

THE COMING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

“And when the day of Pentecost was 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 all the house where they were sitting. ³ And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. ⁴ And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”
(ACTS 2:1-4)

The Christian Church was conceived in an atmosphere of love, unity and prayer. The Holy Spirit found one-hundred and twenty people with one mind and in one accord. Their only purpose was to wait for His coming in obedience to the promise of Jesus. A harmony of spirit pervaded the upper room and a holy expectancy filled each heart. Suddenly from the portals of the throne room He came as a rushing might wind. The angels witnessed the following scene with holy awe as the promise of the Father was fulfilled. The room became charged with His presence as cloven tongues as of fire sat upon each disciple. In that moment the Holy Spirit came into each one and gave evidence of the indwelling by speaking through human lips in other tongues. They did not whisper these supernatural utterances but allowed them to pour forth in unutterable gushings of joy and love. They were immersed and bathed in the Spirit by the great Baptizer that John spoke of. The holy ecstasy was so great in them that they were accused of being drunken with wine. Peter stood up on that memorable day and boldly declared, *“These are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day. ¹⁶ But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; ¹⁷ And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh...”* (ACTS 2:15-17) These followers of Christ were not drunken as the crowd supposed but had tasted of the wine of the Spirit; they had been endued with the power from on high and would never again return to the ritual of dead religion. The shadow and type of the Old Testament was now fulfilled in this manifestation. The high priest went once a year into the Holy of Holies to present a sacrifice for the sins of the people. At the border of his garment, there hung tiny bells interspersed with pomegranates. The people waited in the court listening intently to the tinkling of the bells on the garment of the high priest and so were assured that the blood sacrifice was accepted by God. Peter said of Jesus, *“Therefore, being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.”* (ACTS 2:33) Jesus Christ our High Priest once and for all presented the sacrifice of Himself for the sins of the world. The proof that He was accepted as our sin bearer was the resurrection from the dead. As the bells signified that the Priest was alive and interceding for the people, so the gift of tongues signifies today that our heavenly High Priest is alive and at the right hand of the Father making intercession for us. Peter could boldly declare, *“being by the right hand of God exalted...He hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.”* (v 33) The pomegranates represent the gifts of the Spirit now given to the Church that should be continually in operation in His mystical Body until the end of this dispensation.

The day of Pentecost marked the beginning of the dispensation of the Holy Spirit. This dispensation will terminate with the second coming of Christ when the Bride will take her place with her heavenly Bridegroom. Until this time, the Holy Spirit will continue His work in the Church as in the New Testament Church. We will never out-date the pattern set forth in the Book of Acts; it is God's masterpiece in evangelization. It is the full-gospel as set forth here, that must be preached in all the world as a witness before the end come!

THE REVIVAL IN SAMARIA

“Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the Word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: ¹⁵ Who when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: ¹⁶ (For as yet He was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.)” (ACTS 8:14-16).

These believers had received the Word of God through the anointed preaching of Philip and had given *“heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did.”* (ACTS 8:6) They had received Christ as Saviour and had been baptized in water in Christian baptism; nevertheless, the Word clearly states that they had not received the Holy Ghost. Even though the Holy Spirit was given on the day of Pentecost years earlier, each believer must receive for himself, this same infilling and baptism. The apostles, Peter and John, followed the same pattern that marked the entire Book of Acts after Pentecost and *“Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.”* (ACTS 8:17) We notice that there was an immediate manifestation accompanying the baptism because

Simon SAW this and offered them money. (v-18) After the conversion of Saul, we see that he also received the Holy Spirit through the laying on of hands. *“And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; AND PUTTING HIS HANDS ON HIM said, ...the Lord...hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost.”* (ACTS 9:17) Although no reference is made here of the evidence of tongues, Paul clearly states in the Epistle to the Corinthians the use of tongues in the Church and said, *“I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all.”* (1COR 14:18)

HE COMES TO THE GENTILES OF THE ITALIAN BAND

Peter went down to those of the house of Cornelius and preached Christ to them. They gladly received the Word of God and were then sealed with the Holy Spirit. *“While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the Word...For they heard them SPEAK WITH TONGUES and magnify God.”* (ACTS 10:44-46) The Jewish believers that accompanied Peter were amazed when they heard the evidence of supernatural tongues and were convinced that the Gentiles had received the Holy Ghost in the same manner as they in the beginning.

THE DISCIPLES AT EPHESUS

When Paul found certain disciples at Ephesus, he immediately wanted to know the extent of their knowledge in Christ. The early Church greatly recognized the necessity of the baptism of the Holy Ghost and each believer was urged to receive it immediately. He said unto them, *“Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.”* (ACTS 19:2) After baptizing them in Christian baptism *“Paul laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues and prophesied.”* (v 6) Here again we see the evidence of other tongues accompanying the baptism of the Holy Spirit together with the gift of prophecy. As conclusive evidence that this would be the sign unto the end of the dispensation, Christ said, *“And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; THEY SHALL SPEAK WITH NEW TONGUES.”* (MARK 16:17)

TO WHOM HE IS GIVEN

The baptism of the Holy Spirit is for the believer that is deeply in love with Jesus and who keeps His Word. The world cannot receive Him, because it has no eyes for Him and is not interested in knowing Him intimately. The abiding presence of the Holy Spirit brings the believer into a rich and rewarding love relationship with His Lord. Through Him we have access to the Father and by His influence we can understand the feelings of the heart of God. The Holy Spirit within separates from the world and places a deep longing in the yielded believer for the full redemption of his body. It is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of purchased possession which is our entire beings. The creature is subject to sin and the Spirit within that brings us into the glorious liberty of the Sons of God free from the law of sin and death. As we yield to His influence, the urgings of the Spirit become stronger drawing us closer to God and deeper in the centre of His will. Without the baptism of the Holy Spirit the believer will be stunted in his Christian growth and cannot know the deep experiences of the victorious life.

Our heavenly Father longs to give the Holy Spirit more than we desire to receive Him. The Lord has promised to take up his abode in those that love Him and that keep His commandments. This gift is promised to those that will diligently ask in faith. *“If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?”* (LUKE 11:13) The Lord requires a sincere hunger in the heart of the seeker which prepares him in heart and mind to appreciate and love the presence of God. Even though it is not necessary to tarry for the Spirit as far as God is concerned, tarrying before God can be blessed for it prepares the heart of the seeker. We should not cease to tarry after receiving the infilling but should continue seeking God for ministries or the impartation of the gifts. The Lord invited those with spiritual thirst to come unto Him and drink. When God places a thirst in the human heart, He has that which will fill this desire. If we hunger and thirst we shall be filled with good things from the hand.

In his great soul-stirring sermon on the day of Pentecost, Peter said, *“Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. ³⁹ For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.”* (ACTS 2:38-39)

The Lord said, *“He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive.”* (JOHN 7:38-39) For you that thirst, this promise is for YOU! for you that are called by His Spirit, this promise is for

you! Peter declared that God hath given the Holy Spirit to them that obey Him.

As you enter into His presence now, let there be an entire submission to His will and a yielding to His Spirit. After being assured of His cleansing in your heart, release your faith in a moment of time. If you cannot go to one with a ministry in the Holy Spirit, alone in the closet prayer, God will come to you. Expect Him to come to abide with you and wait in an attitude of faith. As His presence fills the room, drink in of this presence as a thirsty man refreshes himself with cool water. As the Holy Spirit comes in to abide, a great welling up of joy and power will pour from you. Allow His praises to pour unhindered from your lips. God dwells in the praises of His people. As you yield your faculties to His Spirit, He will give utterance in unknown tongues as evidence of His abiding presence. *"Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me."* (REV. 3:20)

The Beauty Of and reproach. Prayer is looked upon by most as a burden rather than a blessing. Many indulge in prayer only when in desperate need or in times of public worship. Prayerlessness is looked upon as a weakness, rather than a sin, and many excuses are often found to justify this weakness. There are many that secretly conceal an aversion to prayer and hold that many of their prayers have not been answered. This causes them to harbour a secret resentment, even though never uttered, against God. To too many, prayer has been a disappointment, and therefore indulged in less and less. Others continue praying with extreme exertion and constantly force themselves to utter repetitions believing it their duty to God and man. Instead of a joyful communion between two deeply in love, it becomes a means to obtain ones needs or a fuel for the fires of religious egotism.

Prayer means many things to many people. Most people pray in one form or another and many will fervently avow that there is power in prayer.

The reason for most of these erroneous concepts of prayer is the ignorance of the Spirit of Prayer. The Holy Spirit is understood more clearly in His seven-fold manifestation. John refers to the seven-fold Holy Spirit in Revelation 5:6, as the seven Spirits of God. *"...and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth."* One of these seven Spirits is, *"the Spirit of grace and Supplication,"* (ZECK 12:10) or the spirit of prayer. Without the influence of the Holy Spirit, prayer is impossible. *"They that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."* (JOHN 4:24) The text says, *"We know not how to pray as we ought."* (ROM 8:26)