

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit



Ten Sessions

**By
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Session One: Introduction

Pastor Mike Chapman

Welcome to this course on the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. This unique doctrine has sparked both excitement and consternation among Christians. Our focus in this study will be on the clear teaching of Jesus and the early followers of Christ as presented in the New Testament.

The ten topics we will cover are:

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| 1. <i>Introduction</i> | 6. <i>A Study of Acts 19</i> |
| 2. <i>A Study of Acts 2</i> | 7. <i>What Is Speaking in Tongues (pt. 1)</i> |
| 3. <i>A Study of Acts 8</i> | 8. <i>What is Speaking in Tongues (pt. 2)</i> |
| 4. <i>A Study of Acts 9</i> | 9. <i>Living the Spirit-filled Life</i> |
| 5. <i>A Study of Acts 10</i> | 10. <i>A Response to Cessation Theology</i> |

EVERY BELIEVER HAS THE HOLY SPIRIT

Regeneration (new birth) is a work of the Holy Spirit (John 3:3-8)

The Holy Spirit comes to dwell in every person who puts their trust in Jesus for salvation (John 20:22)

It is the Holy Spirit who convicts us of sin and draws the heart of the sinner to Christ (John 16:8-11).

This is why Jesus said to the one who blasphemes the Holy Spirit could not be forgiven (Matthew 12:31-32).

The Work of the Holy Spirit in the life of believer:

His abiding presence is proof of God's presence in the believer's life (Romans 8:9).

He is God's seal of ownership in the believer's life (Ephesians 1:3).

He is the earnest (down payment) of the inheritance of God (Ephesians 1:13, 14).

He teaches and guides the believer (John 16:13; 14:16)

He sanctifies and produces the fruit in the life of the believer (Galatians 5:22-23)

THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN SPIRIT BAPTISM

Pentecostal/Charismatic Christians believe that this is a spiritual encounter with the Holy Spirit subsequent to the new birth whereby the Spirit uniquely empowers the believer for the service of God.

What the Baptism in the Holy Spirit is not:

New Birth

Mark of spiritual perfection or spiritual superiority

Not a requirement for eternal life (going to heaven)

What the Baptism in the Holy Spirit is:

An experience which Christ commanded for believers (Luke 24:49).

An experience which was common in the early Church (Acts 2, 8, 9, 10, 19)

An experience which is available to Christians throughout all generations (Acts 2:39)

An experience of power for effective witness of Christ (Acts 1:8)

It is a Kingdom anointing (Acts 2:33-36)

Various Scriptural expressions of Spirit Baptism:

Baptism with Holy Spirit and fire (Matthew 3:11; Acts 1:5; 11:16)

To be clothed with power from on high (Luke 24:49)

To be filled with the Spirit (Acts 2:4; Ephesians 5:18)

The Holy Spirit coming on you (Acts 1:8; 10:44; 11:15)

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit is a promised blessing (Acts 2:16, 17, 39)

Foretold by the Old Testament prophets (Isaiah 44:2, 3; Ezekiel 39:29; Joel 2:28, 29)

Predicted by John the Baptist (Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16)

Promised by Jesus (Luke 24:29; Acts 1:4)

Elements of Spirit baptism:

Presence

Objective

Witness

Energy

Renewal

Questions for Discussion

- Q. 1:** What is the significance of Acts 2:39 for today?
- Q. 2:** If you have a background in church, discuss with your group how these passages on Spirit baptism and spiritual manifestations were taught in your church.
- Q 3:** Why do Christians often feel uncomfortable with spiritual manifestations, such as speaking in tongues?

Session Two: Acts 2

Phil Cook

“We are not going to move the world by criticism of it nor conformity to it, but by the combustion within it of the lives ignited by the Holy Spirit of God.”

Vance Havner

The early church had none of the things that we think are so essential for success today – buildings, money, political influence, social status – and yet the church won multitudes to Christ. Why? Because the church had the power of the Holy Spirit energizing its ministry.

That same Holy Spirit power is available to us today. Acts chapter 2 helps us to understand the Holy Spirit by recording four experiences in the life of the church.

WAITING FOR THE SPIRIT (ACTS 2:1)

The Day of Pentecost followed the Feast of Firstfruits (Lev. 23:15-22). Pentecost literally means “fiftieth” and was held 50 days after this feast.

“All together in one place” . . . “in one accord”

WORSHIPPING THE LORD (ACTS 2:2-13)

The Spirit came (verses 2 – 3)

The Spirit filled or baptized (verse 4)

The Spirit spoke (verses 5 – 13)

WITNESSING TO THE LOST (ACTS 2:14-41)

Three explanations in Peter’s sermon:

1. He explained what had happened – the Spirit had come! (verses 14 – 21)
2. He explained how it happened – Jesus was alive! (verses 22 – 35)
3. He explained why it happened – to save sinners! (verses 36 – 41)

WALKING IN THE SPIRIT (ACTS 2:42-47)

They studied (the teachings of the apostles), fellowshiped (“having in common” or sharing of material goods), “broke bread,” (both meals and the Lord’s Supper), and prayed (verse 42)

They met in the temple courts and in various homes (verse 46)

They were unified (verse 44), magnified (verse 47a), and multiplied (47b).

They met daily (2:46), cared daily (6:1), won souls daily (2:47), searched the Scriptures daily (17:11), and increased in numbers daily (16:5). Their Christian faith was a day-to-day reality, not a once-a-week routine!

Conclusions from Acts 2

This was the initial outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the 120 followers of Christ who were in the Upper Room (Jerusalem 30 A.D.)

They had met to tarry for the “power from on high” in obedience to the command of Christ (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8).

The following signs accompanied the gift of the Holy Spirit: sound of a rushing mighty wind, cloven tongues of fire sat on each of them, and they all spoke in tongues.

The tongues were not given as a means of communicating the gospel, but as a sign that God was in the midst of the believers. There was no language barrier, because Greek was the language of the day. Peter did not preach in tongues. Speaking in tongues was an act of worship and praise, not proclamation.

Speaking in tongues was the single sign of all 120 believers.

The 120 were already believers and had received the Holy Spirit in the new birth (John 20:20).

Questions for Discussion

- Q. 1:** How is the church today different from the one described in Acts 2?
- Q. 2:** What could the church do to revitalize its ministry through the power of the Holy Spirit as described in Acts 2?
- Q 3:** Would this model of church ministry work in today’s post-modern context? Why or why not?

Session Three: Acts 8

Karen Burkett

We cannot stop telling about the wonderful things we saw Jesus do and heard him say. Acts 4:20 TLB

Between Acts 2 and Acts 8

- A time period of two years
- The blaze spreads
- Acts 3-4 Miracle, arrest, preaching the gospel
- Acts 5 More miracles, another arrest, preaching the gospel
- Acts 6 Preaching, believers continue to increase, persecution, Philip arrested, the gospel preached
- The early believers, empowered by the Holy Spirit turned every situation into an opportunity to share the gospel.

Acts 8:1-3

- Great wave of persecution in Jerusalem
- Believers go out with the gospel

Acts 8:4-5

- Philip the evangelist
- Samaritans
 - Samaria capital of northern kingdom of Israel
 - Rebellion and idolatry
 - City fell to Assyrians, inhabitants moved to Assyria as captives
 - Samaria repopulated with people from pagan countries
 - Mixed blood and mixed religion
 - Animosity between Jews and Samaritans
 - Jesus and the woman at the well

Acts 8:6-8

- Philip preached and ministered in the power of the Holy Spirit
- People listened because of the miracles

Acts 8:9-11

Simon

- A Samaritan who successfully practiced magical arts
- Many believed he was the messiah

Acts 8:12-13

- People believed the Gospel and were saved
- Simon believed and was baptized

Acts 8:14-17

- Peter and John laid hands on the new believers
- They were baptized in the Holy spirit

Acts 8:18-19

- Simon saw something
- He tries to buy the Holy Spirit baptism
- The baptism in the Holy Spirit is a gift
- Motive is important

Acts 8:24-25

- Simon asks for prayer
- Peter and John return to Jerusalem

Conclusions

- Holy Spirit gives power to witness
- Holy Spirit gives power to love
- The baptism is available to every believer
- The baptism is separate from salvation
- No formula for receiving the baptism
- Visible evidence of speaking in tongues
- Motive is important
- The baptism is a gift
- The baptism is a beginning, not an end in itself

Discussion Questions

1. We are all to be salt—to make people thirsty for Jesus. The Samaritans listened to Philip because he ministered love to them in the form of miracles and healing. What are some ways we can motivate people to listen to our witness?
2. The baptism in the Holy Spirit can come to people in different ways. In the upper room the people tarried for a lengthy time and then experienced the wind and fire. In Samaria Peter and John laid hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit at once. Describe Holy Spirit baptism experiences you have observed (or your own if you have been baptized in the Holy Spirit.)
3. Discuss some ways that the baptism in the Holy Spirit is a beginning rather than an end in itself.

Session Four: Acts 9

Phil Cook

The conversion of Saul of Tarsus – the leading persecutor of the Christians – was perhaps the greatest event in church history after the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost (Acts 2). The next great event would be the conversion of the Gentiles (Acts 10), and Saul (Paul) would become the apostle to the Gentiles. God was continuing his plan to bring the Gospel to the whole world.

The account of Saul's conversion is given three times in the book of Acts – Acts 9, 22, and 26. In the account of Acts 9, Saul experienced four meetings that together transformed his life.

HE MET JESUS CHRIST (ACTS 9:1-6)

1. *On the road* (verses 1 – 3)
 - a. Saul was very zealous.
 - b. Saul thought he was doing God's work.

2. *On the ground* (verse 4)
 - a. Saul was not knocked down by a heat stroke or epilepsy, but by a personal encounter with Jesus Christ.
 - b. Saul saw a bright light from heaven, and heard a voice speaking his name (the men with him also heard the sound, but they could not understand what was being said).
 - c. Saul made some wonderful discoveries that day.
 1. Jesus Christ was alive!
 2. He was a lost sinner who was in danger of the judgment of God.

The Lord had a special work for Saul to do. The Hebrew of Hebrews would become the apostle to the Gentiles; the persecutor would become the preacher; the legalistic Pharisee would become the great proclaimer of the grace of God. Up to this point, Saul had been like a wild animal fighting against the people of God; but now he would become a vessel of honor, the Lord's tool to preach the gospel. Saul had been out to arrest others, when the Lord arrested him. He had to lose his religion before he could gain the righteousness of Christ!

HE MET ANANIAS (ACTS 9:10-19)

1. God spoke to Ananias, a devout Jew that had accepted Christ, telling him of Saul's conversion. He was instructed to go and pray for Saul that he might receive his sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.

2. The fact that Saul is already a believer when Ananias arrived is attested to with the following facts:
 - a. He had expressed his willingness to do whatever Christ instructed him to do.
 - b. He fasted and prayed for three days (verses 9 & 11).
 - c. Ananias calls him “brother” (verse 17).
3. Ananias lays his hands on Saul and he is healed and receives the spirit baptism.
 - a. No mention is made of Saul speaking in tongues.
 - b. However, Paul later says, “I thank God that I speak in tongues more than you all” (1 Cor. 14:18).

HE MET THE OPPOSITION (ACTS 9:20-25)

Saul was targeted by the Jews. It is possible that this is where he experienced “perils of robbers” and “perils of wilderness” (II Cor. 11:26). He would discover what it meant to be the *hunted* instead of the *hunter*. This was but the beginning of the “great things” he would suffer for the name of Christ.

HE MET THE JERUSALEM BELIEVERS (ACTS 9:26-31)

1. Saul was rejected by the believers (verse 26).
 - a. They were afraid of Saul.
 - b. They did not believe he was a disciple.
 - c. Saul “kept trying” (literal Greek translation).
2. Saul was accepted by the believers (verses 27-31).
 - a. Barnabas helped the church accept Saul.
 - b. This was the beginning of “Paul and Barnabas’ ministry.”

Questions for Discussion

- Q. 1:** Have you known someone who experienced a “Damascus conversion”? Was it similar to Saul’s experience and how was the person changed?
- Q. 2:** Saul was healed, and filled with the Spirit, when Ananias “laid hands on him.” How well does the modern church follow this example?
- Q 3:** This passage does not say that Saul spoke in tongues when he was filled with the Spirit. Does this challenge the validity of speaking in tongues as the initial evidence? Why or why not?

Session Five: Acts 10

Karen Burkett

Introduction

Chapter 10—the Gentile Pentecost

Verses 1-8

Cornelius is prepared

- Cornelius—a Roman centurion who worshipped God
- An Angel brings a message
- Cornelius sends messengers to Caesarea for Peter

Verses 9-16

Peter is prepared

- Peter's vision
- An object lesson

Verses 17-23

Peter and Cornelius come together—the church is about to cross the “race barrier”

Verses 24-28

- Cornelius' welcome
- Peter shares what God has taught him

Verses 30-33

Cornelius tells his story

Verses 34-43

Peter shares the Gospel

Verses 44-48

- Salvation
- Baptism in Holy Spirit evidenced by speaking in tongues
- Visiting Jewish believers amazed
- Peter – Let's baptize them

The message of taking the Gospel to all nations

- Genesis 22:18
- Mark 16:15-16
- Acts 9:15
- Acts 10

Acts 11:1-18

Peter defends his ministry to the Gentiles

Conclusions

- **Salvation and the baptism of the Holy Spirit is available to everyone—
Jewish and Gentile**
- **The baptism in the Holy Spirit had become the normal Christian
experience**
- **No formula for receiving the baptism
(Compare Acts 2, 8 and 10)**
- **Holy Spirit baptism evidenced by speaking in tongues**
- **The Holy Spirit breaks down walls of mistrust and prejudice**

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How does the “go out” concept of spreading the gospel apply to the church today? Should we be going to the unsaved, or inviting them to come to us, or both? What are some specific ways we can “go out”?
2. Cornelius and Peter both obeyed God at once even though they did not completely understand or know what was going to happen. Tell about a time when you (or someone you know) followed God’s leading without hesitation, not really understanding His plan. What happened?
3. The early church at first tried to impose their Jewish customs and rules on Gentile converts. Do you think the church today sometimes expects new converts to take on the culture and personality of the church or people who led them to Jesus? Discuss

Session Six: Acts 19
Karen Burkett

1. Background – Acts 18:24-28

- a. Apollos teaches in Ephesus
- b. Incomplete message
- c. Taught by Priscilla & Aquilla
- d. Recommended to believers in Achaia

2. Acts 19:1

- a. Paul in Ephesus about 53 AD
- b. Ephesus
 - Was capital of province of Asia
 - Major seaport
 - In modern day Turkey
- c. Found several believers

3. Acts 19:2-3

- a. Group never heard of the Holy Spirit
- b. Had been baptized with John's baptism
- c. Had probably been taught by Apollos before he learned about the baptism in the Holy Spirit

4. Acts 19:4-5

- a. Paul teaches them
- b. Eager and ready, baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus
- c. Paul laid his hands on them and the Holy Spirit came on them
- d. They spoke in tongues and prophesied

REVIEW

Acts 2
Acts 8
Acts 9

Acts 10
Acts 19

Conclusions

1. The new birth and the baptism in the Holy Spirit are not synonymous.
2. The baptism in the Holy Spirit was looked upon as normal for a Christian, not an option. (An observation—the people were all eager for more of God,)
3. The baptism in the Holy Spirit was not limited to the initial outpouring on the Day of Pentecost
4. The baptism in the Holy Spirit is not limited to those living in Jerusalem near the time of the Day of Pentecost, but is for all men in any location, both Jew and Gentile.
5. There is no specific formula for receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit.
6. The baptism in the Holy Spirit is an objective experience.
7. The baptism in the Holy Spirit is usually accompanied by outward, observable phenomena. In every case where an outward manifestation is mentioned, speaking in tongues is the manifestation that is mentioned.
8. The love and power associated with the baptism in the Holy Spirit seems to break down walls of prejudice and division.

Discussion Questions

1. These early believers were extremely eager and open to receiving more of God. No hesitation about the baptism in the Holy Spirit. How does that compare to most Christians today? Was there a time when you were reluctant to seek the baptism in the Holy Spirit?
2. Does belief in the baptism of the Holy Spirit sometimes build walls between groups of people today instead of tearing them down? What are some things believers can do to overcome this?
3. Select one of the conclusions above that seems most significant to you and tell why.

Session Seven: Speaking in Tongues (Pt. 1)

Pastor Mike Chapman

Today, we come to address the controversial issue of speaking in tongues. This session is not intended to add more fuel to this controversy, not is it intended to label those who disagree as heretics. What we want to do is to set this supernatural phenomenon in its Biblical and personal context.

WHAT IS SPEAKING IN TONGUES?

Speaking in tongues is speech, inspired by the Holy Spirit, which is not understood by the speaker. (Acts 2:4; 1 Corinthians 14:14).

It is speech not formed by the speaker in the usual manner of learned speech.

It is not ecstatic, emotional, uncontrolled speech.

It may be in the language of men or angels (1 Corinthians 13:1).

There is a two fold dimension of speaking in tongues:

The public ministry of tongues (gift of tongues)

The private prayer language of a Spirit-filled believer.

SPEAKING IN TONGUES IS BIBLICAL.

Jesus first mentioned speaking in tongues in Mark 16:17, calling it a “sign.”

Paul called tongues a “sign” in 1 Corinthians 14:22.

Speaking in tongues was closely linked with the baptism in the Holy Spirit as a convincing sign of the Spirit's presence in a person's life in Acts (Acts 2:4; 10:44-47; 19:6)

Does a person have to speak in tongues in order to be filled with the Spirit?

Paul included speaking in tongues as a manifestation gift of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:10)

He gave extensive teaching about speaking in tongues in public worship in 1 Corinthians 14.

Here are some of the things he said about speaking in tongues:

Do not forbid speaking in tongues. (1 Corinthians 14:29)

I thank God I speak in tongues. (1 Corinthians 14:18)

I wish you all spoke in tongues. (1 Corinthians 14:5)

SPEAKING IN TONGUES IS BENEFICIAL.

Speaking in tongues takes believers beyond mere intellectual Christianity (1 Corinthians 14:14).

Our faith is both rational (*having an intellectual quality that can be rationally discerned by human reason*) and mystical (*having a spiritual quality that is beyond the comprehension of human reason.*)

Speaking in tongues builds up and strengthens the believer (1 Corinthians 14:4, 21)

Speaking in tongues is a Spirit-anointed, Spirit-directed means of communication with God (1 Corinthians 14:2, 14, 17; Romans 8:26-27).

Through the aid of the Holy Spirit, I can pray and worship with an ability greater than my own and with a freedom beyond my limitations of understanding and vocabulary.

Praise and prayer become transcendent.

DYNAMICS OF SPEAKING IN TONGUES

The primary focus is not on tongues, but on a deepening experience with Jesus through the work of the Holy Spirit.

Being filled with Holy Spirit is the core issue. Speaking in tongues is a blessing of this experience not the essence of the experience.

There must be a thirst (John 7:37).

We should ask (Luke 11:13).

We must believe (John 7:37).

We must surrender and yield ourselves, including our voice, to God (James 3:5-8)

Speaking in tongues is a divine/human cooperation.

The Holy Spirit provides the language.

We provide the voice.

Discussion Questions

- Q-1:** Of all the spiritual gifts mentioned in the Scripture, why do people seem to have the most problems with speaking in tongues?
- Q-2:** If you have spoken in tongues, share with your group how this occurred and what it was like the first time.
- Q-3:** Do you think a person can “speak in tongues” any time they want to? Why or why not?

Session Eight: Speaking in Tongues (Pt. 2)

Pastor Mike Chapman

In this session, we will continue our look at speaking in tongues. Today, we will focus on the two manifestations of speaking in tongues in the Bible and the biblical guidelines for tongues and other spiritual manifestations in public worship.

THE TWO MANIFESTATIONS OF SPEAKING IN TONGUES

Without an understanding that there are two manifestations of speaking in tongues in the Bible, some of the Scriptural teaching about speaking in tongues seems confusing and contradictory?

1 Corinthians 12:30, Does everyone have the gift of healing? Of course not. Does God give all of us the ability to speak in unknown languages? Can everyone interpret unknown languages? No! (NLT)

1 Corinthians 14:5, I would like every one of you to speak in tongues. (NIV)

Tongues as a private, prayer language (devotional tongues)

This is when speaking in tongues is used in one's private communication with God.

There is no need for an interpretation since the believer is speaking to God, not to man (1 Corinthians 14:2).

When a person prays in the Spirit, his he is communicating with God on a spiritual level, not an intellectual level (1 Corinthians 14:14).

Praying in the Spirit are for the benefit of the speaker and have little benefit for public ministry. (1 Corinthians 14:4, 6, 9, 16, 17, 19, 28).

The public ministry of speaking in tongues (the gift of tongues)

This is one of the nine gifts of the Spirit mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12:8-12.

The public ministry of speaking in tongues is always accompanied by its sister gift, the gift of interpretation (1 Corinthians 14:28).

Speaking in tongues with interpretation has the same edification value for the church as does the gift of prophecy (1 Corinthians 14:5).

BIBLICAL GUIDELINES FOR PROPHETIC UTTERANCES IN PUBLIC WORSHIP

The Church at Corinth had a real problem with this.

They were making spiritual manifestations a mark of maturity (1 Corinthians 12:31).

Their worship services were carnal and chaotic displays of exaggerated expressions of prophetic utterances.

The key principle Paul outlines is that everything be done in an orderly and appropriate way (1 Corinthians 14:40).

Sensitivity to unbelievers who are present was important (1 Corinthians 14:22-24).

Prayer language is discouraged by Paul when a person is speaking to the church for instruction or for the church in prayer (1 Corinthians 14:6, 15-19).

The public ministry of tongues is accompanied by the gift of interpretation (1 Corinthians 14:13, 27).

Without an interpretation, the speaker is to cease to speak publicly (1 Corinthians 14:28).

There should be an order and limitation on the public manifestation of tongues in worship (1 Corinthians 14:27).

The same guidelines apply to the gift of prophecy in worship (1 Corinthians 14:30-31).

All prophetic utterances must be carefully discerned (1 Corinthians 14:29).

These guidelines are only possible because believers have control over their manner of speaking

1 Corinthians 14:32, *Remember that people who prophesy are in control of their spirit and can wait their turn.* (NLT)

Discussion Questions

Q-1: How can a church offer a worship service that is open to the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit and at the same time sensitive to unbelievers or other Christians who do not understand such things?

Q-2: How should spiritual manifestations or prophetic utterances be judged?

Q-3: If you have ever given a prophetic utterance in church, share with your group how it happened and what you experienced.

Session Nine: Living in the Spirit

Phil Cook

Living in the Spirit gives the ability to understand the meaning of life within the framework of the plan of God. (Ephesians 5:18)

Living in the Spirit gives the wonderful ability to handle emotional problems. (Ephesians 5:19)

Living in the Spirit gives amazing strength to handle spiritual problems. (Ephesians 5:20)

Living in the Spirit gives adequacy to handle relational problems. (Ephesians 5:21)

Living in the Spirit gives the capacity to handle marriage problems. (Ephesians 5:22-33)

Living in the Spirit gives the competency to handle inter-generational problems. (Ephesians 6:1-4)

Living in the Spirit gives proficiency in handling occupational problems. (Ephesians 6:5-9)

Living in the Spirit gives a fullness that overcomes the emptiness of life. (Galatians 5:22,23)

Living in the Spirit gives the capacity to live a life pleasing to God. (Ezekiel 36:27)

Living in the Spirit counteracts the drab dullness of an uncommitted world. (Acts 9:32-43; 10:1-48)

Living in the Spirit gives rest and refreshment in God as we learn progressively, step-by-step, what life in the Spirit is all about. (Isaiah 28:10-12)

Living in the Spirit gives a renewed vision and a revitalized calling. (Acts 2:16-21)

Living in the Spirit gives a zest for life! It fires us with unbounded enthusiasm. (Matthew 3:11)

Living in the Spirit gives insight and spiritual discernment. (John 14:15-17)

Living in the Spirit gives spiritual assistance when you witness to non-believing friends. (John 16:7-11)

Living in the Spirit gives the dynamic of supernatural power. (Acts 1:8)

Living in the Spirit provides the ability to climb above the mediocre and mundane. (Romans 8:13-17)

Living in the Spirit furnishes the skill to discern truth. (John 16:13)

Questions for Discussion

- Q. 1:** What does “living in the Spirit” mean to you?
- Q. 2:** Pick two of the above benefits of “living in the Spirit” and discuss how each applies to your life.
- Q 3:** Do Pentecostals/Charismatics emphasize the Fruits of the Spirit enough? Why or why not?

Session Ten: A Response to Cessation Theology

Pastor Mike Chapman

In this final session, we are going to look at a teaching that many Christians profess in regard to spiritual gifts. It is called Cessation Theology. It holds to the view that the manifestation gifts (so called “sign” gifts) ceased to operate in the church somewhere near the end of the First Century. This doctrine is based on Paul’s teaching in 1 Corinthians 13:8-12:

Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears. When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me. Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

The key point summary of Cessation Theology is:

1. Gifts such as speaking in tongues, healing, miracles, etc. were “sign” gifts to aid and guide the church in its infancy until the complete New Testament was given.
2. These gifts were primarily given to the apostles and not to every Christian.
3. Hence, when the New Testament was completed (“the perfect”) and the last Apostle died, these gifts would cease because they had served their function.

In this session we will look at this doctrine in light of four tests.

THE CONTEXTUAL TEST

What exactly is the Biblical text saying? What is the context of 1 Corinthians 13:8-12?

There is no question that the gifts will cease, but there is a question as to when this will occur.

It is when “perfection” comes—the perfect state of affairs to be ushered in at the return of Christ.

Gifts will continue in the “now” (imperfection) and cease in the “then” (perfection).

Only a strained , laborious interpretation scheme can impose a notion of gift cessation at the end of the 1st Session on this text of Scripture.

A key to Biblical interpretation is “the principle of first, primary audience.”

THE CONCEPTUAL TEST

In the inspiration of Scripture, the Holy Spirit used the vocabulary, concepts, and thought patterns that were familiar to the writers.

Nothing in Paul’s writings would cause us to assume that he thought there would be a completed New Testament and an end to the Apostolic Era followed by a long period of supernatural inactivity.

Paul believed that he would see Christ’s return in his lifetime.

THE CORROBORATION TEST

All major doctrines of the New Testament are always confirmed through a number of support passages by other writers.

There are no other passages of scripture that would support this Cessationist View.

Another key of Biblical interpretation is “the principle of preponderance.”

Peter said the last days began at Pentecost (Act 2:16-21).

THE CONTINUATION TEST

Still another key of Biblical interpretation is “the principle of historical fact.”

There has never been a generation that has not witnessed the manifestation of spiritual gifts.

Discussion Questions

- Q-1:** Discuss with those at your table any issues that have been addressed in this study that has been particularly helpful to you.
- Q-2:** Discuss with those at your table any issues regarding the Baptism in the Holy Spirit that are still difficult for you to understand or accept.
- Q-3:** If someone asked you to tell them about the Baptism in the Holy Spirit, what would you say...in three sentences.

Pentecost in Church History

A look through church history demonstrates that the Pentecostal experience did not end with the apostles.

There is an argument that Pentecost died out with the early church. Following are some quotes taken from church history that will dispel that argument and bless you in the process.

"That this phenomenon is by no means restricted to early Christianity is universally recognized. It was common in the Christian movement as late as Tertullian and Irenaeus. In later years it appeared again, and has been the seemingly inevitable consequence of all extended seasons of 'revivals.'" ¹

"It has been (and is) a feature of religious, especially revivalist, activities at many periods of church history." ²

"Tongues recur in Christian revivals in every age, e.g., among...the early Quakers, the converts of Wesley and Whitefield, the persecuted Protestants of the Cevennes, the Irvingites, and the revivalists of Wales and America." ³

Justin Martyr (died **165**) "For the prophetic gifts remain with us, even to the present time." ⁴

Irenaeus (died **202**) "In like manner we do also hear many brethren in the Church, who possess prophetic gifts, and who through the Spirit speak all kinds of languages, and bring to light for the general benefit the hidden things of men, and declare the mysteries of God." ⁵

Tertullian (died **220**), replying to Marcion, a Gnostic: "Let Marcion then exhibit, as gifts of his god, some prophets, such as have not spoken by human sense, but with the Spirit of God, such as have both predicted things to come, and have made manifest the secrets of the heart; let him produce a psalm, a vision, a prayer - only let it be by the Spirit, in an ecstasy; that is, in a rapture, whenever an interpretation of tongues has occurred to him...Now all these signs are forthcoming from my side without any difficulty, and they agree, too, with the rules, and the dispensations, and the instructions of the Creator..." ⁶

Novatian (died **257**) "This is He who places prophets in the Church, instructs teachers, directs tongues, gives powers and healings, does wonderful works, offers discrimination of spirits, affords powers of government, suggests counsels, and orders and arranges whatever other gifts there are of charismata; and thus makes the Lord's Church everywhere, and in all, perfected and completed." ⁷

Pachomius (died **346**) was reported to have spoken "the language of angels...[and] after seasons of prayer, under the power of the Spirit, was able to speak languages which he had never learned." ⁸

Bishop Hilary of Poitiers (died 367) mentioned, among other things, "gifts of either speaking or interpreting divers kinds of tongues." He concluded, "Clearly these are the Church's agents of ministry and work of whom the body of Christ consists; and God has ordained them." ⁹

Theodore of Mopsueste (died 428) "Many heathen amongst us are being healed by Christians from whatever sickness they have, so abundant are miracles in our midst." ¹⁰

Augustine (430) experienced a revival that swept North Africa where he was bishop. He wrote of miraculous healings from breast cancer, paralysis, hernia - even raising of the dead after the funeral was arranged. In his own church, two epileptics were instantly healed after they had fallen to the floor in convulsions. "Praise to God was shouted so loud that my ears could scarcely stand the din." ¹¹

Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179) "sang in unknown words with such facility and winsomeness that her utterances were known as 'concerts in the Spirit'." ¹²

Francis of Assisi (1182-1226) spoke in other tongues according to some editions of the Catholic Encyclopedia. ¹³

Clare of Montefalco (c. 1193-1253) spoke ecstatically in French, although her native tongue was Italian. ¹⁴

The Waldenses (c. 1217) These followers of Peter Waldo believed in visions and prophecies. ¹⁵ Both healing and speaking in tongues were manifested among these heavily persecuted Christians. ¹⁶

Bridget of Sweden (1302-1373) Concerning this daughter of Birger, Prince of Sweden, Butler records, "To speak the language of angels was the happy privilege of Saint Bridget," ¹⁷

Louis Bertrand (1526-1581), Catholic missionary to South America, spoke in tongues according to Butler: "The gifts of tongues, of prophecy, and of miracles, were favors conferred by heaven on this new apostle, as the authentic history of his life...assures us." ¹⁸

Martin Luther (c 1540), According to the German church historian Theodor Sauer, Luther spoke in tongues: "Luther was easily the greatest evangelical man after the apostles, full of inner love to the Lord like John, hasty in deed like Peter, deep in thinking like Paul, cunning and powerful in speech like Elijah, uncompromising against God's enemies like David; prophet and evangelist, speaker-in-tongues and interpreter in one person, equipped with all the gifts of grace, a light and pillar of the church..."¹⁹ Whether this refers to the actual gift of tongues (I Cor 12) or the romance languages (i.e. Latin, French, etc.) is not certain. That Luther believed in miracles is certain. In 1541 when Myconius lay speechless in the final stages of consumption, Luther prayed and he was restored to health. He also prayed for Melanchthon who was near death and God healed

him also. Melancthon said: "I should have been a dead man, had I not been recalled from death itself by the coming of Luther." ²⁰

Early Quakers "We received often the pouring down of the Spirit upon us, and our hearts were made glad and our tongues loosed and our mouths opened, and we spake with new tongues as the Lord gave utterance, and as His Spirit led us." ²¹

John Wesley. Wesley's journal record over 200 cases of Divine healing; including once when he prayed for his horse which had gone lame while he was on a preaching circuit, and the horse recovered.²² People in Wesley's meetings would be Spirit filled while he preached. "What so impressed and encouraged John Wesley and his followers, what so shocked, startled, and bewildered his contemporaries, is no mystery to the modern psychologist, to whom it is known as glossolalia, or "speaking with tongues"...After Paul laid his hands upon them "they spoke with tongues and prophesied," and such displays...had accompanied all the revivals of the faith and all the persecution of the martyrs. It is no wonder then, that John Wesley refused to listen to the skepticism of Charles (Wesley) or to the reproaches of his opponents, and continued to note down with interest...the extraordinary effects that he was able to produce in those who came to listen to him preach." ²³

Thomas Walsh (one of Wesley's foremost preachers) made this entry in his diary; "This morning the Lord gave me a language that I knew not of, raising my soul to Him in a wonderful manner." ²⁴

England (1830) There was a revival under **Edward Irving** where gifts of the Spirit were manifested. One member of the congregations writes: "The moment I am visited with the Spirit, and carried out to God in a tongue which I know not... I am more conscious than ever of the presence of God. He and He alone is in my soul. I am filled with some form of the mind of God, be it joy or grief, desire, love, pity, compassion, or indignation; and I am made to utter it in words which are full of power over my spirit, but not being accessible to my understanding, my devotion is not interrupted by association of suggestions from the visible or intellectual world: I feel myself, as it were, shut in with God in His pavilion, and hidden close from the invasions of the world, the devil, and the flesh." ²⁵

Charles G. Finney "I received a mighty baptism in the Holy Ghost...No words can express the wonderful love that was shed abroad in my heart. I wept aloud with joy and love; and I do not know but I should say, I literally bellowed out the unutterable gushings of my heart." ²⁶

D. L. Moody "One the following Sunday night, when I got to the rooms of the Y.M.C.A. I found the meetings on fire. The young men were speaking in tongues and prophesying. What on earth did it all mean? Only that Moody had been addressing them that afternoon."²⁷ At a meeting in Los Angeles, Dr. R.A. Torrey told of a service in London where Moody took the pulpit to preach and instead broke into another language. He tried

again, with similar results. The third time, after prayer and praise, he was able to preach his message.²⁸

Charles H. Spurgeon A British preacher told how Spurgeon once asked his audience to forgive him that when he got especially happy in the Lord, "I break forth into a kind of gibberish which I do not myself understand."²⁹

Conclusion

Elijah felt all alone against Ahab and Jezebel, but Obadiah had hid 100 other prophets by 50 in a cave (I Ki 18:4). Sometimes it has seemed that those with the Pentecostal experience were outside of the main stream of Christianity and alone. However we are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses (He 12:1) and as you can see from the quotes above Pentecost is not just a recent (i.e. 20th century) fad.

Here is one last quote from John Wesley. "Oh, Lord, send us the old revival, without the defects; but if this cannot be, send it - with all its defects. We must have the revival."³⁰

Footnotes

¹ Madeleine S and J. Lane Miller, *Harpers Bible Dictionary*, p. 768

² Watson E. Mills, article "Glossolalia", p. 415

³ *The Encyclopedia Britannica*, 1949 ed, vol. 22, p. 283

⁴ Dialogue with Trypho, LXXXII, in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, ed. by Roberts and Donaldson, vol. 1, p. 240

⁵ Against Heresies, V,6,1, *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 531

⁶ Against Marcion, V,8, *Ibid.*, vol.3, pp. 446,447

⁷ Novatian, Treatise Concerning the Trinity, XXIX, in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, ed. by Roberts and Donaldson, vol. 5, p. 641

⁸ Alban Butler, *The Lives of the Fathers, Martyrs, and other Principal Saints* (1889 ed.), vol. 2, p. 218

⁹ Hilary of Poitiers, On the Trinity, VIII,33, in *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, ed. by Schaff and Wace, 2nd series, vol. 9, p. 147

¹⁰ A.J. Gordon, *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 62, quoting Christlieb's Modern Doubt, p. 32

¹¹ Spencer Gear, "St. Augustine: The Skeptic Who Believed," *Charisma*, Sept. 1984, p.45

¹² George H. Williams and Edith Waldvogel, "A History of Speaking in Tongues and Related Gifts," in *The Charismatic Movement*, ed. by Michael P. Hamilton, p. 70

¹³ Bernard L. Bresson, *Studies in Ecstasy*, p. 38

¹⁴ Williams and Waldvogel in *The Charismatic Movement*, ed. by Hamilton, p. 70

¹⁵ R. Kissack, "Waldenses," *The New International Dictionary of the Christian Church*, ed. by J.D. Douglas, revised edition, p. 1026

¹⁶ Gordon F. Atter, *The Third Force*, p. 13

¹⁷ Butler, *The Lives of the Fathers, Martyrs, and Other Principal Saints* (1895 ed.), vol. 4, p. 67.

¹⁸ *Ibid*, 1889 ed., vol. 4, p. 73

¹⁹ Translated from the German work, *Geschichte der Chrislichen Kirche fur Schule und Haus* (Dresden; R. Kuntzes, 1859), 3rd book, p. 400

²⁰ A.J. Gordon, *The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 93-95

²¹ Bresson, *Studies in Ecstasy*, pp. 48-52

²² Journal, 11/1/50, cited by R.A. Knox in *Enthusiasm*.

- ²³ Bowen, Marjorie, *Wrestling Jacob*, p.184ff
- ²⁴ Entry of March 8, 1750, quoted by Frodsham, *With Signs following*, p. 232
- ²⁵ A.L. Drummond, *Edward Irving and His Circle*, pp. 161-162
- ²⁶ Charles G. Finney, *Autobiography*, p. 20
- ²⁷ Boyd, Robert, *The Lives and Labours of Moody and Sankey*, p. 47
- ²⁸ Leonard Darbee, *Tongues: The Dynamite of God*, p. 24.
- ²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 24
- ³⁰ Quoted by Frank Bartleman, *Azusa Street*, p. 45