

Sunday 24th October Lesson 02

We started a new teaching series last week, about speaking in tongues, or praying in tongues. I am really excited about the feedback this week; it seems this is a series a lot of people are interested in. The sermon last week sparked a lot of discussion. Remember that's what I want the sermon to do, I want it to be the first word and not the last word.

I started by giving a sort of summary of where I plan to go with in this series. I want to discuss speaking in tongues, but first we need to talk about the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and we looked at baptisms last week, seeing no real ABC order of events.

This week I am going to look at models in the Word for receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit. But first I am going to clarify something about Holy Spirit baptism and praying tongues, something brought up during the week.

Remember last week we looked at certain events in the life of a believer, and we called them the ABC;

- A – coming to faith in Jesus, believing in Jesus, point of conversion
- B – water baptism
- C – baptism of the Holy Spirit

We actually saw an account where they did occur as ABC, in that order, but also one instance where it was ACB. I had feedback this week that we maybe should be saying ABCD, where D is speaking in tongues.

Sometimes, and I've seen this, someone is baptised in the Holy Spirit but does not speak in tongues. Or does not speak in tongues straight away, not immediately upon baptism. I'm not sure if we should be using the D in this case, but I can see why others may.

In many people we see salvation, then water baptism, then baptised in spirit and then later speaking in tongues; so I suppose you could say this is ABCD. But others speak in tongues immediately, and I have seen that also. In this case D is part of C.

So what's going on here and why is it important?

My understanding from Scripture is that once a believer is baptised in the Spirit, that believer has the capacity immediately to speak in tongues. However we need to remember that our mind is not renewed at salvation or at Holy Spirit baptism. Sometimes our soul (our mind, will and emotions) take time to catch up with our spirit.

That's why always see Andrew Wommack handing out books at his meetings when people are baptised in the Holy Spirit. He has recognised the need for knowledge and understanding, the need to renew their mind about the truth that has just happened.

Many of us came to salvation and then baptism of the Holy Spirit with baggage from religion and often from previous 'charismatic' experience. Praise God if you do not have this baggage, but we have to recognise that many of us do.

Many have had bad experiences of others (allegedly) operating in Spirit, manifestation of the Spirit, and speaking in tongues. This experience and knowledge need to be replaced, that understanding needs altered, and we need renovation of the mind.

Why am I saying all this?

I want to show those of you who know they have been baptised in the Spirit but are not yet speaking in tongues, that you are not a second-class Christians. I also want to tell you, don't doubt your baptism. There is more to Holy Spirit baptism than praying in tongues; we will see that there are gifts, revelation, and power. But speaking in tongues is the aspect that we are focussing on in this series, but remember, it is not only aspect.

If you speak in tongues, you most certainly have been baptised in the Spirit, however if you do not speak in tongues, that does not necessarily mean you have not. I hope everyone understands that.

OK, now on to what I want to cover today.

We saw last week that baptism of the Holy Spirit is essential for speaking in tongues. So, the question we should be asking is, "how do we receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit?" What models or ways do we see demonstrated in the Word of God?

There is a school of thought, that we are required to wait and tarry, and the God will pour out His Spirit when He is ready. Well this has actually happened already; it occurred at Pentecost and my understanding is that the Holy Spirit is now here and has not gone back, so that will not occur again. That was a one off.

So how did other believers post Pentecost receive this baptism?

Well, one was the laying on of hands of someone already baptised in the Spirit.

Acts 19 v 1 to 7

And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples,

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.

And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism.

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.

When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.

Verse 6 says they were baptised in the Spirit when Paul laid hands on them. But Paul was a super-duper wasn't he, he was an Apostle, he wrote most NT. No, in this context I believe Paul was a believer in Jesus, baptised in the Spirit himself, exactly the same as many of us.

Now, we cannot simply go around zapping people, laying hands and commanding the baptism of the Spirit. The way I see it, Paul actually did some teaching first, he instructed them, he spoke about baptisms, and he spoke about the Holy Spirit. Verse 5 says they heard, that means to understand, to report to, as well as hearing an audible sound.

Now, you know what I think of the importance of knowledge, of teaching, of the need know about something before you can have it or experience it, would you agree?

Acts 18 v 24 to 26

And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus.

This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John.

And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.

In this passage we see a man called Apollos, who knew about Jesus but was limited in his knowledge and experience. He in fact only knew about the baptism of John, so his knowledge was very limited indeed. I would go so far as to say he was probably very much orientated to the Old Covenant, but that could be quite a judgement call on my part.

We see Aquilla and Priscilla mentoring him, discipling him, and teaching him, unto the way of God more perfectly. I see this as teaching on grace, on the New Covenant, but also as in water baptism and baptism of the Holy Spirit.

But Vic, verse 25 says he was fervent in the spirit. This however is spirit with small s, and is talking about his spirit as in the way he operated. It is like saying a man was operating in a spirit of excellence. This is not talking about the Holy Spirit.

Apollos did not know about this, he had to be instructed in the way of God more perfectly. I love that passage; I love that phrase. See, we can know something, we can even know about Jesus and be in relationship with Jesus. But we can still know the way of God more perfectly. And in this context and this instance that's about baptism of the Holy Spirit.

But this says something else to me; it says if we want to live more perfectly, and operate in our walk more perfectly, we need the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The main point I want to make, is the importance of teaching, then and now. We need to be taught in the ways of God more perfectly. And I would say this covers every single one of us, wherever we are on our journey of faith.

So we see Paul laying on hands and believers receiving the Holy Spirit. We also saw another instance last week of people receiving this baptism.

Acts 10 v 44 to 48

While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.

And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost.

For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter,

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

And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.

There was no laying on of hands, and no dialogue from the people listening; Peter was simply teaching and preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ. There seems to be no choice, a lack of free will, and this is problematic for me.

My understanding is that we have free will and choice, but this seems like God is just zapping believers with the baptism. Where was the choice? Why zap them and not others?

But look at the context of this event. Pauline brought this up on Thursday at the Bible study, saying that here we have people searching, desperate to know the truth, and with hearts ready to receive. In that sense were they choosing to receive? Were they ready and willing to receive? Were they believing and receiving, in a similar way to salvation, after hearing the teaching and understanding what Peter had said? We had a quick chat about this on Saturday communion as well, and Nicky said almost exactly same; that they were searching, and ready to receive.

And there is another verse I want to look at now, not directly talking about baptism of the spirit, but I think this is relevant, and they are the words of Jesus.

Luke 11 v 9 and 10

And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

I see this is a wonderful promise from God, a great catch all verse that I believe covers all kinds of situations. And for me it is the ask and receive part that is vital. But it is not specifically talking about the baptism of the Holy Spirit you may be thinking. And I would say yes, I agree, but it is not speaking about anything specifically, is it? It is talking in general terms with regards to the things of God.

This is not for worldly things; you cannot ask for a Porsche, a 25-bedroom house, and a huge yacht for example. This is all about asking God for the things of God, such as healing, abundance, joy, peace, salvation, and yes, the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

The baptism of the Holy Spirit is something we receive, so therefore it is something I see that we can ask for. And if we ask God for it, we will receive it; I truly believe that. We may not feel anything, we may not immediately speak in tongues, we may not get a shiver for example. But I believe in what Jesus said, and I believe in the Word of God. If we ask for something from God that is Godly, we will receive it.

And this is the model I like to use with people, along with laying on of hands. That is, ask for the baptism with the support of a fellow believer who has already experienced this. And it is the model I see lots of other ministers and ministries using.

I also tie this in with another verse spoken by Jesus

Mark 11 v 24

Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.

If you desire something of God, with the same caveat that it must be Godly, believe you have it and you will receive. If you desire the baptism of the Holy Spirit, believe you will get it and you will get it.

This verse speaks to me when I think of Peter teaching and the believers receiving in Acts 10. They were ready, willing, desiring more, and they heard and understood. And through belief they received. That sits well with me, far better than God zapping who He wants to zap. That sits well with me along with free will and freedom of choice.

You have to understand, and you have to believe for salvation. My understanding of scripture is that you also have to understand and believe for baptism of the Holy Spirit. We have to teach this in church, and we have to be ok with it. It is nothing spooky, and it is nothing to be scared of.

Next week we will look at the results of baptism of the HS, and we will also offer this life changing experience to anyone who wants to receive.

I do want to finish today with one little appendix as it were. I don't want anyone thinking that they are second class citizens if not baptised in the Spirit.

If you ask me the question, do I have to be baptised in the Spirit, I will have to be honest and say I could answer yes or no.

Yes, as I believe it is a powerful weapon, another great weapon to have in our arsenal. Praying in tongues builds you up, helps you receive revelation, and helps you operate in the power we were created to operate under. In that sense the answer would be yes.

But I could also answer no, look at this scripture we read last week.

Acts 8 v 35 to 38

Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus.

And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?

And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.

And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing.

The eunuch believed upon Jesus, and is baptised in water. Then Philip disappears and this man went on his way rejoicing. What was missing from his experience? Yes, the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Now, I did say earlier that we need continual teaching to know the way of God more perfectly and I think everyone would benefit from the baptism of the Holy Spirit. But sometimes people are not ready and not desiring things, and that's no disgrace. People are baptised in the Spirit after varying times periods after salvation, there are no strict rules or models.

There are examples seen in Acts, no time frame stated, when we see certain disciples and believers being baptised in the Holy Spirit. All we can say is that they were baptised sometime after coming to faith in Jesus, after being saved.

But in this account with the eunuch we don't see his Holy Spirit baptism at all. Was he ever baptised in the Spirit? When did it happen if it ever did? We just don't know! I am trying to walk a tight line here, as I feel that baptism in the Holy Spirit is important but not linked to your eternal salvation.

I want to encourage you to look into the baptism of the holy spirit if you have not already been baptised. Do the study, ask the questions, raise the doubts, and raise the fears even if you have some. I want to encourage everyone to be baptised in the Holy Spirit, but in their own time

AMEN