

## **Appendix A**

### ***About the Baptism of the Holy Spirit***

#### **An Overview**

The Baptism of the Holy Spirit is central to the life and ministry of every Christian. I am convinced that without it, no Christian can successfully live out the calling God has placed on his/her life. I am not going to present a full theology of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit here. (For a better and complete theology please refer to the systematic theology *Fundamentals of Pentecostal Theology* by Guy P. Duffield and Nathaniel M. Van Cleave pp. 304-326.) The purpose of this article is to present some highlights and discuss the gift of tongues in more detail.

Jesus made it quite clear that Christian ministry could not be done without the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. For this reason He commanded the disciples to "wait" in Jerusalem. He didn't say, "Start preaching the good news immediately using the knowledge, experience, and education you received from me." He said, "Wait" (Acts 1:4,5). Note that this was a *command*. He *commanded* them to *wait* until the Holy Spirit fell on them. That's pretty strong! Why?

We can see some of His reasoning if we look at King Saul and King David in the Old Testament. In 1 Samuel 10, after Saul's first meeting with him, Samuel anointed him with oil and gave him some instructions. Verse 9 says that from that point on, "*God gave him another heart*" and Saul became a different person. Why was this so? Because the Holy Spirit had come upon him! You see the Holy Spirit in action in verse 10 when Saul actually prophesied along with some other prophets. Note that Chapter 10 begins with Samuel pouring a flask of oil over Saul's head. Anointing oil is symbolic of the Holy Spirit. When Samuel poured oil on Saul, the Holy Spirit fell on him at the same time – i.e. he was baptized in the Holy Spirit and became a different person. Saul was changed by that experience from a shy, backward farm boy into a bold leader of men. The Baptism of the Holy Spirit *does* make a difference in the life of a believer!

David's story was similar. In 1 Samuel 16:13 Samuel anointed David with oil and the Holy Spirit came upon him. That event changed a no-account shepherd boy so much that he is later described by one of Saul's servants as, "...*A mighty man of valor, a man of war...*" (vs. 18). David himself later testified to that change when, during the Goliath episode, he describes hand-to-teeth combat with lions and bears (1 Samuel 17:34-36). Skinny, inexperienced teenagers don't go

after lions and bears – and beat them – on their own. David accomplished those things because he was full of God's power. He had been dipped by God in the Holy Spirit.

It was the same with the disciples at Pentecost. Spiritually speaking, they were the equivalent of skinny, inexperienced teenagers. Ten days later, after the Holy Spirit fell, they were bold and fearless witnesses for Christ. The Baptism of the Holy Spirit changes us into different people and empowers us to do the work of the Kingdom – work we are otherwise woefully inadequate to take on.

### **What Exactly is the Baptism of the Holy Spirit?**

“But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus...” Eph 2:4-6

We Christians are, in the spirit, seated in the heavenlies with Jesus and our spirits are (or should be) the dominant part of our makeup. How does all this happen? How do the dynamics of that give and take commerce between the Lord and my spirit-man come about? If we go back to our high school science classes we might find an example. Salt dissolves in water. Dump a teaspoon of salt into a glass of warm water, stir, and the salt will disappear. The physics of the process is that the salt breaks into its constituent ions and those ions move to occupy the spaces that exist between the water molecules. If you keep adding salt, those spaces will eventually all get filled and then the resulting solution is said to be *saturated*. The Holy Spirit fills us in similar manner. History gives us another example: In New Testament times the Phoenician city of Tyre's business centered around the manufacture of purple cloth. They took newly woven cloth, dipped it in vats of purple dye, and then marketed it to the world. They made a lot of money that way. The Tyrians used the greek word *baptizo* to describe the process of dipping the cloth in the dye. (That's where we get the word “baptize”.) So, when the cloth was immersed in the dye, the dye soaked into the cloth, surrounding every thread and even soaking *into* the threads, *modifying every tiny little filament* the thread was made of. Leave it in the vat long enough and the cloth becomes *saturated*, unable to hold any more dye.

God the Holy Spirit does something similar with us. Remember, we are “*seated with Him in the heavenlies*”. God the Son picks us up and dips us (*baptizo*'s us) in God the Holy Spirit until He fills every space in our being. He

surrounds and fills us with Himself until we are completely *saturated* with Him. However, unlike my examples above, He doesn't stop there; He just continues to fill us, and fill us, and fill us until we overflow, as He pours down through our hearts and souls into the rest of our beings. It is then that we discover that the Holy Spirit is flammable and we catch fire! What I'm describing is what John the Baptist was talking about when he said of Christ, "*I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.*" This process is also what Christ was talking about when He told the disciples to wait in Jerusalem until the Holy Spirit fell on them (Acts 1:4-8). Through the Baptism of the Holy Spirit the Lord becomes so much a part of us that it is an easy thing to just let Him flow through us, change us, and extend His life to others through us.

### **The Baptism of the Holy Spirit Comes Subsequent to Salvation**

Many of the Christian groups that reject the Baptism of the Holy Spirit as an experience we should seek God for, claim that this infilling of the Holy Spirit happens automatically at the moment of salvation. A newly-minted Christian certainly may experience the Baptism of the Holy Spirit immediately following an initial commitment to Christ, but that is not the usual and customary picture presented in the Scriptures. Following Jesus' ascension, the disciples waited *ten days* for the Baptism of the Holy Spirit to happen. Clearly, for the twelve original apostles (and those with them), the Baptism of the Holy Spirit was an experience that *followed* their initial salvation. In Acts Chapter 8 we read how Philip the Evangelist preached Christ to the Samaritans and they became believers. However, it wasn't until later (probably from several days to a couple of weeks) that Peter and John introduce them to the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. These two examples from the scripture clearly contradict the argument that the regenerative work of the Holy Spirit at the moment of salvation is the same thing as the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. That assertion simply does not fit the scriptural picture God has painted for us.

### **The Gift of Tongues**

Some groups strongly object to the Pentecostal insistence that the gift of tongues is *always* manifested when someone receives the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. The Pentecostal side of the argument centers around the question, "How do you *know* you have been baptized in the Holy Spirit? What is your evidence?" They then go on to show how, in the Book of Acts, when people are baptized in the Holy Spirit, the gift of tongues is either explicitly mentioned or implied. Their arguments are

strong and are hard to dismiss lightly. So, let's look at each instance of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit in the Book of Acts and see for ourselves if the gift of tongues *has* to happen when someone receives the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.

#### *Pentecost Acts 2:1-4*

The sound of wind (without the wind), tongues of fire (that don't destroy), and ordinary yokels speaking languages they had never heard before. This passage is a Pentecostal preacher's dream! So, how did they *know* they had been baptized in the Holy Spirit? The sound of wind was significant, but it didn't touch any of them in a personal way. It had to have been pretty cool to have a tongue of supernatural fire standing above your head, but, really, the fire had no effect on who or what they were as persons. It was the change inside their souls that made the difference as the Holy Spirit filled them and the gift of tongues came bursting forth. Like the ancient kings Saul and David, the Holy Spirit turned them into different persons.

#### *The Samaritans Acts 8:1-25*

Philip the evangelist didn't even *try* to introduce the Samaritans to the Baptism of the Holy Spirit after introducing them to Christ. Yet, when Peter and John arrived, the *first* thing they did was bring up the subject and pray for the Samaritans to receive the Holy Spirit. Why? Because Peter and John were acutely aware of how necessary having the fullness of the Holy Spirit in your life is to living the Christian life and doing the work of the Kingdom of God. Clearly they considered the Baptism of the Holy Spirit an essential step that the Samaritans needed to take. So, how did the Samaritans know that they had received the Holy Spirit? The gift of tongues is not mentioned, yet the reaction of Simon Magus in verses 18 & 19 speaks volumes. Simon saw such a clear demonstration of the Holy Spirit's power in the people Peter and John laid hands on, that he tried to buy it from them! Setting aside the lousy motivations of his heart, what was he observing? Were his fellow Samaritans speaking in tongues? Perhaps, but maybe they were praying for the sick themselves and healing them. Perhaps words of knowledge were being released or some may have been working miracles. Clearly the outward evidence of power in the lives of those receiving the Holy Spirit was strong enough to powerfully impress Simon Magus. Still, significant outward evidence notwithstanding, the Pentecostal argument that the gift of tongues *must* be the evidence that someone has received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit breaks down when you take a clear look at this passage. *There is no imperative* here for the presence of the gift of tongues.

*Ananias Prays for Paul Acts 9:17*

After meeting Jesus on the Damascus Road, Paul was a believer. He was also blind and had no idea what was next. Enter Ananias – a man on direct assignment from the Lord – who prayed that Paul would be healed *and* filled with the Holy Spirit. It wasn't enough that he now recognize Jesus as the Messiah – Paul needed the infilling of the Holy Spirit so that he could carry out his assignment in the Kingdom of God. Read on through verse 25 and Paul didn't wait around – he started preaching immediately. In fact, his preaching – without any Christian training or background at all – was so powerful that no one could stand up to him! *That* is the kind of transformation the Baptism of the Holy Spirit works in the believer's life! Here again, there is no mention of the gift of tongues, but we need to remember that Paul later told the Corinthians he spoke in tongues "*more than you all*" (1 Corinthians 14:18). Did he receive it when Ananias prayed for him? Most likely, but we can't say for sure.

*Cornelius and Peter Acts 10:44-46*

From the moment he called Abraham, God made it clear that His intention was to include the Gentiles in the Kingdom of God. The early church just didn't catch on to that fact and continued the Jewish practice of excluding Gentiles from worship. To set them straight, God sent Peter a vision and an invitation (to speak to Cornelius) and through that led the church into accepting Gentile believers. During Peter's sermon to Cornelius and his household, the Holy Spirit fell on everyone in the room. How did Peter know that the Holy Spirit had fallen on Cornelius and his household? Easy – they all started speaking in tongues! The gift of tongues was clear and unarguable evidence to Peter that even Gentiles could be baptized in the Holy Spirit. Of course, it followed that Gentiles could also be redeemed.

*The Ephesian Twelve Acts 19:6*

Paul found some believers in Ephesus who acknowledged and put their faith in Jesus, but had no knowledge of the work of the Holy Spirit in the believer's life. The first thing Paul did was pray for them to receive the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. They then spoke in tongues *and* prophesied. Note that the gift of prophecy was evidence of the infilling of the Holy Spirit alongside the gift of tongues.

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In every Baptism of the Holy Spirit event listed in the Book of Acts, the evidence that it had happened was *significant, apparent* and *immediate*. Keep in mind that these are the examples God the Holy Spirit gave us when He inspired Luke to write the Book of Acts. It follows then, that we also should expect *significant, apparent, and immediate* evidence when we believe someone has received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. Is that evidence always the gift of tongues? When discussing this topic, I use the term “*usually*” when encouraging individuals to expect the gift of tongues to be manifest when they receive the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. I say “usually” because scripturally there is room for the other manifestation gifts to be expressed instead. However, it stands to reason that God is going to start His people out with the least of the gifts, not the most advanced. When you consider how the gift of tongues serves as a training tool for using the greater gifts, it makes sense that we should expect it to be the first to manifest following the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. This author believes that it is also possible that a person can be baptized in the Holy Spirit with the evidence being a massive outworking of God's power in his/her life without *any* of the manifestation gifts being immediately present.<sup>1</sup> However, I would expect such a scenario to be the exception, rather than the rule.<sup>2</sup>

## Conclusion

John the Baptist pointed to Jesus as *the* Baptizer in the Holy Spirit (Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:8). Jesus Himself emphasized how it was important for him to go away so that the Holy Spirit would come (John 16:7). He commanded the disciples to wait for the Holy Spirit to fall *before* going out to build the church (Acts 1:4). Throughout the New Testament the writers constantly reference the Holy Spirit as essential to living the Christian life and building the Kingdom of God. The message is clear that all Christians should embrace the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and His work in their lives.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Charles Finney in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century apparently experienced the Baptism of the Holy Spirit in just this fashion. Read his account in the excellent spiritual history of America by Peter Marshall & David Manuel titled *From Sea To Shining Sea*, pp. 300-303.

<sup>2</sup> The Christian seeking the Baptism of the Holy Spirit must be careful not to put limits on God. One cannot say, “Fill me with Your Holy Spirit, Lord” and at the same time say, “...just don’t give me that gift of tongues thing!” Anyone seeking God for the infilling of the Holy Spirit necessarily must be willing to accept His choices for his/her life.

<sup>3</sup> This article is an edited excerpt from the author’s book *Understanding the Prophetic Nature*. Go to [johntreagan.com](http://johntreagan.com) to learn more.