

Lesson 4: Baptism in the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8)

We will continue to study Foundations Class. This week, lesson 4 is titled "Baptism in the Holy Spirit."

It is good to attend worship services on Sundays and meetings during the weeks. It is wonderful to read the Bible, pray, and praise and worship the Lord at home. However, if we don't experience Jesus in them, they are just religious rituals. Whether our Christian life will end up mere religious routine, or whether we will experience Jesus, grow and bear fruit as Christians, it depends on the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is not a mere doctrine. He is not a past gift. The Holy Spirit is God, the third Person of the Trinity, who is living and working actively.

The Bible tells us that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are equally God and the only God. It has been consistently so throughout the Bible, from Genesis. In the New Testament, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are often mentioned at the same time, at the same level. (cf. Matt 28:19, 1 Cor 12:4-6, 2 Cor 13:13, and 1 Peter 1:2.)

Today we will study about the Holy Spirit, Baptism in the Holy Spirit in particular.

1. The Holy Spirit lives in those who have been saved

When a person is born again they become a Christian, receiving Jesus as their Lord and Saviour. Because God is One, they receive God the Father and God the Holy Spirit as well as God the Son, Jesus Christ. When a person believes in Jesus and is born again, the Holy Spirit comes and starts to live in the person. Every Christian has the Holy Spirit inside (Rom 8:9).

After his resurrection, Jesus told his disciples to wait for the power from on high, the gift the Father promised, that is Baptism in the Holy Spirit (Luke 24:45-50, Acts 1:6-9). I don't think anyone would say that those disciples had not been saved yet then. In Acts 8:14-17, the people in Samaria had accepted the word of God and received the water baptism but they had not received the Holy Spirit yet. That is, to receive Jesus or to receive the Holy Spirit when people are saved and to be baptized in the Holy Spirit are two different things.

2. The power to live as a witness of Christ Jesus

Then, what is the baptism in the Holy Spirit? Why do we need the baptism in the Holy Spirit? It is the power to live as a witness of Christ Jesus (Luke 24:45-49; Acts 1:4-9).

We studied about the word "baptism" in the last lesson, but let me repeat it again. The English word "baptize" is a transliteration (substitution of letters of one language for those of another) of the Greek word "baptizo." Baptizo means to make whelmed (i.e. fully wet) and comes from the root word "bapto", meaning to cover wholly with a fluid, as in "dip."

For example, when you dye a piece of white cloth red, you soak the white cloth into red water. This "soaking" is "baptizo". If you sprinkle red water over the white cloth, it will not be totally red. It will be spotted with red. Then it will be useless.

Baptism in the Holy Spirit means, a Christian is soaked into the Holy Spirit. Not just a part, not just the surface, but the Holy Spirit has soaked through all over the person. Then we can be truly "witnesses of Christ to the ends of the earth."

John 15:5

I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

We should continue to remain in Jesus. And we need to have Jesus remain in us. Otherwise, we will not bear fruit, we will not grow as Christians and will soon be withered. Baptism in the Holy Spirit means, Jesus has soaked through a person. Not just when you are doing specific things nor just when you are in particular places, but whatever you do, wherever you are, Jesus will come out of you. That is the power of Baptism in the Holy Spirit.

For example, when you put a hard-dry sponge into water, the water will gradually soak through the sponge. Eventually the water will be all over the sponge. Now the sponge is in the water, and the water is in the sponge.

Baptism in the Holy Spirit is not that a Christian is affected by the Holy Spirit a little bit, but it is the state that the Holy Spirit has soaked through the Christian. It is the state that a dry and withered heart is now "moistened, wet" by the Holy Spirit, not only that but "streams of living water" will flow from within it; a hardened heart is now freed by the Holy Spirit; a harsh and hostile heart is now full of thanksgiving and joy by the Holy Spirit. Not just when you are doing specific things nor just when you are in particular places, but whatever you do, wherever you are, the fragrance of Jesus will come out from within you. That is the power of Baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Baptism in the Holy Spirit is the power that makes a Christian "a witness of Christ to the ends of the earth."

3. People who are baptized in the Holy Spirit

John 3:8

The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.

We cannot see the wind itself, but when we hear its sound "view---", we know there is the wind. In the same way, we cannot see the Holy Spirit or the work of the Holy Spirit to make people born again, as we can see an experiment in chemistry. But by the change of what comes out from him and the change of his life style, we know that he has become a new person, he has been born again. A person who has been born again will confess, "Jesus is my Lord" and he lives life true to his confession.

In the same way, we cannot see how the Holy Spirit soaks through a person as we can see an experiment in chemistry, but by the change of what comes out from him and the change of his life style, we know that he was baptized in the Holy Spirit. A person who was baptized in the Holy Spirit will speak words which the Holy Spirit enables him to speak, and his life agrees with the nature and the work of the Holy Spirit.

(1) Speaking new tongues

The Bible says, "out of the overflow of the heart, the mouth speaks (Matt 12:34)." What we speak shows what our heart is full of. Then, what kind of words did those who were baptized in the Holy Spirit speak in the Bible? Four incidents are recorded.

Acts 2:4 (NASB)

And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance.

They spoke with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Acts 10:44-47 (NASB)

⁴⁴ While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who were listening to the message. ⁴⁵ All the circumcised believers who came with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also. ⁴⁶ For they were hearing them speaking with tongues and exalting God. Then Peter answered, ⁴⁷ " Surely no one can refuse the water

for these to be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we did, can he?"

They spoke with tongues and magnify God.

Acts 19:1-6 (NASB)

¹ It happened that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul passed through the upper country and came to Ephesus, and found some disciples. ² He said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" And they said to him, "No, we have not even heard whether there is a Holy Spirit." ³ And he said, "Into what then were you baptized?" And they said, "Into John's baptism." ⁴ Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in Him who was coming after him, that is, in Jesus." ⁵ When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ⁶ And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking with tongues and prophesying.

They spoke with tongues and prophesied.

Here we stop for a while and look at about prophesies.

Acts 15:32

³² Judas and Silas, who themselves were prophets, said much to encourage and strengthen the brothers.

1 Cor 14:3

³ But everyone who prophesies speaks to men for their strengthening, encouragement and comfort.

I want to share my wife, Yumi's testimony. This happened one year after she got saved in England. Somehow she was feeling really homesick around Christmas time that year. At one of her college Christmas events, family members of the students gathered round them. She suddenly felt she was all alone in that foreign land. She couldn't stop crying on her way home. The following day, she went to the Christmas service in her church. After the service, a lady who was sitting behind her talked to her. She had never spoken to the lady before, but she said, "I think God has just spoken to you this." And she gave her a piece of paper which said, "You are much loved my child, and precious in my eyes. In my eyes you are pure and dressed in white linen. Keep this in your heart my child, you will blossom like the rose of Sharon." She realized God knew everything about her; what she was going through and how

she was feeling and He wanted her to know that He loves her and she was not alone. She was very much encouraged.

Prophecies are the words to edify the church and they are spoken with genuine love. (1 Cor 14:4, 13:2) And actually all believers can prophesy. (1 Cor 14:31)

Ok. Now we come back to the incidents in which people spoke new tongues by the Holy Spirit.

Acts 8:14-19 (NASB)

¹⁴ Now when the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent them Peter and John, ¹⁵ who came down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit. ¹⁶ For He had not yet fallen upon any of them; they had simply been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ¹⁷ Then they began laying their hands on them, and they were receiving the Holy Spirit. ¹⁸ Now when Simon saw that the Spirit was bestowed through the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money, ¹⁹ saying, "Give this authority to me as well, so that everyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit."

V.18 says "Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Spirit was given (NKJ)." Simon saw that something unusual had been happening to the people before his eyes. And as he watched the people, he could clearly understand that they were receiving the Holy Spirit. As we compare this with other passages, we can guess what Simon saw.

Speaking in tongues is one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. (1 Cor 12:10-11) It is the language with which we speak to God, not to men, and with which we pray in the spirit. (1 Cor 14:2, 14:14) And unless there is interpretation by the power of God, normally you cannot understand it. (1 Cor 14:7-9)

Some of you may feel, "It is strange, weird, terrifying to speak a language I don't understand." But God is almighty. He has supernatural power. There is nothing strange for God to do something beyond man's understanding.

God desires to have fellowship with us much more than we desire. So God gives us the language the gift of tongues to pray in the Spirit so that we can have deeper fellowship with Him. When we pray in tongues, we can speak to God without being limited by language and intellect. There is no reason for us to reject the gift God gives us. Actually Apostle Paul said in his letter to church, "I would like every one of you to speak in tongues." (1 Cor 14:5)

Baptism in the Holy Spirit is the power that makes a Christian “a witness of Christ to the ends of the earth.”

We witness for Christ through our life and proclaim the good news with our mouth. When a person is baptized in the Holy Spirit, his whole being is soaked in the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit soaks through his mouth and tongue also. He speaks words which the Holy Spirit enables him to speak, and his life agrees with the nature and the work of the Holy Spirit.

Paul says “And my speech and my preaching *were* not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power.” (1 Cor. 2:4) We witness for Christ and proclaim the good news with our life and mouth and tongue which the Holy Spirit has soaked through, the power of the Holy Spirit flows out from us.

(2) Holiness

A person who was baptized in the Holy Spirit lives new life which agrees with the nature and the work of the Holy Spirit.

What kind of spirit is the Holy Spirit? It is literally “holy” spirit. A person who has been soaked into the “Holy” Spirit lives in holiness. “Holiness” is the most powerful witness for Christ to the world, the proof of the power of the Gospel, the hope of salvation.

How do we witness for Christ to someone who is dead in his sins? How do we witness that Jesus Christ is “the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world”? It is by the lifestyle in which sins have been taken away.

How can we prove the power of the Gospel to someone who is ruled by the power of sin, bound by Satan or evil spirits? It is by the lifestyle which was set free from the power of sin and bondage of Satan.

How can we share the hope of salvation to someone who is gratifying the cravings of his sinful nature, following its desires and thoughts and are receiving God’s wrath? It is by the lifestyle in which we have been born again, it is by the lifestyle in which we live in peace, joy and harmony with God.

Ephesians 2:1-10

¹ As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, ² in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. ³ All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath. ⁴ But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, ⁵ made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions-- it is by grace you have been saved. ⁶ And God raised us up with Christ and

seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus,⁷ in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.⁸ For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast.¹⁰ For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

We cannot make ourselves holy, no matter how hard we try. Though we were given holiness, we cannot keep ourselves holy by our own effort. So the Father promised us to baptize in the Holy Spirit. Jesus will baptize us in the Holy Spirit. He will totally soak us into the Holy Spirit.

Holiness is the most powerful witness for Christ to the world, the proof of the power of the Gospel, the hope of salvation. In other words, witness for Christ, message of the Gospel, the hope of salvation **without holiness**, or refraction of God's character, harmony with God do not have power to lead sinners to Christ.

Baptism in the Holy Spirit is the power that makes a Christian “a witness for Christ to the ends of the earth.”

4. Continue to be filled with the Holy Spirit

Acts chapter 2 records one incident which is generally known as Pentecost. They prayed and waited upon the promise of God, and were filled with the Holy Spirit. Then Peter preached the message of the cross and repentance, and about 3000 were added to the disciples that day.

In chapter 3, the healing of a man crippled from birth is recorded. The day after the crippled man was healed, 2000 people were converted. But Peter and John were put into jail and the newly born church was taken for trial. They raised their voices together in prayer to God. How did God answer their prayer?

Acts 4:31

After they 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.

God answered their prayer, that is, He filled them with the Holy Spirit again.

The early Christians had been filled with the Holy Spirit. And in the difficult time, they prayed to God, and God answered their prayer. God poured out the Holy Spirit and filled them with the Holy Spirit again. It is not that they were filled with the Holy Spirit at Pentecost and that's all. The early Christians

continuously asked to be filled with the Holy Spirit. God answered their prayer and continuously filled them with the Holy Spirit.

You and I may have been baptized with the Holy Spirit somewhere, sometime, somehow. You might have been used by God in the event where many people had given their lives to Jesus. But that doesn't mean anyone can say, "I have had enough of the Holy Spirit, I don't need the Spirit anymore." You might have experienced wonderful spiritual events, but it's in the past. We live today, now. We need to be filled with the Holy Spirit every moment of our life. We always need to be filled with the Holy Spirit. That is a Christian!

Isaiah 58:11

The Lord will guide you always; he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail.

Do you have a feeling that you are crossing through a sun-scorched land? Dose any of you need strength to live in a dry land? Do you like to live abundant life like a well-watered garden, not like a ruin? Do you want to have a spring inside of you whose waters never fail while you are in wilderness?

John 7:37-38

...Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him."

For closing, let me ask you one question. Are you longing to be filled with the Holy Spirit today?

I am not asking you if you have been born again. Are you longing to be filled with the Holy Spirit today? If you are not filled continuously, though you may have been born again, you may turn back to slave of sin again in course of time and you never bear fruit. We, Christians always need to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Are you longing to be filled with the Holy Spirit today? I am not asking you what kind of spiritual experiences you have had. Are you longing to be filled with the Holy Spirit today? If you are not filled continuously, you will lose streams of living water flow from within you. Other things will fill your heart. You will begin to speak words to blame others or yourself, instead of streams of living water will flow from within you. We, Christians always need to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Are you longing to be filled with the Holy Spirit today? I am not asking you what kind of church programs and activities you are taking part in and

what's happening there. Are you longing to be filled with the Holy Spirit today? If you are not filled continuously, you will lose the presence of God. You will lose peace and joy of salvation. You will forget the purpose of God's sending you to the world, and cannot accomplish the mission God has given you as the one redeemed through the life of Jesus. We, Christians always need to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Baptism in the Holy Spirit is God's promise. It's His will for every Christian.