

Tool Box Series

Part #2



The Word



Prayer



Water Baptism



Holy Spirit Baptism

Study Outlines

The Word of God

In the beginning God	5
Jesus is the Word	6
Biblical impact	9
Biblical faith	10
Biblical foundation	11
Biblical new birth	13
Biblical growth	14
Biblical teaching	15
Biblical gospel	16
Biblical revelations	19
Biblical weapons	20
Biblical testing	22
Biblical healing	23
Biblical provision	25
Biblical holiness	25
Biblical comfort	26
Biblical understanding	27
Biblical wisdom	31
Biblical guidance	33
Biblical deliverance	34
Biblical zeal	35
Our responsibility	37
Commitment	40

Prayer

The right attitude	42
Hindrances to prayer	42
Sin separates from God	43
Defiled conscience	43
Unforgiveness	44
Strained relationships	45
Double mindedness	45
Hypocrisy & Pride	46
Repeating prayers	47

Flesh vs God	47
We need help	48
The desire to learn	49
Jesus our example	50
Weakness is strength	51
According to scriptures	53
Types of prayer	54
God's courtroom	56
Jesus is our attorney	57
Let us reason together	60
Passion in prayer	62
The warfare begins now	64
Jesus on prayer	68
The 1 st church	68
Paul's prayers	68
Prayers for Ephesians	69
Prayers for Philippians	69
Prayers for Colossians	70
Prayers for Thessalonians	71
Paul to Timothy	72
James on Prayer	72
Old Testament & Psalms	72
Prayer outlines	73
Types of prayer	74
Subjects of prayer	74
Prayer for all nations	74
Praying Bible verses	75
Spiritual warfare	77
Verses for healing	79
Verses for salvation	81

Water Baptism

<u>Introduction</u>	<u>84</u>
<u>Ceremonial purification</u>	<u>85</u>
<u>Reasons for baptism</u>	<u>87</u>
<u>Fulfill all righteousness</u>	<u>87</u>
<u>Jesus commanded it</u>	<u>88</u>
<u>The first church</u>	<u>88</u>
<u>The day of Pentecost</u>	<u>89</u>
<u>Revival in Samaria</u>	<u>89</u>
<u>The Ethiopian eunuch</u>	<u>90</u>
<u>Paul's conversion</u>	<u>92</u>
<u>Cornelius & household</u>	<u>93</u>
<u>Lydia & household</u>	<u>93</u>
<u>The Philippian jailer</u>	<u>94</u>
<u>The Corinthians</u>	<u>95</u>
<u>The Ephesians</u>	<u>95</u>
<u>Re-baptism & formula</u>	<u>96</u>
<u>Prepare for baptism</u>	<u>97</u>
<u>Fruits of repentance</u>	<u>98</u>
<u>Receptive to then Word</u>	<u>99</u>
<u>Must be believers</u>	<u>99</u>
<u>Total submersion</u>	<u>100</u>
<u>Much water</u>	<u>101</u>
<u>Came up from water</u>	<u>101</u>
<u>Down into water</u>	<u>102</u>
<u>Formulas by Apostles</u>	<u>102</u>
<u>To receive the Spirit</u>	<u>103</u>
<u>Relating to Christ</u>	<u>104</u>
<u>Sin is buried</u>	<u>105</u>
<u>Walk in new life</u>	<u>106</u>
<u>Old Testament Types</u>	<u>108</u>
<u>Noah and the Ark</u>	<u>108</u>
<u>Moses at the Red Sea</u>	<u>109</u>
<u>The Laver</u>	<u>111</u>

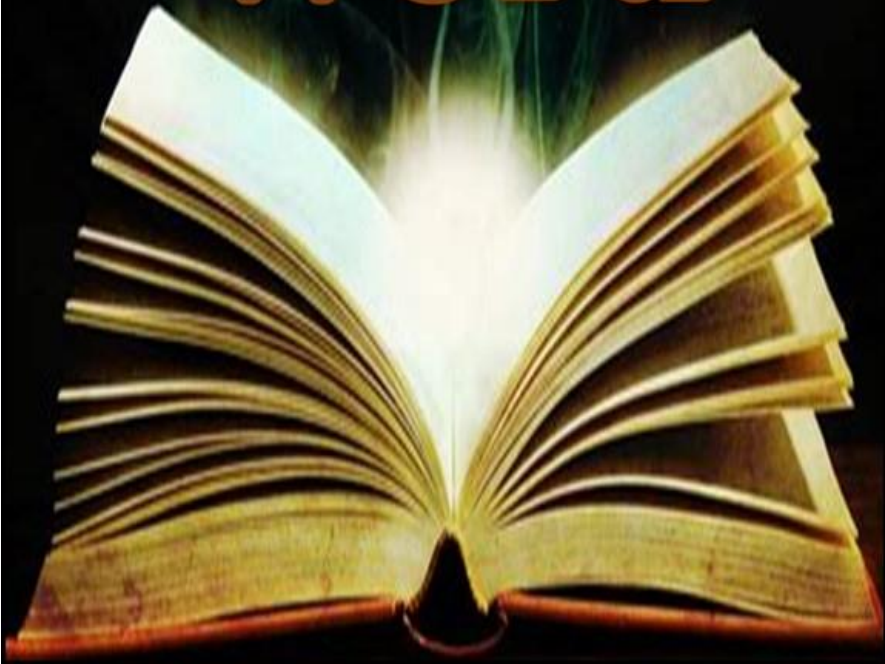
<u>Summary of baptism</u>	<u>114</u>
<u>History after Acts</u>	<u>116</u>

Holy Spirit Baptism

<u>Disclaimer</u>	<u>128</u>
<u>God the Holy Spirit</u>	<u>128</u>
<u>Holy Spirit is a person</u>	<u>129</u>
<u>7-Fold Spirit of God</u>	<u>130</u>
<u>OT Anointing</u>	<u>131</u>
<u>Anointing of priests</u>	<u>132</u>
<u>Tabernacle & utensils</u>	<u>132</u>
<u>Anointing of kings</u>	<u>133</u>
<u>Anointing of prophets</u>	<u>134</u>
<u>A physical appearance</u>	<u>135</u>
<u>Who is Melchizedek?</u>	<u>136</u>
<u>In the New Testament</u>	<u>138</u>
<u>The anointing</u>	<u>139</u>
<u>Jesus the Anointed One</u>	<u>140</u>
<u>Exclusive to the NT</u>	<u>143</u>
<u>A separate experience</u>	<u>145</u>
<u>Distinct from Christ</u>	<u>153</u>
<u>The promise</u>	<u>157</u>
<u>Initial evidence</u>	<u>159</u>
<u>Clarifying tongues</u>	<u>161</u>
<u>Babel vs. Pentecost</u>	<u>163</u>
<u>Tongues are for today</u>	<u>164</u>
<u>Do all speak in tongues?</u>	<u>166</u>
<u>Church order</u>	<u>167</u>
<u>Gifts of the Spirit</u>	<u>173</u>
<u>Fruits of the Spirit</u>	<u>174</u>
<u>Empowerment</u>	<u>175</u>
<u>To Receive</u>	<u>176</u>
<u>Call to Action</u>	<u>181</u>

Tool Box Series

The Word



The Word of God

In the beginning God

The Apostle John wanted to leave a testimony for future generations of all he saw and heard in his experiences with Jesus. He witnessed spectacular miracles, heard previously hidden mysteries, was given prophetic visions of the end times, and had profound insight into the deep things of God. Where would you even begin to describe so many experiences that were so monumental? John started the same way Moses did in the book of Genesis, in the beginning, God. He identified Jesus as God, the creator of all things, and John identified Jesus by his eternal title as the Word of God.

Genesis 1:1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

John 1:1-3, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God." He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.

The writers of Hebrews and Colossians also begin by saying that Jesus is God, creator of the universe, who holds up all things and holds everything together by the Word of his power.

Hebrews 1:2-3 ... has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of

His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power ...

Hebrews 11:3 By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.

Colossians 1:15-17 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

Psalms 33:6 By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the army of heaven by the breath of his mouth.

Jesus is the Word

In John's first written letter, he begins with the same format he used in his gospel, starting with in the beginning. But again, John doesn't refer to Jesus by name but as the Word of God. John's description of the Word has nothing to do with paper and ink but with a person, and one that he saw, heard, and touched. Our attitude toward the Word of God reveals our attitude toward Jesus, whether disdain, neglect, or love.

John 1:14 The Word became flesh, and lived among us. We saw his glory, such glory as of the one and only Son of the Father, full of grace and truth.

That sword is the Word of God, by which he will judge and make war with the nations.

Revelation 19:11-15 Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And **He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war.** His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, **and His name is called The Word of God.** And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. **Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations.**

Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

During Jesus' earthly ministry, when he spoke, his words had an impact unlike anyone before or since because his words are Spirit and life. When we read his words, they can have the same impact on us as they did when Jesus first spoke them. Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and forever, and he is no respecter of persons. What he did for others, he will do for us because there is no favoritism with God.

John 7:46 "No man ever spoke like this Man!"

Hebrews 13:8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

James 1:17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.

John 6:63 "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.

Acts 10:34-35 Then Peter began to speak: "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism, but accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right. (NIV, also Romans 2:11)

Biblical impact

We cannot overemphasize the impact that the scriptures make in our lives. The following list gives us a brief description of some of the different names for the scriptures.

<u>1. Word of GOD.</u>	<u>1 Thessalonians 2:13</u>
<u>2. Word of CHRIST</u>	<u>Colossians 3:16</u>
<u>3. Word of LIFE</u>	<u>Philippians 2:16</u>
<u>4. Word of TRUTH</u>	<u>James 1:18</u>
<u>5. Word of HIS GRACE</u>	<u>Acts 20:32</u>
<u>6. Word of SALVATION</u>	<u>Acts 13: 26</u>
<u>7. Word of RECONCILIATION</u>	<u>2 Corinthians 5:19</u>
<u>8. Word of EXHORTATION</u>	<u>Hebrews 13:22</u>
<u>9. Word of MY PATIENCE</u>	<u>Revelation 3:10</u>
<u>10. Word of RIGHTEOUSNESS</u>	<u>Hebrews 5:13</u>
<u>11. Word of FAITH</u>	<u>Romans 10:8</u>
<u>12. word of HIS POWER</u>	<u>Hebrews 1:3</u>

Biblical faith

The Apostle John gave his motivation for writing the gospel and his letters, and he said that he was writing that we might believe. God wants us to believe in Jesus and grow in faith. When we read the scriptures and hear them preached or taught, we put ourselves in a position to receive faith.

*John 20:30-31, "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: **But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.***

*Romans 10:17, "So then **faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God"***

Jesus used the parable of the Sower to show four different responses that people have in hearing the word of God. Jesus said that 3 out of 4 people who hear the word have no long-term results and produce nothing in their life, and their souls are ultimately lost. However, 1 out of 4 will receive the word and be transformed forever as new creations in Christ. The only



distinction between the hearers on the good ground is differences in fruitfulness in their lives because some produce fruit 100 times more than what they had received, some 60 times, and some 30 times more.

Matthew 13:18-23 "Therefore hear the parable of the Sower: "When anyone **hears the word** of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the **wayside**. "But he who received the seed on **stony places**, this is he who **hears the word** and immediately receives it with joy; "yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For **when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles**. "Now he who received seed **among the thorns** is he who **hears the word**, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful. "But he who received seed on the **good ground** is he who **hears the word** and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a **hundredfold**, some **sixty**, some **thirty**."

Biblical foundation

For all true believers, there is only one authoritative source we can trust and build our lives on as our firm foundation. The word of God is our only rock of stability when everything around us is collapsing. We need the diligence to live by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God as written in the scriptures because everything else is sinking sand.



Matthew 7:24-27 "Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash."

Matthew 4:4 "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'"

2 Timothy 2:19 Nevertheless, God's solid foundation stands firm, sealed with this inscription: "The Lord knows those who are his," and, "Everyone who confesses the name of the Lord must turn away from wickedness."

1 Corinthians 3:10-11 According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it. For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

Biblical new birth

So how important is the Word of God? The eternal destination of our souls is determined by whether we are born again or not. We are born again by the word of God, without which we cannot see the kingdom of God.

***John 3:3** Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, **unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.**"*

***1 Peter 1:23-25** ... **having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever, because "All flesh is as grass, And all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withers, and its flower falls away, But the word of the LORD endures forever."** Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you.*

James 1:18-21** He chose to **give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created ... Therefore, lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.

2 Timothy 3:14-15** But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the **Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

Biblical growth

When we become born again, we have not crossed the finish and have not arrived at the final destination. On the contrary, being born again is only the starting line at the beginning of the race, and we are in a lifelong marathon. As newborn babies in Christ, we start with the milk of the word of God to sustain our spiritual life and growth. As we grow in Christ, we should get off the baby bottle and diapers and grow into maturity, eating strong meat for mature, responsible, committed followers of Christ.



1 Peter 2:1-2 Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby,

1 Corinthians 3:1-2 And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ. I fed you with milk and not with solid food; for until now you were not able to receive it, and even now you are still not able;

Hebrews 5:12-14 In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.

1 Corinthians 13:11 When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

Jeremiah 15:16, "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O Lord God of Hosts."

Biblical teaching

We must base our faith and lives on the scriptures as the final spiritual authority. If any dream, vision, angel, preacher, or experience perverts or disagrees with the scripture, they are false, and we should reject them. If there was ever anyone that could claim they had a legitimate vision from the Lord, it was the Apostle Peter. He saw with his own eyes the actual, historical, flesh and blood Jesus physically transformed before his very eyes. Peter saw Jesus transformed and radiating with glory like the sun, he saw Jesus speaking with Moses and Elijah, and he heard God the Father speaking in an audible voice from heaven. In addition, he had two other witnesses with him, who confirmed what he saw.

That experience is accepted as an indisputable fact without question by all Christians (Matthew 17:1-9). But Peter said we have something more credible, verifiable, and reliable than his experience. And what could that be? The written Word of God.

2 Peter 1:16-21 *We did not follow cleverly invented stories when we told you about the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, **but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty.** For he received honor and glory from God the Father when the voice came to him from the Majestic Glory, saying, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased." We ourselves heard this voice that came from heaven when we were with him on the sacred mountain. **And we have the word of the prophets made more certain, and you will do well to pay attention to it,** as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. **For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.** (NIV)*

Biblical gospel

Some people claim to have a word from God that they received from angels, voices, dreams, visions, and other sources, but what they say is outside the boundaries of the scriptures.



And even if those experiences sound spiritual and come from a respected preacher or leader, if it contradicts the written word of God and the Biblical gospel, all who participate in it are under God's curse.

Galatians 1:8-9 *But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed.*

Revelation 22:18-19 *For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.*

It is sad to see “Christians” who build their house on something other than the word of God. Many sincere people base their lives on dreams, personal prophecies, and home-spun revelations while ignoring what God has plainly said in his written word, the Bible. It is like comparing straw to wheat. Their words are lies and self-delusion.

Jeremiah 23:16-29 *This is what the LORD Almighty says: "Do not listen to what **the prophets** are prophesying to you; they fill you with false hopes. **They speak visions from their own minds, not from the mouth of the LORD ... "I have heard what the prophets say who prophesy lies in my name. They say, 'I had a dream! I had a dream!'** How long will this continue in the hearts of these lying prophets,*

***who prophesy the delusions of their own minds? ...
Let the prophet who has a dream tell his dream, but
let the one who has my word speak it faithfully. For
what has Straw to do with Grain?"***

The previous verses show the importance of daily Bible reading and diligently searching and studying the scriptures. By giving ourselves to learn scripturally based, accurate, and balanced teachings, we will save ourselves and the people we influence.

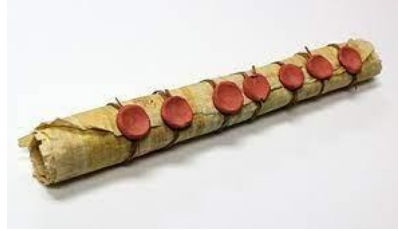
2 Timothy 2:15-16 Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane and idle babblings, for they will increase to more ungodliness.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

1 Timothy 4:13-16, "... devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching. Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through a prophetic message when the body of elders laid their hands on you. Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress. Watch your life and doctrine closely. persevere in them, because if you do, you will SAVE BOTH yourself and your hearers.

Biblical revelations

There are some mysteries in the word of God that are beyond our understanding and will remain mysteries until we enter eternity. Some spiritual



mysteries are hidden from unbelievers and revealed to believers. And, God told prophets Daniel, John, and Paul to keep secret some of the revelations they had seen and heard. So, some prophetic mysteries will remain sealed until they become relevant in fulfilling prophecy. There is no point in struggling to figure out some things until God unfolds them or we risk falling into error.

Matthew 13:13, 16-17 *Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. ... But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, that many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.*

Daniel 12:4 *"But you, Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book until the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase."*

2 Corinthians 12:1-4 *It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. ... How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.*

Revelation 10:4 And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not.

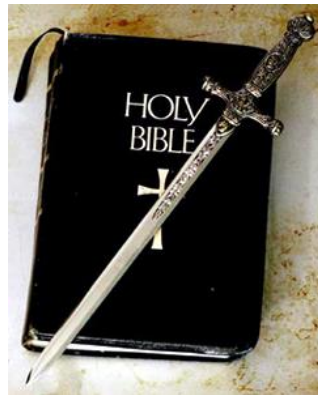
Be careful of accepting revelations by anything that originates outside the written word of God and avoid any speculations or assumptions that can lead to dangerous deceptions. Our concern should be with what we do know and will be held accountable for and not to chase mysteries of things hidden from us.

Proverbs 25:2 It is the glory of God to conceal a matter, But the glory of kings is to search out a matter.

Deuteronomy 29:9 The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.

Biblical weapons

Satan does not sit idle while baby Christians grow to maturity, but he attacks perpetually. We are immediately inducted into God's army and thrown into spiritual warfare. As good soldiers of Christ, we brandish the armor of God and learn to fight in spiritual battles with evil powers and principalities. How do we do that? When Jesus fought the Devil, he used the word of God as a sword, quoting scriptures.



Matthew 4:4 Jesus answered, "**It is written:** 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

Matthew 4:7 Jesus answered him, "**It is also written:** 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

Matthew 4:10 Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! **For it is written:** 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'"

Our weapons are the word of God, which we use to defend ourselves like a shield, and like a sword to attack the strongholds of thoughts that are contrary to the scriptures and take them captive to the word, who is Christ. Then be ready to take revenge on our disobedience with obedience.

Hebrews 4:12 **For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.**

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 **For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.**

*Ephesians 6:12-17 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore, put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with **the belt of truth** buckled around your waist, **with the breastplate of righteousness** in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from **the gospel of peace**. In addition to all this, take up **the shield of faith**, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. **Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.***

Biblical testing

The same word that saves, feeds, and protects us, will also test us to reveal and refine our character. God gave Joseph two prophetic dreams where his father, mother, and ten half-brothers would bow before him. Joseph's brothers were jealous and hated him for the dreams, and they sold him into slavery in Egypt. Joseph spent thirteen years as a prisoner and slave, and it looked like the opposite of God's promise happened to him. For many long years his faith was tested, and Joseph maintained his integrity and held on to the word that God spoke to him.

Psalms 105: 17-19** He sent a man before them-Joseph-who was sold as a slave. They hurt his feet with fetters, **He was laid in irons. Until the time that

his word came to pass, the word of the LORD tested him.

Where that verse says, "He was laid in irons" in the side margins of some Bibles, it reads, "His soul came into iron." There is something that happens during times of testing because we either get bitter or better. Joseph's thirteen years of suffering were a difficult time of testing, but they also put iron in his soul and prepared him to rule and save the world from famine. Times of testing are for our good, and if we refine our character, maintain integrity, and hold on to our faith, they are worth more than gold.

1 Peter 1:6-7 In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,

Malachi 3:2-3 "But who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand when He appears? For He is like a refiner's fire and like launderer's soap. He will sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver; He will purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer to the LORD An offering in righteousness.

Biblical healing

One of the compound names of God is Jehovah Rapha, the Lord our healer or physician (Exodus 15:26). Healing is part of God's character, with a myriad of scriptures that testify to God's willingness and power to heal.

With just one word, God can heal any disease or infirmity.

Psalms 107:20, "He sent his Word and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions."

Matthew 8:5-13, And Jesus said to him, "I will come and heal him." The centurion answered and said, "Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed. ... Then Jesus said to the centurion, "Go your way; and as you have believed, so let it be done for you." And his servant was healed that same hour.

Divine Healing is a central part of the gospel, as expressed by Jesus and the Apostles, which has opened many doors of evangelism and brought multitudes to Christ.

Mark 16:15-17 And he said unto them, go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe ... they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

Acts 4:29-31 "Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word, "by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus." And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.

Biblical provision

The scriptures have provided everything we need for our physical and spiritual lives, not to say we can have whatever we want, but living by faith, we receive what we need.

2 Peter 1:3-4 ... as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises (from the word of God), that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

2 Corinthians 9:8 And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work.

Biblical holiness

God is serious about holiness, and Jesus died not just to save the church but to sanctify, cleanse, and wash it with the word so that his bride would be holy and without blemish.

We should be holy and separate from sin if we want to be the bride of Christ and see the Lord.

Ephesians 5:25-27 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.

Psalms 119:9, 11, 101 How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word. ... Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You! I have restrained my feet from every evil way, That I may keep Your word.

1 John 3:2-3 Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

Hebrews 12:14 Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord:

Biblical comfort

The word of God brings us great comfort, knowing that the present sufferings will pass away, and the God of all comfort will receive us into his glorious kingdom. We will have a resurrection body, no more pain, sickness, or suffering, and live in a paradise with the fullness of joy beyond human comprehension in the presence of God.

1 Thessalonians 4:15-18 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus

*we shall always be with the Lord. **Therefore comfort one another with these words.***

Psalms 119:50, " This is my comfort in my affliction, For Your word has given me life.

2 Corinthians 1:3-4 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.

Psalm 16:11 You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

Biblical understanding

Whenever the religious leaders came against Jesus with trick theological questions designed to discredit him, he routinely embarrassed them by questioning their scriptural context, knowledge, and understanding. In the following verses, Jesus repeatedly asked, "**have you not read?**" Bringing into question their lack of scriptural perception. Finally, after suffering numerous humiliations at the hands of Jesus, the religious leaders dared not ask him any more questions.

Matthew 21:42 Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures: 'The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone. This was the LORD'S doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes'?" (Mark12:10)

Matthew 12: 2-5 *And when the Pharisees saw it, they said to Him, "Look, your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath!" But He said to them, "Have you not read what David did when he was hungry, he and those who were with him: "how he entered the house of God and ate the showbread which was not lawful for him to eat, nor for those who were with him, but only for the priests? "Or have you not read in the law that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and are blameless?"*

Matthew 19:4 *And He answered and said to them, "Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning 'made them male and female,'*

Matthew 21:15-16 *But when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that He did, and the children crying out in the temple and saying, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" they were indignant and said to Him, "Do You hear what these are saying?" And Jesus said to them, "Yes. Have you never read, 'Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants You have perfected praise'?"*

Matthew 22:29-34 *Jesus answered and said to them, "You are mistaken, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God. "For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels of God in heaven. "But concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God, saying, 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'?"*

*God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. "But as touching the resurrection of the dead, **have ye not read** that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." And when the multitudes heard this, they were astonished at His teaching. But when the Pharisees heard that **He had silenced the Sadducees**, they gathered together. (Mark 12:23-27)*

***Matthew 22:41-46** While the Pharisees were gathered together, **Jesus asked them, saying, "What do you think about the Christ? Whose Son is He?"** They said to Him, "The Son of David." He said to them, (quoting from Psalm 110:1), "**How then does David in the Spirit call Him 'Lord,'** saying: 'The LORD said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool'"? "**If David then calls Him 'Lord,' how is He his Son?"** **And no one was able to answer Him a word, nor from that day on did anyone dare question Him anymore.** (Mark 12:34, Luke 20:40)*

Even after Jesus' death and resurrection, he appeared and asked his disciples questions testing their scriptural understanding regarding his suffering, death, and resurrection. The following verses describe a conversation between Jesus and two of his disciples just after his resurrection. Jesus met them as they walked and conversed about his death on the cross, but he hid his identity from them.

Luke 24:16-19 *But their eyes were restrained, so that they did not know Him (Jesus). And He said to them, "What kind of conversation is this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?" Then the one whose name was Cleopas answered and said to Him, "Are You the only stranger in Jerusalem, and have You not known the things which happened there in these days?" And He said to them, "What things?" So, they said to Him, "The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people,*

After listening to the disciple's narrative of events and how they were slow to believe the scriptures regarding his suffering and resurrection, he expounded to them the scriptures regarding himself.

Luke 24:25-27 *Then He said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! "Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?" And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.*

After the disciples recognized Jesus, he vanished, and they remarked how their hearts were burning while Jesus opened the scriptures to them.

Luke 24:30-32 *Now it came to pass, as He sat at the table with them, that He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were*

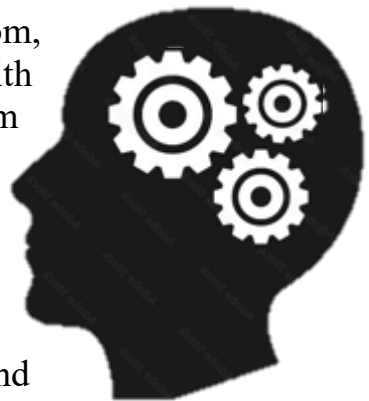
opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight. And they said to one another, "Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?"

Later, while the two disciples reported their experiences to the other disciples, Jesus appeared again. You can guess the topic of Jesus' conversation with them. Jesus opened their eyes to understand how he fulfilled the scriptures written about himself.

Luke 24:44-46 Then He said to them, "These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me." And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures. Then He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day,

Biblical wisdom

There are different types of wisdom, like human wisdom that comes with experience and age, another is from evil and demonic influences, and then there is God's divine wisdom. Which would you prefer to follow? Whatever mindset you choose to follow will control the direction of your life for time and eternity.



Do we take counsel from decades of human experience, a fallen worldly philosophy, or from the eternal creator of the universe who is all knowing, all wise, and omnipresent? Using God's wisdom through his word makes us wise for salvation, gives us understanding, and makes us wiser than all our enemies, teachers, and elders.

1 Corinthians 1:19-25 ... "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent." Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

2 Timothy 3:14-17 But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

Proverbs 3:5-8 Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the LORD and depart from evil. It will be health to your flesh, And strength to your bones.

Psalms 119:98-100 You, through Your commandments, make me wiser than my enemies; For they are ever with me. I have more understanding than all my teachers, For Your testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the ancients, Because I keep Your precepts.

Colossians 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

Biblical guidance

The word of God is a lamp to guide us in the darkness and show us which directions to take in our lives. If we are well versed in the scriptures, as we go through each day, we will have different verses come to our mind to guide our decisions and all our social interactions.



Psalms 119:105, 133, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" ... "Order my steps in thy word."

Isaiah 30:21 Your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, "This is the way, walk in it," Whenever you turn to the right hand or whenever you turn to the left.

Proverbs 3:5-6 Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.

Biblical deliverance

In life, we can find ourselves in situations where we feel trapped and helpless. And sometimes, we are trapped by our bad decisions because we ignore the counsel that comes from the word of God. If we are taken hostage to our bad choices or other outside influences, our only way out of trouble, conflict, or debt may be to return to obedience to the word of God and the Holy Spirit. We may get a spanking, but compliance with the scriptures will lead to our ultimate deliverance and freedom.

Hebrews 12:5-7 And you have forgotten that word of encouragement that addresses you as sons: "My son, do not make light of the Lord's discipline, and do not lose heart when he rebukes you, because the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son." Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father?

Proverbs 5:11-14 At the end of your life you will groan, when your flesh and body are spent. You will say, "How I hated discipline! How my heart spurned correction! I would not obey my teachers or listen to my instructors. I have come to the brink of utter ruin in the midst of the whole assembly."

Psalms 119:153-154, 170 Consider mine affliction, and deliver me: for I do not forget thy law. ... Plead my cause, and deliver me: quicken me according to thy word. ... "Let my supplication come before thee: deliver me according to thy word."

Biblical zeal

If you asked some Christians for a description of zeal, you would get an answer that includes revival meetings in the church, with fiery preachers shouting, jumping around, long altar calls, and claims of the fire of God. But scriptural zeal is based on knowledge and obedience to the word of God, especially in the face of opposition. Jesus demonstrated the zeal of God when he purged the money makers out of the temple to fulfill the scriptures. We need that type of zeal today.

John 2:15-17 (speaking of Jesus) So he made a whip out of cords, and drove all from the temple area, both sheep and cattle; he scattered the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. To those who sold doves he said, "Get these out of here! How



dare you turn my Father's house into a market!" His disciples remembered that it is written: "Zeal for your house will consume me."

Psalms 119:39 My zeal has consumed me, because my enemies have forgotten Your words.

Romans 10:2 For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.

The fire of God's zeal consumes us to speak out against sin and stand for God at a high personal cost or harm. God endowed prophets like Jeremiah with voices like a fire burning the wood, hay, and straw of sin, but afterward, they paid a severe price for their words.

The apostle Paul had the same dilemma as Jeremiah, he had to preach, but his preaching always came at a cost. Jeremiah and Paul are good role models of zeal to preach God's uncompromising word.

Jeremiah 20:8-9, (Jeremiah speaking) For when I spoke, I cried out; I shouted, "Violence and plunder!" Because the word of the LORD was made to me A reproach and a derision daily. Then I said, "I will not make mention of Him, nor speak anymore in His name." But His word was in my heart like a burning fire Shut up in my bones; I was weary of holding it back, And I could not.

1 Corinthians 9:16-17 (Paul speaking) For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for necessity is laid upon me; yes, woe is me if I do not preach the gospel! For if I do this willingly, I have a reward; but if against my will, I have been entrusted with a stewardship.

The disciples were blessed when Jesus opened the scriptures to them after his resurrection. Their hearts were burning with the fiery zeal of the Holy Spirit for the word of God.

Luke 24:32 And they said to one another, "Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?"

Our responsibility

Before Jesus ascended to heaven, he commanded his followers to go, teach, and make disciples, or disciplined believers, who would go and repeat the discipleship process. The Apostle Paul said to teach faithful people who would teach others also.

Matthew 28:19-20 (Jesus, speaking) "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, "teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

2Timothy 2:1-2 (Paul, speaking) You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

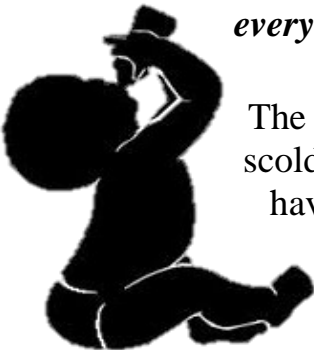
Also, we should not depend totally on the Pastor or teachers to feed us the word of God. The Holy Spirit writes his laws directly on the hearts of each believer. We should be diligent students of the word of God and be capable of feeding ourselves.

That's what mature adults do. Paul commended the Berean believers for fact-checking him to verify that his teachings were correctly derived from the scriptures.

2 Timothy 2:15 Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.

Hebrews 8:10-11 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.

Acts 17:10-11 As soon as it was night, the brothers sent Paul and Silas away to Berea. On arriving there, they went to the Jewish synagogue. Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.



The writer of the book of Hebrews scolded them because, when they should have grown into spiritual maturity, eating the meat of the word, they were still spiritual infants, drinking spiritual milk from a baby bottle.

Every believer in Christ should be able to teach the basics of the faith. The way to grow is through spiritual exercise and repetitious use. When we study, teach, and share the word with others, our faith grows, our confidence grows, our knowledge of the word grows, and we grow spiritually. It's like a weight lifting regiment, starting with light weights and working out consistently, and over time we get stronger and increase to lifting heavier weights. We go from weak to strong by continuous use of our spiritual muscles.



Hebrews 5:11-14 ... of whom we have much to say, and hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. For though by this time, you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

Hebrews 6:1-3 Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again **the foundation**

of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead and of eternal judgment.

Commitment

We eat and drink every day, and if we miss a few meals, we feel like we are starving. In the same way, in our spiritual life, we need our spiritual food and drink daily. And in our Bible reading, we need to read from Genesis to Revelation, every single word. Many believers commit to reading the Bible daily and reading from cover to cover in one year, every year.

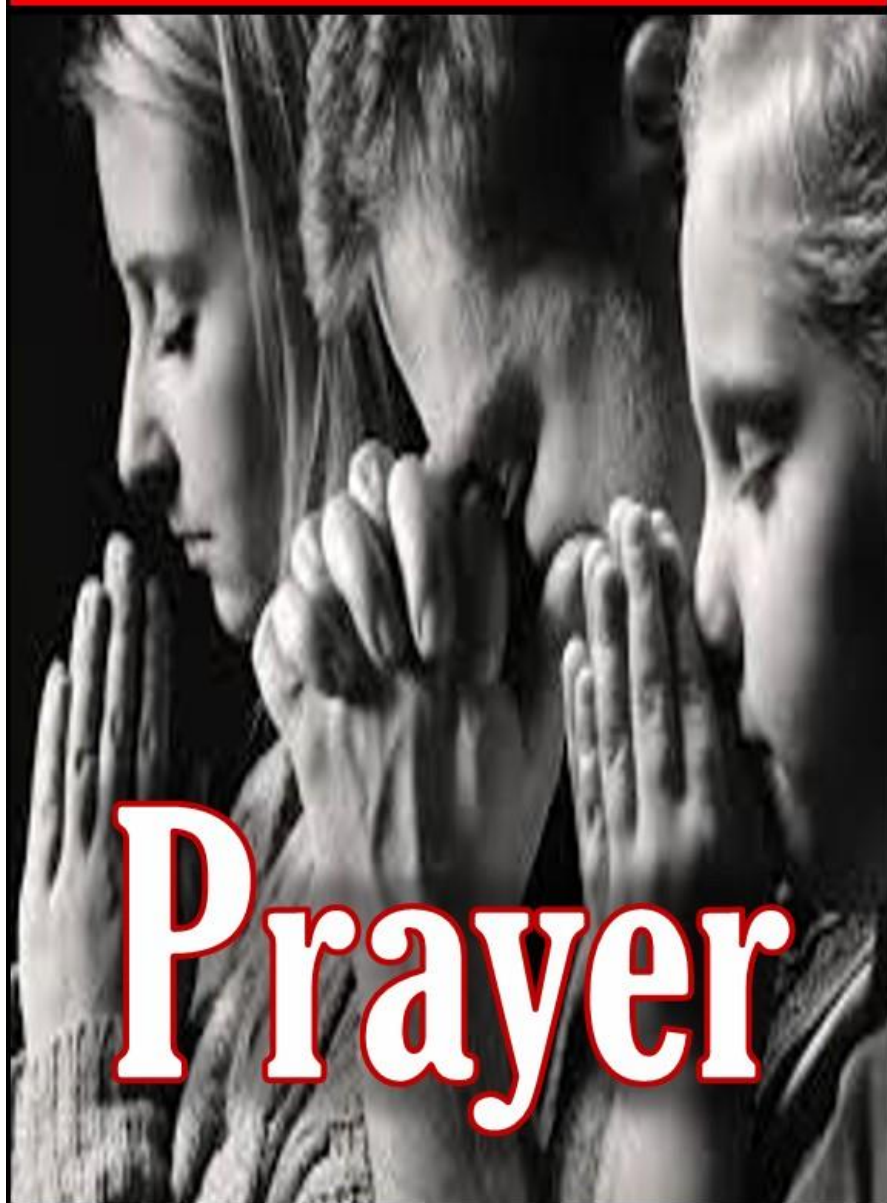
***Matthew 6:11** Give us this day our **daily bread**.*

***Matthew 4:4** But He answered and said, "It is written, '**Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.**'"*

Job 23:12** I have not departed from the commandment of His lips; **I have treasured the words of His mouth More than my necessary food.

***Acts 2:42-46** They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer ... Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts,*

Tool Box Series



Prayer

The right attitude

Before we pray to God, we must have the correct attitude and understanding of who he is and who we are. God is vastly superior to anything our mortal minds can fathom because his holiness, power, and wisdom are beyond human comprehension. Therefore, we should approach God with humility, sincerity, and reverence, knowing that we are undeserving and unworthy and our only access to God is through his mercy, forgiveness, and grace.

1 Peter 5:5-6 ... All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble." Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time.

Isaiah 57:15 For thus says the High and Lofty One Who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: "I dwell in the high and holy place, with him who has a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.

Hindrances to prayer

Prayer brings life to our relationship with God, and we must make every effort to enter his presence under the right conditions. Many obstacles make our prayers ineffective or just plain worthless. If we know what displeases God, we can make changes and increase the chances of entering his presence and having our prayers heard and answered. The following is a list of hindrances to prayer.

Sin separates from God

By far, sin is the biggest obstacle that can kill our prayers, except when we pray for forgiveness and mercy. If anyone is living in unrepentant sins, all their prayers are offensive to God until they sincerely repent and put away their sin.

Psalms 66:18-20 If I regard iniquity in my heart, The Lord will not hear. But certainly, God has heard me; He has attended to the voice of my prayer. Blessed be God, who has not turned away my prayer, Nor His mercy from me!

Proverbs 15:8 The LORD detests the sacrifice of the wicked, but the prayer of the upright pleases him.

Proverbs 15:29 The LORD is far from the wicked but he hears the prayer of the righteous.

Proverbs 28:9 If anyone turns a deaf ear to the law, even his prayers are detestable.

Defiled conscience

Similar to the sin problem is the aftermath of sin, which is a guilty conscience. The only remedy is to confess our sins and ask for forgiveness and cleansing by the blood of Jesus. We must expose, renounce, and confess our sins to God and ask Jesus to cleanse our conscience so we may pray with faith and confidence.

1 Timothy 3:9 ... holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience.

*1 John 1:7 But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and **the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin** ... If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to **forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.***

*Hebrews 9:14 ... how much more shall **the blood of Christ**, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, **cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?***

Unforgiveness

If we harbor unforgiveness towards others, God will not forgive our sins. If we hold onto anger and hatred and are unwilling to forgive, our prayers will not be heard or answered. First, as much as possible, we need to reconcile and forgive those who have offended or hurt us.

*Luke 11:2-4 He said to them, "When you pray, say: "Father, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come. Give us each day our daily bread. **Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us.** And lead us not into temptation. "'*

*Mark 11:25, 26 "And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, **forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses.***

Strained relationships

If we are offended and bitter in any relationship, our conscience will be clouded, and our prayers will be hindered. We need to go to that person and set things right, ask for forgiveness and reconciliation.

Matthew 5:23-24 "Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. **First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift.**

1 Peter 3:7 Husbands, likewise, dwell with them (wives) with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, **that your prayers may not be hindered.**

Double mindedness

When we are double-minded, divided between serving God and serving sin, we will not receive any answers to our prayers. You cannot serve two masters; we must choose one or the other.

Luke 16:11-13 So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches? And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else's property, who will give you property of your own? **"No servant can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money."**

James 1:6-8 But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. ***That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all he does.***

James 4:8 Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and ***purify your hearts, you double-minded.***

Hypocrisy & Pride

Jesus was clear that the prayers of the hypocrites were only for show, to receive the praise of man. Prayers for self-promotion, recognition, and religious theatre will only increase the sentence of judgment against religious frauds.

Matthew 6:5-7 "And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners ***to be seen by men.*** I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. ***But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words.***

Matthew 24:51 And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: ***there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.***

Repeating prayers

Religious people mindlessly repeat prayers written by others, they speak with their mouths, but their hearts are far from God. They think that denominational, professionally prepared prayers read off verbally by rote in mindless repetition will find favor with God, but those prayers have no value or merit.

***Luke 20:46-47** "Beware of the teachers of the law. They like to walk around in flowing robes and love to be greeted in the marketplaces and have the most important seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at banquets. They devour widows' houses and for a show make lengthy prayers. Such men will be punished most severely."*

***Matthew 6:7** "And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words."*

Flesh vs God

Sometimes we don't know what to pray for or how to pray. If you have what you might consider an emergency, it may seem obvious how to direct your prayers. That is potentially one of the biggest problems we have in prayer. Because, what we want for ourselves, may not be what God wants for us. In other words, God's will may cross our will. As Jesus faced the cross, He prayed and was sweating big drops of blood, saying not my will, but thy will, be done. Jesus, soaked with blood, sweat, and tears, said the spirit was willing, but the flesh was weak. We all have the same weakness, that is, our flesh.

Matthew 26:38-41 *Then He said to them, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me." He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will." ... "Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."*

James 4:1-3 *Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members? You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures.*

Romans 8:5-8 *For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For the mind of the flesh is death, but the mind of the Spirit is life and peace; because the mind of the flesh is hostile towards God; for it is not subject to God's law, neither indeed can it be. Those who are in the flesh can't please God.*

We need help

We just saw a long list of hindrances, which only points to why prayer can be a struggle or battle. There are so many things that either keep us from praying or from praying effectively. Even when we have the right attitudes, motives, relationships, and a strong desire to pray, we still fall short in our strength.

The Bible tells us that we have weaknesses in prayer and that everyone needs help. Real prayer is not just words but dependence on God, not only for answers, but for the prayer itself.

***John 14:26** But the Counselor, **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.*

***Romans 8:26-27** In the same way, **the Spirit helps us in our weakness**. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but **the Spirit himself intercedes for us** with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because **the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will**.*

***Ephesians 6:18** And **pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests**. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.*

***Jude 1:20** ... dear friends, build yourselves up in your most holy faith and **pray in the Holy Spirit**.*

The desire to learn

The disciples of Jesus were Jewish; they had observed and practiced their religion from birth. They had seen many "holy men" pray and had participated in the annual Jewish feasts and ceremonies that repeated the same prayers from the Psalms and other scriptures for centuries.

As religious Jews, the disciples of Jesus had seen, heard, and learned all about prayer but had never seen anyone pray like Jesus. The disciples must have been so impressed by all the unbelievable miracles, healings, and teaching revelations, and they asked plenty of questions about parables, the destruction of Jerusalem, and the end times. But the only thing they specifically asked Jesus to train them to do, was prayer.

Luke 11:1-10 "And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.

Jesus our example

The most powerful way that Jesus taught his disciple's regarding prayer was the living example they saw in him. There were times in Jesus' ministry that they were so busy they had no time to eat, and at the end of the day, late at night, when the disciples were exhausted and went to sleep, Jesus would go out by himself and pray ALL NIGHT. The physical stamina required for his rigorous life of prayer was nothing less than a display of the power of God. No doubt that watching Jesus pray made a permanent impact on the disciples. Jesus was a living and breathing example of total obedience, dependence, and communion with the Father.

John 5:19 Jesus gave them this answer: "I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does.

John 5:30 *By myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me.*

Matthew 14:23 *And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone.*

Luke 6:12-13 *And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles;*

Mark 1:35 *And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.*

Mark 6:46-47 *And when he had sent them away, he departed into a mountain to pray. And when even was come, the ship was in the midst of the sea, and he alone on the land.*

Luke 5:15-16 *But so much the more went there a fame abroad of him: and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by him of their infirmities. And he withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed.*

Weakness is strength

The apostle Paul was also a role model of dependence on God. Paul said when I am weak, I am strong in Christ.

The rich and powerful can peddle money and influence to deal with their problems. But the weak and poor are desperate and depend on God as their only hope, so they urgently and passionately cry out to God for help.

***2 Corinthians 12:7-10** To keep me from becoming conceited because of these surpassingly great revelations, there was given me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my **power is made perfect in weakness.**" Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me.*

***James 2:5** Listen, my dear brothers: Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him?*

***2 Chronicles 16:7-9** ... For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him.*

***James 5:16-18** ... and pray for one another, that you may be healed. **The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.** Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and **he prayed earnestly** that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit.*

According to scriptures

To discern the will of God when we pray, we should find a Bible verse that fits our situation and pray in harmony with the scriptures. Quoting verses in prayer, when taken in context, assures us that we are praying for the will of God. If quoting verses becomes our regular practice, we will memorize more of the Bible, and our prayers will be more powerful.

Daniel 9:2-3 ... I, Daniel, understood from the Scriptures, according to the word of the LORD given to Jeremiah the prophet, that the desolation of Jerusalem would last seventy years. So, I turned to the Lord God and pleaded with him in prayer and petition, in fasting, and in sackcloth and ashes.

Hebrews 11:3 By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.

Hebrews 1:2-3 ... has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power,

2 Peter 3:2-7 that you may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior ... For this they willfully forget: that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the

*earth standing out of water and in the water, by which the world that then existed perished, being flooded with water. **But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word**, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.*

2 Timothy 2:15** Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, **rightly dividing the word of truth.

Types of prayer

In the Old Testament temple, the priest would burn incense daily as part of their service to God. God instructed Moses to make incense with four different ingredients in equal amounts, without any variation or imitations. Burning incense is symbolic of prayer and identifies four types of prayer and the balance needed in our prayers.

***Exodus 30:34-35** And the LORD said to Moses: "Take sweet spices, **stacte** and **onycha** and **galbanum**, and **pure frankincense** with these sweet spices; **there shall be equal amounts of each.** "You shall make of these an incense, a compound according to the art of the perfumer, salted, pure, and holy.*

***Rev 8:3-4** Another angel, who had a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much **incense to offer, with the prayers of all the saints**, on the golden altar before the throne. The smoke of the incense, together with the prayers of the saints, went up before God from the angel's hand.*

***Psalms 141:2** Let my prayer be set before you like incense; the lifting up of my hands like the evening sacrifice.*

There were four ingredients to the incense, and the Apostle Paul also mentioned four types of prayer, **request (or supplications), prayers, intercessions, and giving thanks**. There should be equal amounts, or a balance, between the different kinds of prayers. One aspect of a balanced prayer life is that it creates variations so that we don't get stuck in a rut and pray the same routine every time. Prayer should not become boring, monotonous, or repetitious.

***1 Timothy 2:1-4** I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.*

***1 Corinthians 14:14-15** For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful. So what shall I do? I will **pray with my spirit**, but I will also **pray with my mind**; I will **sing with my spirit**, but I will also **sing with my mind**.*

***Ephesians 5:19-20** Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, **singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord**; Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;*

Note: Questions about praying in the Spirit, or speaking in tongues, are answered in the book “Holy Spirit Baptism.”

God’s courtroom

Jesus used the example of a persistent widow pestering, nagging, and begging a judge as an example of the attitude that gets answers to prayer. We should be relentless in bringing our petitions before God the great judge until He answers our prayers.

***Luke 18:1-7** Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them **that they should always pray and not give up**. He said: "In a certain town **there was a judge** who neither feared God nor cared about men. And **there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him** with the plea, '**Grant me justice against my adversary**.' "For some time, he refused. But finally, he said to himself, 'Even though I don't fear God or care about men, yet **because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won't eventually wear me out with her coming!**'" And the Lord said, "Listen to what the unjust judge says. And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? I tell you; **he will see that they get justice, and quickly**. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?"*

Ultimately, as we bring our petitions in prayer, we enter God's courtroom and make our case before God, the judge of all. One example would be how Abraham made intercession.

Once God revealed that he would destroy Sodom, immediately, Abraham interceded with God on behalf of his nephew Lot. Abraham, like an attorney, presented the case for Lot's rescue by appealing to God's justice, saying, surely you will not destroy the righteous with the wicked. Shall not the judge of all the earth do what is right? Abraham respectfully made his plea for Lot, and God granted his petition and sent two angels to save Lot from destruction.

*Genesis 18:25 "Far be it from You to do such a thing as this, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous should be as the wicked; far be it from You! Shall not **the Judge of all the earth** do, right?"*

Jesus is our attorney

We have a better intercessor than Abraham, Jesus is the one who represents us before the Father, and he has purchased our pardon with his blood. And now he ever lives to make intercession for us and present our case before the Father.

*John 2:1 My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, **we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:***

*1 Timothy 2:5 For there is one God, and **one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;***

Hebrews 7:24 But He, because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood. Therefore, He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to

*God through Him, since **He** always lives to make **intercession** for them.*

We have an adversary, an accuser, and a slanderer who wants to destroy us, and he is like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. He is like a prosecuting attorney who continuously persecutes the righteous, which is why prayer is always a battle.

1 Peter 5:8** Be sober, be vigilant; because **your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.

Revelation 12:9-10** So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for **the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God, day and night, has been cast down.

One day the accuser will be cast out of heaven, but for now, we have to battle his army in prayer. But God has equipped us with superior weapons, and we have the victory in Christ.

2 Corinthians 10:3-6** For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For **the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every

thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled.

Ephesians 6:12-18 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places ... praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints.

The Bible paints a picture of the type of battles taking place in heavenly realms when we pray. Daniel had visions from the Lord, and when he prayed to receive an understanding of the visions, God dispatched the angel Gabriel to give him insight. But as Gabriel was on his way to talk to Daniel, he encountered resistance from ruling fallen angels that exercised dominion over the empire of Persia. These principalities and wicked powers battled with Gabriel for 21 days while Daniel prayed. Finally Michael, one of the chief princes among God's angels, came and helped Gabriel so that he could appear to Daniel. After delivering the message to Daniel, Gabriel would return to battle the spiritual wickedness over Persia again but pointed to future conflicts with the coming empire of Greece.

Daniel 10:12-20 Then he said to me, "Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words. "But the prince of the

kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia. "Now I have come to make you understand what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision refers to many days yet to come." ... Then he said, "Do you know why I have come to you? And now I must return to fight with the prince of Persia; and when I have gone forth, indeed the prince of Greece will come.

Let us reason together

Regarding prayer, we have seen terms that relate to making your case in court or using military tactics and strategies to win a victory. That points to the fact that we must be diligent, study the word, prepare and fight with our arguments from the written word, and present our case before God the judge.

Isaiah 1:18 "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD:

The Hebrew word translated here as "reason" literally means to: argue, decide, dispute, judge, plead, and rebuke. In other words, God says, "come let us argue, come let us decide, come let us dispute, come let us judge, come let us plead, and come let us rebuke, with each other." To do all that, we need to use all our reasoning and rationalization skills. That's part of loving God with all our hearts, minds, soul, and strength. These meetings are not just light or frivolous chats but pivotal interventions. When Job was in affliction and assailed by the accusations of the slanderer Satan and his friends, he was like a lawyer, ready to present

his case in court before God:

Job 13:15-18 "Though He slay me, I will hope in Him, Nevertheless I will argue my ways before Him (to his face). Behold now, I have prepared my case. I know that I will be vindicated.

Also, we must be ready to take our prayers into the battle with the Satanic powers. Our armory of weapons is the scriptures that we use as arrows to shoot down and defeat our enemies. The sword of the Spirit is the word of God that we use to cast down every stronghold of the Devil with logical, rational, and intelligent arguments by the inspiration and the power of the Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 6:10-18 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith with which, you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; praying always with all prayer and supplication in

the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints.

2 Corinthians 10:3-6 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled.

Passion in prayer

God is not obsessed with form and substance but looks at our hearts and sees our emotions. If we mouth prayers with our lips, but our hearts are far from God, he will not hear us.

Matthew 15:7-9 "Hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy about you, saying: 'These people draw near to Me with their mouth, and honor Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.'"

As always, Jesus is our example, and nobody ever prayed with the same emotion as Jesus, and his burden was so heavy that when he prayed, he was sweating drops of blood.

Luke 22:44-46 And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground. When He rose up from prayer, and had come to His disciples, He

*found them sleeping from sorrow. Then He said to them, "Why do you sleep? **Rise and pray, lest you enter into temptation.**"*

Elijah was another example of fervent and passionate prayer. Elijah prayed, and it did not rain for three and a half years, and when he prayed again, heavy rain fell and ended the drought.

***James 5:14-18** The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much. Elijah was a man with a nature like ours (subject to like passions as we are), and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit.*

Elijah's prayers were passionate, powerful, and to the point. Elijah challenged the prophets of Baal to a prayer contest, they would set up an altar with a sacrifice and call on God, and the God who answered by fire would be the winner and recognized as the only true God. The prophets of Baal prayed all day, and nothing happened. Elijah had them dig a trench around the sacrifice and drench it with water three times so that the trench filled with water. Elijah stepped up and prayed a few words, and the fire came down.

1Kings 18:36-39** And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, **LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy

servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the LORD God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again. Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, he is the God; the LORD, he is the God.

The warfare begins now

We already saw how Jesus battled with the flesh and the Devil and how Daniel's prayers impacted angelic wars in heaven. When we pray, unseen things happen in spiritual realms. Prayer is a fierce battle, and every time we set out to pray, something will happen or enter our minds to take us on a detour away from prayer. Our flesh does not want to pray and would choose to do anything else like eat, or watch videos, and the "to do" list will flash into our minds. There is a reason all that happens, prayer is a war, and many times, the hardest part is getting started.

The primary objective of the antichrist is to take away the daily sacrifice, which will happen in the temple during the great tribulation. The antichrist is not here, but the spirit of the antichrist is already in the world, and that demonic spirit wants to extinguish all daily prayers and pervert the truth.

1 John 4:2-3 ... but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world.

Daniel 8:11-12 *It set itself up to be as great as the Prince of the host; it took away the daily sacrifice from him, and the place of his sanctuary was brought low. Because of rebellion, the host of the saints and the daily sacrifice were given over to it. It prospered in everything it did, and truth was thrown to the ground.*

Unlike any time in history, we need to pray now more than ever, and our destiny may depend on it. The whole earth will be deceived in the end times by the antichrist. Of course, global deception couldn't happen. Right? That would be like saying that the entire planet would lock themselves inside their houses, and close churches, businesses, and schools, under a medical tyranny. Or that a global mandate would force healthy people to wear masks and take untested experimental vaccines for a flu virus created in a lab that would kill less than one percent of the people, but the cure, the vaccine would kill or make infertile untold millions. Deception like that could never happen on a global scale, could it?

The Bible tells us that far, far, far worse things are coming, and Jesus is coming for those who battle to restrain the antichrist from coming forward. And Jesus also tells us to pray that we are considered worthy to escape that time.

2 Thessalonians 2:4-7 *(speaking of the antichrist). He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God. And now you know what is holding him back,*

*so that he may be revealed at the proper time. For the secret power of lawlessness is already at work; **but the one who now holds it back will continue to do so till he is taken out of the way.***

Luke 21:34-36 "But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly. "For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth. "Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man."

Again, we are thrown to our knees, realizing we cannot fight these battles in our strength and it is only by the Holy Spirit that we can rise to this pivotal time on the prophetic clock. We need the Holy Spirit and the Spirit of prayer in continual communion with God. One attribute of the Holy Spirit is called the Spirit of grace and supplication, or grace and prayer, which references a set time with the Jews. But we also have access to the same Spirit of grace in prayer through the Holy Spirit.

Romans 8:26-27 In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will.

Zechariah 12:10 "And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication. They will look on me, the one they have pierced, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for him as one grieves for a firstborn son.

Are you ready for the battle? It's time to develop a strategy. The enemy wants to take away daily prayer, so the top priority should be to set a daily time for prayer. We saw that Jesus prayed all the time, and Daniel prayed three times a day, consistently, even when they made a law against praying. The only way to be consistent is to schedule a time and make it a habit. From this point, the focus is on providing information to help make a game plan, strategy, and marching orders to enter the battlefield.

This study only covered a few aspects of prayer because prayer is not a destination where you arrive and are finished. Prayer is meant to be a lifestyle of continuous communion with God and is a journey whereby we grow and have new experiences with God every day of our life. Since prayer represents an intimate personal relationship with God, each individual will be unique in how they commune with God. Therefore, canned prayer programs and outlines may be fruitful in intercession and group prayers but cannot be a substitute for sincere, passionate, heartfelt conversations with God. For that reason, we provide a little information for each person to process, filter, and implement into their prayers as the Holy Spirit guides them.

Next, we will see an outline of what Jesus said about prayer, and then we will look at examples from the first church and letters to the churches.

Jesus on prayer

Pray for enemies	Matthew 5:44
Don't pray to be seen of men	Matthew 6:5, 6
Don't use vain repetitions	Matthew 6:7
An outline for prayer	Matthew 6:9 -13
Pray for workers in the harvest	Matthew 9:38
Pray in trials	Matthew 26:41
Pray in faith	Mark 11:24
Perseverance in prayer	Luke 18:1-8
Humility in prayer	Luke 18:9-14
Prayer for disciples	John 17:6-19
Prayer for all believers	John 17:20-26

The 1st Church

Prayer to appoint a new apostle	Acts 1:24
Prayer for boldness	Acts 4:23-31
Prayer to appoint deacons	Acts 6:6
Prayed to receive the Holy Spirit	Acts 8:15
Prayed to send out missionaries	Acts 13:1-3
Prayed to appoint elders	Acts 14:23

Paul's prayers

The apostle Paul's letters to the churches were to encourage, rebuke, and instruct, but they also revealed his prayers for the various churches, which are relevant today for us, and we should use them in our prayers. The following is a list of prayers for the saints and churches.

Prayers for Ephesians

Ephesians 1:15-19, Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power,

Ephesians 6:18-20 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

Prayers for Philippians

Philippians 1:3-6 I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with joy, for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;

Philippians 4:6-7 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts

and minds through Christ Jesus.

Philippians 1:8-11 And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment, that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

Prayers for Colossians

Colossians 1:3, 9-13 We give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, ... For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy; giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light. He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,

Colossians 4:2-4 Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving; meanwhile praying also for us, that God would open to us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in chains, that I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak.

Colossians 4:12 Epaphras, who is one of you, a bondservant of Christ, greets you, **always laboring fervently for you in prayers, that you may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.**

Prayers for Thessalonians

1 Thessalonians 5:17-18 Pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus

2 Thessalonians 1:11-12 Therefore we also pray always for you that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of His goodness and the work of faith with power, that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Thessalonians 2:16-17 Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and our God and Father, who has loved us and given us everlasting consolation and good hope by grace, comfort your hearts and establish you in every good word and work.

1 Thessalonians 5:22-25 Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it. Brethren, pray for us.

2 Thessalonians 3:1-3 Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may run swiftly and be glorified, just as it is with you, and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men; for not all have faith. But

the Lord is faithful, who will establish you and guard you from the evil one.

Paul to Timothy

1 Timothy 2:1-4 I exhort supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

James on Prayer

James 5:13-17 Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any sick among you? pray over him, the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he has committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.

Old Testament & Psalms

The Old Testament has prayers from beginning to end, but the best examples are in the book of Psalms, which is a collection of prayers and songs. We will not outline the Psalms for you, but if you read five Psalms a day, you will read all the Psalms in a month. David and the other psalmist were very emotional and dramatic with their prayers and are beautiful examples of pouring out your soul to God in prayer. The following example is David's prayer of repentance.

Psalm 51:1-12 Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Your lovingkindness; According to the multitude of Your tender mercies, Blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Make me hear joy and gladness, That the bones You have broken may rejoice. Hide Your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me away from Your presence, and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me by Your generous Spirit.

Prayer outlines

It's up to each person to decide what their commitment to prayer will be. It's up to each one to enlist as a prayer warrior, to get their marching orders, build their arsenal, engage in the battle, and balance their attack. It's up to each person to enter the courtroom as an intercessor, to do their research, prepare their arguments, state the legal precedence from the written word of God, and present their case before God the judge.

Everyone has their particular way of praying because we are all individuals with a personal relationship with God. There is no authorized official template for prayer, but the most important thing is to pray and spend time with God. We have included a few outlines that may help organize and develop a disciplined prayer life.

Types of prayer

Casual Prayer	Meals, Trips, etc.
Current Events	For special needs, etc.
Community Prayer	Church Meetings, etc.
Committed Prayer	Daily, Personal
Combat Prayer	Intercession, Spiritual Warfare
Continuous Prayer	Praying Always, Spirit of Prayer

Subjects of prayer

All Men	Nations, People groups
Governments	To Live Peaceful, Godly Lives
Kings	Leaders, Presidents, etc...
Rulers	Those in Positions of Authority
Family	Salvation, Provision, Healing, etc.
Church	Spiritual Understanding, Discernment
Lost Souls	That they would be Saved

Prayer for all nations

God's house is called a house of prayer for all nations. We should pray for all the nations, especially since we have access to global news daily. God has declared a special blessing to those who pray for Israel and the peace of Jerusalem.

Isaiah 56:7 ... these I will bring to my holy mountain and give them joy in my house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations."

Psalms 122:6-7 Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: "May they prosper who love you. Peace be within your walls, Prosperity within your palaces."

Monday	Australia & Antarctica
Tuesday	Central & South America
Wednesday	Europe
Thursday	Africa
Friday	Asia
Saturday	Israel (Jews) & Middle East (Muslims)
Sunday	USA, Canada, The Church

Praying Bible verses

Quoting Bible verses is a great way to pray, and if you find a verse that fits your situation, you can use it as a sword to fight your spiritual battles. We see that Jesus used the spiritual sword of the spirit, the word of God, to fight against Satan. At the end of 40 days of fasting and testing, Satan came with three final attacks against Jesus, and each time Jesus defeated him by saying, "it is written."

***Luke 4:3-4** And the devil said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread." But Jesus answered him, saying, "**It is written**, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.'"*

***Luke 4:8** And Jesus answered and said to him, "Get behind Me, Satan! **For it is written**, 'You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.'"*

***Luke 4:12** And Jesus made answer and said to him, **It is said in the Writings**, You may not put the Lord your God to the test.*

When Jesus returns to judge the nations at the second coming, scriptures say he has a sword coming out of his mouth, meaning he is speaking the word of God, when he comes to make war.

***Revelation 19:11-15** Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness **He judges and makes war**. His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and **His name is called The Word of God**. Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should **strike the nations**. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.*

You can pray using your own words and thoughts, but they will not have the same power as when you use scriptures. That is why we suggest praying with the scriptures, which will also keep you aligned with the will of God and the mind of God. We will use a healing verse as an example of how you can personalize the scriptures when you pray.

***1 Peter 2:24** ... who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness **by whose stripes you were healed**.*

You would pray, “by whose stripes I am healed,” or insert the name of the person you are praying for, “by whose stripes Joe Sick Person is healed. Each verse is like a sword, but don’t swing the sword just once because the more scriptures you can use in your prayers, the better.

Sometimes God will speak a verse to you that will become your verse, that verse is perfect for your situation and becomes part of your life. You may hang that verse at the top of your list until the next verse pops off the page at you. The bottom line is to build your list of prayer verses, like putting more arrows of victory in your quiver.

Psalms 45:3 (speaking of Jesus). Gird Your sword upon Your thigh, O Mighty One, With Your glory and Your majesty. And in Your majesty ride prosperously because of truth, humility, and righteousness; And your right hand shall teach You awesome things. Your arrows are sharp in the heart of the King's enemies; The peoples fall under You.

2 Kings 13:17 "Open the east window," he said, and he opened it. "Shoot!" Elisha said, and he shot. "The LORD's arrow of victory,

The following is a starter list of scriptures that we can use in our prayers.

Spiritual warfare

Luke 10:19 "Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you.

Matthew 16:18-19 "And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock, **I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. "And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."**

2 Corinthians 10:3-6 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. **For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled.**

Isaiah 54:17 **No weapon formed against you shall prosper, and every tongue which rises against you in judgment You shall condemn.** This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is from Me," says the LORD.

Psalms 18:29-36 For by You I can run against a troop, by my God I can leap over a wall. As for God, His way is perfect; The word of the LORD is proven; **He is a shield to all who trust in Him.** For who is God, except the LORD? And who is a rock, except our God? **It is God who arms me with strength, and makes my way perfect. He makes my feet like the feet of deer, and sets me on my high places. He teaches my hands to make war, so that my arms can bend a bow of bronze. You have also given me the shield of Your salvation; Your right hand has held me up, your gentleness has made me great. You enlarged my path under me, so my feet did not slip.**

Psalms 18:2-3 The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; My God, my strength, in whom I will trust; My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold. I will call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised; so shall I be saved from my enemies.

Psalms 149:6-9 Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand; to execute vengeance, to bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron; to execute the judgment written:

Verses for healing

Isaiah 53:4-5 He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; **and with his stripes we are healed.**

Exodus 15:26, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for **I am the LORD that heals you.**

Psalms 103:1-5 Bless the LORD, O my soul; And all that is within me, bless His holy name! Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: **Who forgives all your iniquities, who heals all your diseases**, who redeems your life from destruction, who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies, who satisfies your mouth with good things, So that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

Luke 7:7 "Therefore I did not even think myself worthy to come to You. **But say the word, and my servant will be healed.**

Matthew 9:35 And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and **healing every sickness and every disease** among the people.

Matthew 12:15 But when Jesus knew it, he withdrew himself from thence: and great multitudes followed him, **and he healed them all.**

Acts 5:16 Also a multitude gathered from the surrounding cities to Jerusalem, **bringing sick people and those who were tormented by unclean spirits, and they were all healed.**

Psalms 107:19-20 Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble, and He saved them out of their distresses. **He sent His word and healed them,** and delivered them from their destructions.

Luke 9:11 And the people, when they knew it, followed him: and he received them, and spake unto them of the kingdom of God, **and healed them that had need of healing.**

Acts 4:29-31 "Now, Lord, look on their threats, and **grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word, "by stretching out Your hand to heal,** and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus."

Deuteronomy 33:25 Your sandals shall be iron and bronze; **As your days, so shall your strength be.**

Deuteronomy 34:7 Moses was **one hundred and twenty years old** when he died. **His eyes were not dim nor his natural vigor diminished.**

Malachi 4:2 But unto you that fear my name shall **the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings**; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.

Mark 16:17-18 "And **these signs will follow those who believe**: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; "they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; **they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover."**

Verses for salvation

2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, **not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.**

Ezekiel 18:31-32 "Cast away from you all the transgressions which you have committed, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit. For why should you die, O house of Israel? "**For I have no pleasure in the death of one who dies,**" says the Lord GOD. "Therefore, turn and live!"

Psalms 34:18-19 The righteous cry out, and the LORD hears, and delivers them out of all their troubles. **The LORD is near to those who have a broken heart, and saves such as have a contrite spirit.** Many are the afflictions of the righteous, But the LORD delivers him out of them all.

1 Timothy 1:15 This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that **Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners**; of whom I am chief.

Ezekiel 33:11 "Say to them: '**As I live,**' says the **Lord GOD, 'I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live.** Turn, turn from your evil ways! For why should you die, O house of Israel?'"

Hebrews 7:25 Therefore **He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him**, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

Luke 19:10 For the **Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.**

Romans 10:13 For "**whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved.**"

***Isaiah 56:7** Even them I will bring to My holy mountain, and make them joyful in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices Will be accepted on My altar; For My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations."*



Tool Box Series



Water

Baptism

WATER BAPTISM

Introduction

If you ask most Christians about water baptism, they would probably give you the standard clichés about an outward sign of an inward change or making a public confession of faith, which would be about the extent of their knowledge on the subject. But water baptism has profound spiritual implications with Biblical and historical significance.

John the Baptist was the forerunner to announce the coming of Christ, and he introduced water baptism as part of his message of repentance. And when Jesus came, he publicly endorsed John and insisted that John baptize him to fulfill all righteousness. Jesus commanded his followers to be water baptized, and the Apostles continued the practice. Throughout history, the practice of water baptism has been changed, corrupted, and persecuted, and like other biblical mandates and teachings, the truth always comes under attack.

Many people have paid a high price for converting to Christ in Muslim, Hindu, or communist countries, and when they get baptized, they may risk being imprisoned, beaten, and even killed. What is the great spiritual significance of water baptism that would encourage people to risk their lives by being baptized? Hopefully, by the end of this study, we will have a greater appreciation for the profound impact that water baptism has had on history and can have in our lives.

Ceremonial purification

Before we begin with water baptism in the New Testament, we can look at the Old Testament, they had something very similar to water baptism, and it was a ceremonial purification by immersion, bathing, or washing, which goes back to the times of Moses and the law. According to the law, the Jewish people would ceremonially cleanse themselves before going to the tabernacle or temple in preparation for approaching God.

The law had specific instructions regarding the water source used for purification. They could use a river or a mikvah. The mikvah is a gathering of water, similar to a pool, which had a freshwater source with drainage and was a permanent enclosure (Leviticus 11 &15). The Jewish people would bathe or immerse themselves in water as part of their purification before going to the temple or for purification from some uncleanness. In Jerusalem, archeologists uncovered many Mikvahs near the temple mount, dating back to the time of the second temple, and used in Jesus' time.

Some aspects of the ceremonial cleansing in a mikvah are still active today with religious Jews. In preparation for a traditional Jewish



wedding, the bride will go to the mikvah to make herself ceremonially clean before the wedding. And when someone converts to Judaism, part of their indoctrination is to be made ceremonially clean by being immersed in water.

The act of immersion in water for ceremonial purification was already a part of the Jewish mindset, so when John the Baptist and Jesus began their ministries, no one questioned them about baptism. Everyone knew it represented repenting from sins, purification, and changing to live in righteousness. However, the religious leaders refused to acknowledge that they were sinners and would not repent or get baptized, especially if it meant submitting to John's authority. Jesus confronted and condemned them for their lack of repentance and refusal of John's baptism and used that as a witness against them, exposing the apostate condition of their hardened hearts. At the same time, he endorsed baptism as the way of righteousness.



Matthew 21:23-32 *Jesus entered the temple courts, and, while he was teaching, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him. "By what authority are you doing these things?" they asked. "And who gave you this authority?" Jesus replied, "I will also ask you one question. If you answer me, I will tell you by what authority I am doing these things. John's baptism where did it come from? Was it from heaven, or from men?" ... Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you. ...*

... John came to you to show you the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes did. And even after you saw this, you did not repent and believe him.

Reasons for Baptism

Every follower of Jesus should be water baptized at the earliest convenient time, as was the pattern seen in the Bible. Let's look at a few reasons why a sincere follower of Jesus should be water baptized.

Fulfill All Righteousness

Jesus came to John and asked to be baptized by him. John felt unworthy and preferred to reverse roles, but Jesus explained to John that he came to fulfill all righteousness. Thus, Jesus endorsed John and water baptism as a righteous act of obedience.

Matthew 3:13 - 17, Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. But John tried to deter him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" Jesus replied, "Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness."



Jesus commanded it

Jesus set the example by being baptized, and then he commanded his disciples to go to all nations and make disciples and baptize them. Every generation of disciples is responsible for their generation of souls. Jesus commands us to go and baptize, and that's not a request or an option.

Matthew 28:18-20 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. **Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.**

The First Church

The book of acts has numerous examples of water baptism. Where they differ from modern churches is that when they had a new convert to Christ, they immediately baptized them. There were no classes, sign-up sheets, or waiting periods. The standard operating procedure for the first church was to go from repentance and salvation directly to water baptism immediately, without any hesitation, on the same day. Sometimes they received the Holy Spirit before they were water baptized and sometimes afterward.

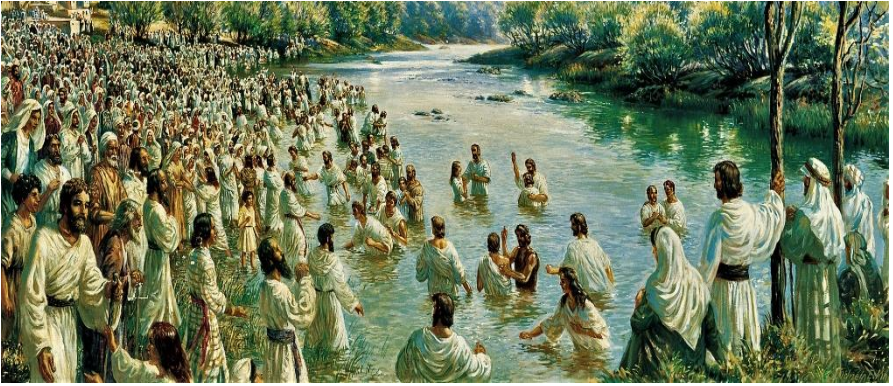
Baptism Party
POTLUCK SIGN-UP SHEET

Date/Time: _____ Location: _____

Main Dish		Side Dish	
NAME	I WILL BRING	NAME	I WILL BRING

Desserts / Snacks		Drinks	
NAME	I WILL BRING	NAME	I WILL BRING

Desserts / Dinnerware		Others	
NAME	I WILL BRING	NAME	I WILL BRING



The day of Pentecost

On the day of Pentecost, 120 disciples were praying, there was a mighty rushing wind and tongues of fire, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke in tongues. A large crowd gathered to see what was happening, and Peter stood up and preached. At the end of Peter's message, 3,000 people converted to Christ, and all 3000 souls got water baptized the same day.

Acts 2:41, Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.

Revival in Samaria

Persecution arose in Jerusalem, and the disciples became scattered and preached the gospel wherever they went. A deacon named Philip went and preached to the city of Samaria, and multitudes of people came to Christ, and he baptized them in water.

*Acts 8:12-13, But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, **both men and women were baptized.** Then Simon himself also believed; and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and was amazed, seeing the miracles and signs which were done.*

Later, Peter and John went to Samaria and prayed for the Samaritans to receive the Holy Spirit. That shows that water baptism is a good step of obedience and preparation to receive the Holy Spirit.

*Acts 8:14-17 Now when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them, who, when they had come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit. For as yet He had fallen upon none of them. **They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.** Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.*

The Ethiopian eunuch

After Philip left Samaria, he met an Ethiopian in a chariot who was reading from the prophet Isaiah and asked Philip about whom the prophet was speaking. Philip started from Isaiah and preached Christ to him. Then the Ethiopian saw some water and asked to be baptized. Philip only had one condition, and he said if you believe with all your heart, the Ethiopian replied, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." They stopped the chariot, and they both went down into the water, and Philip baptized the Ethiopian.

Acts 8:36-38, Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, "See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?" Then Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." And he answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." So, he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him.

That interaction between Philip and the Ethiopian revealed several key points. The first is faith in Christ, in other words, a profession of faith, with the conviction and understanding of who Christ is and what he did on the cross to forgive our sins. So, infants who are too young to understand repentance and faith in Christ and unbelievers are not candidates for baptism. Secondly, He was immediately baptized upon his profession of faith, showing the urgency of baptism. Third, they went down into the water, demonstrating that baptism is by immersion in the water, proving that sprinkling is an incorrect mode for baptism.



Paul's conversion

While on his way to persecute Christians, Saul, later known as Paul, had a vision of Jesus. Paul saw Jesus brighter than the noonday sun, and the glory of Christ blinded Paul, and Jesus instructed him to go into the city for further instructions. Paul did not eat or drink for three days, and Jesus spoke to a disciple named Ananias to go pray for him. Ananias met Paul, and after a few words, he prayed for him, and Paul got immediately healed from his blindness.



So here is the situation, you just met Jesus, you've been blind and haven't had a thing to eat or drink for three days, so what is the most urgent thing you need to do? The



obvious answer is that you must be water baptized! Immediately, Paul was water-baptized, and food and water took a distant second place on his to-do list.

*Acts 9:1-17 And Ananias went his way and entered the house; and laying his hands on him he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you came, has **sent me that you may receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit. "Immediately there fell from his eyes something like scales, and he received his sight at once; and he arose and was baptized. So, when he had received food, he was strengthened.***

Cornelius & household

Peter did something very scandalous for the early Jewish disciples because he went to the house of a Gentile (non-Jewish person), contrary to Jewish law and tradition. His name was Cornelius, and he was a Roman military commander in charge of 100 soldiers. God had prepared Peter and Cornelius by giving them both separate visions miles apart from each other. The Spirit specifically spoke to Peter not to consider Gentiles unclean and to go to Cornelius's house. When Peter preached to Cornelius, his whole household was saved and filled with the Holy Spirit. Then Peter commanded that they should also be water baptized which is the logical next step for believers.

Acts 10:44-48, While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word. And those of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also for they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God. Then Peter answered, "Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord.

Lydia & Household

While on a missionary journey, Paul came to the city of Thyatira and preached to a group of women. And Lydia, with everyone in her house, got saved and water baptized. Later, Lydia's house became the meeting place for the local believers.

Acts 16:14 *One of those listening was a woman named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth from the city of Thyatira, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul's message. **When she and the members of her household were baptized, she invited us to her home.***

The Philippian jailer

While Paul was preaching in Philippi, a riot broke out, and he and Silas were beaten, flogged, and thrown in jail. Sitting in his jail cell, Paul and Silas were praying, and suddenly there was an earthquake. The prison doors opened, creating a risk that all the prisoners could escape. The head jailor was about to commit suicide, and Paul stopped him and then preached to him. The Jailer brought Paul to his house, and everyone in the house believed and immediately got baptized. The entire process of coming to faith in Christ and getting baptized happened overnight.



Acts 16:30-33 *He then brought them out and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" They replied, "**Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved you and your household.**" Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house. At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; **then immediately he and all his family were baptized.***

The Corinthians

Paul's custom was to go to the Jews first, so when he went to Corinth, he went into the synagogue and preached Christ to the Jews. The Jews strongly opposed Paul, so he left and went to the house next door, which belonged to Justus. But Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, and everyone in his household and many Corinthians believed Paul's message of Christ and got baptized.

Acts 18:8 Crispus, the synagogue ruler, and his entire household believed in the Lord; and many of the Corinthians who heard him believed and were baptized.

The Ephesians

When Paul came to Ephesus, he met twelve disciples of Apollos, who were only familiar with the baptism of John the Baptist. Being baptized in the name of John the Baptist did not meet the requirements of Jesus, who required faith or belief in Christ, and performing the baptism in Jesus' name or in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Paul re-baptized these believers in the name of Jesus.

That example gives an endorsement for the act of being re-baptized if prior baptisms were incorrect. And after Paul re-baptized them in Jesus' name, they received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, showing that water baptism is a preparation to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 19:2-6, So Paul asked, "Then what baptism did you receive?" "John's baptism," they replied. Paul said, "John's baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus." On hearing this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied.

Re-baptism & formula

Paul rejected baptism in John the Baptist's name, so he baptized in Jesus' name. Some people teach there is no salvation unless a person gets baptized with the formula of saying, in Jesus' name. That would be fine if they didn't make it a condition of salvation or didn't have an erroneous agenda. They deny the Trinity of God, believing that Jesus is the Father, Jesus is the Son, and Jesus is the Holy Spirit. Also, they make baptism a condition of salvation, which is false. Jesus accomplished everything needed for our salvation when he said, "it is finished" on the cross. The only requirement is to believe what Jesus did for us, so we cannot earn salvation by works, including baptism. We get baptized in obedience to the command of Jesus because we are saved, not to earn salvation.



The baptism formula varies in Biblical accounts. Jesus said to baptize in the name of all three persons in the Trinity, but Paul and the other Apostles did baptisms in Jesus' name.

To be safe, they could include both formulas saying; in Jesus' name, I baptize you in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Correctness with words, or semantics, is not the point. Once again, salvation is not achieved or earned by proclaiming the correct words over a person during a baptismal service or if even someone never gets baptized because salvation is only by faith in Christ alone.

***Matthew 28:19** "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,*

Preparation for Baptism

John the Baptist did not accept all candidates who offered themselves for water baptism. When John discerned insincere people at his baptisms, he gave them scathing rebukes.



***Matthew 3:7-9**, "But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, **O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ... And think not to say within yourselves, we have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.**"*

Later the chief Priest challenged Jesus' authority, so he asked them about the baptism of John, was it from God or man? This highlighted Jesus endorsement of baptism, while revealing the priest's unbelief.

Matthew 21:25-27 *John's baptism where did it come from? Was it from heaven, or from men?" They discussed it among themselves and said, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will ask, 'Then why didn't you believe him?' But if we say, 'From men' we are afraid of the people, for they all hold that John was a prophet." So, they answered Jesus, "We don't know." Then he said, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.*

Like John the Baptist, we also need discernment to detect insincerity and lack of conviction in the candidates for baptism. The following is a list of characteristics that qualify candidates for baptism.

Fruits of repentance

There must be signs that somebody has genuinely repented, and there should be evidence or fruit as evidence. For example, if someone was a thief, they should stop stealing and restore whatever they have stolen. Whatever sins a person was involved in, they need to stop doing them and repair the damage as much as possible

Matthew 3:1-12 *Produce fruit in keeping with repentance ... The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire. "I baptize you with water for repentance.*

Acts 2:38, *"Then Peter said unto them, repent and be baptized."*

Receptive to the Word

The word of God should be an obsession for any new believer. But receiving the word of God is more than just listening to someone else preach. The word of God is our daily bread, and we should daily study, memorize, share, and put it into practice. Those who gladly receive the word of God should get baptized.

Acts 2:41-42, "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day were added to them about three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."

Acts 16:31-34, Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes. And immediately he and all his family were baptized ... and he rejoiced, having believed in God with all his household.

Must be believers

It is meaningless for an unsaved sinner to get dunked underwater, just to come out of the water a wet unsaved sinner. Candidates for water baptism must be born again or should not get baptized.

Acts 8:12-13, "But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the Kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women

(Notice that there is no mention of children, The Bible has never endorsed child or infant baptism!)

Acts 8:26-40, Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, "See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?" Then Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." And he answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." So, he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him.

Acts 16:31-34, So they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household." Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes. And immediately he and all his family were baptized.

Mark 16:16, "He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.

Total submersion

When you bury the dead, you don't leave them lying on the ground and sprinkle a little dirt on their forehead. The very word "baptism" has the meaning of being completely submerged or immersed. When you bury a body, you dig a hole six feet deep and cover them with dirt, or the decomposing body could be exposed.

So, because water baptism symbolizes burial, complete submersion under the water is essential to baptism.

Colossians.2:12 "Buried with him at baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead."



Much water

Why would John need much water if he only needed to sprinkle a little water on their heads? John needed much water to fully submerge the person baptized, representing burying the dead body of the old life.

John 3:23, "And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there: and they came, and were baptized."

Came up from Water

John the Baptist did not sprinkle water on Jesus' head. Jesus went under the water and came up out of the water.

Matthew 3:14-16, When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. (Also, Mark 1:10)

Down into the water

Why would Philip and the eunuch go down into the water and come up out of the water? Why didn't Philip just fill a cup with water and dump it on the eunuch's head? That would have been easier, but it would not have had the same symbolic significance.

Philip completely submerged the eunuch underwater, representing the burial of the old way of life.



Acts 8:36-38, Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, "See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?" ... And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him. Now when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing.

Formulas by Apostles

The Apostles were careful not to baptize in their name and always deflected all the honor and glory to God. They did not want baptism to be a source of contention among believers.

Acts 2:38, "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins."

Acts 19:5, "When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus."

1 Corinthians 1:13-15 Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, lest anyone should say that I had baptized in my own name. Yes, I also baptized the household of Stephanas. Besides, I do not know whether I baptized any other.

Acts 10:48, "And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days."

To receive the Spirit

In the book of Acts, we see that people were receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit when they were being water baptized.

Acts 2:38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.



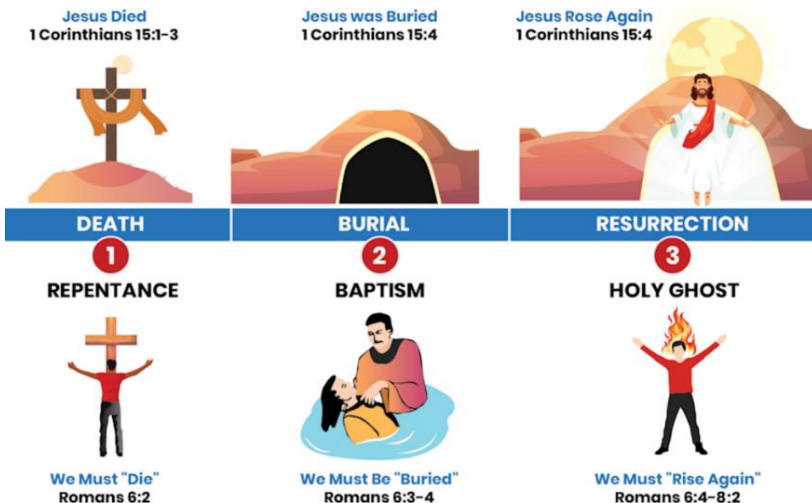


Acts 8:15 -17, "Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost."

Acts 19:5-6, "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 Ghost came on them; and they spoke with tongues, and prophesied."

Relating to Christ

Notice how Paul describes how we relate our experience to Christ's death, burial, and resurrection. The gospel is that we have been crucified with Christ when we are born again, buried with him at water baptism, and resurrected with Christ to walk in newness of life by the power of the Holy Spirit.



*1 Corinthians 15:3-4 For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that **Christ died** for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that **He was buried**, and that **He rose again** the third day according to the Scriptures,*

Galatians 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Romans 8:10-11 But if Christ is in you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive because of righteousness. And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you.

Sin is buried

During our life of sin, before we accepted Christ, we accumulated a record of sinful habits and lusts that perverted our character and contaminated our minds, like immorality, drug abuse, alcoholism, and so forth. Those memories of sin and what remains of the immoral habits and practices from our old life are what the Bible calls the body of sin.

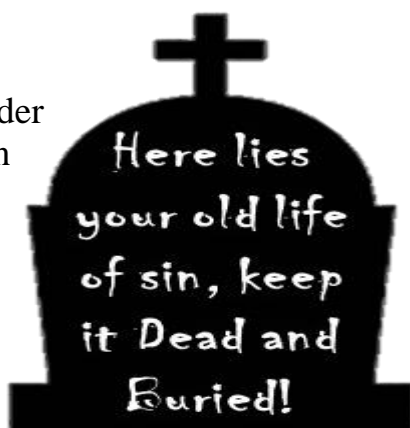
We renew our minds and transform our lives by relating our life to Christ's death, burial, and resurrection. Every time the old life tries to surface, we must reckon that the old sinful person that we used to be is dead, crucified with Christ, and our old life of sin has been buried, at water baptism.

So, now it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives his life through me. To eliminate the "body of sin" or the old sinful character and sins of the past, we must develop a habit of crucifying our old body of sin, bad habits, and evil character and bury it. Every time our old sinful self tries to come back to life, we must re-crucify and re-bury them.

Romans 6:2-8 ... How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore, we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. For he who has died has been freed from sin. Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him

Walk in new life

We must continuously consider ourselves dead to our old life of sin and re-bury it every time we feel it rising inside us. Then we must put on the character of Christ, who makes us a new creation.



2 Corinthians 5:17 *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.*

Colossians 3:5-10 *Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.*

Ephesians 4:22-24 *You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.*

We can renew our baptism commitment every time we recognize any sinful urges rising within us. We fight sin by reckoning ourselves dead, buried, and raised from the dead with Christ. In the process, we distance ourselves from our old life of sin that used to control us, and we develop the character of Christ in our lives.

Old Testament Types

The Bible has many different types and shadows, or stories that can have varied meanings, the literal, spiritual, and symbolic meanings that reveals various aspects of Christ from the Old Testament. Let's look at a few examples.

Noah and the Ark

In Noah's time, the world had become so corrupt that their thoughts were only evil continuously, so God had to send judgment in the form of a flood. All



the world, except Noah's family, were drowned in the great deluge of water and were buried under the flood waters. When Noah left the Ark, he walked out into a new world and a new life. Noah's salvation through the water symbolizes baptism. That salvation is the "pledge of a good conscience toward God" by the resurrection of Christ. In the old life, pre-flood and baptism, our thoughts were only evil continuously, but our water baptism is a pledge to control our thoughts and maintain a pure conscience before God.

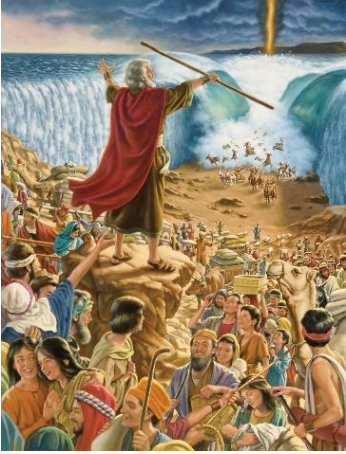
I Peter 3:20-22, ... when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water, and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at God's right hand with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.

Moses at the Red Sea

We will give an abbreviated description of Israel's exodus from Egypt, but you can read the full text in Exodus chapters 1-15. For 400 years, the children of Israel were slaves in Egypt until God raised Moses to liberate and lead Israel to the promised land. The Pharaoh, king of Egypt, refused to release Israel from their bondage, so God sent nine devastating plagues, but Pharaoh continued to harden his heart and refused to give Israel their freedom. Then God sent a tenth and final plague, the death of the firstborn. But God spared Israel from death by having them put the blood of a lamb on their doorpost, so death passed over their houses.

Exodus 11:11 ... It is the LORD'S Passover. 'For I will pass through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD. 'Now the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be on you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.

There was death in all the Egyptian households, and finally, Pharaoh surrendered and released Israel from its bondage. However, Pharaoh changed his mind and took the entire army of Egypt in pursuit of Israel. But God put a pillar of cloud and fire between Egypt and Israel and opened a path of escape for Israel through the Red Sea. God divided the waters like walls on either side and dried the ground for the 2.5 million Israelites to escape from the Egyptians.



Exodus 14:21 Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea into dry land, and the waters were divided. ***So, the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea on the dry ground, and the waters were a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.***

God lifted the pillar of fire, and Pharaoh and the Egyptian army attempted to follow Israel through the Red Sea. When Egypt was in the middle of the Red Sea, God caused the walls of water to collapse on them, drowning them all.

Exodus 14:27 And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and when the morning appeared, ***the sea returned to its full depth, while the Egyptians were fleeing into it. So, the LORD overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. Then the waters returned and covered the chariots, the horsemen, and all the army of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them. Not so much as one of them remained.***

The entire exodus of the children of Israel from Egypt is like an allegory of our spiritual journey. Egypt is a type of the world system, and Pharaoh is a type of who we were before salvation when we were king over our own life in bondage to sin. We resisted God's will, and it was a continuous inner struggle. Christ is our Passover lamb who delivers us from the bondage of sin when we submit to His will.

1 Corinthians 5:7 Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.

We reckon ourselves dead with Christ. But there may be a temptation to backslide to let the old Pharaoh back into our life. We may miss Egypt and the old life of sin with all our old Egyptian sin buddies, and they will come chasing after us. But the pillar of God's presence stops them as we run through the midst of the sea to the other side, heading toward the promised land, or God's land of promises. Our old Pharaoh and the army of sins follows us into the depths of the sea, but the walls of water baptism collapse upon them, burying our past sins and the power that Egypt had over our lives. Therefore, if we reckon that the old sinful person, we used to be is dead and buried, we are free to live a new life in Christ.

1 Corinthians 10:1-6, For I do not want you to be ignorant of the fact, brothers, that our forefathers (Israel) were all under the cloud and that they all passed through the (Red) sea. They were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. They all ate the same spiritual food and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ.

The Laver

The tabernacle was Israel's portable place of worship, which Paul said was a pattern of heavenly things.

The priest in the outer court of the tabernacle had three responsibilities, to offer animal sacrifices on the brazen altar, they washed with water at the bronze laver and anointed with oil before entering the Holy Place. The altar points to the cross and being born again. And, washing at the laver points to water baptism, and the anointing points to the baptism in the Holy Spirit.



Exodus 30:18-19, "You shall also make a laver of bronze, with its base also of bronze, for washing. You shall put it between the tabernacle of meeting and the altar. And you shall put water in it, "for Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet in water from it.

The priest working in the tabernacle or the temple would wash at the laver to cleanse themselves from the dirt, blood, and sweat that resulted from their work in the tabernacle service. That represents the washing of water by the word of God. the laver and water baptism are like being washed by the word, which we can and should do daily.

John 15:3 (Jesus' speaking) "You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.

Ephesians 5:25-27 *Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.*

Another aspect of the laver is that they made it from brass mirrors donated by Israelite women. Mirrors represent the word of God.

Exodus 38:8 *He made the laver of bronze and its base of bronze, from the bronze mirrors of the serving women who assembled at the door of the tabernacle of meeting.*

James 1:22-25 *But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.*

So, the laver was a type of water baptism representing washing and renewing that comes from obedience to the word of God.

Summary of baptism

Let's review the information and reasons for water baptism.

- #1. Jesus commanded his followers to be baptized.
- #2. Jesus was baptized to fulfill all righteousness.
- #3. The first church baptized new believers immediately.
- #4. Re-baptism is required if the first baptism wasn't valid.
- #5. The formulas used in Baptism.
 - a). The formula that Jesus said to use was in the name of the Father, the Son & the Holy Spirit.
 - b). The formula that the Apostles used was in the name of Jesus, and in the name of the Lord.
- #6. Qualifications for potential candidates to be baptized.
 - a). They must have the fruit of repentance.
 - b). They must believe in Christ.
 - c). They must be obedient to the word of God.
 - d). They must be born again.
 - e). Lost sinners are not qualified to be baptized.
 - F). Infants and small children not capable of comprehending salvation and baptism are not qualified
- #7. The mode of baptism is by complete submersion.
 - a). They baptized where there was much water
 - b). They went down and came up out of the water.
 - c). Baptism represents the burial of a dead body.
 - d). Sprinkling is not an acceptable mode of baptism.
- #8. Water baptism is preparation for the baptism of the Holy Spirit.
- #9. How we relate to the death, burial & resurrection of Christ.

a). When we are born again, we consider ourselves crucified with Christ, and we put to death our old sinful thoughts and actions whenever they try to come back to life. That's how we relate to Jesus' death on the cross.

b). After water baptism, we can reckon our old life of sin to be dead and buried. Every time the old sinful person we used to be, tries to come back to life, we mentally consider them crucified and buried with Christ.

c). After receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit, we leave the past dead and buried and consider ourselves resurrected with Christ to walk in the newness of life, allowing Christ to live through us, being led by the Holy Spirit.

#10. Old Testament Types and Shadows of baptism.

a). Before Noah's flood, the people only had evil thoughts, but Noah was saved through the water, the water buried the old world of sin, and we are baptized as an appeal for a pure conscience.

b). When Moses & Israel passed through the midst of the Red Sea, Pharaoh and his army followed and were buried under the water. Pharaoh represents our hardness of heart in our old sinful life, his army represents the power of sin. Egypt represents the sinful ways of the world, or worldliness. Christ delivered us from the power of sin, the old hard-hearted rebellious person we used to be, is buried in the waters of baptism, in the Red Sea, and we leave our worldly lifestyle behind us, in the past.

c). In the tabernacle and the temple, the priest would wash with water at the brazen laver, which represents how we are washed by the water of the word of God.

History after Acts

To understand our modern baptism, we will look at the roots of the movement that sprang out of the Protestant reformation and the Anabaptists to give us a historical background and context. That knowledge will be valuable to appreciate the sacrifice and severe price paid to bring us something we take for granted, namely the believer's baptism.

After the resurrection of Christ, the church experienced tremendous growth and severe persecution for the first 300 years. But around 313 A.D., Emperor Constantine made Christianity the religion of the Roman Empire and blended it with pagan religions and the Roman government. For 1,000 years, the faith and teachings of Christ had been perverted, controlled, and institutionalized by the Catholic Popes, and opposition voices were silenced or killed. Only the Catholic priesthood and educated elites had access to Bibles, and those Bibles only existed in Hebrew, Greek, or Latin, which were dead languages to ordinary people.

The Catholic church held a monopoly over Christianity, the Popes exercised great power over secular governments and rulers, and there was no separation between church and state. The Popes weaponized their authority and enforced tyrannical rule, elevating the priesthood to a class above the laity.

Popes claimed Papal infallibility, papal edicts were non-negotiable, and they exterminated all opposition, while the priesthood themselves were above the law, wicked and corrupt beyond measure.

The Catholics held sole proprietorship of the Bible, keeping the people ignorant and dependent on the priests for Biblical information. Producing Bible translations in the spoken language or unauthorized preaching was a crime punishable by death. Heretics, meaning faithful Christians who disagreed and spoke out against Catholic teachings, were cruelly tortured and then subjected to public humiliation and suffering in agonizing executions. That form of terrorism worked to strangle religious freedom.

The Popes derived power from keeping the people ignorant, compliant, and in fear. Although they were persecuted and martyred, the opposition voices that first started as a small trickle gained strength and eventually became a mighty torrent. Persecution always causes the people of God to flourish by removing hypocrisy and sin, which produces godly character and more believers.



On October 31, 1517, Martin Luther nailed his 95 Thesis (or disagreements with Catholicism) on the door of the church in protest. Then the dam of pent-up opposition to the Catholic religious stranglehold burst forth in a spiritual revolution called the Protestant Reformation.

The movement gained momentum and began to spread around the world. Martin Luther and others translated the Bible from Greek, Hebrew, and Latin into German, English, and other languages commonly used by the general public. Many reformers were deemed heretics and became casualties in the war for spiritual freedom.

But the word of God spread, creating a purge from the religious oppression and false teachings that had held the people in bondage for centuries. The discussions amongst the reformers, once held secretly for fear, were now becoming more public, and differing opinions were developing into different factions. The reformers had to face correcting centuries of error and attempting to realign the church with scriptural precepts demonstrated in the book of Acts by the first church.

The leaders at the forefront became movements, so the followers of Luther became Lutherans, Calvin's followers Calvinists, and so forth. In 1525, only eight years after Luther's 95 Thesis, there came a split between the reformers. There were many disagreements, but the two that came to the forefront were regarding the church government and infant baptism.

The Lutherans, Calvinists, Zwinglians, and Anglicans believed in church and state as one governing body, and the opposition believed in the separation of church and state. The leaders in favor of church and state were all former Catholic priests and were against changing the power structure because they were at the top of the pyramid and fought for the status quo.

That form of church hierarchy legislates secular laws to enforce their doctrine. The government-authorized institutional churches professionalized the ministry by separating and empowering the priesthood against the untrained laity or ignorant congregation. Institutional church services were extremely orthodox, like the minutes of a business meeting with one speaker and a crowd of spectator constituents.

Every prayer, word, and ritual were mindless routines, timed, dead, and dry, following the traditions of men established by the Catholic church. The opposition longed for religious freedom and to return to the pattern described in the Bible's book of Acts and felt Zwingli and others were not going far enough, so they parted ways. The opposition longed for religious freedom and to return to the pattern described in the Bible's book of Acts and felt Zwingli and others were not going far enough, so they parted ways.



In a case of "becoming what you hate," the group that unified the church with the state used their power to persecute the reformers who wanted to go further by giving freedoms to the people apart from the religious overlords. One group broke away from the followers of Zwingli, a Swedish reformer, and called themselves the brotherhood or the brethren, a reference to the priesthood of all believers.

Which meant they were choosing to dissolve the pyramid power scheme in the church and put everyone on the same level as brothers, like a family. But their rivals did not accept their position on hierarchy or infant baptism and spitefully labeled them Anabaptists, which means to re-baptize.

The Anabaptists opposed infant baptism but endorsed adult or believers' baptism because of Biblical precedence. Anabaptists argued that someone must be of sufficient age to comprehend the gospel, repent, and be born again before baptism, which would exclude babies and young children. But infant baptism was the standard operating procedure for 1,000 years, and infant baptismal dates recorded by the church were the same as being registered as a legal citizen.



The drowning of Anabaptists in northern Europe.

Many who chose adult baptism had their citizenship revoked, forcing them to relocate to areas friendly to them. Others were not so fortunate, and many died as martyrs at the hands of the Protestant Reformers and the Catholics. The Anabaptists were deemed too radical and a danger to religious stability. King Ferdinand declared that drowning was the best antidote for Anabaptists, and he called it the third baptism. According to one estimate, over 10,000 died as martyrs in just one of the three original branches of the Anabaptists, 350 in one city, and thirty percent of those were women.

Another report claims that more Anabaptists died at the hands of other Christians in the 1500s than Christians who were killed by the Romans in the first 300 years of the church. They were tortured, burned alive on the stake, or tied inside burlap bags and dumped in the river to drown in their "third baptism." The accounts of the Anabaptist martyrs were recorded in a book, *The Martyrs Mirror* by Tieleman Jansz Van Braght written in 1660, you can find it free online, but it is a long read, 1290 pages.

We will give a brief biography of one of the more notable examples of martyrdom, namely Hans Bret, who was an outspoken leader. In the city of Antwerp, Netherlands, on May 6, 1576, at 9:00 pm, Hans was arrested and charged with being re-baptized and sentenced to death. January 4, 1577, was the day of Hans' execution. But before leading him to his death, his executioners decided to make sure he could not speak to his followers.

Hans was a pacifist and did not put up any resistance. So, they pulled his tongue outside of his mouth and clamped it with a tongue screw, so he could not pull his tongue back inside his mouth. Then they took a hot firebrand and burned the end of his tongue. The tongue swelled up so badly they could not remove the tongue screw.



Then they led him to the stake, chained him to it, and burned him alive. They kept the fires burning until nothing remained but the tongue screw. His Pastor, Hans de Ries, waited for the crowd to disperse and took the tongue screw. Later, Pastor Reis married Han's mother, and they kept the tongue screw and passed it down as part of Hans Bret's legacy to future generations.



The persecution forced the Anabaptists to move in search of religious freedom, several branches have survived, and their descendants are with us today. Some stayed in Europe, and others sailed across the ocean to settle in America, looking to escape persecution and find religious freedom. They are the Mennonites and Amish, which would later split into all the various Baptist denominations.

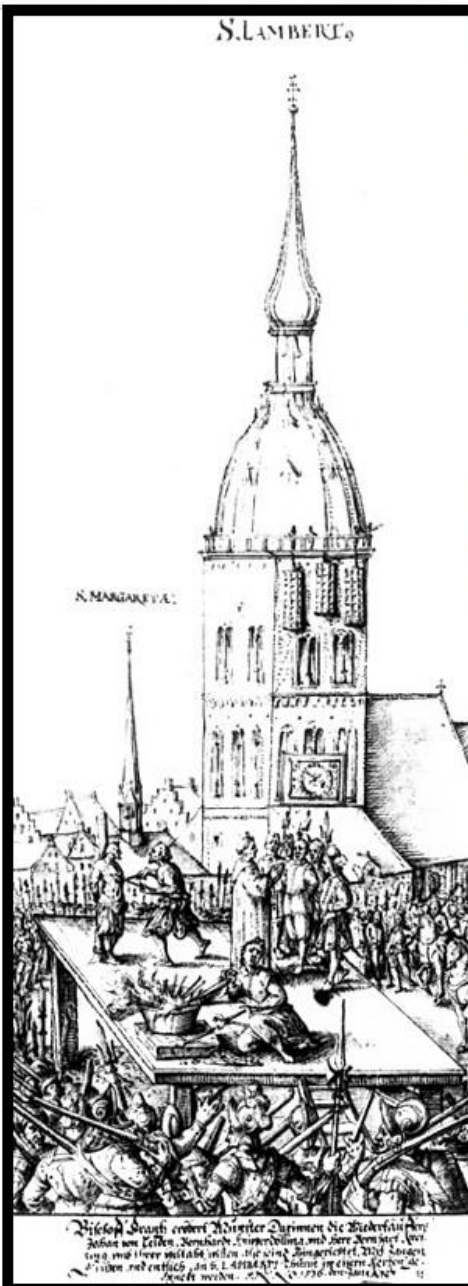
Most Americans have a life of comfort and ease compared to men throughout history. We are isolated from tyranny, torture, starvation, extreme poverty, and deadly persecution, a current threat for many Christians overseas. Even today, in Muslim, Hindu, or communist countries, professing Christians are targets for cruel religious persecution. If a Christian man gets baptized in a Muslim community, he faces death, and his wife and children could get sold into slavery. And, even though the Muslim country of Iran engages in some of the most extreme religious persecution, it has the fastest-growing number of converts to Jesus worldwide, with new believers getting baptized at great peril of pain and death.

If you were in Iran, would you be willing to be baptized? If you are in the United States or anywhere in the western free world and are a born-again follower of Jesus, there is no excuse for not being baptized. Water baptism is an act of obedience to the command of Jesus. Period. Preaching the gospel and making disciples is also part of that same command. Go, therefore, and obey Jesus.

Matthew 28:18-20 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, "teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen



1529 A.D. Alzey Germany, 350 Anabaptists refused to recant from their faith, and as pacifists, they offered no resistance but sang joyful songs heading to their executions as martyrs.



In 1536 after giving adult baptism to 1000 people and taking over the city of Münster, Germany, three of Anabaptist leaders were captured, tortured publicly and killed. Their bodies were put in cages and hung from the St. Lambert's church. The cages remain on the church to this day. Historical depiction from the time on left, current picture above.



1569 A.D. Dutch Anabaptist Dirk Willems escaped prison but stopped to rescue his pursuer, who fell through thin ice. Afterward, his pursuer turned him over to the executioner, and he was tortured and martyred for his stand for adult baptism.

Ears2Hear.online

Free E-books, Audio books,
Bibles, resources, links, etc.

Also available on Kindle & Amazon
Search: Tool Box Series Mark England

Email: Ears@Ears2Hear.online

Tool Box Series



Holy Spirit Baptism

The Baptism of the Holy Spirit

Disclaimer

We must start by addressing a potential elephant in the room, we live in a time of deception, and there are multitudes of outrageous frauds who pervert the gifts of the Holy Spirit and make merchandise of the things of God. Unfortunately, many gullible sheep follow the crazy antics of these false prophets and embrace their teachings. Part of the problem is that many deceived religious people base their faith on personalities, experiences, and excitement and want their ears tickled with false blessings. But they could care less if the scriptures get twisted and perverted from their pulpits.

We should distance ourselves from all non-Biblical practices or teachings. Before we can separate from deception and error, we must first have knowledge, understanding, and discernment regarding the written Biblical accounts. The purpose of this study is to show what the scriptures teach regarding the baptism of the Holy Spirit. We contend that the baptism and gifts of the Holy Spirit, first given on the day of Pentecost, have not ceased but will continue to function until the rapture when the church gets removed from the earth.

God the Holy Spirit

We must always keep foremost in our minds that the Holy Spirit is God, the third person in the trinity. We must approach the Holy Spirit with the same attitude of reverence and respect that we give to Jesus and the Father.

*1 John 5:7 For there are three that bear record in heaven, the **Father**, the **Word**, and the **Holy Ghost**: and these three are one.*

*Matthew 28:19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the **Father**, and of the **Son**, and of the **Holy Ghost**:*

*2 Corinthians 13:14 The grace of the **Lord Jesus Christ**, and the love of **God**, and the communion of the **Holy Ghost**, be with you all. Amen.*

Holy Spirit is a person

The Holy Spirit should not be called "it," like an impersonal force, and is not like a circus animal that can be tamed and forced to do tricks as some regrettably suggest. The Holy Spirit is God and should be respected and revered with awe, in the same way as the Father and the Son. He is God and should not be reckoned as a lifeless force, not referred to as "it." An inanimate force does not possess a personality and is incapable of independent actions. On the contrary, we see the Holy Spirit speaking, moving, creating, guiding, teaching, reminding, comforting, striving, reproofing, grieving, and helping. Look at the following list of the activities of the Holy Spirit.

He speaks, (Acts 13:2 & 21:11, 1 Timothy 4:1, Hebrews 3:7)

He moves & creates, (Job 26:13; 33:4, Gen. 1:2, Ps. 104:30)

He guides & directs, (Luke 4:1, John 16:13)

He is blasphemed, (Matthew 12:31-32)

He is lied against, (Acts 5:3)

He grieves, (Ephesians 4:30)

He can be quenched, (1 Thessalonians 5:19)

He strives with man, (Genesis 6:3)

He can be resisted, (Acts 7:51)

He is a witness, (Acts 5:32, Acts 20:23, Hebrews 10:15)

He convicts the world of sin, (John 16:8)

He teaches us truth, (1 John 2:27)

He reminds us, (John 14:26)

He comforts us, (John 14:16-17, Acts 9:31)

He is our helper, (Romans 8:26)

He intercedes for us, (Romans 8:26)

7-Fold Spirit of God

The Holy Spirit is known as the sevenfold Spirit of God, not because He is seven different spirits, but because He is one



Spirit manifesting himself in seven different ways. Also, biblically speaking, the number seven signifies divinity, perfection, or completion. The number seven appears weaved throughout the scriptures and the natural world, with examples like seven days a week, seven major chords in the music scale, seven primary colors in the rainbow, etc.

Revelation 3:1 And to the angel of the church in Sardis write, "These things says He who has **the seven Spirits of God**,

Revelation 4:5 And from the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices. **Seven lamps of fire** were burning before the throne, which are **the seven Spirits of God**.

The following are some of the multifaceted and eternal characteristics of the seven Spirits of God with attributes that are like an infinite well of enlightenment, power, strength, and supernatural abilities.

<u>#1, Wisdom & Understanding,</u>	<i>Isaiah 11:2</i>
<u>#2, Counsel & Might,</u>	<i>Isaiah 11:2</i>
<u>#3, Knowledge & Fear of the Lord,</u>	<i>Isaiah 11:2</i>
<u>#4, Judgment & Burning,</u>	<i>Isaiah 4:4</i>
<u>#5, Grace & Supplication,</u>	<i>Zechariah 12:10</i>
<u>#6, Holiness,</u>	<i>Romans 1:4</i>
<u>#7, Truth</u>	<i>John 14:16-17; 15:26</i>

OT Anointing

In the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit would only come upon selected individuals for specific purposes. In some cases, a ceremony of ordination was performed, signifying that the Holy Spirit was with the chosen



person. This ceremony consisted of "anointing" or pouring oil on that person. The anointing is a concept of great importance to our understanding of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament. Our word anointing comes from the Hebrew word *mashach*, which means: to rub with oil, i.e., to anoint; by implication, to consecrate or dedicate. This "anointing" represented the Holy Spirit coming upon that person and is synonymous with the Holy Spirit's presence, equipping, and empowering a person for a specific service.

Anointing Priests

The first instance of anointing someone began under Moses' leadership. God commanded Moses to ordain his brother Aaron to be the high priest. This priesthood was to be passed from father to son in endless succession. There was only one High priest at one time. When the High priest died or stepped down from his responsibilities, a new high priest would get anointed. This anointing qualified them for the ministry.

*Exodus 40:13-15 "You shall put the holy garments on Aaron, and **anoint him** and consecrate him, that he may minister to Me as priest. "And you shall bring his sons and clothe them with tunics. " Throughout their generations." You shall anoint them, as you anointed their father, that they may minister to Me as priests; for their anointing shall surely be an everlasting priesthood*



Tabernacle & utensils

Even the physical objects of the tabernacle had to be anointed, showing that every aspect of the Levitical priesthood had the anointing of the Holy Spirit upon it (*1 Corinthians 12:7-11, Ephesians 2:19-22*).

Exodus 40:9-11 "And you shall take the anointing oil, and anoint the tabernacle and all that is in it; and you shall hallow it and all its utensils, and it shall be holy. ...

... *"You shall anoint the altar of the burnt offering and all its utensils, and consecrate the altar. The altar shall be most holy. "And you shall anoint the laver and its base, and consecrate it.*

Anointing of kings

They anointed kings to begin their reigns. King David received the anointing on three different occasions. The **first anointing** was prophetic, ordaining him to be the future king of



Israel. Also, notice the Spirit of the Lord was on David and departed from Saul but was not on both David and Saul simultaneously. So, when the Spirit of God departed from Saul, an evil spirit began to torment him. In the Old Testament, the Spirit would only rest on a selected few at one time.

1 Samuel 16:13-15 Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him (speaking of David) in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward. So, Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah. But the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the LORD troubled him. And Saul's servants said unto him, behold now, an evil spirit from God troubles you.

David's **second anointing** came when Judah anointed him as their king.

2 Samuel 2:4 And the men of Judah came, and there they anointed David king over the house of Judah.

The **third anointing** was when he was anointed king over all Israel and Judah.

2 Samuel 5:3 So all the elders of Israel came to the king to Hebron; and king David made a league with them in Hebron before the LORD: and they anointed David king over Israel.

Anointing of prophets

Prophets also were anointed to function in their office, and that anointing came only by God's choosing and calling. In the following example, God commanded Elijah to anoint a king and anoint a prophet to take his place:

1 Kings 19:16 "Also you shall anoint Jehu the son of Nimshi as king over Israel. And Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel Meholah you shall anoint as prophet in your place.

Only after Elijah departed did the Spirit come upon Elisha. However, Elisha received a double portion of the Spirit of God that was on Elijah.

2 Kings 2:9 And so it was, when they had crossed over, that Elijah said to Elisha, "Ask! What may I do for you, before I am taken away from you?" Elisha said, "Please let a double portion of your spirit be upon me."

2 Kings 2:15 Now when the sons of the prophets who were from Jericho saw him, they said, "**The spirit of Elijah rests on Elisha.**" And they came to meet him, and bowed to the ground before him.

So far, we have seen that the Holy Spirit came upon kings, prophets and priest in a formal "anointing" ceremony. Even the inanimate objects of the tabernacle had to be anointed. Now we will see that the Holy Spirit came upon a few individuals for specific purposes:

<u>Builders</u>	<i>Exodus 31:1-5</i>
<u>Elders</u>	<i>Numbers 11:16-17</i>
<u>Deliverers & Judges</u>	<i>Judges 13:25; 14:5-19; 15:14-15</i>
<u>Counselor</u>	<i>Genesis 41:38-39</i>
<u>Interpreter of Dreams</u>	<i>Daniel 4:8-18; 5:11-14</i>

We just saw that the Holy Spirit came upon a select few individuals for specific purposes. The general population of Israel never experienced the anointing and supernatural gifts and abilities given by the Holy Spirit.

A physical appearance

We have one incident where there was a physical manifestation of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament. This situation came about after Abraham defeated some Kings in battle, and afterward, a person named **Melchizedek** met with him [*Genesis 14:18-21, Hebrews 6:20 - 7:21*].

Who is Melchizedek?

There is some question over who this Melchizedek may be. The first clues regarding his identity are associated with the terminology used to describe Him. He was not birthed, had no parents, no beginning point, or end of life, which points to the obvious conclusion that he is eternal, meaning he is God.

Hebrews 7:3, ... without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life ...

If he is God, then which member of the trinity would he be? The Father, the Holy Spirit, or Christ? That answer becomes evident as we follow the descriptions given to him. Melchizedek is the King of Salem, which means he is the King of peace. By contrast, Jesus is the Prince of Peace (*Isaiah 9:6*).

Hebrews 7:1, "For this Melchizedek, King of Salem."

Melchizedek is the priest of the Most-High God, so he is not the Most-High God, meaning God the Father. Since he is not God the Father, or the Son, the logical conclusion is that Melchizedek was the Holy Spirit.

Hebrews 7:1-2, "priest of the Most-High God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him; To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all."

The next verse describes Melchizedek as being *like* the Son of God. If he is like the Son, he is not the Son, again pointing to the Holy Spirit.

Hebrews 7:3, "...but made LIKE UNTO the SON of GOD."

In another passage, Jesus was made a high priest after the order of Melchisedec. Jesus was not made a high priest after himself, so by necessity, Melchisedec would have to be different than Jesus, again pointing to the Holy Spirit.

Hebrews 6:20, Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made a high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

Under the Law the tribe of Levi and specifically the descendants of Aaron were the only tribe legally recognized as qualified to perform as priest. However, Melchizedek met with Abraham before the Law, and Melchizedek's priesthood is eternal and greater than the Levitical priesthood that came by the Law. The lessor would pay tithes to the greater, and Levi representing the Old Testament priesthood, who would come from Abraham's descendants over 400 years later, paid their tithes to Melchizedek through Abraham.

Hebrews 7:9-11, Even Levi, who receives tithes, paid tithes through Abraham, so to speak, for he was still in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him. ... what further need was there that another priest should rise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be called according to the order of Aaron?

When Jesus appeared, he was from the tribe of Judah, a descendant of David, which disqualified him from being a priest based on the Laws of the Levitical priesthood. But Christ was qualified as a priest according to a different priestly order, a higher priestly order, and Jesus became a priest after the order of Melchizedek.

Hebrews 7:13-17 For He of whom these things are spoken belongs to another tribe, from which no man has officiated at the altar. For it is evident that our Lord arose from Judah, of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning priesthood. And it is yet far more evident if, in the likeness of Melchizedek, there arises another priest who has come, not according to the law of a fleshly commandment, but according to the power of an endless life. For He testifies: "You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek."

In the New Testament

Jesus did not begin his earthly ministry until after being anointed by the Holy Spirit. First, John baptized Jesus, and then the Holy Spirit descended upon him. Then, Jesus went into the wilderness to be tested by the Devil for 40 days. Afterward, he came out of the desert in the power of the Spirit.



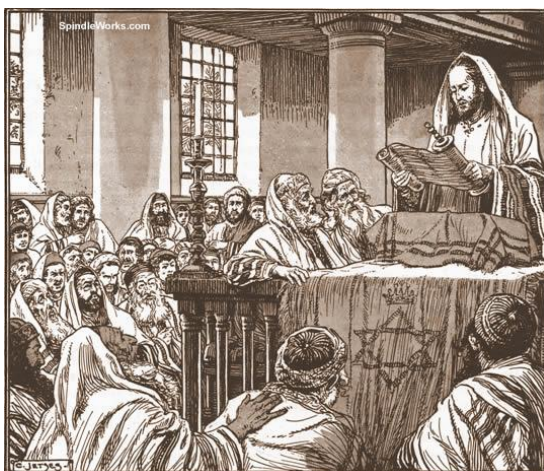
Matthew 3:16 When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him.

Luke 4:1 And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness,

Luke 4:14 And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about.

The anointing

After being filled with the power of the Spirit, Jesus went into the synagogue. They handed him the scroll from the prophet Isaiah, and he read from it the part regarding being anointed by the Spirit of God to preach, heal, proclaim liberty, and the acceptable year of the Lord. Then he announced himself as being the fulfillment of the scripture he had just read. Only after his anointing by the Holy Spirit did Jesus begin his earthly ministry. He was ready at age 12 (*Luke 2:41-50*) but waited until he was 30 years of age, as required by the Law for priests (*Numbers 4:1-3*).



Luke 4:18-21 *"The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed; To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD." Then He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him. And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."*

Acts 10:38 *How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.*

Hebrews 1:9 *Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.*

Acts 4:27 *For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together,*

Jesus the Anointed One

The Hebrew word Messiah and the Greek word Christ are the same, being a title that means anointed, or the anointed one, which is a designation of a specific person, the promised Son of David, a Jewish king who would rule all the nations from Jerusalem.

The name Jesus comes from the Hebrew word Joshua which means God is salvation. So, Jesus is his name, Christ or Messiah is a title that describes his position, power, and authority. Because Jesus is the Christ, he has unlimited spiritual power, rules over all, with all authority.

But when Jesus became a man, he emptied himself of his divine power and lived as a servant, and all the miracles, healings, and casting out of demons that Jesus did, He attributed to the power of the Holy Spirit. But the Scribes and Pharisees attributed the miracles Jesus did to the Devil. So, Jesus said they had committed blasphemy against the Holy Spirit for which there is no forgiveness.

Matthew 12:28 But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you.

Mark 3:29, 30 But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation: because they said, He hath an unclean spirit.

As the time drew near for Jesus to finish his ministry, he told the disciples how important it was for him to leave so that he could send the Holy Spirit to help them.

John 16:7 "Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you.

John 16:13-14 "However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. "He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you.

We see that when Jesus died on the altar of the cross, it was through the Holy Spirit that Jesus offered Himself as a sacrifice for our sins.

Hebrews 9:14 how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

The last thing that Jesus told his disciples after his resurrection and before He ascended to heaven was to wait in Jerusalem for power, referring to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 1:8. "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

Acts 1:4-5. And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, "which," He said, "you have heard from Me; "for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

Exclusive to the NT

The baptism of the Holy Spirit is exclusive to the New Testament believers in Jesus and will continue with the church until the rapture. The Old Testament saints witnessed the Holy Spirit in many profound ways; however, they did not experience the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Some might point to John the Baptist as an example of being filled with the Holy Spirit from His mother's womb.

***Luke 1:15** For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb.*

John interacted with the Holy Spirit from his mother's womb, but he never experienced the baptism of the Holy Spirit. There is no doubt that John had experiences with the Holy Spirit, but John acknowledged that he needed, but did not have, the baptism that Jesus baptized with, specifically the baptism with the Holy Ghost and with fire. Also, John could not have been baptized in the Spirit because the outpouring of the Holy Spirit took place long after John had died.

***Matthew 3:11-14** I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire ... Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. And John tried to prevent Him, saying, "I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?"*

John was the last and greatest of the Old Testament saints (*Matthew 11:11-13*). None of the Old Testament saints had the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit was **WITH** them, but not **IN** them. Only after Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection, and fifty days later on the day of Pentecost, was the baptism of the Holy Spirit and fire

***John 14:16-17, 26** And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives WITH you and will be IN you.*

***John 7:38-39** Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him." By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.*

Here we come to a difference of opinions. Many good Christians believe everyone who accepts Christ is automatically baptized in the Holy Spirit when they say a sinner's prayer. According to them, the original Apostles received the baptism of the Holy Spirit with all the supernatural gifts of the Holy Spirit to establish the church. They teach that when the last original Apostle died, all the power and the spiritual gifts also died, ceased to operate, and would never return. That may be why they personally have never had any spiritual experiences after they were born again.

They have a one-and-done attitude, so once they accomplish repeating the sinner's prayer, they are set for life. Some of these same people will slander as demonic and deceived other Christian believers who have received the baptism of the Spirit with speaking in tongues and operate in the gifts of the Spirit.

We would beg to differ with the anti-Holy Spirit contingent and contend that the gifts of the Holy Spirit are still in operation and have not been discontinued or ceased from functioning in the church. And granted, numerous bizarre and flaky quacks fleece the flock, twist the scriptures, and bring great reproach and shame by claiming false gifts in false ministries. But they do not cancel, void, or negate all the legitimate giftings of the Holy Spirit in humble and sincere servants of God. Our position is that all the promises of God are Yes and Amen in Christ. The gifts are still available and will only cease after the rapture, but until then, the church needs them now more than ever.

2 Corinthians 1:20 For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us.

A separate experience

To show a distinction between initial salvation by faith and a subsequent experience of being baptized in the Holy Spirit, we will follow the path of the original Apostles and their experiences before and after Pentecost. Jesus sent out 70 disciples to preach the Kingdom, and they came back rejoicing over the power they had over demons.

Jesus replied to rejoice, not at power over demons, but because of having their names written in heaven. That sounds like a confirmation of their salvation, implying their names are in the book of life.

Luke 10:20** Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but **rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.

We have another example of someone receiving salvation before Jesus went to the cross. Zacchaeus demonstrated repentance and faith, and Jesus said, "today," salvation has come to his house.

Luke 19:8-10** Then Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold." And Jesus said to him, "**Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; "for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."

Jesus sent the twelve apostles out to preach the kingdom, and they experienced the power of God before Pentecost, but that was not the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

***Matthew 10:7-8** And as ye go, preach, saying, the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.*

At one point, Jesus asked his disciples who he was, and Peter answered that he was "the Christ," the Son of the living God. That sounds like a statement of faith that many Pastors would include in their sinner's prayer. Do you believe Jesus was the Son of God?

Matthew 16:15-17 He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter answered and said, "**You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.**" Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for **flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.**"

Jesus brought his inner three disciples to a mountain top and gave them a glimpse of his glory, endorsed by God the Father speaking from heaven.

Matthew 16:28 "Assuredly, I say to you, **there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom.**"

Matthew 17:1-5 Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, led them up on a high mountain by themselves; and **He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light. And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him. ...** While he was still speaking, **behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!"**

Let's summarize the Apostle's experiences before the cross: they were witnesses to raising the dead, miracles of healing, casting out demons, miraculous multiplication of food, walking on water, revelations from the father that Jesus was the Messiah, a vision of Jesus glorified with Moses and Elijah, with names already written in heaven and salvation declared to repentant sinners. Redemption took place at the cross by the sacrifice and blood of Christ, but when did they have saving faith? The question about salvation and the baptism of the Holy Spirit is critical to determine if they are one simultaneous and synonymous experience as some claim, or are they two distinct experiences?

Jesus told his disciples to wait in Jerusalem to receive another experience. Let's look at the events leading up to that point, particularly in the life of Peter. When they took Jesus and crucified him, Peter cut off somebody's ear, denied that he knew Jesus three times, cursed, hid from persecution, and went back to his former job, fishing. Peter was not exactly a picture of spiritual fortitude at that time. Then after three days, Jesus was raised from the dead, and he appeared to His disciples with these final words before His ascension:

Luke 24:49 I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high."

Acts 1:8 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."

The word translated "witness" in that verse, comes from the Greek word "martus" and literally means a martyr. So, Jesus appears to his disciples who had been hiding in fear, and tells them that they that would receive power, enabling them to be his witnesses, even to the point of death. Jesus had already personally prophesied about Peter's martyrdom, (*John 21:18, 10*).

We could ask, how did they know when they had received the power? They would still be there waiting, if there was no outward or inward sign. Let's read the actual account of the disciples receiving this power.

Acts 2:1-4 When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. ... Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. **and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.**

We read of a number of outwards signs that took place that day:

- Sound of a rushing wind
- Appearance of tongues of fire on each of them
- They spoke in 16 different foreign languages, they had not previously known

There was another sign, it was a change in Peter. The same Peter who denied the lord three times, who cursed, went back to fishing, and was hiding for fear. Now he is standing boldly, and openly preaching about Christ, who he had denied. After being Spirit filled, boldness became a trademark of Peter, (*Acts 5:28-32*).

Acts 2:14 But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice,

Acts 4:5-13 Now when they saw the **boldness** of Peter and John ...

Acts 4:14-31 ... they were **all filled with the Holy Ghost**, and they spoke the word of God with **boldness**.

Acts 5:40-42 And to him they agreed: and when **they had called the apostles, and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.**

Another sign that we see took place on the day of Pentecost was the tremendous increase in the number of disciples added to the church:

Acts 2:41 Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day **there were added unto them about three thousand souls.**

Are you having problems taking a stand and being bold for Jesus? Take note of Peter's life and be encouraged at what the Holy Spirit can do! He can change a cowardly backslider into a fiery preacher! Let's read from Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost.

*Acts 2:38 Then Peter said unto them, **Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.***

This verse is what some people call the gospel in a nutshell. In this one verse Peter gives four aspects of the gospel.

#1. Repent

#2. Be Born Again.

#3. Be Baptized in Water.

#4. Receive the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Peter lays out the gospel as a process with four steps. If there is no repentance, the process stops on step one. If they repent and believe, then proceed to be water baptized, which usually happens at the earliest convenience. So, after repenting and believing, being water baptized is followed by receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost. Peter promoted having distinctly different experiences **after** being born again, namely water baptism and receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Let's look at a few more examples.

After persecution broke out against the church, the disciples scattered to various cities. In every city where they were scattered, they preached the gospel.

A deacon named Philip went to Samaria and preached Christ with tremendous results. Multitudes of Samaritans got healed, delivered from demons, saved, and baptized in water (*Acts 8:4-13*). Take note also that Philip would not baptize someone unless that person believed in Jesus with all their heart (*Acts 8:36-37*) Taking that into consideration, read the following verses:

Acts 8:14-17 Now when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that **Samaria had received the word of God**, they sent Peter and John to them, who, when they had come down, **prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit. For as yet He had fallen upon none of them. They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.**

A person does not automatically receive the Holy Spirit at the new birth. That is why Peter and John had to pray for these Samaritan believers to receive the Holy Spirit. These people had already experienced healing, deliverance, and miracles and had been born again and water baptized, but they did not have the Holy Spirit. It is important to remember that Philip would not baptize unbelievers. The Samaritans had been born again, but only after Peter and John laid hands on them did these believers receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Here's another example. The apostle Paul while on his travels, found some disciples in Ephesus (probably disciples of Apollos. *Acts 18:24-28*). Upon discovering that these disciples were already believers in Christ, what was Paul's first question for them?

Acts 19:1-2 And it happened, while Apollos was at Corinth, that Paul, having passed through the upper regions, came to Ephesus. And finding some disciples he said to them, "***Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?***" So, they said to him, "***We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit.***"

Paul acknowledged that they were already born-again believers. If baptism in the Holy Spirit is automatic at salvation, why would Paul ask if they received the Holy Spirit? Paul held salvation and the baptism of the Holy Spirit as two separate experiences. What was Paul's response to these believers?

Acts 19:6 And when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied.

Distinct from Christ

Christ existed as the word of God in eternity before He came to earth and took on flesh, a human body, and dwelt among us.

John 1:1-3, 14 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. ... And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

Some groups teach that Jesus is the Father, Jesus is the son, and that Jesus is the Holy Spirit, which is erroneous on many levels, especially in regards to the incarnation (a separate topic). On another extreme, others have expressed concern over a “Christ-less Pentecost” where the gifts and moving of the Holy Spirit are so highly emphasized that Christ becomes neglected and just a distant figure in the background. Balance and perspective are needed.

Distinguishing between the Spirit of Christ and the Holy Spirit may be treading on dangerous ground, but many Christians think the two are synonymous. However, they are two distinct and separate persons. It may be a matter of semantics, but inquiring minds (like the people of Berea in Paul’s time, *Acts 17:10-11*) may search out this matter to bolster their convictions. The doctrine of the Trinity has relevance, and we should recognize each person in the Godhead. One example would be the formula for baptism given by Christ

Matthew 28:19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the ***Father*** and of the ***Son*** and of the ***Holy Spirit***

When Jesus was baptized it does not say that Jesus descended on Jesus in the form of a dove, and then the voice of Jesus spoke from the heavens saying “this is Jesus in whom I Jesus am well pleased”. No, it was a graphic example of the trinity on display, God the Father speaking from heaven, the Holy Spirit descending in the form of a dove, and Jesus truly God and truly man, it was the trinity three distinct persons in one God.

Matthew 3:16-17 *When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."*

Jesus and the Holy Spirit are separate, yet one with the father. The Spirit of Christ can be distinguished from the Holy Spirit. Look at the following list of examples:

1 Peter 1:10 *Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow, ... which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost.*

Philippians 1:19 *For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,*

Luke 23:46 *And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit ... (Jesus gave up his own spirit)*

If you don't have the Spirit of Christ, you are not saved, but if the Spirit of God dwells in you, you will not walk after the flesh, like the unsaved people do.

Romans 8:9 *But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.*

When people repeat the sinner's prayer, it goes something like this, Holy Spirit, I know you died on the cross for me, cleanse me with your blood, forgive my sins and come into my heart. Right? Wrong! Jesus is the one that died and shed His blood for you. You asked Jesus to forgive you and come into your heart, not the Holy Spirit! You ask Jesus into your heart, and the Holy Spirit baptizes you later.

Galatians 4:6 *And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.*

Ephesians 3:17 *That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love.*

Jesus taught us to ask, seek, and knock to receive the Holy Spirit. If a person automatically has the Holy Spirit from the time they are born again, why did Jesus teach that we should ask, seek, and knock until we receive the good gift of the Holy Spirit?

Luke 11:9-13 *"So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened ... "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!"*

The promise

After Jesus rose from the dead, he appeared to his disciples and gave them very specific instructions:

***Luke 24:49** I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city **until you have been clothed with power from on high.**"*

These instructions were clear, wait in Jerusalem until you receive power. He did not tell them to wait for salvation because they had salvation. They were waiting for the baptism, the power, and the gifts of the Holy Spirit. How would they have known they had received the Holy Spirit if there were no outward signs? They would still be there waiting if nothing happened on the day of Pentecost. But thank God that signs and wonders manifested to confirm the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

***Acts 1:4-8** ... "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.**" ... **you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem ... and to the ends of the earth.**"*

The disciples followed Jesus' example and did not begin their ministries until after the Holy Spirit had anointed them. A crowd gathered outside and wondered what was happening. Then Peter stepped up and boldly began to preach. Take note that, unlike in the Old Testament, where a few select people received the anointing of the Holy Spirit,

to the contrary, everybody in the church, top to bottom, young and old, male and female, all are encouraged to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 2:16-18 "But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: 'And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, that **I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams. And on My menservants and on My maidservants, I will pour out My Spirit in those days; And they shall prophesy.**

Peter went on to proclaim that this was the promise of the Spirit:

Acts 2:33 ... (Jesus) being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father **the promise of the Holy Spirit**, He poured out this which you now see and hear.

Just to further clarify that the promise was in reference to the baptism of Holy Spirit, look at a few other verses:

Galatians 3:13,14 Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us ... that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, **that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.**

Ephesians 1:13** In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were **sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.

Back to Peter's sermon, he said the promise is for everyone. He said to repent (get saved), be baptized (in water), and you (everyone who thirsts) will receive (another experience) the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 2:38-39** Then Peter said to them, "**Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall (future tense) receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. "For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."

Initial evidence

Here is the big question; how can you **KNOW** when a person receives the Holy Spirit baptism? Do you pray for the gift of discernment? (*I Corinthians 12:10*). Do you look for the fruit of the Spirit? (*Galatians 5:22-23*). Those are important considerations to determine whether someone is walking in the Spirit, or in the flesh. But how do you **KNOW** without a doubt that someone received the Holy Spirit? What is the fastest, easiest way to know? How did the apostles **KNOW** that the gentiles had received the gift of the Holy Spirit? The answer: **THEY HEARD THEM SPEAK IN TONGUES!**

That was the same way that Peter and the 120 who were in the upper room on the day of Pentecost received the Holy Spirit, confirmed by the evidence of speaking in tongues.

Acts 10:44-47 While Peter was still speaking these words, ***the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word.*** And those of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, ***because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also. FOR they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God.*** Then Peter answered, "Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized ***who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?***"

Peter recounting this outpouring to the elders in Jerusalem made this statement:

Acts 11:15 And as I began to speak, ***the Holy Ghost fell on them, AS ON US AT THE BEGINNING.***

How did the Holy Spirit fall on the disciples in the beginning? With speaking in tongues! Note that the Biblical examples of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit was always accompanied by speaking in tongues.

Acts 2:4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Acts 19:6 And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, ***the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.***

Jesus said that those who believe in him would have signs that follow them, and one of those signs was speaking in tongues.

Mark 16:17 ... these signs shall follow them that believe; in my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;

Clarifying tongues

To understand tongues let's go back to the original outpouring, there were 120 disciples in an upper room in Jerusalem, (*Acts 1:15*). Jesus told His disciples to wait there until they received power, and after 10 days something happened.

Acts 2:1-4 When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. ... Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

They spoke in other tongues or different languages as the Holy Spirit gave them utterance. These disciples were fishermen and local people who never traveled or went to school to learn languages (*Acts 4* verse 13). The foreign languages came by the supernatural intervention of the Holy Spirit, which gave them their utterances. The word utterance means to enunciate plainly, declare, and speak forth. The enunciation of words means to pronounce or state clearly. These uneducated men and women were given the supernatural ability by the Holy Spirit to speak and enunciate fluently in languages they had never learned.

Since the disciples experienced this phenomenon on the day of Pentecost, the adherents of the baptism of the Holy Spirit are sometimes called “Pentecostals,” amongst other things. Pentecost was a Jewish festival day for which Jewish pilgrims traveled from all over the world to Jerusalem to join in the feast (Acts 2:5). What the pilgrims heard and saw on that day amazed them.

*Acts 2:6-8 And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, **from every nation under heaven.** And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, because **everyone heard them speak in his own language.** ... Then they were all amazed and marveled, saying to one another, "**Look, are not all these who speak Galileans?**" **"And how is it that we hear, each in our own language in which we were born?**"*

They heard them speak in their own "language," that word in Greek is *dialektos*, the root for our word dialects. Dialects can have variations within the same language, with slang and accents, according to the different locations. When the phenomenon of speaking in foreign languages (tongues) happened on Pentecost, foreign visitors to Jerusalem heard the disciples speaking in slang, with accents, just like in the local neighborhoods of the foreign countries from where they had come.

Acts 2:8-11 Then how is it that each of us hears them in his own native language? [1] **Parthians**, and [2] **Medes**, and [3] **Elamites**, and the dwellers in [4] **Mesopotamia**, and in [5] **Judaea**, and [6] **Cappadocia**, in [7] **Pontus**, and [8] **Asia**, [9] **Phrygia**, and [10] **Pamphylia**, in [11] **Egypt**, and in the parts of [12] **Libya** about [13] **Cyrene**, and strangers of [14] **Rome**, Jews and proselytes, [15] **Cretans** and [16] **Arabians**, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.

Each of the 16 languages represented by foreigners visiting Jerusalem heard them speaking clearly in their native dialects about the wonderful works of God. These were ordinary people to whom the Holy Spirit did supernatural things by putting words in their mouths as a sign, a witness, and a message to the multitude that had gathered. The fruit of that event is undeniable, as three thousand Jews converted to faith in Jesus and joined themselves to the body of Christ.

Babel vs. Pentecost

At the tower of Babel, they had one language and purpose and were united in rebellion against God. Then God came down and divided their language, which resulted in chaos, confusion, and division. Ultimately, they abandoned the tower project, and all the different language groups separated from each other and scattered around the world (Genesis 11:1-9).

By contrast, on the day of Pentecost, people from around the world gathered in Jerusalem. Then God came down and

filled the disciples with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke in foreign languages. People from 16 different language groups simultaneously heard the gospel message in their native dialect. Then 3,000 people joined the disciples to become one body of believers, and they had all things in common, daily praying, studying, and eating meals together (*Acts 2:41-47*). The church experienced the opposite effect as the Tower of Babel. They all stayed in Jerusalem until severe persecution began, then they were sent out by the Holy Spirit to preach the gospel to the uttermost parts of the earth.

Tongues are for today

Those that say that tongues died with the last apostle, have failed to realize that the last apostle hasn't died yet. Here is the verse they use to prove their teaching.

1 Corinthians 13:8-10** Love never fails. But whether there are **prophecies**, they will fail; **whether there are tongues, they will cease**; whether there is **knowledge**, it will vanish away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part. **But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away.

He says that tongues will cease. But, take note that he also said that prophecies would fail. Have prophecies failed? NO! There is a shelf life for all prophetic events that expire at the end of time. But Paul went on to say that they prophesied in part, he wasn't finished with prophecy. The apostles prophesied in part because they had partial information, and the information gap will be closed with the coming of Christ and our entrance into eternity.

He also says that knowledge will vanish or pass away. Has God left the church vacant or void of knowledge, wisdom, or faith? NO! Those are gifts of the Spirit to the church and are necessary for every generation of believers (*1 Corinthians 12:4-11*). Although, maybe they have ceased for those who claim that the gifts died with the last apostle. Will speaking in tongues cease? Yes! When? When Jesus, the perfect has come, and not before. But until the rapture takes place, the church needs every gift of the Spirit, including faith, knowledge, wisdom, discernment, and speaking in tongues. When the church is raptured and gone, only then would speaking in tongues and all the gifts of the Spirit have served their purpose and cease.

Now we see dimly, but one day Jesus will come and we will see him "face to face." The church will be caught up in the clouds to meet Jesus in the air, (*1 Thessalonians 4:13-18*). What a glorious, joyful day that will be. Until then we are pressing towards the prize, and perfecting holiness in the fear of God, and speaking in tongues!

1 Corinthians 13:12 For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.

Let's go back to Pentecost again and we will discover another important fact that lets us know that tongues are for today. When Peter was explaining the phenomenon of tongues, he said it was a fulfillment of prophecy:

Acts 2:16-20 ... I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh ... And on My menservants and on My maidservants, I will pour out My Spirit in those days; And they shall prophesy. I will show wonders in heaven above and signs in the earth beneath: Blood and fire and vapor of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD.

Did all these events take place on the day of Pentecost? No! The second part of this prophecy has not yet taken place. The sun turning to darkness, the moon to blood, and the day of the Lord, are all references to the great tribulation which will take place after the rapture of the church (*Matthew 24:29, Isaiah 13:6-10, Revelation 12-17*). The Spirit will continue to pour out, leading up to the time when the sun turns to darkness and the moon to blood, then it reaches its full completion.

Do all speak in tongues

Another argument is from a verse that says "do all speak in tongues." This is used to say that tongues were for the first church but not for today. Let's see what the verse says.

1 Corinthians 12:28-30 *And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues. ... Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles? Do all have gifts of healings? **Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret?***

These verses speak about the diversity of callings and gifts in the church. Those verses do not imply that any ministry gifts are eliminated or taken away. Are there still teachers in the church? Yes! Are there still helpers and administrators in the church? Of Course! We can't pick and choose which gifts are for today and which ones are not. If someone wants to do that, they might as well take their scissors and cut out all the parts of the Bible they don't like. That thinking twists scriptures out of context to fit a theological agenda. On the contrary, the Bible tells us to desire the best spiritual gifts to build up and encourage the church.

I Corinthians 12:31 But earnestly desire the best gifts. And yet I show you a more excellent way, (Rom.11:29, I Cor.1:20).

Church order

On the day of Pentecost, those present to witness the outpouring of the Holy Spirit were perplexed. Some thought it was a sign, others said the disciples were drunk, and others heard about the marvelous works of God (*Acts 2:11-15*).

You can see from the different reactions that people didn't understand what was happening. Fortunately, Peter interjected before confusion could set in. He stood up and preached a mighty sermon that everyone understood, and 3,000 souls joined the body of Christ. Years later, the Apostle Paul addressed the Corinthian church and gave instructions to clear up any confusion regarding the use of tongues.

Paul taught the Corinthians two types of speaking in tongues, one for personal prayer and the other to edify the church. We will look first at tongues for personal prayer and edification.

1 Corinthians 14:1-4 Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy. For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands him; however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries. But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men. He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church.

He says no one understands tongues but God, including the person who is the speaker. He is speaking mysteries unknown to all but God.

That personal expression of speaking in tongues is not for interpretation, unlike the gift of tongues for the church.

In that prayer language, our spirit communicates with God, not man. This type of tongue is for personal prayer and edification. The Holy Spirit helps us pray and express ourselves to God in a way we cannot by praying in our understanding (understanding would be English, or whatever language you speak).

Jude 1:20 But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit.

1 Corinthians 14:14-15 For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my understanding is unfruitful. What is the conclusion then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with the understanding. I will sing with the spirit, and I will also sing with the understanding.

Romans 8:26-27 Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

Another use of tongues is to build up the church, and the gift of tongues is only permitted if accompanied by the gift of interpretation. The Corinthians had problems keeping order in the church because they would all speak in tongues simultaneously, and nobody would explain to visitors what was happening, which brought confusion and troubled the new people.

Paul taught the church to speak in a common language that everyone could understand and only use the gift tongues if it gets interpreted so everyone can understand it. Paul said the church should speak a common language that everybody can understand. Paul also said they could all speak in tongues, but only two or three at a time and with interpretation, to build faith in the church.

1 Corinthians 14:5 I wish you all spoke with tongues, but even more that you prophesied; for he who prophesies is greater than he who speaks with tongues, unless indeed he interprets, that the church may receive edification.

1 Corinthians 14:27-28 If anyone speaks in a tongue, let there be two or at the most three, each in turn, and let one interpret. But if there is no interpreter, let him keep silent in church, and let him speak to himself and to God.

1 Corinthians 14:39-40 Therefore, brethren, desire earnestly to prophesy, and do not forbid to speak with tongues. Let all things be done decently and in order.

Paul told the church, "I wish you all spoke in tongues." He wanted each member of the body of Christ to be personally edified (built up, encouraged) by speaking in tongues. But when they came together as a church, the building up of the congregation must take precedence over individual edification. Interpretation of tongues is one of the gifts of the Spirit, which is the ability through the Holy Spirit to interpret a message given in tongues (*1 Corinthians 12:10*). The gift of tongues should only be used in conjunction with an interpretation and is for the building up of the church, not the individual. As Paul continues teaching, you can distinguish the difference between tongues for personal prayer and encouragement, contrasted by the gift of tongues with interpretation for the benefit of the church. As we continue through the chapter, these points are confirmed. The following verses speak about the gift of tongues and interpretation for the church:

1 Corinthians 14:6-13 Now, brothers, if I come to you and speak in tongues, what good will I be to you, unless I bring you some revelation or knowledge or prophecy or word of instruction? Even in the case of lifeless things that make sounds, such as the flute or harp, how will anyone know what tune is being played unless there is a distinction in the notes? Again, if the trumpet does not sound a clear call, who will get ready for battle? So, it is with you. Unless you speak intelligible words with your tongue, how will anyone know what you are saying? You will just be speaking into the air. Undoubtedly there are all sorts of languages in the world, yet none of them is without meaning. If then I do not grasp the meaning of what someone is saying, I am a foreigner to the speaker, and he is a foreigner to me. So, it is with you. Since you are eager to have spiritual gifts, try to excel in gifts that build up the church. For this reason, anyone who speaks in a tongue should pray that he may interpret what he says.

The next verses are showing tongues for personal edification:

1 Corinthians 14:14-15 For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful. So, what shall I do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will also pray with my mind; I will sing with my spirit, but I will also sing with my mind.

Again, he goes back to the exhortation to seek for the edification of the church:

1 Corinthians 14:16-19 *If you are praising God with your spirit, how can one who finds himself among those who do not understand say "Amen" to your thanksgiving, since he does not know what you are saying? You may be giving thanks well enough, but the other man is not edified. I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you. But in the church, I would rather speak five intelligible words to instruct others than ten thousand words in a tongue*

Paul said, "I thank my God I speak in tongues more than you all." Apparently, in Paul's personal life, he was a prolific tongue talker. Yet, in the church, he sought the edification of others. Therefore, he would rather speak five words in a message that people could understand than speak 10,000 words that would only build up his faith. Paul taught the church to consider the unsaved visitors who did not understand tongues:

1 Corinthians 14:20-25 *In the Law it is written: "Through men of strange tongues and through the lips of foreigners I will speak to this people, but even then, they will not listen to me," says the Lord. **Tongues, then, are a sign, not for believers but for unbelievers;** prophecy, however, is for believers, not for unbelievers. So, if the whole church comes together and everyone speaks in tongues, and some who do not understand or some unbelievers come in, will they not say that you are out of your mind?*

Tongues were also mentioned as a sign for the unbelievers. Paul also gave instructions as to the order of the gifts in a church service:

Mark 16:17. *"And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues.*

1 Corinthians 14:26-33 *What then shall we say, brothers? When you come together, everyone has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. All of these must be done for the strengthening of the church. If anyone speaks in a tongue, two or at the most three should speak, one at a time, and someone must interpret. If there is no interpreter, the speaker should keep quiet in the church and speak to himself and God ... For God is not a God of disorder but of peace. As in all the congregations of the saints,*

Paul finishes by commanding **DO NOT FORBID TO SPEAK IN TONGUES**, and he encourages order in church services. Sadly, many churches today forbid speaking in tongues, and they even say that speaking in tongues is of the Devil. They may be committing blasphemy against the Holy Spirit in the same as the Sadducees and Pharisees (*Matthew 12:31-32*).

1 Corinthians 14:38-40 *But if anyone is ignorant, let him be ignorant. Therefore, brethren, desire earnestly to prophesy, and do not forbid to speak with tongues. Let all things be done decently and in order.*

Gifts of the Spirit

Some corrupt preachers would like to make you think that the Holy Spirit can be leashed and harnessed to serve their

will. Run from those frauds. Quite to the contrary, the Holy Spirit is God and deserves to be feared, reverence, and obeyed, and He controls the distribution and power of the gifts according to His will, not ours.

*1 Corinthians 12:7-11 But the **manifestation of the Spirit** is given to each one for the profit of all: for to one is given the word of wisdom **through the Spirit**, to another the word of **knowledge through the same Spirit**, to another faith **by the same Spirit**, to another gifts of healings **by the same Spirit**, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. But one and **the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.***

Fruits of the Spirit

If someone is walking in the Spirit they will reflect the character of Christ, and will avoid bad character. Jesus said you will know them by their fruits, good or bad.

*Galatians 5:22-25 But the **fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.** Against such there is no law. And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. **If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.***

*Matthew 7:17-20 "Even so, **every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. "A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. "Every tree that does not bear good fruit***

is cut down and thrown into the fire. "Therefore, by their fruits you will know them.

Empowerment

The following is a list of some of the operations and blessings that the Holy Spirit bestows in and through us.

Sanctifies & makes holy,	<i>1 Cor 6:11, 2 Thess 2:13, 1 Peter 1:2</i>
Power & gifts of healing,	<i>1 Cor 12:9, Acts 10:38</i>
Casting out demons,	<i>Matthew 12:28</i>
Boldness to preach,	<i>Acts 4:31</i>
Breaks oppression,	<i>Isaiah 10:27, Luke 4:18</i>
Clothes with power,	<i>Luke 24:49</i>
Reveals truth,	<i>John 16:13, 1 Pet 1:22, Eph 3:3-5</i>
Righteousness, peace, joy,	<i>Rom 14:17, 1 Thess 1:5-6</i>
Gives faith, hope, love,	<i>Gal 5:5, Rom 5:5, Rom 15:13</i>
Gives guidance,	<i>John 16:13, Luke 4:1, Rom 8:14</i>
Helps in prayer,	<i>Rom 8:26, Zech 12:10</i>
Grace & gifts,	<i>1 Cor 12:4-11, 1 Cor 12:28, Heb 2:4</i>
Spiritual life,	<i>John 6:63, Rom 8:4-12, 2 Cor 3:6, Gal 6:8</i>
Puts to death the sin nature,	<i>Rom 8:4-12</i>
Strengthens us in the inner Man,	<i>Ephesians 3:16</i>
Strengthens our physical body,	<i>Romans 8:11</i>
Comfort, Encouragement,	<i>John 14:16-26: 16:7, Acts 9:31</i>
Assurance of salvation,	<i>2 Cor 1:22, 2 Cor 5:5</i>
Writes on our hearts,	<i>2 Corinthians 3:2-3</i>
Makes us his temple,	<i>Eph 2:22, 1 Cor 3:16</i>
Takes us from glory to glory,	<i>2 Cor 3:18, 1 Peter 4:14</i>
Brings us into glorious liberty,	<i>2 Corinthians 3:17</i>

To receive

Receiving the Holy Spirit cannot be reduced to a formula or a set of steps. The only way to receive the Holy Spirit is by faith through grace as a gift. No one can earn or purchase this precious gift at any price. The following verses will point the thirsty seeker in the right direction to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit and experience rivers of living waters.

Repent & Believe & Be Baptized

First, once someone is born again, they should be water baptized. Why? To be obedient to the word of God as commanded by Jesus and the Apostles, all believers should be water baptized.

Acts 2:38 Then Peter said to them, "**Repent**, and let every one of you **be baptized** in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; **and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.**

Ask with a Pure Conscience

If there is any area of sin or conflict with other people, make things right so you can seek God with a pure conscience. Faith works in a pure conscience and gives us boldness to approach the throne of God.

1 John 3:20-22 For if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things. Beloved, **if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God. And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.**

Timothy 3:9 ... Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.

Ask in faith for the free gift

Persistence is a key, so keep asking, keep seeking, keep knocking, and you will receive.

Luke 11:9 -13 "So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. "For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. "If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? "Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!"

Worship

On the day of Pentecost, when they spoke in tongues, they were being heard in different languages glorifying God and all His wonderful works. Jesus said that those who worship God must worship in Spirit and truth. Praise and worship to God play a crucially important role in being Spirit-filled.

John 4:23-24 "But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. "God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

Acts 2:11 ... we hear them speak in tongues the wonderful works of God.

Obedience to God

God rewards obedience and punishes disobedience. If there is anything that God has put on your heart, or has been dealing with in your life, be obedient to God, or you will not grow or move forward spiritually until you obey.

*Acts 5:32 And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also **the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.***

Receive by Faith

Everything is by faith, we are saved by faith, and we are baptized and operate in the gifts of the Holy Spirit by faith.

*Matthew 21:22 "And whatever things you **ask in prayer, believing, you will receive.**"*

*John 7:39 But this He spoke concerning **the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive;** for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.*

Be Thirsty & Drink

Hunger and thirst for God are the driving motivation required to receive from God. If there is no spiritual thirst, nothing will happen. But those who have an unquenchable thirst will be filled, and rivers of living waters will flow from their innermost being.

1 Corinthians 12:13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.

John 7:37-39. On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive;

Revelation 22:17. And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.

Matthew 5:6 Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

Prayer & the Laying on of Hands

Phillip had a multitude of converts in Samaria, but none had received the Holy Spirit. So, Peter and John went to Samaria and laid hands on the Samaritans, and then they received the Holy Spirit.

Phillip had the gift for evangelism, healing, and miracles, but not the gift the Apostles had to pray for people to Holy Spirit. If you recognize someone gifted to pray for people to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit, ask them to pray for you.

Acts 8:14-17 Now when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them, who, when they had come down, ***prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit. For as yet He had fallen upon none of them. They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.***

Speak as the Spirit Gives Utterance

Speaking in tongues comes supernaturally by the Holy Spirit, and it is the Spirit that gives the utterance. The true gift of speaking in tongues does not come from man's efforts. There are no super spiritual formulas or routines to follow. When the presence of the Holy Spirit comes powerfully upon a person, the Spirit will move as He sees fit, and the recipient need only step out by faith and receive.

Acts 2:4 ***And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.***



Call to action

Because we are in the end times, our world is changing quickly to line up with Bible prophecy. Jesus said the signs of his return would be like birth pangs, growing in intensity and frequency and globally. All those signs happen at once, and we can see them happening in real-time with wars, food shortages, pandemics, shutdowns, and natural disasters, all leading to a one-world government ruled by the antichrist. Also, there will be a great falling away from Christ, with churches becoming perverted, politically woke, and government-controlled. Eventually, all true believers will have to come out of the dead institutional denominations and fake churches. Thank God we have a blessed hope that Jesus will rapture the church before wrath and judgment hit the earth!

While we have time and freedom, we should study the scriptures, share the gospel, and learn to live by faith. This book is part of a series of basic teachings that all Christians should know and teach. We call it the "toolbox series" because each study is a tool for you to share your faith with others. For free resources and study materials, visit our website at Ears2Hear.online.

