

Things of the Spirit - Baptism

There are a lot of superhero movies out these days. While I'm not a sci-fi kind of guy, I have found that I do like superhero movies. What I like about them is that we see often times, common people that receive some kind of superpower and use it for good.

Now what I also find fascinating is that many times there's already something about that person, some kind of character qualities that set them apart. Take Captain America, as Steve Rogers he was the kind of guy that would give his life to save a stranger. He had great moral character and was more concerned about helping people than "being somebody". They ultimately chose him to become Captain America because of these qualities, he was a small guy but they knew the power wouldn't change who he was at his core, it would just make him more powerful.

Wouldn't you like to remain who you are, yet have power that would enable you to do greater things? Just some kind of superability to aid your walk, to help you do the things you do already but even better?

If you are in Christ, you are on a mission. You are saved, redeemed, and set free. And you have work to do. Could you use some help? Have you found it to be difficult to do in your own strength?

Turn to Acts chapter 1.

Acts 1:4-5 (NKJV)

And being assembled together with them, He **commanded** them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, "which," He said, "you have heard from Me; 5 for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

This is Jesus speaking and I think you'll find His target audience interesting. You might think He's speaking to a large group of believers....maybe say 120 of them?

But if you look back at v2, as Luke is describing the setting for this letter he says that Jesus through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen. We're talking about the founding apostles, you know the 12 (actually 11) that had been walking with Him DAILY???

He assembled them and then Jesus commanded them to stay and wait for the promise of the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Why would He command these men to wait for this promise? Aren't they supposed to be out there spreading the gospel and turning the world upside down?

Haven't they been with Jesus for over 3 years? Shouldn't they be ready to go?

If you remember the men that walked down the road with Jesus (unknowingly at first) and they talked with Him and they said "Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?"

These apostles had over 3 years of that! Not just one stroll down the road! Yet Jesus commanded them to wait for it.

They had been prepared. Jesus taught them. He showed them. He walked with them. And He gave them a commission. He told them what to do. And maybe they could have gone and done it and maybe it would have been ok at first but He knew that they needed supernatural power to overcome their natural weaknesses.

This power is something that was spoken of before Jesus stepped onto the scene.....

Luke 3:16 (NKJV)

John answered, saying to all, "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.

Christ is essential for life.....and the baptism in the Holy Spirit is essential for the Christian life.

I want to pause right here and say that many have put up a wall between them and the baptism in the Holy Spirit. For one reason or another you don't agree with it, you don't like it, you don't want it, but more than anything you probably don't really understand it....

Will you tear your wall down or at least knock a brick out of the middle and put your ear up to the hole and listen to the Holy Spirit this morning as we read the scriptures?

"One of the most telling blows the enemy ever struck in the life of the church was to create in her a fear of the Holy Spirit" ~ AW Tozer

I want to start by saying that there IS a difference between being born again and being baptized in the Holy Spirit.

When we are born again, the Holy Spirit comes within us. He sanctifies us, seals us, He's the guarantee, we are children of God.

But when He baptizes us we are endued with power.

There's a difference between position and power.

The apostles had position. They were certainly in Christ. They were certainly saved right? Yet Jesus calls them together and says "wait for the power"

Some people will say that this was the coming of the Holy Spirit. So the believers at this point did not have the indwelling of the Spirit yet.

REALLY? Then you are telling me they were not yet born again! They were not made new? They were the same as before they met Jesus with only a little behavior modification. They were just better people?

Is THAT what Jesus was building His church on? Guys that walked with Him that were not changed? I can't believe that.....These men were saved and born again before Acts chapter 2...

They HAD to already have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. These were changed men.

John 20:22 (NKJV)

And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit.

This was not a symbolic anticipation of Pentecost. The Greek word for "receive" means immediately, right now, not something to wait for and get later.

As I've studied it, I see this as the point when the apostles received the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. When I see this I think back to Genesis 2:7 where God formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living being.

Then I see Jesus breath on them and here they were born again. They received the breath of life.....new life in Christ.

Here they were called and commissioned. Then in Acts 2 is when they were empowered to do what they were called to do

The Holy Spirit comes within us for relationship (with God). He comes upon us, baptizes us to empower us to do what we are called to do.

Acts 2:1-4 (NKJV)

When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. 2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 Then there appeared to them divided

tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

This is what Jesus spoke of when He said “you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”

This is what John the Baptist spoke of when he said “He (Jesus) will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.”

The Greek word for baptize is baptizo and it means - to immerse, to submerge, to overwhelm!

Were these 120 not overwhelmed? Overwhelm means to overcome completely, to overpower. They were completely overcome by the Holy Spirit. They were baptized. Completely submerged in the Spirit!

There is even a visual description, they were immersed in fire! Fire represents God. They were immersed in God when they were baptized in the Spirit. It was power to an entirely new level that was way beyond being born again.

And then they spoke. And when they spoke, they spoke in other tongues. The Spirit did not “make them” speak, they spoke as the Spirit gave them utterance.

What does that mean? I’ll tell you what it doesn’t mean.

- It doesn’t mean the Spirit forced their mouth open and forced sounds out of their mouth - THEY SPOKE
- It doesn’t mean when they spoke that they repeated tongue twisters until the Spirit finally was able to break through into tongues

The Spirit gave them utterance.....He gave them the power to speak out. They spoke, but the Holy Spirit gave them the power to speak from the Spirit instead of the intellect. And they spoke in other tongues.....a work of God....literally a miracle.

What is a tongue? It’s not scary.....it is simply a language not recognizable to YOUR understanding.

It may be another earthly language or it may be a heavenly language.

1 Corinthians 13:1 (NKJV)

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 want to be clear that tongues are not bad. They are not of the devil. They are of God.

There are 2 “public tongues”

1. We see in 1 Corinthians 13:22 and here in Acts 2 that tongues as a sign to the unbeliever. This is going to be a language of this earth spoken by someone who doesn't know it around others who do!
2. We see in 1 Corinthians 12 and 14 the gift of tongues for interpretation. Someone speaking in a heavenly language and then God giving the interpretation in the native tongue to another person to share

There are 2 “private tongues”

1. We see in Roman 8:26-28, tongues for intercession when praying, this can actually include groaning that comes deep from within
2. We see in 1 Corinthians 14:4, 14-15 and also Jude 1:20 praying in a tongue to build up and edify ourselves. The Greek word for edify here means to build a structure. So when you pray in tongues there is a divine operation inside of you building you up in the presence and power of God!

Study these verses.

Tongues is AN EVIDENCE of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. It does often accompany the baptism, but it MAY not.

Our focus today is more on the power that comes which is definite, it will come. It's a promise.

So in Acts the people see this baptism in the Holy Spirit take place. They accuse the 120 of being drunk, Peter stands up and with a new boldness.....with power.....preaches the gospel....

Acts 2:32-33 (NKJV)

This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses. 33 Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now **see** and **hear**.

They ask what do we do?

Acts 2:38-39 (NKJV)

Then Peter said to them, “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. 39 For the promise is to **you** and to **your children**, and to **all who are afar off**, as many as the Lord our God will call.”

It was not only to them but to everyone. YOU.....YOUR CHILDREN.....ALL WHO ARE AFAR OFF.....

That includes YOU! The baptism in the Holy Spirit is for every single believer and it is a separate experience from being born again and indwelt.

Read the book of Acts you will see people believe, get baptized in water, and then baptized in the Holy Spirit and speak in tongues

1. In every situation but one, it is a separate experience from them being born again.
2. They would see and they would hear

Need more evidence?

Acts 8:12-13 (NKJV)

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**. 13 Then Simon himself also believed; and when he was baptized he continued with Philip, and was amazed, seeing the miracles and signs which were done.

They believed - were they born again? YES

Acts 8:14-16 NKJV)

Now when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had **received the word of God**, they sent Peter and John to them, 15 who, when they had come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit. 16 For as yet He had fallen upon none of them. **They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.**

Guys the power of God is available to His children. Why would we not want the fullness of it?

**** Jason****

Why would we deny something that God offers that makes us superhuman? This is a superpower because it's a power that is greater than any power you have on your own.

It's the Spirit of God to a greater measure. You may have Him IN you helping you to become more and more like your Savior, Jesus.

But what about having Him engulf you like a flame so that you can have the power to do what He's called you to do which is bring life to a dying world?

When you get born again you begin to see the overcoming Christian life, you begin to see the things that need to be changed/adjusted, you begin to see where you need to go.

But when you are baptized in the Spirit you begin to walk in those things. You are endued with power.

Why do so many believers feel powerless?

Is it because we are not walking in the power that God has for us?