

Call to Obedience #508  
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## **The Baptism with the Holy Spirit**

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Beloved children of the King of glory: I feel constrained today to write to you concerning the Baptism with the Holy Spirit and the gift of tongues. The phenomenon of “tongues speaking” first occurred in the Corinthian church, then it died out except for a few occurrences among some monks and the Huguenots during the next 1800 years; and it has had a strong reoccurrence ever since.

John the Baptist said: *I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me... will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire* (Matt. 3:11). Jesus repeated this statement when He departed from Jerusalem and returned back to His Father’s throne.

### The Necessity of the Baptism with the Holy Spirit

There are two baptisms: the baptism by man with water and the Baptism by Jesus with the Holy Spirit. The baptism with water initiates you into the community and the fellowship of the church. The Baptism with the Holy Spirit takes you into a greater realm with God.

Think about this. It was expedient that Jesus had to die on the cross. It was expedient for Him to go back to His throne and it is expedient that He send the Holy Spirit to you. It is equally expedient that you receive Him—for it is impossible for you to live the Christian life without the Holy Spirit. See John 14, 15 and 16 for Jesus’ explanation about this.

The Baptism with the Spirit does occur at your rebirth. It is quite common that many believers disobey shortly after their rebirth, and immediately they lose their first love and settle into a backslidden condition. The Holy Spirit will not live in a disobedient heart. For example, this happened to the Laodicean Christians who found Jesus standing outside of their lives calling them: *...lukewarm... wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked* (Rev. 3:16-17); and Jude calling them: *...clouds without water, carried about by the winds; late autumn trees without fruit, twice dead, pulled up by the roots* (Jude 1:12). This Spirit Baptism is necessary. Just as Jesus was obedient to take up His cross out of love for His Father and all mankind, so you must choose to take up your

cross out of love for Him and deny yourself daily. Jesus said: *...If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me* (Luke 9:23). This is also known as baptism with fire and remember that fire gives you three things: light, heat and ash from impurities. When you have done what is your responsibility which is to repent and forsake all, then God will do His work of purging the dross out of your life. And He will do it beautifully making you the salt of this earth and the light of the world. However, remember that He will not get serious with you, until you get serious with Him.

The Baptism with the Holy Spirit enables you to abide in a “He in me and I in Him” relationship (John 15:5). Your body literally becomes the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19). You no longer “go to church” because you are always *in* church; from the day of your baptism on, every day in your life is given to God. The result is that: *...the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us* (Rom. 5:5). Before your baptism, loving others took human effort; it was work. But with the Holy Spirit, your love is now always present: it is within, not put on over and over again with futile results. With the Holy Spirit, you love all people, not just a few; and the light of His truth will shine through you and out to them (2 Cor. 4:6). Following that, you will have numerous refreshings of the Holy Spirit. For truly, the Holy Spirit also does maintenance work in your new life (Titus 3:5).

**The goal of having the Holy Spirit should never be for you to obtain any gift of the Spirit; the goal should be that His kingdom triumphs in your heart.** The kingdom of God is *...righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit* (Rom. 14:17). These are part of the fruit of the Spirit, and are impossible to obtain outside of God’s kingdom. This Spirit Baptism and His kingdom go together. There are nearly 130 references to His kingdom in the Gospels, and only one to the rebirth. Jesus preached the kingdom everywhere—and He said: *...the violent take it by force* (Matt. 11:12). There is no: “All you have to do is believe” in Jesus’ evangelism. God wants your heart, all of it and the devil will do everything he can to prevent you from entering God’s kingdom by creating confusion, misunderstanding and counterfeits.

### Tongues, A Matter of Biblical Authority

Pentecostals believe the gift of tongues is given to all those who receive the Baptism with the Holy Spirit—no exceptions. Charismatics, on the other hand, believe that the gift of tongues is given to a few select people as the church needs them because God does not load others down with baggage they do not

need. Pentecostals draw their doctrine from the day of Pentecost when the first 120 disciples received tongues. Take note that this occurred in a multi-linguistic environment. There were people of 15 languages present on the day of Pentecost and they all heard them speak in their own languages (Acts 2:7-12). That is, the first disciples who spoke in tongues did not receive unknown tongues; but rather, they spoke known languages!

Further, Pentecostals overlook that these 120 originals received their tongues for the purpose of evangelism. The evidence shows that these disciples, having received known human tongues, immediately preached in these languages causing great amazement among the crowd. Please also observe that the gift of tongues occurred only two times after the Pentecostal event, and all three of these events were evangelistic events reaching the Jews, the Romans and the Greeks (Acts 2:4, 10:46 with 11:15, 15:8 and 19:6). Jesus specifically promised that when His people would receive the Holy Spirit, they would be given power to be His witnesses (Acts 1:8); He gave them no other promises. So then, 3,000 souls from many nations were saved that first day; followed by another 5,000 a few days later. It is impossible to believe that Luke, the trained observer and physician, would have neglected to mention tongues on future occasions had they accompanied all those who were newly converted. Further, the prophet Joel, whom Peter quoted on the day of Pentecost, said nothing in his prophecy about the gift of tongues accompanying the Pentecostal experience, nor about wind or cloven tongues like fire. But Joel twice mentions prophesy: the preaching, teaching and declaration of divine truth which are all included in evangelism (Joel 2:28-29).

Considering all the references to the Holy Spirit in Acts, there are 40 events as follows: 29 are about miracles such as healings, exorcisms, visions, etc. and 11 speak of a “filling with” or “baptism of” the Holy Spirit. But of these 40 events, only three speak of the gift of tongues (there is a list showing these Scripture references at the end of this CTO newsletter). Truly, the book of Acts could be called: “The Holy Spirit at work in the early church.”

**God has many different ways by which He pours out His Holy Spirit. You do not need to copy any particular event.** Look at the variety of God’s outpourings and wondrous works: at Solomon’s dedication of the Temple when people fell on their faces (2 Chron. 7:1-3); the salvation of the city of Nineveh (Jonah 3); Elizabeth and Mary when both were pregnant and prophesied (Luke 1:41-55); when Zacharias prophesied about his son, John (Luke 1:67); the baptism of Jesus by John when the Spirit descended like a dove and a voice came from heaven (Matt. 3:16-17); and when Jesus breathed on His disciples

to give them the Holy Spirit (John 20:22). All of these events occurred before Pentecost. Do not try to put the Holy Spirit in a box—it cannot be done. The early churches did not put Him in a box. Paul only addressed the issue of tongues with the church at Corinth and not to any of the other six churches to which he wrote. This was an isolated Corinthian problem. In this respect, the Corinthian church was the only church that refused to get under biblical authority.

First Corinthians was primarily written by Paul to bring the Corinthians back into the biblical fold on a number of issues, including spiritual gifts. And indeed, **the good news is that the Corinthians repented of their errors**, as you can see because Paul wrote: *Now I rejoice, not that you were made sorry, but that your sorrow led to repentance...* (2 Cor. 7:9). As you get under biblical authority with your doctrines, you are assured that you will experience God's holy anointing in your life.

So again, the mistake the Pentecostals make is that they are looking at an event in Acts that occurred to 120 people, and from that they try to make it a doctrine: you must speak in tongues (Acts 2:4). The purpose of the book of Acts is not doctrine, but teaching. Acts is history; Paul's letters are doctrine. Luke was not an apostle, but a physician turned journalist and even he recorded that the new Christians *...continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine...* (Acts 2:42). In reference to tongues, Pentecostals do not follow Paul. Paul also affirmed that the church is to be: *...built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone* (Eph. 2:20).

**Nobody. Nobody has the right to leave biblical doctrines!** This kind of thing destroys the authority of both the church and the word of God. It is called apostasy by scholars; and it is extremely dangerous. Again, it is Paul's teaching on tongues that must be followed by all. As a record of history, the book of Acts tells you what *has* been. The epistles tell you what *should* be. The Acts say: "thus *did* the Lord;" the letters say: "thus *says* the Lord." Paul, the only apostle who saw Jesus in His heavenly state, more than anyone else could say with authority: *Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ* (1 Cor. 11:1). Be careful to follow what the Bible says. If you do not follow what the Bible says, you are not following Jesus. In speaking to His apostles, Jesus said: *He who hears you hears Me, he who rejects you rejects Me, and he who rejects Me rejects Him who sent Me* (Luke 10:16).

Look at Paul's first letter to the Corinthians. In the first chapter, Paul praises them for not lacking any gift. This is a supreme compliment. That means that Pentecostal churches should be very spiritual. But that was not the

case with the Corinthian church! Rather, they are an absolute proof that gifts do not make men spiritual. It is the fruits of the Holy Spirit that make men spiritual. Paul proceeds to scold this gift-laden church: he actually calls them “carnal”—that is, *worldly*—and he holds them accountable for tolerating incest, fornication, adultery, division, taking each other to pagan courts and drunkenness at the communion table. He commands them to throw out the sexual offender, because there is no place for such persons in the church of God. Following are the only three key chapters on tongues in the entire Bible. The main themes of them are: diversity, love and discipline.

**Chapter 12:** Paul emphasizes diversity in this chapter. **The Holy Spirit operates in diversity** of *gifts, administrations and activities* (1 Cor. 12:4-6). Recall that remarkable night when Jesus told Nicodemus: *The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit* (John 3:8). You cannot predict what all will happen when somebody is baptized with the Spirit. As Paul explains so well: *But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge..., to another faith..., to another gifts of healings..., to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills* (1 Cor. 12:7-11). Notice the words: *as He wills*. God carefully chooses to whom He gives a gift.

Do not turn Paul’s *one* or *some* into *all*. Paul actually implies that only a few would speak in tongues: *Do all have gifts of healings? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret?* (1 Cor. 12:30). The answer to these rhetorical questions is: “No!” Tongues are listed last in the gifts: *And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues* (1 Cor. 12:28). Paul claimed to speak more in tongues than anybody else, but he did not impose his experience on anybody else. **Be careful about building doctrines on spiritual experiences and then pressing others to seek after them.**

**Chapter 13:** We think of this chapter as a great treatise on love. Yes, truly it is, but it also was written as a centerpiece of a larger treatise on spiritual gifts, as a counterpoint to all the diversity discussed in the previous chapter. Here, in a single masterful sentence, Paul puts tongues into perspective: *Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have*

*become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. ...I am nothing. ...it profits me nothing* (1 Cor. 13:1-3). Nothing is nothing! Paul makes the point again: **It is not tongues that is the evidence of the spiritual life; it is love, the greatest of all.** And then Paul describes the siblings of love: patience, kindness, no envy, no pride, politeness, positivity, hopefulness, etc. (1 Cor. 13:4-7). Jesus said: *By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another* (John 13:35). And indeed, when tongues are in divine order, they are truly a wonderful blessing to all who are blessable!

**Chapter 14:** Paul reaffirms the legitimacy of tongues. But, then He gives instructions concerning tongues in services: *I wish you all spoke with tongues, but even more that you prophesied; for he who prophesies is greater than he who speaks with tongues, unless indeed he interprets, that the church may receive edification* (1 Cor. 14:5). Paul is very concerned about orderliness in meetings and the presentation of Christianity to outsiders. He carefully and lovingly instructs that **tongues be kept under the umbrella of the spiritual disciplines of the church.** You must also remember that no gift (or gifts) of the Spirit will ever give you the right to usurp authority over your pastor. On the contrary, these gifts should humble you.

Tongues without an accompanying interpretation can be compared to musical instruments played without a tune or out of tune—making them unhelpful or unedifying events during any service: *Therefore let him who speaks in a tongue pray that he may interpret. For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my understanding is unfruitful. What is the conclusion then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with the understanding. I will sing with the spirit, and I will also sing with the understanding* (1 Cor. 14:13-15). Paul continues by criticizing unregulated tongues as a bad witness to unbelievers: *If the whole church comes together in one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in those who are uninformed or unbelievers, will they not say that you are out of your mind?* (1 Cor. 14:23). Paul wraps up by clearly instructing how a service should operate: *How is it then, brethren? Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification. If anyone speaks in a tongue, let there be two or at the most three, each in turn, and let one interpret. But if there is no interpreter, let him keep silent in church, and let him speak to himself and to God* (1 Cor. 14:26-28). It is contrary to biblical teaching to have unbridled exhibition of tongues, just as it is contrary to biblical teaching to deny tongues altogether.

As you can see over and over again, Paul stresses that it is not the gifts that make you spiritual: *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control...* (Gal. 5:22-23). The Holy Spirit Baptism brings the kingdom of God into your very heart of hearts. I urge you, dear one, to think about this writing prayerfully. Let your faith come to rest in God and learn of Him. The Holy Spirit promises to teach you all things (John 16:13). Yes, *seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you* (Matt. 6:33).

Yet, what a great story this really is. In Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, he calls them carnal; in his second letter to them, he called them letters *written in our hearts* (2 Cor. 3:2). That is a homerun for the Corinthians. Finally, how do you handle any problem of division in the church? For this or any other problem, Jesus has given you the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit will guide you into all truth as necessary (John 16:13). You then conquer from a position of confidence and trust.

References to healing, signs and wonders in the book of Acts:

Acts 2:43—"many" wonders and signs  
 Acts 5:12—"many" signs and wonders  
 Acts 5:16—"all" healed  
 Acts 6:8—Stephen did "great" wonders and signs  
 Acts 8:7—exorcisms and healings by Philip  
 Acts 19:11—God worked "unusual" miracles by the hands of Paul  
 Acts 20:22-23—Paul is going to Jerusalem where chains and tribulations await him  
 Acts 21:4—Paul told not to go up to Jerusalem

Specific events in the book of Acts of healings, miracles, etc.:

Acts 3:7—Peter and John heal the lame man at the Beautiful Gate  
 Acts 5:5, 10—deaths of Ananias and Sapphira  
 Acts 6:10—Stephen's irresistible wisdom  
 Acts 8:39—Philip disappeared after baptizing the eunuch  
 Acts 9:34—paralyzed man healed by Peter  
 Acts 9:40—Dorcas raised from the dead by Peter  
 Acts 10:3-22—Cornelius and Peter both had visions  
 Acts 12:7-9—Peter awakened and walked out of prison  
 Acts 13:2-4—Paul and Barnabas set aside to preach and then sent on journeys  
 Acts 14:8-10—Paul heals a lame man  
 Acts 15:12—Barnabas and Paul declared miracles and wonders God had worked  
 Acts 16:6—Holy Spirit forbids Paul to preach the word in Asia  
 Acts 16:18—Paul commanded demons to come out of a slave girl  
 Acts 16:26—a great earthquake opened prison doors and loosed chains of Paul and Silas

Acts 18:5—Paul compelled to preach to Jews in Corinth  
 Acts 18:9-10—Paul instructed to keep preaching in Corinth  
 Acts 20:10—Eutychus raised from the dead  
 Acts 21:11—Agabus prophesies Paul’s imprisonment  
 Acts 26:2-23—Paul tells his story to King Agrippa  
 Acts 28:3-5—Paul bitten by a viper on the island of Malta  
 Acts 28:8-9—Paul heals many on the island of Malta

Instances of the term “filled with” or “baptism of” the Holy Spirit in the book of Acts:

Acts 2:1-12—(event 1) Pentecost: filled with Holy Spirit and spoke with other tongues  
 Acts 4:31—the place was shaken and the disciples spoke the word of God with boldness  
 Acts 7:55-56—Stephen sees vision of heaven  
 Acts 8:17—Samaritans received the Holy Spirit, no signs mentioned  
 Acts 9:17-18—Saul healed of blindness and filled with the Holy Spirit  
 Acts 10:44-46—(event 2) Gentiles were filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke in tongues  
 Acts 11:15—(event 2) Peter reviews about the Holy Spirit falling on the Gentiles  
 Acts 11:24—Barnabas was full of the Holy Spirit and many were saved  
 Acts 13:9-11—Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, rebukes the sorcerer Elymas  
 Acts 15:6-9—(event 2) Peter reviews about the Holy Spirit falling on the Gentiles  
 Acts 19:1-6—(event 3) 12 men, filled with Holy Spirit, spoke with tongues and prophesied

References to activities of the Holy Spirit in the Letters:

Rom. 5:5—love poured into hearts by the Holy Spirit  
 Rom. 14:17—righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit  
 Rom. 15:13—hope given by power of the Holy Spirit  
 2 Cor. 6:4-6—commended by the Holy Spirit  
 2 Cor. 13:14—communion of the Holy Spirit  
 Eph. 1:13—sealed with the Holy Spirit  
 Eph. 3:5—Holy Spirit reveals mystery of Christ  
 Eph. 4:3—unity of the Spirit  
 1 Thes. 1:5-6—Holy Spirit comes in power and with joy  
 2 Tim. 1:14—keep that good thing (truth) by the Holy Spirit  
 Titus 3:5—renewing of the Holy Spirit  
 Heb. 2:4—disciples given signs, wonders, miracles and gifts of the Holy Spirit  
 Heb.10:15—Holy Spirit witnesses to us  
 1 Peter 1:12—gospel preached by the Holy Spirit  
 2 Peter 1:21—prophecy spoken by move of the Holy Spirit  
 Jude 1:20—praying in the Holy Spirit

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