

☞ **The Pursuit of the Holy Spirit, part 1**

We've been talking for several weeks now about the Holy Spirit and how important his work is in us. We need the Holy Spirit today.

☞ **The Holy Spirit is a person who fills us, builds Godly character, and enables powerful gifts.**

We want to be filled with the Holy Spirit and experience the effects of his presence. I want to be clear that if you are a believer, a follower of Christ, you have the Holy Spirit. However, we need to keep on being filled with the Spirit and we want to experience what the disciples experienced in the book of Acts. They were baptized in the Holy Spirit and phenomenal things happened. So, as a believer, you have the Holy Spirit. But there's more!

☞ **Holy Spirit is deposited at salvation:
2 Corinthians 1:21-22**

He anointed us, 22 set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.

The disciples received the Spirit from Jesus in John 20...

Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." 22 And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit."

Then, Jesus tells the disciples to wait to be baptized in the Holy Spirit in Acts 1...

"Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."

So, we see from the disciples' example that you can have the Holy Spirit, but then later can also be baptized in the Holy Spirit.

☞ **There is another work of the Holy Spirit after salvation:
Acts 19:1-2, 6**

...Paul took the road through the interior and arrived at Ephesus. There he found some disciples and asked them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" They answered, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." ...6 When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied.

Here's how I see it: At salvation, we get a deposit of the Holy Spirit, which is sort of like a down payment on a house. Then sometime after that we can be baptized in the Holy Spirit, which is kinda like payment in full. But, even beyond that we are to keep on being filled, which is like investing more into the home to make improvements.

☞ **Being filled with the Holy Spirit is both an event and an ongoing process.** In **Acts 2**, the disciples had a profound experience of being filled with the Spirit. However, they continued to experience his filling again and again throughout the book of Acts. We should expect the

same today: A significant event of being filled with the Spirit and a repeated, or continual infilling.

☞ **Ephesians 5:18** speaks of the ongoing process...

Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled (**keep on being filled**) with the Spirit

Drunk vs. Filled:

Both: Walk differently; Talk differently; Act differently; Think differently; Feel differently

☞ Both: **"Under the influence"** **Drunk: "impaired"** **Filled: "improved"**

☞ **How to be Baptized in the Holy Spirit (the initial event):**

☞ **1. Believe**

Everything in Christianity is based on faith. So you have to start there.

What a man accomplishes depends on what he believes.

☞ **Matthew 21:22**

If you **believe**, you will **receive** whatever you ask for in prayer.

Mark 11:24

I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.

Galatians 3:2

Did you receive the Spirit by observing the law, or by believing what you heard?

☞ --AW Tozer... **Believe you can be filled; believe it is God's will**; believe it is not abnormal; believe the Holy Spirit is not strange or eerie; He is the essence of Jesus; be convinced of these things.

--Spurgeon... *I would recommend you either believe God up to the hilt, or else not to believe at all. Believe this book of God, every letter of it, or else reject it. There is no logical standing place between the two.*

--St. Augustine... *"Understanding is the reward of faith. Therefore, seek not to understand that so that you may believe, but believe so that you may understand."*

All of Christianity is built on faith. Do you believe Biblical patterns are still relevant today? Do you believe the Lord wants to baptize you in the Holy Spirit? Do you trust him?

☞ **2. Desire**

Last week I asked if you like to receive gifts. God is a gift giver. He gave us his Son, Jesus; he gives us grace; he gives us the Holy Spirit. My view is simply that **if God is giving something**

☞ **away, I want to receive whatever that is.**

Isaiah 44:3

For I will pour water on him who is thirsty, And floods on the dry ground; I will pour My Spirit on your descendants, And My blessing on your offspring; NKJV

☞ **Matthew 5:6**

Blessed are those who **hunger and thirst** for righteousness, for they will be filled.

☞ --Dwight Lyman Moody... *God commands us to be filled with the Spirit, and **if we are not filled, it is because we are living beneath our privileges.***

--AW Tozer... *Complacency is a deadly foe of all spiritual growth. Acute desire must be*

☞ *present or there will be no manifestation of Christ to His people. **He waits to be wanted.***

--Dwight Lyman Moody... *If we are full of pride and conceit and ambition and self-seeking and pleasure and the world, there is no room for the Spirit of God, and I believe many a man is praying to God to fill him when he is full already with something else.*

There is an ancient tale from India about a young man who was seeking God. He went to a wise old sage for help. "How can I find God?" he asked the old man. The old man took him to a nearby river. Out they waded into the deep water. Soon the water was up just under their chins. Suddenly the old man seized the young man by the neck and pushed him under the water. He held the young man down until the young man was flailing the water in desperation. Another minute and he may well have drowned. Up out of the water the two of them came. The young man was coughing water from his lungs and still gasping for air. Reaching the bank he asked the man indignantly, "What did that have to do with my finding God?" The old man asked him quietly, "While you were under the water, what did you want more than anything else?" The young man thought for a minute and then answered, "I wanted air. I wanted air more than anything else?" The old man replied, "When you want God as much as you wanted air, you will find him."

You must dig down deep to discover what's really in your heart. Many times what people think they want is not what they really want! I say again, if God is passing out gifts, I want whatever he's giving. He is giving us the Holy Spirit... I want the Holy Spirit.

☞ **3. Ask**

Luke 11:9-13

"So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. 10 For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened. 11 "Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? 12 Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? 13 If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will **your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!**"

James 4:2

You do not have, because you do not ask God.

☞ Ask (pray) with confidence, 1 John 5:14-15

This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. 15 And if we know that he hears us — whatever we ask — we know that we have what we asked of him.

☞ Pray together, Acts 2:1-4

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. 2 Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. 4 All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

☞ Pray with “hands on,” Acts 19:6

When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied.

☞ 4. Expect Acts 2:38-39

Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And **you will receive the gift** of the Holy Spirit. 39 The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off — for all whom the Lord our God will call."

A little book, long out of print, called Expectation Corner, tells of a king who prepared a city for some of his poor subjects. Not far away he constructed a large storehouse where everything they needed would be supplied if they would only send him their requests. There was one condition, however: they should constantly be on the lookout for his messengers so that when they came with the gifts in answer to their urgent pleas, the petitioners would always be found waiting and ready to receive them. One faithless subject, not actually expecting to get what he asked for, never watched for their delivery. One day he was taken to the king's storehouse; and there, to his amazement, he saw scores of packages that had originally been made ready for him. The messengers had come to his door, but because he was not looking for them, the king's gifts never satisfied his needs.

In Acts 1 Jesus told his disciples to wait, and we see in Acts 2 that's exactly what they were doing. They had an expectation that his promise would be fulfilled.

This is really an issue of trust. God says he has a gift for us; all we need to do is ask. Do you ☞ think God will give what he has promised to give? Then, **trust that he will!**

Conclusion

When you believe, desire, ask and expect, the Holy Spirit will fill you. Remember, this filling is both a significant event and an ongoing process. Today's focus is the initial event. If you're a believer, you need to be baptized in the Holy Spirit and be Spirit-filled! Just before we wrap up, let's talk about the actual experience of this Holy Spirit baptism...

--Charles G. Finney... *The Holy Spirit descended upon me in a manner that seemed to go through me, body and soul. I could feel the impression like a wave of electricity going through and through me. Indeed, it seemed to come in waves and waves of liquid love... like the very breath of God... it seemed to fan me like immense wings.*

My personal experience at Bible Camp.

I know of other Spirit-filled believers who initially weren't sure about this thing, but simply prayed, saying, "If this is real, then I want it."

Sometimes it's the issue of speaking in tongues that people wrestle with. We see the biblical pattern... in most cases people baptized in the Spirit spoke in tongues. So, it's legit, but it can seem to be an awkward thing and some people are reluctant to pursue the Spirit's baptism because of that.

--Jack Hayford... *I want you neither to feel you must speak with tongues to prove anything, nor to feel you have failed if you ask the Lord Jesus and you don't speak with tongues immediately. But I must be honest with you: I do pray that you will ask Him to overflow your soul with new dimensions of praise and prayer, and I do ask Him – prayerfully agreeing with you – that you will receive a release into the beauty of spiritual language.*

--Jack Hayford... *How does the "tongues" part start? I've talked with people to this day who think that the Lord is going to make them speak with tongues; that there's going to be some sort of seizure over which they have no control... People often say to me today, "I want to be sure that I don't make up "tongues," to which I will respond, "What makes you think you could? Especially since you don't want to." Such fears are needless and ought to be laid at Jesus' feet. People also say, "I want to be sure it's all of God." Of course! We all do, but let me tell you, God Himself wants your involvement. The Holy Spirit doesn't hypnotize you and then make you speak in another language. The Bible says, "THEY began to speak with tongues as THE SPIRIT gave utterance" (Acts 2:4)—clearly indicating God's will and pattern incorporates our decision to speak, and the Holy Spirit's enablement to give the language spoken. I frequently point out that **spiritual language often occurs in a person's mind even before it is spoken**. Your language may at first be quite simple. The beginning may not be dramatic or expansive, but if you **begin in faith**, then continue in faith. Trust the Lord to expand the language and be at peace in this: He will! He gives the language, but if you're ever going to speak, you're going to have to **decide to speak**, just as much as you had to decide to receive Jesus as Lord... When Jesus was walking on the water, He beckoned Peter to come to Him. There came a moment when Peter had to decide, "I'm standing here and I'm going to go there." There comes a moment where you decide to **step out and walk in a miracle**.*

Song - Holy Spirit