

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit

Jesus gives us the power for the mission

Jesus gave the church, you and me a great commission. To go and make disciples, people learning to love and serve the living God and teaching others to do the same.

"God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son..... Not to condemn the world but that the world through Him might be saved."

We must tell people about this wonderful news of the love of God. We do it in words and actions.

He has shown us the depth of His love Rom 5:8

Was it When we were good enough, reached a certain level of holiness and showed that we were trying our best?! No. "Whilst we were yet sinners."

He died on the cross for the complete forgiveness of Sin so that we may know the love of the Father and like Jesus, one day experience the resurrection from the dead.

Salvation is found in no other name? We, his disciples, are called to serve, ***in the name of Jesus***, the poor, the vulnerable and needy, to bring the kingdom of God into a broken world. Both showing and telling people the good news about Jesus. The gospel message is "the power of God to salvation for **everyone** who believes." This is a message we should never be ashamed of. Rom 1:16

We must not under estimate the power of the local church to heal the broken, save the lost, deliver the oppressed, set people free from addiction, restore broken relationships, and transform lives.

Many organisations have catchy vision statements, such as "revitalising our communities", "building a brighter future" etc. Yet I know that only God can truly transform a life, only He can really revitalise our neighbourhoods! He does it through the local church, empowered by the Holy Spirit. You and I filled, baptised in the Spirit and sent into the harvest field.

"Loving God, loving one another and loving others"

Acts 1:18

"You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you and you will be my witnesses...."

The pouring out of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost was not so that we could have an anointed worship time or a great inspiring meeting each Sunday and praise God that this happens through the Holy Spirit, but to **in order that Jesus may be made known** and the great end time harvest brought in. He empowers us to be **His witnesses** through mercy ministry, service, the witness of our transformed lives, our testimony and the ministry of the word.

It was never God's intention that we do his work under our own steam, reliant on our natural talents and gifts and resources, but to rely entirely on His Spirit working in and through every believer.

Do you think God is a reluctant giver? Absolutely not!

I saw a Facebook video where an older man was given an iPad. He and his daughter are busily making a meal in the kitchen and she asks her dad if he liked the gift she had bought. Very handy he replies as he promptly chops vegetables on it! Then he preceded to wash it under the tap and place it in the dishwasher.

I believe Jesus wants us to understand why he gives us His Spirit. To empower us to live godly lives, yes but also

"To be His witnesses" Living epistles, not written with pen and paper but lives, with the Holy Spirit written all over us, that when others read us they read the very work of God.

Those of us who are born of God and filled with His Spirit are **first hand** witnesses of the power of God to transform lives. We don't have to tell someone else's story. We have experienced His power to transform our lives! We are the Evidence that Jesus is alive and has given to us the promised Holy Spirit.

Jesus never intended for us to live a powerless life. A life lived under our own steam. His intention is for every believer to receive power from on high.

God wants to be known as a generous God. A Father who always wants the best for His children. We should be in awe of **the God who can**, and who **generously gives** to those who love Him.

Eph 1: 7-9 NLT

He is so **rich in kindness and grace** that he purchased our freedom with the blood of His Son and forgave our sins. He has **showered His kindness** on us, along with all wisdom and understanding.

Exodus 34: 6-7

Then the Lord came down in a cloud and stood there with him, and he called out his own name, Yahweh. The Lord passed in front of Moses, calling out, "Yahweh!- The Lord! The God of compassion and mercy!

I am slow to anger and **filled with unfailing love** and faithfulness.

I **lavish unfailing love** to a thousand generations.

I forgive iniquity, rebellion, and sin."

God made himself known to Moses as a generous God filled with and lavishing **unfailing** love.

Matthew 7: 11

So if you sinful people know how to give good gifts to your children, **how much more** will your Heavenly Father give good gifts to those who ask Him?

Psalms 65:9-13 NLT

"The river of God has **plenty** of water; it provides a **bountiful** harvest of grain, for you have ordered it so.

You **drench** the ploughed ground with rain, melting the clods and levelling the ridges. You soften the earth with **showers** and bless its **abundant** crops. You crown the year with a **bountiful** harvest; even the hard pathways **overflow** with **abundance**.

The grasslands of the wilderness become a **lush** pasture, and hillsides **blossom** with joy. The meadows are **clothed** with flocks of sheep, and the valleys are **carpeted** with grain.

They all shout and sing for joy!"

Romans 5:5

"Now hope does not disappoint, because The love of God has been **poured** out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us."

John 3:

"God does not give the Spirit by measure...."

He generously pours out His Spirit to those who will ask and will receive.

Jesus, when he taught the disciples how to pray, wanted them to ask for the most valuable gift, to enable them to live out the normal Christian life. The life He intended for every believer. He told them a story to illustrate his point and highlight to them the incredible value of this gift, his generosity and the attitude of the receiver.

Luke 11 is Jesus' master class on prayer.

His disciples saw Jesus praying and realised, they were falling way short in prayer. So they ask Jesus to teach them how to pray. Jesus teaches them both how to pray and even teaches them the key things to pray for. There are Seven specific requests, one of these is singled out for us, but separately from the model prayer.

We know the Lord's Prayer so well. I don't intend to look at the prayer in great depth but it starts with devotion to God. True prayer flows from hearts devoted to God.

He teaches us the things we should be asking for:

- Your kingdom come (God's rule and reign in my life. His priorities become my priorities etc)
- Your will be done (Complete surrender to the will of God)
- Give us our daily bread.

- Forgive us our sins, as we forgive...
- Lead us not into temptation (leads us in safe pasture for His name's sake)
- Deliver us from evil (Powerless to save ourselves, He gives us the gift of repentance)

Jesus then tells us a story before telling us to ask for the seventh request we should make.

I've said this before. Often, the truth is hidden from us in plain sight. We have to have truth **revealed** to us by the Holy Spirit. I wonder how many people have read the scriptures and miss this simple truth?

The tale Jesus tells is designed to contrast a reluctant giver with the generous nature of our Heavenly Father.

Is the Holy Spirit going to fill us, just on the basis that He chooses to do so? No. Jesus is so clear that we must **ask** for this precious gift of the Holy Spirit.

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit

You may be aware there are two baptisms spoken of in the New Testament. Baptism in water and Baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Even in the Old Testament we see two baptisms referred to in 1 Cor 10:2 baptism in the cloud and the sea.

Just as the Baptism in Water is full immersion so too is Baptism in The Holy Spirit. Just as we get drenched in water so also we get drenched in the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit came down upon them, rather like standing under a waterfall!

In the introduction to each of the 4 gospels, they all tell us about the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Matt 3:11 "**He will baptise you** with the Holy Spirit and fire"

Mark 1:8 "**He will baptise you** with the Holy Spirit."

Luke 3:16 "One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose, **He will baptise you** with the Holy Spirit and fire."

John 1:29-33 "this is **He who baptises** with the Holy Spirit."

Who is the baptizer in the Holy Spirit?

This is one of the ways that Jesus wants us to know Him! As Baptizer in the Holy Spirit.

The pouring out of the Holy Spirit, Baptism in the Holy Spirit is what was foretold by the Prophet Joel (Joel 2:28-29) Acts 2:17 – Peter's sermon.

"And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; your sons and daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams; your young men shall see visions. And also on my menservants and on my maidservants I will pour out my Spirit in those days."

It is hard to get away from the Baptism in the Holy Spirit in the book of acts alone! You could almost call the book "The acts of the Holy Spirit." It is an eye witness account of the fire of God, a **flame that took hold of a small group of disciples and spread rapidly as more and more people came alive to the gospel and the power of God to transform lives. Wherever these people went lives were changed!**

The starting point of the book of Acts is the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Why should our starting point in effective ministry and service be any different?

The church did not grow by its own power or enthusiasm. They were empowered by the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit demonstrated that Christianity is supernatural and the church became more conscious of the Holy Spirit than the problems they faced.

When the Holy Spirit comes there is movement, excitement and growth.

Acts 1:4-5

What were the disciples commanded to do?

"To wait for the promise of the Father....."

You can imagine the sense of excitement and uncertainty amongst those early disciples as they gathered to pray. Daily they gathered, prayed, spoke of Jesus and this promised gift. They knew to expect something they hadn't yet experienced. What does it mean to receive the Holy Spirit? How do we receive Him? What will happen? How will this help us? Something real and deep stirred within them, yet they were waiting for something beyond their understanding. They knew the scriptures in Joel, that in the last days He will pour out His Spirit, but how will He do it and what should they expect?

Don't miss the fact that they came together as one, they gathered in expectation even though they didn't know what to expect. They came daily not wanting to miss out on the promise of the Father and Jesus.

Should we expect to be filled? Was the gift for then and not now?

We should be equally expectant to receive the baptism of the Spirit!

Acts 2:38-39

"Repent and let every one of you be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and for your children, and all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."

Acts 2:1-4 Day of Pentecost

Three things that happened: -

1. They were immersed – Baptized in the Holy Spirit
2. Each of them was individually filled
3. There was an overflow. There was a supernatural outflow from the infilling.

When anyone is filled there is an overflow which comes out in speech. Each time this is recorded in scripture those who received, spoke in other tongues.

Matt 12:34

“Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks.”

The Holy Spirit gives utterance in words we don't understand, perfect prayer, untainted by human understanding. Some people want God to do it all but whilst the Holy Spirit gives the language, we must do the speaking.

So we see the fulfilment of the promise of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2:1-4 as we read earlier.

The purpose of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit is very clear –

- To witness for Jesus Christ and preach the gospel
- To be empowered for Kingdom living in all spheres of life. ‘Dynamite’ received power from above. All Jerusalem was stirred and heard of it.
- To operate in supernatural power

The classic pattern of the book of Acts is: they believed the gospel and were baptised, they were filled/baptized in the Holy Spirit (*not necessarily in that order! Believing and coming to faith came first but some received the baptism in the Spirit before and some after water baptism*). They received power (and love), and released in prophetic speech, usually tongues (see Acts 19:5-6 where they also prophesied).

Just a quick word about tongues

What is speaking in tongues?

I don't want to take Paul's thunder as he is speaking about the gifts next week!

It's an unlearned supernatural language of men and angels. (1 Corinthians 13:1) and is perfect prayer and praise to God (1 Cor 14:2), and strengthens the speaker (1 Cor 14:4) spiritually. This is the private use of tongues (1 Cor 14:5) and is different to the public use which requires an interpretation (1 Cor 14:13) unless all are speaking in tongues together as in Acts 2:4.

Speaking in tongues is evidence of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. Not the only evidence.

Acts 10:44

“While Peter was still speaking these words.....”

Where had Peter got to in his sermon?

He had told them about the forgiveness of sins through Jesus and Jesus the baptizer in the Holy Spirit came and they were all baptized in the Holy Spirit. Speaking in tongues was evidence to the apostle that the gentiles had indeed received salvation and were given power to live the new life!

Tongues was evidence that they had received the gift. They didn't wait for weeks to see the fruit, they had immediate confirmation through tongues.

Acts 11:15 “As I began to speak, they received the Holy Spirit as we did”

What was the same? (As we did) the thing that is the same, is that they also spoke in tongues.

Just to confirm:

At conversion we are in-dwelt by the Spirit.

Romans 8:9b

“And remember that those who do not have the Spirit of Christ living in them are not Christians at all.”

Baptism in the Holy Spirit is a separate experience.

Acts 8:14-17

“.....the Holy Spirit had not yet come upon any of them, for they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then Peter and John laid their hands upon these believers, and they received the Holy Spirit.”

They were already Christians therefore were in-dwelt by the Holy Spirit, yet had not received the Baptism in the Spirit. It was clear to onlookers that they had received the Holy Spirit in power and the evidence was they spoke in tongues.

Repentance and faith, baptism in water and baptism in the Holy Spirit should all be part of our early Christian experience. We don't have to wait for years, God wants us to be saved and to have the power both to live the life and witness to the life we have received in Christ.

We are to be continually filled with the Holy Spirit.

After Pentecost the believers were together again and were filled again!

Acts 4:31

“After they had prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.”

They all got another dose!

Eph 5:18 “be filled....” (Continuous tense - be being filled)

We leak and need to be continually filled.

You can be baptised in the Holy Spirit in two ways:

- Down from Heaven
- Laying on of hands (Acts 8: 14-15, Acts 19) Hadn't even heard there was a Holy Spirit.

The apostle Paul said that the only things worth speaking about in his ministry were the supernatural things done by Jesus through the Holy Spirit.

Romans 15:18-19

We need a supernatural experience of our own. It's not enough to have someone communicate theology to us. You will find your prayer life is lifted to new heights when you are baptized in the Spirit.

Baptism in the Holy Spirit brings us into a new realm of the supernatural, which is the only realm in which the gospel can be really effective.

Heb 2:3,4

“.....God also bearing witness by signs...”

Characteristics of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit

1. It is an **experience** – They **heard** a wind, **saw** fire, **spoke** in tongues. If you don't know whether you have received it or not, then you probably haven't. When you receive, you know!
2. It is accompanied by **Manifestations** – some cry, shake, laugh, sense God's presence, feel drunk, have visions etc. The most obvious is speaking in tongues. If we are baptised in the Spirit should speak in tongues preferably immediately, or if not, some time after.

People often try to explain it away, because it's not their experience or belief, however the scriptures speak for themselves as do many peoples personal experience and testimony.

Derek Prince – 7 requirements for receiving

1. Repent (Acts 2:38)
2. Be baptised
3. Be thirsty
4. Come to Jesus (There is only one baptiser in the Holy Spirit)
5. You have to Ask. (Luke 11:9-13) Some people say; “If God wants to give it to me He will.” No, **you must ASK.**
6. Receive (drink) – Breath Him in!
7. You must yield your tongue. We have been given a tongue to glorify God. We will truly glorify Him when the Holy Spirit comes upon us.

John 7:37

If anyone is thirsty let Him come to me and drink.....out of his belly will flow rivers of living water...”

John 14:16

“And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you for ever – the Spirit of truth.....”

How do we receive?

Ask – Luke 11:9-13

Believe – In faith believe you will receive what you ask for.

Potential blockages include: - Fear of what might happen/Anxiety, doubt, unbelief/Self-consciousness/Wrong doctrine – not for today/Intellectualism.

Confess – in prophetic speech, praising God in tongues or prophesy. Holy Spirit will implant a word or sound in your mind or on your tongue. Speak it out and the rest will come. Holy Spirit will not force you to speak it or open your mouth for you!

