



STUDY GUIDE

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[set up]

What difference does being filled with the Holy Spirit make in the life of a believer?

How have you experienced the Holy Spirit empowering you to do His work?

[digging deeper]

What is the baptism of the Holy Spirit?

The term "*baptism of the Spirit*" occurs in *only* 6 places in the Bible: Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33; Acts 1:5; 1 Corinthians 12:13. Yet this phrase has created a great deal of controversy and division among Christians.

Pentecostals make all references to the "*baptism of the Spirit*" refer to a post-conversion (after conversion) pouring forth of the Spirit. They talk about the "*baptism of the Spirit*" as being a "second experience" following salvation. The Biblical evidence they usually point to are passages from the book of Acts: Acts 2:1-4; 8:13-17; 19:1-6.

Non-charismatics tend to make all New Testament references to the "*baptism of the Spirit*" refer to the receiving of the Spirit at conversion. They say that the "*baptism of the Spirit*" is the same thing as the sealing of the Spirit talked about in other places of the New Testament. The Biblical evidence they point to is: 1 Corinthians 12:13 where Paul says that all of the Corinthians became members of Christ's body when they were baptized by the Spirit.

Some Christians believe it is wrong to adopt either of the above extremes. They are convinced that "*baptism of the Spirit*" is a term which means any pouring out of the Spirit at any time in the life of a believer.

The study of the Bible tells us that the terms "*baptism of the Spirit*," "*drinking of the Spirit*," "*pouring out of the Spirit*," "*Spirit coming upon you*," "*clothed with power*" and "*filling of the Spirit*" are all synonyms -- they describe the same experience.

Since every Christian receives the Holy Spirit at conversion, all Christians have been baptized by the Spirit -- just as the non-charismatics say. But it is just as true that there are subsequent baptisms (fillings) (moments of renewal) of the Spirit in the lives of Christians -- just as the Pentecostals affirm.

This view is not new or novel. It has been held in past centuries and is presently held by other teachers of the Scriptures. The English and American Puritans, for example, took the term "*baptism of the Holy Spirit*" to mean "effusion in the Spirit" or "inundation in the Spirit" and felt free to pray for revival with the words: "Oh, baptize us afresh with thy Holy Spirit." Present day theologian Ian Murray (see his article entitled "Baptism with the Spirit: What Is the Scriptural Meaning?" *Banner of Truth Magazine* 127, April 1974, pp. 5-22) and D. A. Carson, professor of New

Testament at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School (see his book Exegetical Fallacies, pp.46-47) also hold this view. One of our dear Christian brothers calls the "*baptism of the Spirit*," the "embrace of the Spirit." That's not far off the mark.

Test this view for yourself. Read Acts 1 & 2 and note how the term "*baptism of the Spirit*" is used interchangeably with other terms:

- "*baptism with the Spirit*" 1:5
- "*Holy Spirit comes on you*" 1:8
- "*filled with the Holy Spirit*" 2:4
- "*pour out my Spirit*" 2:17
- "*poured out*" 2:33

Should we be seeking a "second experience?" Absolutely. And a third, and a fourth and . . . We need special outpourings of God's Spirit many times in our lives.

Peter is an example of repeated baptisms of the Spirit:

Peter was one of the twelve apostles. On one occasion Jesus sent out the twelve apostles and gave them authority to cast out demons and to heal people (Mark 6:7-13). Although the Bible doesn't specifically say, it seems reasonable to assume that the apostles were filled with the Holy Spirit so that they could perform these miracles. How else could they have done these things?

Following Christ's resurrection, Christ appeared to the disciples. Jesus breathed on the disciples and said, "*Receive the Holy Spirit*" (John 20:22). The apostle Peter was among that group that "*received the Holy Spirit*" at this time. Was this the first time that Peter received the Holy Spirit or did he receive the supernatural pouring forth of the Spirit again?

Fifty days later on the day of Pentecost, Peter was "*filled*" (Acts 2:4) and "*baptized with the Spirit*" (Acts 1:5) along with 119 other people. Is this Peter's first, second, or third experience with the Holy Spirit? You decide.

Some weeks later Peter was arrested for evangelizing. A trial was held and the Bible tells us that when Peter spoke to the Jewish leaders he was again "*filled with the Holy Spirit*" (Acts 4:8).

After being warned by the Jews not to proclaim the gospel again, Peter was released. He went back to the church and reported all that the priests and elders had said to them. The church prayed together. Then Acts 4:31 tells us: "*After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken and they (including Peter) were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.*"

Review the following list of particular instances of the Holy Spirit being poured out in the book of Acts.

Receiving of the Holy Spirit in the Book of Acts

Scripture	Place	Evangelist	Receiver	What Received	What Sign or Result
2:1-4	Jerusalem	none	Disciples	Holy Spirit	Wind, fire, tongues, prophecy
2:38	Jerusalem	Peter & apostles	Jews	Salvation & Holy Spirit	Unknown
4:8	Jerusalem	none	Peter	Holy Spirit	Persuasive speech
4:31	Jerusalem	Peter & John	Jewish believers	Holy Spirit	Evangelistic boldness
6:5,10	Jerusalem	none	Stephen	Holy Spirit	Persuasive speech
7:55	Jerusalem	none	Stephen	Holy Spirit	Vision of Jesus

8:14-18	Samaria	Philip, Peter, John	Samaritans	Holy Spirit	Something? (see v.18)
9:17-19	Damascus	Ananias	Paul	Salvation & Holy Spirit	Healing of eyes
10:44-48	Caesarea	Peter	"God-fearers"	Salvation & Holy Spirit	Tongues & praising God
13:52	Antioch	Barnabas & Paul	Gentiles	Holy Spirit	Joy (?)
19:1-7	Ephesus	Paul	Disciples of John the Baptist	Holy Spirit	Tongues & prophecy

What conclusions can you draw from this list?

Those who put together this list came to the conclusion that *there is no one sign of the baptism of the Holy Spirit*. There are many different signs of the outpouring of the Spirit in the book of Acts.

Ephesians 5:18-21 says: *"And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another in the fear of God."*

The interesting thing about this passage is that the Greek language clearly shows that the things which follow in verse 19-21 are results or consequences which come from being *"filled with the Spirit."* There are three results mentioned:

1. speaking to one another and the Lord in song,
2. giving thanks to God,
3. submitting to one another.

What evidence have you seen in your life as a result of being filled with the Holy Spirit?

[living it out]

Discuss together your biblical understanding of the work of the Holy Spirit. Be sure to pray for one another that each will experience a fresh encounter with God.

How does this information help you grow in your faith as a disciple of Jesus?

How can this help you grow in the area of helping others become disciples?