

# Holy Spirit Baptism

## The Promise of the Father

*Jesus said, "Wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard Me speak about. For John baptized in water but in a few days you will be baptized in the Holy Spirit ... you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you and you will be My witnesses." Acts 1:4-8; see also Luke 24:49*

Jesus commanded His disciples to be baptized in water and He also commanded them to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. When Jesus appeared to His disciples on Resurrection Sunday, He said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit (John 20:22)." This was the moment when the disciples were born again of the Spirit. In the Book of Romans, the apostle Paul gives two conditions for salvation: "If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved (Romans 10:9)." Before His resurrection, the disciples had already confessed Jesus as Lord. But now for the first time, they also believed God raised Him from the dead. This was the moment of their new birth when God replaced their old Adam nature with Christ's new nature. This is when the Holy Spirit came to dwell within them.

Yet, even though the disciples had now received the Holy Spirit for salvation, Jesus made it clear they also needed to be baptized in the Holy Spirit for empowerment (Acts 1:5-8; also Luke 24:49)." This was fulfilled when the disciples were baptized in the Holy Spirit on Pentecost Sunday. "They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them (Acts 2:4)." The apostle Peter then explained to all present what had happened: "Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He (Jesus) has poured out what you now see and hear (Acts 2:33)."

The Greek word for baptism means immersion. In the natural, there are two ways we can be immersed under water. The first way is

we can go down under the surface of the water. This is what happens when we are water baptized. The other way is if the water is poured over us until we are completely immersed under it. In the natural, this experience would occur if we stood underneath a pouring waterfall. This is the type of immersion that happens when we are baptized in the Holy Spirit. This is why the Bible describes Holy Spirit baptism in language such as "I will pour out My Spirit" and "the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word" and "the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles." We should also note the Bible uses the terms "the baptism in the Holy Spirit," the promise of the Holy Spirit" and "the gift of the Holy Spirit" interchangeably to describe the same experience (Acts 1:4-5; 2:38; 10:44-47; 11:16-17).

When we are baptized in the Holy Spirit, our entire being is immersed and filled with the power of Christ's Spirit. Yet Jesus did not intend His baptism in the Spirit to have only a one-time impact; He also meant it to be the spiritual gateway for us to walk continually in the power and the gifts of His Spirit. Jesus knew we needed His power to be His witnesses. Without the power of His Holy Spirit, it is impossible for us to live the holy Christian life. Without the power of the Holy Spirit, we cannot overcome Satan.

However, the only way for the power of the Holy Spirit to be effective in our lives is if we spiritually know (and act on this knowledge) that we have died with Christ (Romans 6:8). Calvary comes before Pentecost. This is the divine order. Jesus had to die at Calvary and then ascend before the Father's promise of the Spirit could be poured out on Pentecost (John 7:39). In the same way, our baptism into Christ's resurrection power is only effective because we have been baptized into Christ's death (Romans 6:3). The divine fact is our sinful nature died and was removed from us when we were born again (Romans 6:6). However, if we don't know this fact by divine revelation, we will try to live the Christian life by our natural ability. We then quench and block the power of the Holy Spirit from working in us.

Therefore, it's essential that we know (believe and act on) the truth that we have died with Jesus Christ so He can continually manifest the power of His Spirit in us (Galatians 2:20). Otherwise, even though we may have been baptized in the Spirit, we will end up living by the power of our soul. The Bible calls this starting in the Spirit but finishing in the flesh (Galatians 3:3). Tragically, this has been an all too common experience for many Christians, even "charismatic" Christians. However, when you have been baptized in the Holy Spirit and know you have been crucified with Christ, then Jesus Christ can train you each day to walk in the power of His Holy Spirit and to place no confidence in the power of your personality and your natural abilities and talents (Philippines 3:3).

Jesus Christ commanded His disciples to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. When Jesus baptizes us in the Holy Spirit, He empowers us to be His witnesses and overcome our enemy, the devil. At the same time, He gives us a personal prayer language and enables us to pray in the Spirit for the body of Christ (Acts 2:4; 10:46; 19:6; and Ephesians 6:18). He also empowers us to employ the spiritual gifts to build up His church (1 Corinthians 12:4-11). The baptism in the Holy Spirit is also called the baptism *with fire* (Matthew 3:11). Fire represents the holiness of the Lord. Therefore, when Jesus Christ baptizes us in the Holy Spirit, He intends His Spirit to not only to empower us but to also purify and sanctify us.

We can receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit the same way we received Jesus Christ - by faith (Galatians 3:14). The baptism in the Holy Spirit is the promise of the Father. His Son is the One who baptizes us in the Spirit. Ask Jesus Christ to baptize you in the Holy Spirit and He will.

*"If you 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*