

C.—Baptism of the — Holy Spirit—

Excerpted from a teaching by Chuck Smith,
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What is the Baptism of the Holy Spirit?

In the second chapter of Acts, we read of an event which has come to be called the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. Nearly two months after Jesus Christ had been crucified, the disciples were gathered in an upper room on the day of Pentecost. They had been commanded not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised...“You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you” (Acts 1:4, 8).

As all the disciples of Jesus were gathered, a sound from heaven came like a mighty rushing wind. It filled the house where they were staying. Cloven tongues like fire sat upon each of them, and they were all “filled with the Holy Ghost.” They then began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. It is my belief that this describes a dynamic relationship that one still can have today with the Holy Spirit. It is the experience where the Holy Spirit comes upon or over you; it is the overflowing of the Holy Spirit to enable or empower you for greater and more effective service.

At your conversion, God gave the Holy Spirit as a down payment to show that He now owns you. You are on the lay-away plan. And one day soon Jesus will come and claim that which He has purchased.

This is what happened when Jesus, prior to His death, breathed on His disciples and said, “Receive ye the Holy Spirit” (John 20:22). Right then the Holy Spirit came into them. After His death and resurrection, He again commanded His disciples, “Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high” (Luke 24:49). John the Baptist had preached, “I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He that cometh after me...shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire” (Matthew 3:11).

You can be both a vessel containing the Holy Spirit, and a channel for the Holy Spirit to flow through. In describing this overflowing of the Holy Spirit, Jesus said, “Out of your innermost being there shall gush torrents of living water.” People are dying of spiritual thirst all around us, they need Christ’s life; yet most Christians have the Holy Spirit all bottled up.

The Holy Spirit should gush forth from our lives in torrents so spiritually thirsty people might get a drink of the overflow. This is what the Baptism of the Holy Spirit enables and empowers.

The Baptism of the Holy Spirit is the means of releasing many gifts of the Spirit that you can possess (see Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12). God has manifested many of these gifts in my life, for which I am indeed grateful.

I believe we are in the last days and about to see the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy, "I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions" (Joel 2:28).

How do I receive the Baptism of the Holy Spirit?

When I was about 12 years old, the church I was attending had a guest evangelist come who was preaching on the Holy Spirit. I wanted to receive all God had for me. So, I remember going to the back room where I knelt down and folded my hands. I was worshipping the Lord, and the Lord was moving on my heart.

Then the evangelist came by and stopped right by me. Talking in a loud voice so that everybody could hear, he said, "This young man will never get the Holy Ghost until he learns to raise his hands, and praise God aloud." When I heard that I got up and left and I thought that I would never get it. I didn't ask God for the Holy Spirit again for many years. But the man had been totally wrong.

You don't have to raise your hands; you don't have to kneel; you don't have to lie on the floor. The position of your body does not matter. What matters to God is the position of your heart. If your heart is open, you can be standing on your head and receive the Holy Spirit. Your body position doesn't make any difference.

I believe we are seeing God's last-day outpouring of His Holy Spirit. You don't have to beg God for this free gift, just accept it. Just say, "Lord, You promised it. I need it. I want it. Thank you, Lord, I accept it."

For a more complete explanation of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, we recommend you read "Charisma vs. Charismania" and "Living Water: The Power of the Holy Spirit in Your Life," both by Chuck Smith, available in the bookstore.