

CHRISTIAN GROWTH KEYS

KEY NO. 20 – THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING FILLED WITH (BAPTISED IN) THE HOLY SPIRIT

INTRODUCTION:

Once a person becomes a Christian, God has another wonderful gift for them - the gift of the Holy Spirit. This gift is known as the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. The Bible speaks much about this experience. John the Baptist spoke of it, and revealed that Jesus Christ is the Baptiser with the Holy Spirit. John himself said, ***“I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.”*** (Matthew 3:11)

THE APOSTLES HAD THEIR NEW BIRTH EXPERIENCE ON RESURRECTION SUNDAY

After appearing to His disciples on resurrection Sunday, Jesus said to them: **“Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.”** And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them; **“Receive the Holy Spirit.”** (John 20:21-22)

This was the New Birth experience for His disciples. The Apostle Paul outlined in the book of Romans that there were two requirements for receiving New Testament Salvation: **“If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.”** (Romans 10:9)

Prior to resurrection Sunday the apostles had already confessed Jesus as their Lord. (Mark 8:29 and John 6:67-69) But now, for the first time, they also believed that God raised Him from the dead. Thus their salvation was completed. This was the point at which they experienced the new birth. The Holy Spirit, breathed into them by Jesus, imparted to them a totally new kind of life - eternal life - which had triumphed over sin and Satan, over death and the grave.

However, just before Jesus ascended back to Heaven He told His disciples that there was still a fuller experience of the Holy Spirit to come. Jesus said to His disciples, “Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.” (Luke 24:49) “For John truly baptised with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.” (Acts 1:5) and

“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” (Acts 1:8)

THE DISCIPLES WERE BAPTISED IN THE HOLY SPIRIT ON THE DAY OF PENTECOST

“When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” (Acts 2:1-4)

Before a person can receive the Holy Spirit, they must be first saved (Born Again). (Acts 19:2a)

The Baptism of the Holy Spirit is the submerging of the whole being into the Spirit of God. It is being filled with the Holy Spirit Who Himself is a living person.

Being filled with the Holy Spirit should not be just a one-time experience but an ongoing practice. As we give out to others we must continually be filled ourselves. The Apostle Paul wrote, “And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit,” (Ephesians 5:18)

The distinction between the Born Again experience (John 4:14) and the overflowing fullness of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit experience (John 7:37-39) which all those in the Upper Room experienced on the Day of Pentecost, can also be clearly seen in the book of Acts where Philip preached the gospel in the city of Samaria. (Acts 8:4-17)

WHEN CHRIST WAS PREACHED IN SAMARIA

1) **Multitudes in that city were born again,**

“Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ to them. And the multitudes with one accord heeded the things spoken by Philip, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did.” (Acts 8:5-6)

2) **Then Water Baptized, and**

“But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, **both men and women were baptized.**” (Acts 8:12)

3) **Finally Baptized in the Holy Spirit (Received the Holy Spirit)**

“Now when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them, who, when they had come down, prayed for them that they might **receive the Holy Spirit**. For as yet He had fallen upon none of them. They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid hands on them, and they **received the Holy Spirit.**” (Acts 8:14-17)

The Holy Spirit empowers us to minister to others. Jesus promised His disciples that when the Holy Spirit came upon them they would receive power to be His witnesses. (Act 1:8) After receiving the Holy Spirit, all the disciples become powerful preachers. Being Baptised in the Holy Spirit enables all believers to witness with greater joy and freedom, and with much more boldness when sharing with others who Jesus is, and what He has done for them. It also helps believers to enter into a richer spiritual awareness of the Lord.

God has given a lasting sign as evidence that we have been baptised in the Holy Spirit. That sign is speaking in tongues, or praying in the Spirit. (Mark 16:17 & Acts 2:4) The language that you receive when baptised in the Holy Spirit, is not one that you have learnt with the mind. However, you must use your own mouth and tongue to speak the words that God will give you.

To receive the gift of the Holy Spirit a believer must simply ask their heavenly Father for the special gift of the Holy Spirit. 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)

Like the gift of salvation it is to be received – by Grace – through Faith – Not of Works

“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.” (Ephesians 2:8-9) **A believer must simply receive the gift of the Holy Spirit by FAITH.** “...that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.” (Galatians 3:14)

HOWEVER FAITH IS NEVER A SUBSTITUTE FOR OBEDIENCE. TRUE FAITH IS ALWAYS MANIFESTED IN OBEDIENCE. The apostle Peter focused on the obedience aspect of genuine faith in his defence to the Jewish council. “And we are His witnesses to these things, and so also is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him.” (Acts 5:32)

SEVEN THINGS TO CONSIDER IN RELATION TO RECEIVING (BEING BAPTISED IN) THE HOLY SPIRIT

- 1a) **Maintaining a humble heart as you operate in the gifts of the Spirit. Whatever we do in life must always be done to glorify God and to serve others.** (1 Corinthians 10:31) (1 Corinthians 12:7) (1 Corinthians 12:11)

SIX SCRIPTURAL STEPS OF OBEDIENCE AND FAITH TO HELP BELIEVERS TO RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT

- 1b) & 2) **Repentance and being Baptized** The first two steps are stated by the Apostle Peter. These are genuine repentance and being water baptized upon becoming a believer. “**Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.**” (Acts 2:38)
- 3) **Being Hungry and thirsty for the fullness of the Spirit. Jesus said,** “If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.” (John 7:37-38) “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled.” (Matthew 5:6)
- 4) **Asking our Heavenly Father for the gift of the Holy Spirit. 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)
- 5) **We must receive the Holy Spirit (DRINK) Jesus said,** “If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink.” (John 7:37) “**Drinking**” represents an active process of receiving. The infilling of the Holy Spirit cannot be received by a negative or passive attitude, just as no one can drink with a closed mouth. The Lord says, “Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it.” (Psalm 81:10) *God cannot fill a closed mouth. We must open our mouth to receive the fullness of the Spirit*
- 6) **We must “yield” ourselves to God** The apostle Paul speaks to Christians of a twofold surrender to God: “**But present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.**” (Romans 6:13)

- The first surrender is the “surrender of the will and the personality” YOURSELVES
- The second surrender involves the surrender of our PHYSICAL MEMBERS

In surrendering our physical members, we can no longer seek to understand intellectually what God asks of us. We must simply hand over unreserved control of our physical members and allow God to use them according to His own will and purpose. The particular member He takes full control of is that unruly member which no man can tame – the tongue. Thus the yielding of our tongue to the Spirit represents the ultimate surrender of one’s members and by this we receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. **The above six Scriptural steps of obedience and faith are not always fulfilled when some believers receive the Holy Spirit, but they are important steps to be taught to those believers desiring to be Baptized in the Holy Spirit.**