

Martin White. 31st January, 2010

“You will be baptised with the Holy Spirit”

Last week I told the story of the Day of Pentecost – when God sent the Holy Spirit – just as the Prophet Joel had promised – “on **all** His people” young & old; sons & daughters; men & women.

This was a sign of the promised New Covenant that God had made through Jesus and was an amazing event with tongues of fire; the sound of a rushing wind ; new languages being heard as the disciples praised God – and about 3000 people being saved and baptised.

Many people call this day the birth of the Church.

The sending of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost was something that Jesus spoke about several times – because it was really important to Him that His disciples understood.

It says “...he gave them this **command**: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptised with water, but in a few days **you will be baptised with the Holy Spirit.**" (Acts 1:4-5)

But you will **receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you**; and you will be my witnesses..." (v.8)

And had said “I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been **clothed with power from on high.**" (Luke 24:49)

Today I want to talk about this “Receiving of” or “Baptism in” or “Clothing with power” by the Holy Spirit.

Over recent years there has been a lot of talk about what it means and there have been many questions about it and arguments – so today we’re going to look at what the Bible says and then we are going to pray.

Was it just for the Disciples?

Was it just for back then, in Bible times?

Is it just another way of talking about becoming a Christian?

Clearly the Day of Pentecost was unique – it was, as I spoke about last week, evidence of the New Covenant – Joel’s prophecy about the Spirit being poured out on all people; but being filled with, or baptised in the Holy Spirit, continued through the Book of Acts.

I want to look at these accounts, because I think they are an important model for us as we seek the Holy Spirit ourselves.

- **Samaritan Believers – Acts 8:14-17**

When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had **accepted the word of God**, they sent Peter and John to them. When they arrived, they prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit, because the Holy Spirit had not yet come upon any of them; they had simply **been baptised into the name of the Lord Jesus**. Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

Clearly these people were believers already – they had “accepted the Word of God” and they had been “baptised into the name of the Lord Jesus” But *then* they received the Spirit.

- **Saul – Acts 9:17-18**

Then Ananias went to the house and entered it. Placing his hands on Saul, he said, "**Brother Saul**, the Lord--Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here--has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit." Immediately, something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he could see again. He got up and was baptised

If you had asked Saul (Paul) when he had become a Christian, I guess he would have said “When I saw Jesus”, But it was 3 days later when Ananias appears and calls him “Brother Saul” then he placed his hands on him and he was filled with the Holy Spirit.

- **Ephesus – Acts 18:24-19:7**

Meanwhile a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was a learned man, with a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures. He had been instructed in the way of the Lord, and he spoke with great fervor and **taught about Jesus accurately**, though he knew only the baptism of John. He began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they invited him to their home and explained to him the way of God more adequately.

When Apollos wanted to go to Achaia, the brothers encouraged him and wrote to the disciples there to welcome him. On arriving, he was a great help to those who by grace had believed. For he vigorously refuted the Jews in public debate, proving from the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ.

While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul took the road through the interior and arrived at Ephesus. There he found some disciples and asked them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit **when you believed?**"

They answered, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit."

So Paul asked, "Then what baptism did you receive?"

"John's baptism," they replied.

Paul said, "John's baptism was a **baptism of repentance**. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus." On hearing this, they were baptised into the name of the Lord Jesus. When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied. There were about twelve men in all.

Again, these were men who had been taught accurately about Jesus; had believed; had repented and had been baptised; but they still had not received the Holy Spirit. And there must have been some visible evidence of this, because this seems to have been the first thing Paul asked.

And then Paul laid his hands on them and they receive the Holy Spirit, speak in tongues and prophesy (which is similar to what happened at Pentecost.)

So I believe that although we are fully saved, forgiven, loved, accepted, adopted and born again when we become Christians; there's more!

God wants to empower, fill, drench, overwhelm, flood and bless us with the Holy Spirit!

And He wants to do this to underline the fact that He has brought us into a New Covenant – a time when His Spirit will be poured out on everyone!

And as a sign that He has ascended and has been given the Name above every name – as I spoke about last week; this is part of the evidence.

And to remind us that we are not left as orphans, but have been given the Spirit of adoption, the Comforter, the Paraclete, the Spirit of Truth, who leads us into all truth; and builds us into unity, who takes from what Jesus has been given and makes it known to us (John 16:15); who convicts us of sin, shows us righteousness and reminds us of the Judgement to come.

And who gives us authority and boldness for Jesus' Mission and who empowers us and pours out His Gifts.

So who this it for?

This promise is for all Christians! – You don't need to be good enough or deserve it – as if we could earn anything from God! He willingly, gladly pours out His Spirit on His Church. This, like our salvation is a gift of Grace!

This isn't an optional extra – Jesus strongly told His disciples to wait and receive; He used the words “you **will** receive...” many times.

And there was no other expectation in the Early Church.

We are Evangelical Christians – we believe in the authority of the Bible. We are Charismatic Christians **because** we are evangelicals – because this is the Biblical model we have been given. It's not a choice – will I be evangelical or Charismatic? – We need to be both! Spirit **and** Truth

We seek the Baptism in the Spirit because Jesus told us to.

And once we are filled, we keep on being filled!

Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit. (Ephesians 5:18)

So how are we baptised in the Holy Spirit?

Luke 11:9-11

"So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.

"Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"

This is one of the strongest things Jesus said – repeating Himself again and again in order to make the point stronger.

If you're not sure whether you deserve to be filled with the Spirit, take your eyes off yourself and look at God; He is such a Good Father!

This is all because of Him – and it's all for Jesus – for His Mission, to prepare His Bride – the Church.

On the last and greatest day of the Feast, 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." By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified. (John 7:37-39)

Now Jesus is glorified!

So if you think "Anyone" might include you, and if you're thirsty for more of what God wants to give you; if you want to be equipped for His Mission, then come forward now!

PRAY!