

Pentecost and Holy Spirit Baptism

There is something that happened 2000 years ago today that changed Christ-followers. Do you know what it was? I will give you a hint, it has to do with fire. Let's talk about Pentecost and baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Introduction

Today is Pentecost Sunday. This is 50 days after the sabbath following Passover. Today marks the day when Christians received the promised gift of God and were first baptized in the Holy Spirit.

We would like to spend a few minutes discovering the influence that the Holy Spirit has on the lives of Christ followers. To do that, we first need to learn about the first experience of being baptized in the Holy Spirit. We are going to start by reading what Jesus said about this promised gift in Acts 1:1-5.

Jesus Promises the Holy Spirit

Acts 1:1-5

(1) In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach (2) until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. (3) After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. (4) On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. (5) For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."

Jesus gave some specific instructions in this passage of scripture. First, he says to not leave Jerusalem. They were there because Jesus was crucified and rose from the dead there. He was teaching them about the Kingdom of God for 40 days after he had risen from the dead.

Jesus was not finished with them yet. He did not want the apostles to go back to fishing, tax collecting, their careers, and their way of life. Instead, he wanted them to stay with patient expectation.

This leads us to the second instruction Jesus gives. God was going to give them a gift he had promised them. We see this promise in John 14:26 which says:

John 14:26

(26) But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

The final instruction Jesus gave them was that they would receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit. They didn't know what this meant or what to expect. However, they obeyed. We read later in Acts chapter one that they all joined together constantly in prayer along with the women and Jesus' family.

Waiting Expectantly in Prayer

Not only did the disciples wait expectantly, but they also prayed constantly. They did not want to miss the gift, they wanted to receive it and be ready for it even though they did not understand what it



meant. They understood that if this gift was from God, he had a purpose in it for their good. The apostles completely trusted Jesus and his word.

We do not see them second-guessing Jesus and they do not ask any clarifying questions. What we read is that they obeyed. They did not need an explanation. They believed that what Jesus said was true. They may not have understood what he was saying about it, but that did not matter. Jesus said it and they chose to believe it.

This causes me to think about whether sometimes we are afraid to experience something that is from God simply because we do not understand it. If we truly think that God is good, and his purposes are good, then shouldn't we wholeheartedly trust him whether we understand him or not? Just a thought to ponder.

The Baptism of the Holy Spirit

Let us continue our story and see what happens when this promised gift of the Holy Spirit shows up. We find the purpose of Pentecost Sunday in this passage of scripture. Let us read Acts 2:1-4.

Acts 2:1-4

(1) When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. (2) Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. (3) They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. (4) All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

What an experience! First, a noisy, violent wind blows through the room and what looks like fire comes and rests on top of each believer. For those watching, there would have been no denying that something miraculous was happening.

Then, every one of them was filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in different languages! Acts goes on to say that those watching were amazed because they heard their own foreign language being spoken.

This was the promised gift of the Father Jesus told them to wait for. It was a powerful experience but not one-of-a-kind. This was just the beginning of the work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of God's people. The Holy Spirit then was poured out on believers as they said "yes" to Jesus.

Gifts of The Holy Spirit Are for All Time

We read all through the book of Acts where Peter, Paul, and the other apostles met with people, and after they repented of their sins and accepted Jesus that they were baptized in the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues.

We read how the Holy Spirit filled Peter with boldness, so he could preach to the Sanhedrin and those who opposed Christ. We read how the Holy Spirit came upon Paul to perform miracles in the name of Jesus. Throughout the New Testament, we see how the Holy Spirit took ordinary Christians and made them extraordinary by displaying the power of God in their lives.



This power, this gift, did not stop when the apostles died. It did not end when the Bible was complete. The Holy Spirit is the third part of the Holy Trinity. Just as God is active today and Jesus is still saving souls, today, the Holy Spirit is still baptizing people so that they can speak in tongues and have power displayed in their lives to be a testimony of the Gospel.

Before Jesus ascended into Heaven, and after he told the apostles to not leave Jerusalem, he said this about the Holy Spirit in Acts 1:8

Acts 1:8

(8) But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Conclusion

This is the purpose of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit equips us and gives us power so that we can preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ with boldness. Speaking in tongues increases your prayer life and intercedes on behalf of others. It brings power to prayer and gives you a deeper understanding of God. There are other gifts the Holy Spirit can equip us with also. Gifts of healing, prophecy, words of knowledge, and more. All of these are evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Your relationship with God will be strengthened and deepened when you receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit. It is for today. It is for you. It is for the world.

If you have said "yes" to Jesus and have not received the baptism of the Holy Spirit in your life, then we invite you to ask the Lord to receive this gift. Be patient and wait expectantly in prayer and you will receive this wonderful gift from God.

There is power in the Holy Spirit. He is our comforter, advocate, counselor, and guide.

Today, on Pentecost Sunday, we encourage you to seek this gift from on high and know that God's purposes are what is best for you. You can read more about the Holy Spirit in the book of Acts and throughout the New Testament.

