

## THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Who is the Holy Spirit? First of all, He is God. He is also a person, and not an impersonal force or essence. He is the One that testifies of Christ, indwells and empowers the believer, and who convicts the world of sin and of their need for Jesus as Savior and Lord. He is the Helper Jesus promised to His disciples ... the Helper that comes to our aid just as Jesus did for His men in the days of His earthly ministry. <sup>1</sup>

It's vital that every believer learn to experience fellowship with the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 13:14). According to the New Testament, there are three possible relationships that a person can have with the Holy Spirit. <sup>2</sup>

The Holy Spirit can be *with* a person (Greek preposition *para*), convincing him/her of the need for Christ; He can be *in* someone (Greek preposition *en*), regenerating them and helping them in many areas related to living as a believer; and He can be *upon* the believer (Greek preposition *epi*) for spiritual power to be witnesses of Christ. It is this *upon* relationship with the Holy Spirit that is called the baptism with the Holy Spirit. <sup>3</sup>

Obviously, to do God's work, we need God's power. Jesus told His disciples, "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you..." (Acts 1:8).

### *Is the Baptism of the Holy Spirit for Everyone?*

Yes! The baptism of the Holy Spirit is for all who believe in Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord, and who are children of God through Him (Acts 2:38-39).

### *What Is the Baptism of the Holy Spirit?*

The baptism of the Holy Spirit occurs when the Spirit of God comes *upon* a believer. The Holy Spirit fills the believer's mind with genuine understanding of truth, takes possession of the believer's abilities, and imparts gifts that qualify the believer for service in the body of Christ and for the kingdom of God.

When a person accepts Jesus Christ as personal Savior and Lord, the Holy Spirit dwells inside him or her (John 14:15-17; 1 Corinthians 3:16; 12:13). But believers also need the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:5-8).

### *Why We Need the Baptism of the Holy Spirit*

The baptism of the Holy Spirit empowers believers for service, witness, spiritual warfare, and boldness in their testimonies (Acts 1:8, 4:19-20, 29-31; 6:8-10; 1 Corinthians 2:4).

Jesus commanded the disciples not to begin the work to which He had called them until they were baptized in the Holy Spirit (Luke 24:48-49; Acts 1:4,8). When the apostles met believers in Christ, they at once asked whether the believers had received the Holy Spirit. If not, they made sure the believers received Him (Acts 8:14-16; 19:1-5). The baptism of the Holy Spirit is an absolute necessity in every Christian's life for the service to which God has called us.

### *How to Receive the Baptism of the Holy Spirit*

God fulfills His promises in a variety of ways, and no two human beings are alike in how they receive spiritual things.

The New Testament tells us that some believers received the baptism of the Holy Spirit at the moment of their conversion, such as Cornelius and his family (Acts 10). Others, such as the believers in Ephesus, received it at a later time (Acts 19:1-5). We should never limit God by our own expectations. He is sovereign and will work in whatever way He chooses.

Having said that, it's important to understand that anything we receive from the Holy Spirit is by faith (Galatians 3:2), and in answer to believing prayer.

Jesus said, "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!" (Luke 11:13). As you carefully read and study the passages referenced in this article, the Lord can build up your faith to receive this important gift.

You may want to have the pastors lay hands upon you and pray with you, or you may want to ask for the baptism of the Holy Spirit when you're alone.

In any case, the pastors are available to help you in your understanding and in any way you need help to begin living as Christ's witness by His power, the power of the Holy Spirit.

1. Acts 5:3-4; John 14:26, 15:26; 16:13-14, 16:7-8; John 14:16-17, 16:7.
2. John 14:16-17; Acts 1:8.
3. Also called the *promise of the Father*, being *endued with power from on high* (Luke 24:49); being *filled with the Holy Spirit* (Acts 2:3-4); *receiving the Holy Spirit* (Acts 2:38); the *gift of the Holy Spirit* (Acts 10:44-47, 11:15-17); and the *coming upon of the Holy Spirit* (Acts 19:6).

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