

# FOUNDATIONS FOR CHRISTIAN GROWTH

## Lesson FIVE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT — THE POWER OF GOD

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### I. INTRODUCTION

After Jesus was raised from the dead, He appeared to His disciples numerous times. For the space of forty days He was with them, teaching them about the kingdom of God (Acts 1:3). Yet, they still needed something from God before they would be ready to go out with the good news of Jesus' resurrection. Jesus said that they needed to be "*baptized in the Holy Spirit.*"

Jesus told His disciples to wait for the promise of the Father "*which you heard from Me; for John baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now*" (Acts 1:4,5). This "baptism in the Holy Spirit" was predicted by John before the beginning of Jesus' ministry. "*He who is coming after me (Jesus) is mightier than I; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire*" (Matthew 3:11, also read Mark 1:8, Luke 3:16, and John 1:33).

The promised day arrived ten days after Jesus' ascension — on the day of Pentecost. On that day the Holy Spirit was sent from the Father by Jesus, and all the disciples were "*filled with the Holy Spirit*" (Acts 2:4). This was the church's entrance into the supernatural realm, for the infilling of the Holy Spirit manifested itself in a supernatural way. The disciples began to speak with new languages (which they had never learned and which they did not understand), as the Holy Spirit gave them utterance, or ability to speak (Acts 2:1-4).

The disciples now had the same Holy Spirit that had indwelt Jesus during His ministry, and so they continued that supernatural ministry which He had begun. Thus, the baptism with the Holy Spirit was not the disciples' introduction to the kingdom of God, for they were already a part of that. It was, rather, their introduction into the supernatural, miracle-working power of God's Spirit. This remains today the factor that sets Spirit-filled believers apart: that is, the supernatural. Jesus intends all of His followers to walk in that supernatural power (John 14:12), and so promised all believers the "baptism with the Holy Spirit."

To these He also presented Himself alive, after His suffering, by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over a period of forty days, and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God.

*Acts 1:3*

"I baptized you with water; but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

*Mark 1:8*

John answered and said to them all, "As for me, I baptize you with water; but He who is mightier than I is coming, and I am not fit to untie the thong of His sandals; He Himself will baptize you in the Holy Spirit and fire."

*Luke 3:16*

"And I did not recognize Him, but He who sent me to baptize in water said to me, 'He upon whom you see the Spirit descending and remaining upon Him, this is the one who baptizes in the Holy Spirit.'"

*John 1:33*

And when the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent, rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance.

*Acts 2:1-4*

"Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go to the Father."

*John 14:12*

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### II. BORN OF THE SPIRIT vs. BAPTIZED WITH THE SPIRIT

You are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.

*Romans 8:9*

“But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.”

*John 14:26*

“And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin, and righteousness, and judgment: concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me; and concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you no longer behold Me; and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged.”

*John 16:8-11*

The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.

*Romans 8:16*

“He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned.”

*Mark 16:16*

For He had not yet fallen upon any of them; they had simply been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

*Acts 8:16*

Now when the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent them Peter and John.

*Acts 8:14*

At the new birth, the Holy Spirit comes to dwell inside a believer. The scriptures clearly state that anyone who is born again has the Spirit of God within them (Romans 8:9). He is there to teach, admonish, and to bear witness (John 14:26; John 16:8-11; Romans 8:16). However, when a person is born again, he isn't automatically “baptized with the Spirit” (filled with the Spirit). Being “born of the Spirit” and “baptized with the Spirit” are two **distinct** manifestations of the Spirit of God within men. No man can be baptized with the Spirit *until* he has been born of the Spirit.

The distinction between being born again (conversion) and the baptism with the Holy Spirit can be seen in the accounts of this manifestation recorded in the book of Acts. On two occasions, believers were prayed for to receive the baptism (or infilling) with the Holy Spirit, *after* they had been converted.

#### A. THE SAMARITAN REVIVAL —

**Read Acts 8:4-24**

In this account we see that the gospel was being preached and *believed* in the city of Samaria. Those who believed what Philip was preaching were baptized in water, a sign of a man's entrance into the body of Christ. Jesus had said, “*He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved*” (Mark 16:16). Thus, these Samaritans were saved, members of the body of Christ, and “*there was much rejoicing in that city*” (Acts 8:8). And yet, they had not yet received the infilling of the Spirit. “*For He (the Spirit) had not yet fallen on any of them*” (Acts 8:16).

We can see from this passage that the new birth and the baptism in the Holy Spirit are *not* one and the same. The Samaritans were born again (saved) when they “*received the Word of God*” (Acts 8:14). But, this did not automatically give them the infilling of the Holy Spirit; that manifestation came when the apostles laid hands on them.

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### B. SAUL'S CONVERSION —

Read Acts 9:1-19

Saul's conversion (new birth) took place on the road to Damascus. This is evidenced by the fact that he addressed the risen Christ as "Lord" (Acts 9:5), and then asked Jesus what He wanted him to do (Acts 22:10) and obeyed Him. Saul (subsequently called Paul) said later that this was his witness of the resurrection (I Corinthians 15:8). The man who was led blind into the city of Damascus was a man who had witnessed and believed in the resurrected Christ and had submitted himself to His Lordship.

But Saul, though converted, was not yet "filled with the Holy Spirit." Ananias came and laid his hands on him so that he might receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit (Acts 9:17). Again, we see a clear distinction between conversion (new birth) and the infilling (or baptism) in the Holy Spirit.

### C. CORNELIUS' CONVERSION

There are instances where people are saved and filled with the Holy Spirit at the same time. Cornelius and his household had the Holy Spirit fall upon them as they were listening to Peter preach. No appeal was made to Cornelius to repent or confess; the Spirit fell upon him as he believed what Peter was saying about the Lord Jesus (Acts 10:44).

The new birth and the baptism in the Spirit can sometimes occur simultaneously; however, this does *not* mean that these two works of God are one and the same. If that were the case, the Samaritans (who had received the Word and been baptized in water) would not have needed to *afterward* receive the Spirit. If being born again meant the same thing as being filled with the Spirit, the convert Saul would not have needed Ananias to lay his hands on him to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

And he said, "Who art Thou, Lord?" And He said, "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting."

Acts 9:5

And I said, "What shall I do, Lord?" And the Lord said to me, "Arise and go on into Damascus; and there you will be told of all that has been appointed for you to do."

Acts 22:10

"And last of all, as it were to one untimely born, He appeared to me also."

I Corinthians 15:8

And Ananias departed and entered the house, and after laying his hands on him said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road by which you were coming, has sent me so that you may regain your sight, and be filled with the Holy Spirit."

Acts 9:17

While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who were listening to the message.

Acts 10:44

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### D. DISTINCT WORKS AND DISTINCT MANIFESTATIONS

Regeneration by the Spirit and the baptism in the Spirit are two *distinct* works of the Spirit of God. They each result in a manifestation of the presence of God within the believer, but those manifestations are not the same. The difference is well illustrated in two statements made by Jesus and recorded in the gospel of John.

#### 1. A well of water

*"But whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life"* (John 4:14). In this statement Jesus refers to the indwelling of the Spirit which occurs when a man is born again.

Water is often used in the Bible as a symbol of God's Spirit. The Spirit in a born-again believer is a *well* of water, bringing eternal life to those who possess it. The well is always there to quench a man's spiritual thirst for God and to sustain him. *Every* born-again believer has this well of the waters of God's Spirit within him.

#### 2. Rivers of living waters

*"He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being shall flow rivers of living waters'"* (John 7:38). In this passage the water again refers to the Holy Spirit. But, now Jesus refers to the water as "rivers," not just a "well." This helps us to understand the difference between the presence of God's Spirit in those who are born again and those who are baptized in the Holy Spirit. In the former the Spirit's presence is like a well, but in the latter, the Spirit's presence is like rivers, which flow outward to give help and sustenance to others.

### E. OLD TESTAMENT TYPE OF THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

In the Old Testament we see a type (a symbol) of the baptism in the Spirit when Israel crossed the Jordan into the promised land. Israel's passing through the Red Sea symbolized water baptism and our separation from the world (Egypt) (Exodus 14:22). But, before the nation could pass into the promised land, they had to cross another impassable

"But whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life."

John 4:14

"He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water.'"

John 7:38

And the sons of Israel went through the midst of the sea on the dry land, and the waters were like a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.

Exodus 14:22

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physical barrier, the river Jordan. God parted the waters of this river as He did the waters of the sea (Joshua 3:14-17). The crossing of the Jordan by the miraculous power of God symbolizes the baptism in the Holy Spirit in the life of a believer.

That the crossing into the promised land does *not* symbolize our going to heaven when we die is seen clearly from the fact that Israel still had enemies to fight and defeat when she crossed the river. We will have no enemies to fight in heaven. While we remain on this earth, however, we do have an adversary (Satan) with whom we have to contend.

### F. THE DIFFERENCE = SUPERNATURAL POWER

The Spirit of God indwells *all* who have Jesus as their Saviour (Romans 8:9-16). God gives His Spirit to all His children to help and guide them, and to testify within them that they are indeed the children of God. But, it is plain from the scriptures that this indwelling of the Spirit at the new birth is *not* the same as the baptism, or infilling, of the Spirit.

Those who are born again have the Spirit like water in a well, but those who are baptized in the Spirit have that Spirit like the waters of a river. *The difference is not one of kind, but of volume and power.* The baptism in the Spirit gives to a believer a greater manifestation of the presence of God and endues him with the supernatural power of God. *"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you"* (Acts 1:8).

Being baptized in the Spirit is *not* a requirement for salvation or going to heaven. On the contrary, it is *offered* to those who *believe* (Acts 2:38), that is to those who are already born again. It is, however, a requirement for operating in God's supernatural power.

So it came about when the people set out from their tents to cross the Jordan with the priests carrying the ark of the covenant before the people, and when those who carried the ark came into the Jordan, and the feet of the priests carrying the ark were dipped in the edge of the water (for the Jordan overflows all its banks all the days of harvest), and the waters which were flowing down from above stood and rose up in one heap, a great distance away at Adam, the city flowing down toward the sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea, were completely cut off. So the people crossed opposite Jericho. And the priests who carried the ark of the covenant of the Lord stood firm on dry ground in the middle of the Jordan while all Israel crossed on dry ground, until all the nation had finished crossing the Jordan.  
*Joshua 3:14-17*

However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him. And if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you. So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh — for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons

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by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!" The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.

*Romans 8:9-16*

"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."

*Acts 1:8*

And Peter said to them, "Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

*Acts 2:38*

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### III. RECEIVING THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

Receiving the infilling or baptism in the Holy Spirit is not a complicated process. In fact, it is not a process at all. It is as simple as getting born again and receiving the Eternal Life of God. The *gift of the Holy Spirit* was poured out on the day of Pentecost and is available today to whomever will ask for it and receive by faith. Jesus said, *"If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him?"* (Luke 11:13).

#### A. ONLY ONE REQUIREMENT

There is only one preliminary requirement which a person must fulfill before he can be a candidate for the baptism in the Spirit: **He must be born again, a believer in the Lord Jesus.** The infilling of the Spirit is not offered to sinners and those outside of God's kingdom. To sinners, God offers forgiveness and salvation, the way to be born again. The infilling of God's Spirit is reserved for those who know Jesus as their Saviour.

This is the **ONLY** prerequisite for receiving this blessing. Some Christians mistakenly believe that we must prove to God that we are holy or worthy enough to receive. God is thought to somehow look to see whether or not we deserve this blessing before He will bestow it. But, the Bible calls the infilling of the Spirit a *gift*, bestowed by the Father (Acts 1:4; 2:38). As with all gifts which God gives, this one is given on the basis of God's grace, and not on the basis of our goodness or worthiness.

The baptism in the Holy Spirit is not reserved for those Christians who are holy or mature enough to receive. Cornelius didn't have to wait until he was "mature" in the Lord before he received (Acts 10:44). The Samaritans didn't have to wait for years to receive; there was an urgency about them receiving which brought the apostles down from Jerusalem (Acts 8:14-16). This blessing from God has been made available to *every* Christian on the basis of the fact that they are born again.

*"If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?"*

*Luke 11:13*

And gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, "Which," He said, "you heard of from Me."

*Acts 1:4*

And Peter said to them, "Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

*Acts 2:38*

While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who were listening to the message.

*Acts 10:44*

Now when the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent them Peter and John, who came down and prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit. For He had not yet fallen upon any of them; they had simply been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

*Acts 8:14-16*



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“And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.”

*Luke 24:49*

### B. A FREE GIFT

The baptism is just as much a free gift as is salvation and cannot in any way be earned. As with any gift which God bestows, this one must be received by faith. This means that God will give it when a person asks Him and will not wait until that person is holy enough or has “tarry” long enough to receive it.

Some mistakenly believe that one must “tarry” for the infilling of the Holy Spirit before one can receive. They base this belief on Jesus’ command to the apostles to “*tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high*” (Luke 24:49 KJV).

#### 1. Tarrying in Jerusalem

Jesus told those disciples to “tarry” in Jerusalem to receive the Holy Spirit when He was sent. Up to that time, the Holy Spirit had not yet been given in fullness because Jesus had not ascended and sat at God’s right hand. After the day of Pentecost, tarrying was no longer necessary, as subsequent accounts of the infilling of the Spirit bear out.

#### 2. Tarrying no longer necessary

That this was a specific command, meant only for the disciples, is seen in the fact that Cornelius and his household did not in any way “tarry” for the Spirit; they received while they were listening to the message. The disciples in Ephesus received when Paul laid his hands on them, and there was no “tarrying” recorded there. The same is true of the Samaritan believers; they received when the apostles laid their hands on them.

### C. THE BIBLE EVIDENCE OF THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

When a person is baptized in the Holy Spirit, there is a supernatural manifestation or evidence of that inward filling. That manifestation is called “speaking with other tongues (or languages).” Speaking with other tongues is simply speaking in a language which one has NEVER learned and does not understand with his mind. Throughout the book of Acts we find evidence that this sign accompanied the infilling of the Spirit.

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### 1. The Day of Pentecost

On the day of Pentecost, the disciples were baptized in the Holy Spirit, just as Jesus had said they would be (Acts 1:5). When this event took place, they began to speak in other tongues. The languages they were speaking were not intelligible to them, but they were intelligible to the many foreigners which were in the city of Jerusalem at that time (Acts 2:5-7).

This was, of course, a supernatural occurrence, signifying a miraculous work which had taken place within the believers who were gathered in the upper room. *"And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance"* (Acts 2:4).

### 2. Cornelius' Household

We have previously mentioned how that Cornelius was born again and baptized in the Spirit at the same time. The Holy Spirit "fell on them" as they were listening to Peter preach (Acts 10:44), and they were filled with the Spirit. The reason that the Jews with Peter knew that these Gentiles had received the Spirit is because they heard them speaking in other tongues. *"And all the circumcised believers with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out upon the Gentiles also. For they were hearing them speaking with tongues and exalting God"* (Acts 10:45,46).

These prejudiced Jews were truly amazed that Gentiles should receive the Holy Spirit (Acts 10:45), but they were convinced beyond any shadow of doubt that it was so because they saw the *evidence* of that infilling; the Gentiles were speaking in other tongues.

### 3. The Ephesian disciples

In his missionary travels Paul came across some disciples in Ephesus who had been taught incorrectly. They were not aware of the existence of the Holy Spirit. After Paul had straightened out their beliefs, he laid his hands on them for them to receive the infilling of the Spirit (Acts 19:1-5). *"And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking with tongues and prophesying"* (Acts 19:6).

*"For John baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."*

*Acts 1:5*

Now there were Jews living in Jerusalem, devout men, from every nation under heaven. And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were bewildered, because they were each one hearing them speak in his own language. And they were amazed and marveled, saying, "Why, are not all these who are speaking Galileans?"

*Acts 2:5-7*

And all the circumcised believers who had come with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out upon the Gentiles also.

*Acts 10:45*

And it came about that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper country came to Ephesus, and found some disciples, and he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" And they said to him, "No, we have not even heard whether there is a Holy Spirit." And he said, "Into what then were you baptized?" And they said, "Into John's baptism."

And Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in Him who was coming after him, that is, in Jesus." And 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 Spirit came on them and they began speaking with tongues and prophesying.

*Acts 19:1-6*

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Once again we see that the supernatural evidence of the Holy Spirit's infilling was speaking in other tongues, and in this case, prophesying as well.

And when the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent, rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance. Now there were Jews living in Jerusalem, devout men, from every nation under heaven. And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were bewildered, because they were each one hearing them speak in their own language.

Acts 2:1-6

Now when the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent them Peter and John, who came down and prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit. For He had not yet fallen upon any of them; they had simply been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they began laying their hands on them, and they were receiving the Holy Spirit.

Acts 8:14-17

And Ananias departed and entered the house, and after laying his hands on him said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road by which you were coming, has sent me so that you may regain your sight, and be filled with the Holy Spirit."

Acts 9:17

### 4. Instances when tongues are implied

In the book of Acts, there are five recorded instances of people receiving the infilling of the Spirit (Acts 2:1-6; 8:14-17; 9:17; 10:44; 19:5-7). In the three that we have discussed, the evidence of speaking in other tongues is stated. In the remaining two, although speaking in tongues is not explicitly mentioned, study of the scriptures will show that it is certainly implied.

#### a. The Samaritans

The Samaritans received the infilling of the Spirit by the laying on of the apostles' hands. "Then they (the apostles) began laying their hands on them, and they were receiving the Holy Spirit" (Acts 8:17). The outward effect that receiving the Spirit had upon those believers was profound enough to catch Simon's attention (Acts 8:18,19). This outward manifestation had to be more than just joy or exuberance, for these were already present before the apostles arrived (Acts 8:8). What Simon saw was so supernatural that it made him covet the authority to lay on hands as the apostles had done.

There is little doubt that the supernatural evidence which Simon witnessed was the same as the foreigners in Jerusalem had witnessed on the day of Pentecost. It was the same evidence that the Jews in Cornelius' house had witnessed. The Samaritans were speaking in other tongues.

#### b. Paul

Paul was converted on the road to Damascus, when Jesus appeared to him (Acts 9:5,6). But, he did not receive the infilling of the Holy Spirit until Ananias came and laid his hands on him (Acts 9:17). Although the scripture does not state here that Paul began to speak in tongues, Paul later told the Corinthian church that he did speak in tongues, more than them all (I Corinthians 14:18). Speaking in tongues was obviously a part of his Christian walk.

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While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who were listening to the message.

*Acts 10:44*

And 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 Spirit came on them, and they began speaking with tongues and prophesying. And there were in all about twelve men.

*Acts 19:5-7*

Now when Simon saw that the Spirit was bestowed through the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money, saying, "Give this authority to me as well, so that everyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit."

*Acts 8:18,19*

And there was much rejoicing in that city.

*Acts 8:8*

And he said, "Who art Thou, Lord?" And He said, "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting, but rise. and enter the city, and it shall be told you what you must do."

*Acts 9:5,6*

"I thank God, I speak in tongues more than you all."

*I Corinthians 14:18*

And Ananias departed and entered the house, and after laying his hands on him said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road by which you were coming, has sent me so that you may regain your sight, and be filled with the Holy Spirit."

*Acts 9:17*

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Since we have seen from the other four examples that speaking in tongues began when the believers received, there is no reason not to believe that Paul began speaking in tongues when he received.

### D. TONGUES — A SUPERNATURAL RIVER

We can see from the above mentioned scriptures that the Bible evidence of the infilling of the Holy Spirit is speaking with other tongues (i.e. in other languages which are unknown to the speaker). This is an initial sign of the believer's having been baptized in the Spirit.

Again, this is not to say that tongues is an evidence of *salvation*; the Bible does not teach that. When a person is born again and receives the Spirit like a well of water within, the sign is the inner witness of the Spirit and an outward change reflecting what the new birth has wrought within. But, when a person is baptized in the Holy Spirit and receives the Spirit like rivers of living water, then the initial sign of those out-flowing, supernatural rivers is speaking in other tongues.

Speaking in tongues goes far beyond just an initial evidence. The scriptures show that this supernatural manifestation became a part of the corporate life of the church (I Corinthians 12:7,10), as well as giving great blessing in believers' personal lives (I Corinthians 14:4). The apostles spoke in tongues on the day of Pentecost as an initial sign of receiving the Holy Spirit, but this does not mean that that was the *only* time this phenomenon occurred in their lives. Paul indicated to the Corinthians that he frequently prayed in tongues (I Corinthians 14:18); he said this *after* he had received the infilling of God's Spirit.

There are several benefits to praying (speaking) in tongues which we can see from the scriptures.

#### 1. Edification

*"One who speaks in a tongue edifies himself"* (I Corinthians 14:4). The word "edify" means "to build up." When a person prays in tongues, he is building himself up on the inside; his spirit is being strengthened. *"But you beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith; praying in the Holy Spirit"* (Jude 20). Praying in the Holy Spirit is the same

But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. And to another the effecting of miracles, and to another prophecy, and to another the distinguishing of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, and to another the interpretation of tongues.

*I Corinthians 12:7,10*

One who speaks in a tongue edifies himself; but one who prophesies edifies the church.

*I Corinthians 14:4*

"I thank God, I speak in tongues more than you all."

*I Corinthians 14:18*

But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith; praying in the Holy Spirit.

*Jude 20*

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thing as praying in tongues. Those who pray in tongues build themselves up, because their spirits are praying directly to God. *“For one who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men, but to God; for no one understands, but in his spirit he speaks mysteries”* (I Corinthians 14:2). This is a divine, supernatural means by which our spirits can come into direct communication with God.

### 2. Help in intercession

By praying in tongues, we allow the Holy Spirit to pray through us prayers which are in accordance with the perfect will of God. *“Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered”* (Romans 8:26 KJV). These “groanings which cannot be uttered” include prayer in other tongues. *“For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit by the Holy Spirit within me prays, but my mind is unproductive”* (I Corinthians 14:14 Amplified).

### 3. Praying for the unknown

There are times when we simply run out of words to say in prayer, or perhaps times when we don't even know where to begin to pray with our minds. In these cases the Holy Spirit is there to help us to pray (not to pray for us, but to help us). Praying in tongues enables us to pray in cases where we do not have complete understanding.

### 4. Means of worship

Speaking in tongues is also a way of giving thanks and praise unto God. In referring to a man who speaks in tongues during an assembly meeting, Paul says, *“For you are giving thanks well enough, but the other man is not edified”* (I Corinthians 14:17). The man who speaks in tongues gives thanks well; he himself is praising God, even though that particular giving of thanks does not edify the others around him, because they do not understand it.

*For one who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men, but to God; for no one understands, but in his spirit he speaks mysteries.*

*I Corinthians 14:2*

*And in the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.*

*Romans 8:26*

*For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful.*

*I Corinthians 14:14*

*For you are giving thanks well enough, but the other man is not edified.*

*I Corinthians 14:17*

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I thank God, I speak in tongues more than you all; however, in the church I desire to speak five words with my mind, that I may instruct others also, rather than ten thousand words in a tongue.

*I Corinthians 14:18,19*

### 5. Public vs. private use

All the benefits listed above (and there are certainly more than the ones listed) are the results of the *private* use of praying in other tongues. There is also a *public* use for speaking in tongues, and this is what the apostle Paul addresses in the fourteenth chapter of I Corinthians.

Many confuse Paul's statement, "Do all speak in tongues?" (where the answer to this rhetorical question is "No!"), to mean that not *all* are to use their prayer language (tongues). But, Paul is simply making a statement about the abuse of the public practice of speaking in tongues. If four or five men stand up in the middle of a service and simultaneously address the congregation in other tongues, then nobody in the congregation will be edified.

*"I thank God, I speak in tongues more than you all; however, in the church I desire to speak five words with my mind, that I may instruct others also"* (I Corinthians 14:18,19). Here Paul makes it plain that he speaks in tongues privately, but when he is addressing the assembly, he would rather speak in a known language so that all can understand and be edified.

The private use of praying in tongues always edifies and helps the person who does it. But when addressing an assembly, one should not speak in tongues unless there is one to interpret, so that *all* may be edified. So we see that God's purpose is that we be edified — whether *individually* through the **private** use of tongues, or *corporately* through the **public** use of tongues and interpretation.

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### IV. THE DOORWAY TO THE SUPERNATURAL

Jesus' intention for His followers was that they should continue the ministry of preaching, teaching, healing, and deliverance that He had begun. He told His disciples that they would do the same works that He was doing and even greater works, because He was going to the Father (John 14:12). When He went to the Father, He sent the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:33) to empower the Church to do those works.

Jesus told the disciples not to leave Jerusalem (to try to continue the earthly ministry He had started) before the Holy Spirit had come upon them (Acts 1:4). After they were baptized in the Holy Spirit, then they were witnesses "*in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth*" (Acts 1:8). And wherever any of them shared the good news, the supernatural power of God was in manifestation (Acts 3:6,7; 5:12,15,16; 6:8; 8:7; 9:34,40; 14:9,10; 19:11,12).

#### A. THE INITIAL EVIDENCE IS SUPERNATURAL

As we have already seen, the initial evidence of the baptism in the Holy Spirit is speaking with other tongues. This is not a natural occurrence, but a supernatural one. Thus, it is fitting that this supernatural infilling of God's Spirit, to empower believers with supernatural power, should be accompanied by supernatural evidence. However, speaking in other tongues is only the beginning of a Spirit-filled believer's walk in the supernatural.

#### B. THE GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

The gifts of the Spirit listed in I Corinthians 12 are all *supernatural*. They are not natural abilities, such as speaking ability or musical ability; these kinds of talents can be found in all men, even the unsaved. The gifts of the Spirit are the supernatural workings of God's Spirit through men. The baptism in the Holy Spirit will usher a believer into the working of these gifts.

Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear.

Acts 2:33

And gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, "Which," He said, "you heard of from Me."

Acts 1:4

But Peter said, "I do not possess silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you: In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene — walk!" And seizing him by the right hand, he raised him up; and immediately his feet and his ankles were strengthened.

Acts 3:6,7

And at the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were taking place among the people; and they were all with one accord in Solomon's portico. . . . to such an extent that they even carried the sick out into the streets, and laid them on cots and pallets, so that when Peter came by, at least his shadow might fall on any one of them. And also the people from the cities in the vicinity of Jerusalem were coming together, bringing people who were sick or afflicted with unclean spirits; and they were all being healed.

Acts 5:12,15,16

(over)



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And Stephen, full of grace and power, was performing great wonders and signs among the people.

*Acts 6:8*

For in the case of many who had unclean spirits, they were coming out of them shouting with a loud voice; and many who had been paralyzed and lame were healed.

*Acts 8:7*

And Peter said to him, "Aeneas, Jesus Christ heals you; arise, and make your bed." And immediately he arose.

*Acts 9:34*

But Peter sent them all out and fell down and prayed, and turning the body, he said, "Tabitha, arise." And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter, she sat up.

*Acts 9:40*

This man was listening to Paul as he spoke, who, when he had fixed his gaze upon him, and had seen that he had faith to be made well, said with a loud voice, "Stand upright on your feet." And he leaped up and began to walk.

*Acts 14:9,10*

And God was performing extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul, so that handkerchiefs or aprons were even carried from his body to the sick, and the diseases left them and the evil spirits went out.

*Acts 19:11,12*

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### C. THE SUPERNATURAL CHURCH

One of the striking characteristics of the early church was the fact that they moved in the realm of the miraculous. The miracle working power of God was not uncommon to the believers in that church. To them it was a matter of course that they should continue the ministry which Jesus had begun, and that they should *conduct* it in the same manner as Jesus had conducted His earthly ministry (Matthew 4:23; Acts 5:14-16).

Jesus told them, "*You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you*" (Acts 1:8). The kind of power Jesus was referring to was demonstrated in the apostles' ministry, as they went about preaching the word with signs and wonders following. But, God desires every believer to be endowed with this same power. God wants all His children to be baptized with the Holy Spirit.

### V. SUMMARY — THE SUPERNATURAL RIVER IN THE BELIEVER

The baptism of the Holy Spirit is for every born-again child of God. Every believer has the Spirit within like a well of water, but God wants every believer to also have the Spirit flowing out in power like rivers of water. This river of living water flowing from within is the result of a person being baptized in the Holy Spirit.

When the Holy Spirit is flowing out like a supernatural river, then supernatural things begin to take place. Thus, when the disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit, they began to speak in foreign languages which they had never learned. This was a supernatural occurrence. They then went out and began to perform the works of Jesus, and even greater works, because they had a supernatural river flowing from within.

And Jesus was going about in all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness among the people.

*Matthew 4:23*

And all the more believers in the Lord, multitudes of men and women, were constantly added to their number. To such an extent that they even carried the sick out into the streets, and laid them on cots and pallets, so that when Peter came by, at least his shadow might fall on any one of them. And also the people from the cities in the vicinity of Jerusalem were coming together, bringing people who were sick or afflicted with unclean spirits; and they were all being healed.

*Acts 5:14-16*

"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."

*Acts 1:8*