



*The
Baptism
of
Power*

Jesus promised His disciples that He would baptize them with the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4,5,8). This Baptism of power was clearly distinct from water baptism, because Jesus was going to baptize them not in water but in the Holy Spirit. This baptism of power was not to initiate them into the Lord's kingdom, but to equip them with power for service in the daily Christian life, power to face the challenges and problems that would arise (Luke 24:49).

The promise of the Spirit was given to all the church of all ages (Acts 2:38,39), because the Christian believers would always need the power of the Spirit for practical service and to carry out the great commission to "preach the gospel to every creature." They would also continue to need that power for gifts to edify the church (1 Cor. 12-14; Romans 12:4-8).

Now, let us look at some of the kinds of circumstances in which we need the fullness and power of the Holy Spirit.

1. In the early church when there was a crisis of discord over the daily distribution of charities, the apostles sought out seven men "full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom" who would be able to solve the problem and to restore harmony. The church of today certainly needs men of spiritual power and wisdom who can keep peace and harmony in times of crisis.
2. Jesus said, "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost has come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto me." The

importance of giving testimony to our Savior Jesus Christ can be seen in the fact that the words, "testify," "testimony," and "witness" are found more than one hundred times in our New Testament. Whoever has tried to give adequate witness to the One whose name is called "Wonderful" will understand well the need for the power of the Spirit, which power helps us not only to give adequate witness, but to give it when there is need for courage and boldness (Acts 4:29-33).

3. Furthermore, we need power to exercise faith when we are called upon to pray for another, especially a sick person. In the great commission Jesus prophesied, "And these signs shall follow them that believe...they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover." In a time of persecution, the believers in Jerusalem prayed in the following manner, "Lord, stretch forth Thy hand to heal." Also, we read about Stephen (Acts 6:5,8), who was a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, "full of grace and power, he did great wonders and miracles among the people." Perhaps we cannot all be modern-day Stephens, but we all have the privilege of being believers full of the Holy Spirit and, as a result, we can be instruments in the hands of the Lord to accomplish whatever He wishes.
4. We also need the power of the Holy Spirit to help us in our prayer life. In the natural, we have a weakness in prayer according to the Apostle Paul (Romans 8:26,27): we don't know what to pray for as we ought. But we do not dare to be

weak in prayer, because it is our means of communication with our heavenly Father. However, the Holy Spirit provides help so that we know how to pray and for what to pray; we are conscious of an anointing in prayer in which we pray beyond our human intellect and the Spirit intercedes through us better than we can with our human vocabulary.

Perhaps now, my friend, you will ask, "How can I receive this fullness of the Spirit—how can I be baptized with power?"

1. First, one must sense a spiritual hunger to be filled and a desire to serve the Lord; the purpose of the baptism of power is Christian service and witness.
2. Second, ask for it. We read: "How much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him" (Luke 11:13). "Ask and it shall be given you" (Luke 11:9).
3. Third, seek the help and prayers of pastors, elders, or workers of the church who are full of the Holy Spirit, requesting that they lay hands upon you in the name of Jesus. We find this pattern in Acts 8:17; 9:17; 19:6.
4. Attend regularly those services in your church where people are being filled with the Spirit. If you do not have a church home, find a place of worship where people do receive the fullness of the Spirit.