

Articles of Faith Essentials: Holy Spirit Baptism (Article #X)

We believe that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is the incoming of the promised Comforter in mighty and glorious fullness to endue the believer with power from on high; to glorify and exalt the Lord Jesus; to give inspired utterance in witnessing of Him; to foster the spirit of prayer, holiness, sobriety; to equip the individual and the Church for practical, efficient, joyous, Spirit- filled soul-winning in the fields of life; and this being still the dispensation of the Holy Spirit, the believer may have every reason to expect His incoming to be after the same manner as that in which He came upon Jew and Gentile alike in Bible days, and as recorded in the Word, that it may be truly said of us as of the house of Cornelius: the Holy Ghost fell on them as on us at the beginning. (John 14:16, 17; Acts 1:5,8; 2:4; 8:17; 10:44-46; 19:6, 1Cor. 3:16)

1. CORE—the Baptism of the Holy Spirit is an experience by which the Holy Spirit comes in “fullness to endue the believer with power from on high” for powerful and effective worship, prayer, witness, and evangelism. Believers should “expect His incoming to be after the same manner” as that which occurred “in Bible days.”

2. BROADER ESSENTIALS—

- Holy Spirit empowerment has as its main end and goal the building up of the church as the body of Christ and effective witness of the good news of Jesus Christ in the world.
- Baptism in the Holy Spirit is how we are enabled to know deeper dimensions of worship, sanctification, prayer, and evangelism.
- Foursquare, as an organization, embraces a shared expectation that the Spirit will freely bestow on an individual any of the charismatic gifts mentioned in the New Testament, including speaking in tongues (personal prayer language), because of a person’s baptism in the Spirit.
- Foursquare makes intentional room for some variation of belief about how speaking in tongues is related to Spirit baptism.
- It is critical to our movement that ministers and congregations actively seek and receive the “coming upon” of the Spirit in power, and that they actively pursue the manifestation of all spiritual gifts, including speaking in tongues.
- Church leaders (lead pastors?) should have a clear understanding and plan for teaching and leading people into the Baptism in the Holy Spirit, ongoing Spirit fullness, and the manifestations of the Spirit for the edification of the church.
- The Foursquare Church makes the stipulation that every lead pastor be baptized in the Holy Spirit and speak in tongues because the empowerment of the Spirit in all its varied forms is critical for healthy and effective Christian leadership.

3. ELEMENTS FOR DISCUSSION—

- What do we think about:
 - Those in Foursquare who believe that “expecting His incoming to be after the same manner [as] in Bible days” is “code” for “tongues as initial evidence”? If that’s not your understanding of its intent, how do you understand that statement?
 - A Foursquare minister who does not believe in “tongues as initial evidence”?
 - A Foursquare minister who interprets “baptism with the Holy Spirit” as exclusively salvific, citing 1 Corinthians 12:13? If you disagree, what should Foursquare do with this Pauline use of the phrase?
 - A licensed minister who does not have a clear plan for teaching people about Spirit baptism and leading them into the experience as understood in Foursquare?
- **Some on the Doctrine Committee** feel we should consider rethinking this statement from the FLPG, “The Foursquare Church makes the stipulation that every lead pastor be baptized in the Holy Spirit and speak in tongues because the empowerment of the Spirit in all its varied forms is critical for healthy and effective Christian leadership” because it can give the impression that we are linking speaking with tongues as a necessity “for healthy and effective Christian leadership.”