

Who Am I?

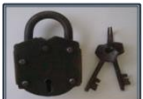
Unlocking and Understanding the Mystery of Christ

Week Six

Day Four

WAIT FOR IT....

“...Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard Me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.” (Acts 1:4-5)



Unlocking the Mystery

This great mystery follows the Great Commission just studied. Remember I asked if you were one that felt ill prepared or ill equipped. In Matthew 28:16-20, Jesus said that He would be with us always. In the lesson on Greater Things, you discovered the source of how Jesus is to be with us always and how we are to fulfill the Great Commission. The answer lies in the giving of the Counselor, in the giving of the Holy Spirit. He is the part of God that resides with us, teaches us to obey, and empowers us to do the work we are called to do.

Today’s great mystery is the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. Since I received it, I have noticed it is one of the most controversial mysteries of Jesus Christ. I had never been taught on it prior to seeking it. My eyes were opened to it in Scripture, and shortly after I gave my life over completely to Jesus, I asked for it and received it. I truly believed my loved ones would be happy for me. I truly believed it was going to be the start of a revival in our church. I did not expect what came... rejection from many people that were close to me; also, it did not start a revival in our church at that point, but it absolutely started a revival in my life. I must share this with you because this single event in my life changed me completely into the true disciple of Jesus Christ I desired to be. I don’t know where you are in your understanding of it. I do know, however, that many people that speak badly about it have never been taught, do not know anyone that has experienced it, or have been in the presence of its abuse. My dear readers please hear my heart... I would never intentionally lead you to a place of harm or of deceit. Don’t just take my word for it. Read about it. Study it. Allow Scripture to saturate your heart, and let God’s Word and the indwelling of His Spirit teach you and guide you into all truth. Not my words...but the very words of God.

Through today’s lesson, you will learn of the initial outpouring of the Holy Spirit as promised by Joel and Jesus. You will see that this promise is still for you today, and that the baptism in the Holy Spirit is intended for power for you to bring attention and others to Jesus. You will also learn of a few arguments against it, and the truth in it. Open your Bibles, and open your heart and mind to the truth of God’s Word. Let’s begin.



DIGGING DEEPER: John 20:21-23; Luke 24:45-49; Acts 1:4-5

SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES: John 20:21-23

V. 21 As the Father has sent Me, I am _____ you.

V. 22 What did Jesus do to the disciples? _____

V. 22 What did Jesus want the disciples to do? _____

Look back over the verses prior to this scripture and after... When did Jesus give the Holy Spirit? Was it before or after the resurrection? Was it before or after the ascension? _____

V. 23 This work was about what? _____

This action of breathing the Spirit onto the disciples is a representation of new life. In Genesis, the breath of God brought new life to Adam. This breath followed the work of the cross by which the disciples entered into the New Covenant. When we are “born again” we receive New Life in Jesus because the Holy Spirit comes to dwell within us. His work has begun. I say begun because if Jesus intended for us to just stop there He would never have told them to go to a place in Jerusalem and wait for the clothing of POWER from on HIGH.

SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES: Luke 24:45-49; Acts 1:4-8

Luke 24:49 I am going to _____ you what My Father has _____; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with _____ from on _____

Acts 1:4 Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the _____ My Father promised which you have heard Me speak about.

Acts 1:5 For John baptized with _____ but in a few days you will be _____ with the _____.

Acts 1:8 But you will receive _____ when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be My _____ in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

This baptism of the Holy Spirit is for the power to witness. It takes a lot of courage to be a witness for Christ, and the fullness of His Spirit empowers you to stand and speak boldly when you would rather run.

“In Jerusalem, all Judea, and Samaria, and the ends of the earth,” does not mean we will have to go to Israel or be a missionary to witness. Our Jerusalem represents those directly around us. It represents those we live near and have contact with often. Judea and Samaria broadens our area of witness. Look outside of your little circle. Minister and witness to your city, your state, your country. Then be prepared to go IF He does call you to “go.” Be willing to go to the ends of the earth. What you will learn is that the ends of the earth need to hear about Jesus, so Jesus can come back... but that is the next lesson.

A couple arguments against the Holy Spirit baptism are, “Sure, it happened then but it isn’t for today,” or “That ‘being baptized in the Holy Spirit’ isn’t for everyone.” Both of these statements limit God. Jesus didn’t just want the first disciples to have His strength, authority, and power; He wants all of us to have it, so all of us can participate in the Great Commission He left us with. I know many people doing a lot of great things for God that have not even tapped into the fullness of this promise. I cannot even imagine what God would have those people do upon receiving it! Just a thought! Another accusation is that it is, “of the devil.” **Luke 11:14-28** teaches that Jesus Himself was accused of working in accordance with the devil. This accusation in my opinion is a blasphemy against the truth and fullness of God. You don’t receive the devil by hungering after God! **READ FOR TRUTH...STAND ON TRUTH!**

DIGGING DEEPER: Acts 2; Joel 2:28-29;

SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES: Acts 2:1-13

V. 2 Suddenly, a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from _____ and filled the whole house where they were sitting.

V. 3 They _____ what seemed to be _____ of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them.

V. 4 _____ of them were _____ with the _____ and began to _____ in other _____ as the _____ enabled them.

V. 5-12 Bewilderment encompassed the crowd because people were from all over. Each one was hearing these people do what? _____

V. 13 Some, however _____ and said, “They have had too much wine.”

From the beginning, speaking in tongues was attached to the baptism of the Holy Spirit, declaring the wonders of God in languages that would reach beyond your own inner circle. Also, from the beginning there were mockers and doubters among those that witnessed it. Let’s continue...

Now, the same Peter that denied Christ three times, was then forgiven and was then prophesied over that Jesus would build His church upon Peter, stands up with the power of the Holy Spirit and gives an explanation.

SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES: Acts 2:14-36

V.14 Who was he addressing? _____

V. 16 Peter uses a prophecy from _____ to explain what was going on.

V. 17 “In the _____ I will pour out My Spirit on _____ people.”

V. 18 Even on My _____, both men and women, I will pour out My Spirit in those days.

V. 19 I will show _____ in the heaven above and _____ on the earth below...

V. 22-36 What message did Peter preach? _____

SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES: Acts 2:37-47

V. 37 When the people heard this, they were _____ and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?”

V. 38 What was Peter’s response? _____, and be _____ every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the _____ of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

V. 39 The promise is for _____, your _____ and for all who are _____ -for all whom the Lord our God will call.

V. 40-41 Save yourselves from this _____ generation. Those who _____ His message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

V. 42-47 They devoted themselves together, many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. They continued to meet together, break bread together, share possessions and praised God together. Then the Lord did what? _____

Now, reading this, Peter was baptized with the Holy Spirit to do what? To preach the message of Jesus Christ. To proclaim the message of what he was witness to. It wasn't about the tongues... it wasn't about what gift they would receive. Actually, it had very little to do with Peter except that he was being obedient, open and willing to all that Jesus told him to do.

By the way, don't confuse the baptism mentioned in this passage with the Holy Spirit baptism. It is referring to water baptism. Also, notice that the Holy Spirit absolutely comes in the heart at conversion. As you read, however, throughout the remainder of the book of Acts, you see at least five separate times at someone's conversion a separate act of being "filled with the Spirit" or "speaking in tongues". It became the normal progression after conversion. Remember though, even on the day it was given there were doubters and scoffers. They continued, as well. Men have a tendency to pervert or twist what God intends for good. It happened then; it has happened throughout history, and it will continue to happen until the end of time!

Like I said before, this mystery for some reason is a very controversial topic. There was a time I was very reluctant but very curious about the Holy Spirit baptism and the evidence of speaking in tongues. I remember speaking to my brother-in-law on my husband's side of the family about this, and he looked right at me and said, "If it is from God, why wouldn't you want it?" That put my anxiety and my fears to rest. He was right. If God has more for me, why wouldn't I want it? Why should I be afraid of it? I know, because people may mock me, and think I am weird. I know, because God may then require more of me, and I am afraid. Please listen; people will mock you...because of Christ not because of you seeking after Him. God will require more of you, but you will be equipped to do what He calls you to do. God loves you. It isn't His desire for you to be a "freak show." It is His desire that you love Him, worship Him, fellowship with Him, and tell others about Him, so they can do those things, too.



I want to also preview the next lesson in light of the Holy Spirit baptism. We are getting very close to the return of Jesus Christ. It is going to get harder and harder for Christians to stand and unite. If you desire to endure to the end and make it safely home to our eternal home, why wouldn't you want all the power and help God offers? We saw what happened to the disciples that actually walked side by side with Jesus during Jesus' last days on earth. How do you ever expect to stand when the pressure increases?

In this call to live with integrity, I want to briefly explain a couple things to help you understand. First, the Tongues is a Spiritual Language. It is between you and God. There have been many reports that an actual tongue (language) was given to minister to someone close by. Two books I highly recommend are *The Beauty of Spiritual Language* by Jack W. Hayford, and *They Speak in Other Tongues* by John L. Sherrill. Both of these books teach on the beauty of this unknown language. **Romans 8:26-27** teaches how the Holy Spirit intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. This spiritual language gives that passage a much deeper understanding. **James 3** teaches us about the power in controlling the tongue; I don't think it was by accident that God uses our tongue to surrender control to Him as an act of obedience.

Secondly, tongues are just the initial physical evidence. As you experience the initial evidence, the enduring evidence will follow. When living in this fullness of the Spirit, you will notice a much deeper love for Christ, His Word, for the lost, and for worship. If you imitate the first outpouring and stay connected to Christ, to His teachings, and to fellowship with like believers, you will grow in the fruit of the Spirit. This means your outward life will reflect the ways of Christ more and more.

Thirdly, be ready to be used by God! Stay surrendered to God as He directs your path into situations that need Jesus. His Spirit will ALWAYS point back to Jesus. If you encounter situations that bring attention to a person, to yourself, to “miracles and wonders” rather than bringing attention to the message of Jesus Christ and the Gospel message of Salvation through faith in Him, you are experiencing an abuse of this baptism. Your discernment will heighten; your hunger for truth will heighten, and your boldness to walk and talk in ways pleasing to Christ will heighten.

Baptism in the Holy Spirit - a great mystery briefly explained. I want all people empowered to stand firm in the last days. I want all people to be able to experience this precious gift of power, and I want all people to walk with integrity and bring glory to Christ our King. In Jesus’ name, Amen