

ETHAN TEMPLE MINISTRIES
TOOLS FOR LIFE
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BENEFITS OF RECEIVING THE BAPTISM OF THE SPIRIT

What happens when we ask God for the baptism of the Holy Spirit? A few examples of the change the infilling of the Spirit will bring to the life of the receiver are: (1) a stronger desire to study God's word, (2) a more earnest prayer life, (3) a deeper repentance of sins, and (4) changes in lifestyle and activities.

The infilling of the Spirit is necessary for the believer to walk victoriously in Christ. According to the Bible, one does not know Christ in the fullest biblical sense without the baptism of the Holy Spirit. This is illustrated in the parable of the ten virgins in Matthew 25: 1-13, in which Christ told the five foolish virgins who were without the oil of the Holy Spirit "I know you not" in verse 12.

Here, as well as in other scriptures, Christ speaks of not knowing someone. For example, Jesus said, "Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." Matthew 7:21-23

Simply knowing the teachings of the Bible, or engaging in active ministry for Jesus, is not a substitute for knowing Him intimately through the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Water baptism is similar to the wedding ceremony, while Spirit baptism is symbolized by the consummation of the marriage, when the bride knows the bridegroom. Satan will resist this work fiercely, for he is aware that the Spirit's infilling will break his power on the believer's life.

Understanding and experiencing the infilling of the Holy Spirit is second in importance only to understanding and accepting Christ as our Savior. Once a person understands and accepts Christ there is no work more important for the believer than to seek the Spirit's infilling and to learn to walk victoriously in the Spirit.

Another very important point is that we must renew this infilling every day. It is not a once and forever experience. Paul tells us that "the inward man is renewed day by day" in 1 Corinthians 4:16. We need the renewing of the Spirit every day of our lives. Paul's command to be filled with the Spirit in Ephesians 5:18 is a continuous action verb in the Greek meaning we are to *keep on* being filled with the Spirit daily.

Christ is our example in all things. Of Christ's Spirit baptism experience Ellen White wrote, "Daily He received a fresh baptism of the Holy Spirit. In the early hours of the new day the Lord awoken Him from His slumbers, and His soul and His lips were anointed with grace, that He might impart to others." Christ's Object Lessons, page 139.

If Christ needed to receive the baptism of the Spirit every day, the Christian surely needs to pray for this daily experience in the Spirit. Our growth into the fullness of the Spirit is a process. "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." 2 Corinthians 3:18.

Spiritual growth is a process into which we must enter anew every day. Ellen White described the development of character that the recipient of the infilling of the Spirit receives when she wrote:

When the Spirit of God takes possession of the heart, it transforms the life. Sinful thoughts are put away, evil deeds are renounced; love, humility, and peace take the place of anger, envy, and strife. Joy takes the place of sadness, and the countenance reflects the light of heaven.
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What a wonderful blessing our Lord has provided for each of us through the baptism of the Holy Spirit!

Personal Reflection and Discussion

1. List four benefits of receiving the baptism of the Spirit.
2. Is the baptism of the Spirit to be a one-time event in the Christian's life?
3. How often is the Christian to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit?
4. What does receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit do for our relationship with Christ?
5. Why is Satan fearful of your receiving the Spirit's infilling?
6. What does Ellen White say will happen in our lives when we receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit?

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