

OPEN BIBLE CHURCH

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SERMON TITLE The Pursuit of the Holy Spirit

SERIES We Need the Holy Spirit

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KEY SCRIPTURE John 7:37-39

SYNOPSIS Though the Holy Spirit lives within believers, we can also be baptized in the Holy Spirit and power.

HIGHLIGHTS Closing song: Holy Spirit



We Need the Holy Spirit

☞ The Pursuit of the Holy Spirit

We've been talking for several weeks now about the Holy Spirit and how important his work is in us. He builds godly character in us; he enables powerful gifts through us. We need the Holy Spirit today.

☞ **John 7:37-39** *Jesus prophesied about the Holy Spirit*

On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. **38 Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.**" 39 By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.

☞ **Holy Spirit is deposited at salvation:** If you are a believer and follower of Christ, the Holy Spirit is in you. 2 Corinthians 1:21-22 says He put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come. **And yet, there's more.**

In John 20:21-22 we see that the disciples received the Holy Spirit when Jesus sent them out. But then in Acts 1, Jesus tells them to wait to be baptized in the Holy Spirit and they would receive power.

Jesus said to come to him for a drink, indicating receiving the Holy Spirit; then, that drink would become streams of living water flowing from within. The disciples had that exact experience, receiving the Holy Spirit in John 20, then later being baptized with the Holy Spirit and power in Acts 2, which began an overflow of the living water from within.

Paul had this same expectation in his ministry. In Acts 19 he found some new believers, but they didn't know about the Holy Spirit, so he placed his hands on them and the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied.

So, there's a pattern. You believe in the Lord Jesus and the Holy Spirit is deposited within - you have the Holy Spirit. But then, there's a follow-up of being baptized in the Holy Spirit, which typically is a profound experience, often accompanied by signs like speaking in tongues and prophesying. And, it goes even further because we see the disciples being filled over and over again throughout the book of Acts. It's a three-pronged experience:

☞ **Believe, and the Holy Spirit takes up residence in you.
Be baptized in the Holy Spirit and he overflows with power.
Keep on being filled with the Holy Spirit.**

☞ Today, we are focusing on the second prong: **How to be Baptized in the Holy Spirit.**



1. Believe

Faith and belief are fundamental throughout the Christian's life. You have faith, believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, which gets you saved. But, then faith is still vital in your walk with the Lord.

Galatians 3:2, 5

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

5 Does God give you his Spirit and work miracles among you because you observe the law, or because you believe what you heard?

To be baptized in the Holy Spirit and power, you have to believe. We've been talking about the Holy Spirit for several weeks now; about the gift God is giving us; about the grace he is pouring  out; about the power included when the Holy Spirit is working in us. **Do you believe the Holy Spirit is a good gift? Do you believe that this gift is for you? Do you believe?**

--AW Tozer... *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.*

Matthew 21:22

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

2. Desire

Matthew 5:6

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

So, hopefully by now, you believe the Holy Spirit is a good gift from God. But what about your  desire? Do you want this gift? **Is there a hunger in your heart to be baptized in the Holy Spirit?** Sometimes people are still a bit reluctant about the Holy Spirit, even after hearing about all of his benefits.

Have you ever received a gift that, at first, you weren't so sure about? You didn't know if you really liked it or not? *Wedding and funeral log; Calipers; Shoe shine sponge.*

--DL 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.*

So, if you're having doubts, listen to your friends who are touting the gift of the Holy Spirit. Take their word for it; you won't be sorry. Take my word for it; you won't regret this gift.

But, then there are some who *are* interested in this gift and have yet to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. In this case, you may need to do a self-inspection. What do you really want?

 **When the Holy Spirit fills a person, he is taking over.** Are you sure you're ready for that?



And still, even then, some have other priorities which take precedence over the Holy Spirit.

--DL 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 he 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."

☞ 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 with confidence

1 John 5:14-15 says, "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."

☞ Ask with others

In Acts 2, the disciples were all together, praying and waiting for the gift of the Holy Spirit, when suddenly they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

☞ Ask with "hands on"

Acts 9 and again in chapter 19, we this action of laying on hands. I don't know why this is, but it is a biblical example and instruction for prayer. That's why we often touch a person on the shoulder or hold hands when we prayer with people.



☞ 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."

☞ This gift of the Holy Spirit is a promise from God. Does God ever break his promises?

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.

As you believe, desire and ask, are you then looking and listening with expectation for this gift of the Holy Spirit. It's easy to just say a prayer and then go on about your business. Remember, the disciples waited in the upper room. They didn't just move on. Jesus said they would be baptized in the Holy Spirit and they believed it enough to wait in expectation.

When you believe, desire, ask and expect, the Holy Spirit will baptize and fill you.

Table Talk: What has your experience with the Holy Spirit been like?

☞ Start timer

Everybody's experience is unique, but typically, the baptism in the Holy Spirit is a profound, memorable time.

--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.

Song: Holy Spirit