

LIFE IN THE SPIRIT SEMINARS

SESSION 5 NOTES: PRAYING FOR BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

The purpose of this session (indeed the purpose of the seminar series) is to claim Christ's promise of the Holy Spirit.

If you know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him! (Luke 11:13)

This is the turning point of the seminars, the moment at which many begin a new life with Christ. It is not the culmination of a person's Christian life but a new beginning: it is the life in the Spirit, the life of following Christ, that is important, not the experience of being baptized in the Spirit.

We start by making a prayer of commitment to Christ.

This can be understood as a renewal of our baptismal vows. A definite clear verbal commitment confirms our decision to be a follower of Christ. *If you declare with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. (Romans 10:9).*

- Do you renounce Satan and all wrongdoing? **I do**
- Do you believe that Jesus is the Son of God, that he died to free us from our sins, and that he rose to bring us new life? **I do**
- Will you follow Jesus as your Lord? **I will**

Lord Jesus Christ, I want to belong to you from now on. I want to be free from the dominion of darkness and the rule of Satan, and I want to enter into your kingdom and be part of your people. I will turn away from all wrongdoing, and I will avoid everything that leads me to wrongdoing. I ask you to forgive all the sins that I have committed. I offer my life to you, and I promise to obey you as my Lord. I ask you to baptize me in the Holy Spirit.

Individuals are then prayed over for Baptism in the Holy Spirit.

- Invite the Holy Spirit to come, then relax with open arms and open heart, trusting in the Lord to do what He knows is best for you. The Lord is the baptizer in the Holy Spirit. Ask him to give what he promised and expect it. Thank Him for what He is doing
- Different things will happen to different people. Some people experience warmth, trembling, deep peace, tears, or nothing at all. Don't seek a particular kind of experience. Just turn to the Lord and receive a new life in the Holy Spirit from him.

Pray to receive the gift of tongues

When Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them; and they spoke with tongues and prophesied. (Acts 19:7)

- Everyone should want the gift of tongues; it is a gift of God. We would never say to the Lord, "I want what you have for me, except for this." Relax. The more relaxed we are, the easier it is to receive the Lord's gifts.
- The Lord loves you and wants you to experience his love in a new way.
- Do not expect the Holy Spirit to force you to speak in tongues, you have to yield to it. The Holy Spirit does not "take us over." He leaves us our freedom.
- We speak, the Spirit forms the speech. Ask for the gift of tongues, then yield to it. Begin by speaking out, if necessary, beginning by just making meaningless sounds. The Holy Spirit will form them. Don't pray in English or in any language you know.
- Don't be afraid that it is just you, and not the Spirit. Don't analyze the sounds. Don't worry if it seems like babble or baby talk. Don't worry about sounding foolish. Make the sounds an act of worship to God. Focus on him, not on the sounds.
- Some may also be given words of prophecy in English, a message or an inspired prayer. Yield to it and speak out.

Finally: Different people have different experiences. Feeling is not the important thing. Look for the new ways God is at work in you and respond to it: a new desire for prayer, for scripture, etc. If you did not speak in tongues today, don't worry about it! Expect it to come soon.

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DAILY SCRIPTURE & REFLECTION WEEK FIVE: BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

Day 1

“He did not spare His own Son, but surrendered him for us all; and with this gift how can He fail to lavish upon us all that He has to give?” Romans 8:32

The Father gave Jesus to win you for His kingdom and is totally serious in His love for you personally. He has given everything He can, so that you can fulfil the role He has given you. He gave His only Son and has given His Holy Spirit so that you would live life to the full.

Day 2

“Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? ...If you know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!” Luke 11:11, 13

The Holy Spirit is the ultimate “good gift” of God, and He is given to us in **all** His giftedness. As Cardinal Suenens says: ‘The Spirit is inseparable from His gifts. When I receive Him, I receive the fullness of all that He is.’ Will you welcome **all** His gifts, even the ones that look strange!?

Day 3

“There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord.” 1 Corinthians 12: 4-5

Jesus knows all our needs, and the power of His Spirit is given to meet our needs and the needs of His people. As we are led to serve others, we can be confident that all His gifts necessary in that service are available to us. Pray ‘thank you Lord, for meeting all my needs.’

Day 4

“I would like every one of you to speak in tongues” 1 Corinthians 14:5

We may have thought that this was a gift only for the early church, or for special people. But Jesus specifically mentions it is for believers generally, and scripture expressly records it as an important gift associated with the gift of the Holy Spirit, and available for everyone – including you!

Day 5

“The Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans.” Romans 8:26

We always want to pray in line with God’s perfect will, but so often we simply don’t know what His will is. And when we pray for other people, we are not aware of their deepest needs. So, we pray in tongues, knowing that the Holy Spirit will be praying through us according to God’s own mind!

Day 6

“It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me.” Galatians 2:20

Pentecost brought to the Disciples the breath of God, a new heart. The Holy Spirit unites us with Jesus so that we receive his heart and are able to love with his love and obey His command ‘Love one another as I have loved you.’ Forgive and love our enemies? Impossible... but it is HIM-possible!

Day 7

“Those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God.” Romans 8:14

In addition to God working in you through the power of His Sacraments, the gift of His Spirit inspires, guides and enables you to live your new life as a beloved child of the Father. You can live Jesus’ way of life with a new heart, filled with the Father’s love and the Spirit’s power. Alleluia!

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