

What is the baptism of the Holy Ghost?

The word *baptize* means *to immerse, to submerge, to make overwhelmed*. The Holy Spirit is simply the spirit of God, and when God fills us with His spirit, we are immersed, submerged, and overwhelmed by God Himself. John 4:24 tells us:

God is a Spirit....

It is the Spirit of God that overwhelms us, and begins to create life changes that lead to true Christianity

The greatest experience this side of Heaven is receiving the Holy Ghost. Romans 14:17 tells us:

For the *kingdom of God* is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy *in the Holy Ghost*.

The righteousness, peace and joy that *God wants to give*, comes to us when we receive the Holy Ghost, and begin to walk in the Spirit. It is our greatest need, and that's why Jesus said:

But seek ye first the kingdom of God (*the Holy Ghost*), and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you, Matthew 6:33

When we receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost, all of God's Kingdom becomes available to us. It is an experience that grows with every passing day. When we allow the Lord to lead

us by His Spirit, we enter into a joyful experience that we never thought possible. Peter described the joy of having the Holy Ghost as:

...joy unspeakable and full of glory. I Peter 1:8

Jesus said:

I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. John 10:10

Receiving the Holy Ghost is being born of the Spirit.

Jesus said in John 3:3 that in order for us to see the Kingdom of God (all that God is, including Heaven) we *must* be born again:

.... Verily, verily (truly, truly), I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

Two verses later he expanded on this statement in verse 5:

.... Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

When we receive the Baptism of the Holy Ghost, we *are born again of the Spirit*. In Acts, chapter 2, the Jews asked Peter how they could rid themselves of the great sin of crucifying their own Messiah, and in verse 38 Peter told them:

.... 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.*

He was telling them how to be *born again* of the *water and Spirit*, as Jesus commanded in John 3. When we receive the Holy Ghost we are born of the Spirit, and when we are baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, we are *born again* of the *water*. We will discuss that in the next section.

The Holy Ghost is the Spirit of adoption.

Jesus said in Matthew 22:14:

Many are called, but few are chosen”.

Sadly, there are many that God calls who do not receive the Baptism of the Holy Ghost. Perhaps the world is more important to them, or their careers, or their social life. Or perhaps they just don't see the *unspeakable joy* and the *abundant life* God is offering them. But those who *have* received the Baptism of the Holy Ghost, have opened their hearts to God, and for that reason God *chooses* them.

Many years ago, we knew of a Minister and his wife who adopted a little girl who was born in South America. They located her through an agency, went to South America to meet her, and then decided to adopt her. They *chose her* to be their own child. That's what happens to us when we receive the Holy Ghost. Romans 8:15 tells us:

For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the *Spirit of adoption*, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

Abba is an Aramaic word which corresponds to “Daddy” or “Papa”. When God fills us with the Holy Ghost, he is *adopting* us into His family, and as we begin to follow Him, we come to know Him as our “Daddy” or “Papa”.

The Holy Ghost is the “earnest” of our inheritance.

Many people think we get to Heaven by being good, or living a good life, however that is not true. In fact, God has said the righteousness of man is like *filthy rags*, (Isaiah 64:6). Jesus would not even allow himself to be called *good* (Mark 10:18). He said there was none good except God.

So how do we get to heaven? We go to Heaven *by inheritance*! When we are born again into the family of God, we receive an inheritance greater than any earthly inheritance. Notice Colossians 3:23-24:

23 And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;

24 Knowing that of the Lord ye shall *receive the reward of the inheritance*: for ye serve the Lord Christ.

Our reward is not based on being “good” or not being “good”, but it is based on *inheritance*. God’s plan for rewarding man is completely dependent on whether or not we are *born again*

into His family, thereby obtaining an inheritance. Notice these verses in Hebrews from the New International Version:

15 For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant (the New Testament), that those who are called may receive the *promised eternal inheritance*--now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant (the Old Testament).

16 In the case of a will, it is necessary to prove the death of the one who made it,

17 because a will is in force *only when somebody has died*; it never takes effect while the one who made it is living. Hebrews 9:15-17

We could not have an inheritance without the death of the one who promised it, so God himself came in the person of His own son and suffered death on the cross. It was his death that provided his sons and daughters with an inheritance! Notice Ephesians 1:13-14:

13 In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,

14 *Which is the earnest of our inheritance* until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

The word *earnest* means a *pledge*, or a *down payment*! When we receive the Holy Ghost, it is God's *pledge* to us that we

have an eternal inheritance! In is a *down payment* on everything God has provided for us in the future!

When God fills us with His Spirit, he becomes our guide in this world.

In John, chapter 14, Jesus spoke about the Holy Ghost that would come. Notice verse 26:

26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he *shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.*

As we go through life in this dark world, the Spirit of God within us becomes our guide. As we learn the things of God, His Spirit within us will remind us of them. God's Spirit within us helps us to remember to do the things that please God. In John 16:13 Jesus said:

13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will *guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.*

God's Spirit within us helps us to be *real*. To live out the truths contained in the Word of God. He even gives us understanding about what is coming upon this world, and how to be prepared.

The challenge we all face as Christians, is to be led by God's Spirit within. The more completely we are led by

God's Spirit, the stronger a Christian we will be, and the more confidence and faith we will have. Romans 8:15 tells us:

14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

We insure our inheritance as we allow the Spirit within to lead us!

The Holy Ghost is the power that will bring us out of the grave!

Romans 8:11 tells us:

11 But *if* the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead *dwell in you*, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken (make alive) your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

The most important word in the above verse is *if*. *If* the same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead *dwell in us*, we will also have power over the grave! When God filled us with the Holy Ghost, he gave us a power that no grave can overcome! When you received the Holy Ghost, it was truly a *red-letter-day* in your life! It is the starting place in a life truly blessed of God. It's where all Christians begin, and where we all want to end.... full of the Holy Ghost.

So, now that you have received the Holy Ghost, what happens next? Well, first of all, turn the page!

Part 2

*“Now that
I have received
the Holy Ghost,*

What Next?”

Introduction

When God filled you with the Holy Ghost, he gave you an experience that allows you to know all of God's will for your life. Paul said in II Timothy 1:9:

**Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling,
not according to our works, but according to *his own
purpose.....***

For everyone whom God calls, God has a purpose. He has a blueprint for our lives. The power of His Spirit working in us is what helps us fulfill that purpose, and discover His plan.

Within a tomato seed, God has programmed an entire tomato vine. God designed that seed to produce the vine, the branches, and ultimately, the mature fruit of the tomato. But the seed will never produce unless it is planted, watered and cared for. And, just like the tomato seed, we will never produce what God has designed for us, unless we care for the experience he has given us. When God filled you with the Holy Ghost, it was not an end; it was a beginning. Now it is up to you to provide the atmosphere in which this spiritual experience can grow and mature.

First of all, have you been baptized in the name of Jesus Christ?

In the 10th chapter of Acts, we read the story of an Italian by the name of Cornelius. Cornelius and his household were the first Gentiles to be born again into the New Testament church. Cornelius was a religious man, but his religion had not saved him. God sent Peter to him to tell him how to be saved (Acts 11:13-14). While Peter was preaching, the Holy Ghost fell upon Cornelius and his family just as it did on you. When that happened, they were born again of the Spirit. Peter, realizing that they were born of the Spirit, but not yet born of the water, commanded them to be baptized “in the name of the Lord”:

47 Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?

48 And he *commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord.* Then prayed they him to tarry certain days. Acts 10:47-48

When Cornelius and his family received the Holy Ghost, they were only half born again, so Peter was commanding them complete the new birth. Baptism in Jesus name is a *command* to everyone who has received the Holy Ghost.

Many say, “I have already been baptized”. So the question we must ask is, “Have I been baptized in *Jesus name?*”. Many have read Matthew 28:19:

19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

and have interpreted that to mean they should be baptized in the titles Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Those who have done that have not interpreted this verse correctly. Jesus was not telling us what to *say*, he was telling us what to *do*. He said to baptize “in *the name of* the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost”. The Apostles, who were there to hear this, understood Jesus’ command, and always baptized in the *name of* the Father, Son and Holy Ghost (Acts 2, Acts 8, Acts 10, Acts 19), understanding that name to be Jesus.

In Acts 19:1-6, the Apostle Paul encountered some disciples of John the Baptist. These disciples had been baptized by John the Baptist (Baptizer), the only man God ever sent specifically to baptize. Yet when Paul learned they had not been baptized in Jesus name, he re-baptized them:

4 Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that

they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.

5 When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Acts 19:4-5

The only way to be born again of the water is to be baptized in the name of Jesus. Everyone must be baptized in the name of Jesus:

12for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. Acts 4:12

If you have not been baptized in Jesus name, please talk to your mentor and the Pastor, and be baptized as soon as possible.

The importance of Church

Many people believe they can be saved without going to church, but nothing could be further from the truth. Being saved without going to church is like expecting a baby to live without being fed. Notice I Peter 2:2:

2 As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:

It is the Word of God that causes our experience in the Holy Ghost to grow and bless us. God has said:

21 For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness *of preaching* to save them that believe.

Your Pastor has a special anointing from God that allows him to preach what the people need to hear *today*. Using the ministry, is God's way of leading us to heaven. Notice Ephesians 4:11-12:

11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

12 For the *perfecting* of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the *edifying* of the body of Christ:

God gave the ministry for the *perfecting* of the saints. The word *perfecting* means *completing*. As we respond to the preaching and teaching of the ministry God has given us, God does the work of *completing* our experience in him. The word *edifying* means *building up*. Using the ministry to teach and preach to the body of Christ (the church) is God's way of strengthening the church.

God has always provided a place for the preaching and the teaching, which saves us, to occur. In the Old Testament under Moses law, there was the Tabernacle. After Jesus died for us on the cross, and the New Testament church began, people met in synagogues and homes. The importance of this assembling together is emphasized in Hebrews 10:24-26:

24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to *good works*:

25 **Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.**

26 **For if we *sin wilfully* after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,**

“Forsaking the assembling of ourselves together”, which is the same as missing church, is called a *willful sin* in verse 26. God takes missing church very seriously, and has called it a sin we commit on purpose, or willfully. But *the assembling of ourselves together* he has called a *good work* in verse 24. It is vitally important to our growth in the Lord that we make a strong commitment to being faithful to church.

“Come out from among them and be ye separate.....”

There was a time, not that long ago, when the average person who was not a Christian lived about the same as the average Christian. Today, that is far from true. The passing of time, and the introduction of liberality has opened doors and opened minds to sinful practices that are very displeasing to God, and very grievous to those who have become bound by sin. Thank God for receiving the Holy Ghost, which is the power to be set free from sins that overpower us. But in order to stay free, we must remain separated from those sins. Notice what God has said in II Corinthians 6:17-18:

17 **Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye *separate*, saith the Lord, and *touch not the unclean thing*; and I will receive you,**

18 **And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.**

God has always separated His people from the world that is following sin. In our heart of hearts, we know the things that are displeasing to God. We know instinctively that in order to please Him, there are certain things we must forsake and repent of. And there are many things in the Word of God, that as time passes, we will learn. Our Christian maturity does not take place overnight, but is a gradual process, God working with us. Notice:

16 **For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.**

17 **For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from *faith to faith*: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.**

A good parent realizes their babies are not ready for a rib-eye steak, and God, being a good parent, does not teach us about his righteousness all at once. Instead, we learn His righteousness as we go from *faith to faith*. As we begin to live by faith, each faithful experience will prepare us to learn a little more.

And there are a lot of beautiful things to learn! Our Bibles contain 66 books; 39 in the Old Testament, and 27 in the New

Testament. It is the New Testament that will judge us, and in it we have the 4 Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) which teach us about the birth, life, death, burial and resurrection of Jesus. Then we have the book of Acts, which is the history of the early New Testament church. It is the only book in the Bible where we can *see* someone being born again! Then we have 21 letters (epistles in the Greek), which were written to churches and individuals who were already saved (Romans through Jude). It is from these books, that anointed Pastors will teach their churches *how* to live for God. And finally, the book of Revelation, which speaks of things to come.

When we are completely born again..... when we are being faithful to church..... when we are separating ourselves from the things that displease God and grieve us, we will be constantly drawing closer to God. And the closer we get to God, the further we will be from the world. And the further we are from the world, and the deeper we grow into holiness and a life separated unto Him, the more the blessings of God will begin to grow in our lives!

In conclusion.....

God filled us with the Holy Ghost because he loves us, and the greatest experience of all is knowing His love. One of the most beautiful things about being a Christian is described in Ephesians 3:19:

19and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge...

And Philippians 4:7 speaks of.....

7the peace of God which passeth all understanding....

Knowing Jesus is the best thing that can happen to anyone. Because He loves us so much, He has told us to cast all of our cares upon Him:

7 Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you. 1 Pet 5:7

And in Philippians 4:6 he has told us not to worry, but rather:

.....let your requests be made known unto God.

The world we live in is filled with broken hearts. The tears falling on pillows every night could fill an ocean. Everywhere people are worrying about loved ones, relationships, careers, the future. God is not going to wipe away the final tears until we get to Heaven, but in the mean time, through the baptism of the Holy Ghost, we can experience a love that will make all of life's cares and worries lighter. Just as we can love God through the baptism of the Holy Ghost, He will let us experience His love the same way. One final scripture.....

Rom 8:35, 38-39

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

**For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor
angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present,
nor things to come,**

**Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able
to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus
our Lord.**