

Spirit Baptism

By David Feddes

The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! This is he of whom I said, ‘After me comes a man who ranks before me, because he was before me.’ I myself did not know him, but for this purpose I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel.” And John bore witness: “I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’ And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God.” (John 1:29-34)

John the Baptist tells us who Jesus is. He says, “He’s a man who comes after me,” and he is “the Son of God.” Jesus is both God and man, and he does two really big things: he is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, and he is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit. Those are the two great actions of our Lord Jesus Christ on our behalf: he takes away sin, and he baptizes with the Holy Spirit.

Sometimes those two actions of Jesus become divided in our minds and even in our experience. We may tend to think largely of Jesus as the one who takes away sin, removes the penalty of sin, and rescues us from hell. The gift of the Holy Spirit is perhaps something that we do not focus on as much. There may be others who separate it in a different way, where he takes away sin and he fills us with the Holy Spirit, and there is a strong emphasis on that. Sometimes there is also a separation where people say that in actual Christian experience the forgiveness of sin can come long before the baptism of the Holy Spirit. So the two things are separated in people’s theology and in their minds. But in the teaching of the Bible, these belong together. Jesus’ removal of sin from our lives and from the record against us is in order that we can have the way opened to receive the gift of God’s Holy Spirit living within us.

Today I want to focus with you on Spirit baptism. I am going to answer five questions: What is Spirit baptism? When is Spirit baptism? What happens after Spirit baptism? What is the Spirit’s impact? And how can we seek more?

What is Spirit baptism?

- Father and Son give Spirit to indwell and help each believer.
- Unites believers with Christ and his body, the church.
- New Covenant blessing.

I want to begin by simply addressing the question, What is Spirit baptism? What did John the Baptist mean when he said that Jesus is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit? It means that the Father and the Son give the third person of the Holy Trinity, the Holy Spirit, to indwell and to help every believer.

The Holy Spirit is a divine person, the third person of the Trinity, along with the Father, the first person, and the Son, the second person. Jesus came into the world and became one of us so that

we could participate in the life of God. All the mighty things that Jesus did as a man here on earth were done by the anointing and by the power of the Holy Spirit. Then when Jesus ascended to heaven, he received the authorization from the Father to pour out the Holy Spirit on all who belonged to Jesus. The Holy Spirit, the third person in the Godhead, is given to us to help us. Jesus spoke of the Holy Spirit as the Paraclete, sometimes translated as Helper, Counselor, Comforter, or Advocate. However you translate it, the Holy Spirit is here to help us in all of those ways and to live within every believer.

The baptism of the Holy Spirit is something that is not only for some extraordinarily spiritual people who have had an experience that a lot of other Christians have not yet had. It is something that God does for each believer. In doing so, God the Holy Spirit unites every believer with Jesus Christ. That is what salvation is. It is union with Jesus, where you are in him and he is in you, and the Holy Spirit is the one who brings that about. He unites us with Jesus. He unites us with Jesus' body, the church, and makes us part of it. He does that for every believer.

1 Corinthians 12:13 says, "For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body... and all were made to drink of one Spirit." Notice the oneness, but also the word **all** is used a couple of times. The apostle Paul was writing to a church that had a lot of divisions and where some people felt spiritually superior to other believers in the church. The apostle is emphasizing that every one of you has been baptized by the one Spirit and you have drunk of the one Spirit. You **all**, if you are a believer at all, have received this one Spirit.

This is the great blessing that God had promised when he spoke of a new covenant in the Old Testament. He spoke of a time when he would have a special servant. In Isaiah he talked about that servant, and he said, "The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him—the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord" (Isaiah 11:2). Then in Isaiah 61 it says, "The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners" (Isaiah 61:1). You see the emphasis that the Spirit of the Lord would be on this special servant, and he would be the one to open up a new covenant.

God promised in Joel chapter 2 that he would pour out his Spirit in enormous measure on old and young, men and women, and would fill their lives. When Jesus pours out the Holy Spirit, he is giving what God has been promising all along. Even in the Old Testament, no one would have actually come to faith or walked with God at all if the Holy Spirit had not already been working in them. But in the new covenant, the Holy Spirit would work in a new and much more powerful and evident way among his people. He would be identified as the Spirit of Christ, not simply as a Spirit who often comes on you with power or who works only secretly, but people would know that it was the Spirit of Jesus who had been poured out.

Spirit baptism is that ultimate new covenant blessing where the Father and the Son give themselves in the person of the Holy Spirit to live in us and to help each one of us. It is something that happens to everybody who is a believer. So what is Spirit baptism? In answering the question, "What is Spirit baptism?" we have also answered two underlying questions. Who baptizes with the Holy Spirit? Jesus does, on the authorization of the Father. Who receives the

baptism of the Holy Spirit? You do, if you believe in Jesus at all; otherwise not. But every true believer in Jesus who belongs to him has received this baptism of the Holy Spirit.

When is Spirit baptism?

- At Pentecost for first disciples, years after they first believed.
- At conversion for us today.
- Two-stage experience of first disciples is not the norm for us.

When is Spirit baptism? It happened historically to the church as a whole on Pentecost. That was the first great baptism of the Holy Spirit. There was the sound of a mighty rushing wind, and fire came on the head of each of those believers who had been praying. They received the powerful gift of the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages. That is when the church as a whole received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and the church ever since then has lived by the power and the life of the Holy Spirit.

For individuals, when does Spirit baptism happen? For the first disciples, it happened at Pentecost. That occurred years after they had put their faith in Jesus and had begun following him. Sometimes their faith was weak, and Jesus rebuked them. We know some of the difficulties and challenges the apostles had. But they genuinely did believe in Jesus and belong to him well before receiving the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. So for them, meeting Jesus and receiving the Holy Spirit with that Pentecostal fullness were separate experiences that were years apart.

For believers today, those are not separate experiences years apart. When you become a Christian, when you are converted and put your faith in Jesus, you receive God's gift of the Holy Spirit, the baptism of the Holy Spirit, at that very moment.

This difference between the first disciples and us might make us wonder, "Aren't we supposed to be like the people in the Bible? Those people in the Bible received the Holy Spirit years after they had received Jesus. Does that mean that it is normal to receive Jesus as your Savior and then sometime later, receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit? That is what happened with those disciples."

But the two-stage experience they had is not the norm for us. Why the difference? Because that was the transitional time in switching from the old covenant to the new covenant. It was a transitional time when the great events and actions of God were still unfolding. Jesus became incarnate. Jesus carried out his ministry and taught and did miracles. Then he died and rose again. All those things happened one after another in sequence. Then after his resurrection and ascension, the Holy Spirit was poured out. If you were one of the people walking alongside Jesus at that time, those events happened one after another, and in your experience knowing Jesus and being saved by him could occur before you received that greater fullness of the Holy Spirit.

But all those events have now happened. They are not in the process of unfolding. It's all been accomplished. Jesus has ascended to heaven. He has poured out his Holy Spirit. So now, when

Jesus comes into your life and you become a Christian, the full blessing of the Holy Spirit is given at that very time, and you are baptized with the Holy Spirit.

You are also baptized in water. That baptism with water is a sign of the washing by Jesus' blood and of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Jesus often spoke of the Spirit as living water. When we receive baptism, it is a sign and a seal of those two great realities. Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, and you are washed in his blood and forgiven. Jesus gives his Holy Spirit; he is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit, and you receive that living water. Baptism is not the thing that automatically makes that happen, but it is the sign, the picture, and the seal of that happening.

So when is Spirit baptism for us today? It is at the time that Christ comes into your life and you become a Christian.

Some Christians disagree. They take what they saw as the two stages in the experience of some people in the New Testament and said that is the norm. Many Pentecostal or charismatic Christians still hold that you can be converted and really be a saved person, but not yet have been baptized with the Holy Spirit. There are seven texts in the New Testament that speak of baptism in the Holy Spirit or by the Holy Spirit, and those are all referring to Jesus baptizing us with the Holy Spirit. They do not speak of different stages or a time gap between being saved and receiving the Holy Spirit. I think it is a mistake for Pentecostal Christians to say there are some believers who have Jesus but not yet the baptism of the Holy Spirit. There is some truth in what Pentecostals emphasize, and I will get to that a little later. But I do think it is a misunderstanding to say that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is something that comes at some point after you have become a Christian.

One of the main problems with that view is a practical one. When the apostle Paul was writing about being baptized into one body and all made to drink of the one Spirit, he was dealing with this very problem. The problem was that some Christians in Corinth were saying, in effect, "It is nice that you are a Christian. It is nice that you belong to Jesus. But it is just too bad that you have not yet had what I have had. I have been baptized with the Holy Spirit." They would say that there are people called carnal Christians who really do belong to Jesus but have not yet had the baptism of the Spirit that others claim to have.

When that kind of belief is held, it can lead to spiritual pride and to thinking that I have received something from God that you, poor thing, have not yet received. This does not exactly contribute to unity in the body of Christ. The apostle Paul was addressing exactly that problem when he wrote the letter of 1 Corinthians. There were divisions in the church, with some people thinking that their experience of the Holy Spirit and their gifts of the Holy Spirit raised them above the experience of others. So this is not just a theoretical question. The two-stage idea has practical dangers that go with it.

What happens after?

- Not all speak in tongues.
- Some have amazing filling(s) after conversion.

- Spirit is often unspectacular.
- Spirit forms true you in Christ.

What happens after Spirit baptism? Some Pentecostal Christians insist that speaking in tongues is the sign of having the fullness of the Holy Spirit. Pentecostalism has been closely connected with the idea that baptism with the Holy Spirit happens in two stages, and that the sign of having reached that second stage is that you are able to speak in tongues.

Their idea of speaking in tongues is that you make sounds that you probably do not understand and that nobody else would understand either unless they are given a special gift of interpretation of those sounds coming out of your mouth. They believe that everybody who has the baptism of the Holy Spirit will be speaking in tongues, that is, making noises that nobody understands unless there is an extraordinary gift of understanding as well as the extraordinary gift of making those noises.

What do we make of that? First, not all Spirit-baptized people speak in tongues, and the Bible makes that very clear. The apostle Paul asks the question rhetorically: “Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret?” (1 Corinthians 12:30). The answer is no. There are different gifts, and not all speak in tongues.

What's more, what Pentecostal people often describe as speaking in tongues is not what happened on Pentecost. On Pentecost the disciples spoke known human languages. They spoke those known languages for a couple of reasons. One reason was as a sign that God was reversing the judgment of the Tower of Babel and that now God was speaking to people of many languages whose languages he had divided, calling them all to the same Savior. It was a sign of the good news of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit for people from all languages and nations.

A second reason the disciples spoke those different languages was the practical fact that God was launching the church, and doing it big time right on the spot. There were people from various parts of the world gathered in Jerusalem, hearing the word spoken to them in their own languages. They did not need to spend a couple of years studying a given language. The apostles were simply given the gift of speaking those other people's languages so that they could hear, and then after the celebration was over go back to where they came from and speak the gospel in their own language.

So the gift on Pentecost of speaking in other people's known languages is not the same thing as what is meant by speaking in tongues by most charismatic or Pentecostal people today. I am not saying it is a terrible thing to speak ecstatic utterances that nobody understands. Some people may be blessed with that, and it may be a kind of gift that God gives. But it is not what happened on Pentecost.

Here's another point to keep in mind. Many of the greatest Christians in history, some of the people most mightily used by God in revival and in reforming the church, did not speak in tongues. That is simply a fact. If you were to say that the sign of being baptized with the Holy Spirit and empowered at the highest level is that you speak in tongues, that claim would fall flat,

because some of the people who were undoubtedly the most spiritual and mighty in the history of the church did not speak in tongues.

So what happens after Spirit baptism? Speaking in tongues doesn't always happen, but what does happen? Some people, after they have become Christians, after they have been baptized with the Holy Spirit at conversion, later experience some amazing filling (or fillings) from God after the time of their conversion. Notice that I did not say they are "baptized with the Spirit" some time after conversion, or that they receive one baptism, then another baptism, then a third baptism with the Holy Spirit. The baptism of the Holy Spirit happens once, when you become a Christian and Jesus gives you his Spirit. But **filling** with the Holy Spirit can happen multiple times. Pentecostal and charismatic believers may not have quite the correct view of Spirit baptism or tongues, but the experiences they describe may still be real and transformative experiences of the Holy Spirit.

The book of Acts speaks of people who are "full of the Holy Spirit." Then it will say of a person who is already full of the Holy Spirit that he was "filled with the Holy Spirit" on a particular occasion when he really needed help from God to speak words to a hostile audience, or to face martyrdom, as in the case of Stephen. There were times when a fresh empowerment of the Holy Spirit would come upon someone for a particular occasion, even though that person had already been baptized with the Holy Spirit.

Here is where I want to emphasize that, despite some mislabeling of exactly what the experiences involve, Pentecostals are right in saying that God sometimes gives great blessings of his Spirit quite a while after you have been converted. Sometimes he works in extraordinary ways and gives you an extraordinary experience of the Holy Spirit that either enables you to do something for him on a given occasion that you could never have done without that additional empowerment, or he gives a richer experience of the Spirit to press the fast-forward button on your spiritual life, where you grow more through that experience than you might otherwise have grown in a few years of ordinary spiritual growth.

The Holy Spirit doesn't always press the fast-forward button to give huge spurts of spiritual growth, and it is not the only way you grow, or the most frequent way. But there are times in people's lives when God does something that propels them forward in a way they had not experienced previously. I do not think it is wise to deny that God does such things, because it is too evident that he has done them in many lives.

I do think it is a mistake to describe such a moment as Spirit baptism. Sometimes this is called second blessing theology, where the first blessing is salvation in Christ and the second blessing is the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

There are a couple of dangers. One is that if you believe in second blessing theology, you might tend to look down your nose at those who have only had that one blessing and have not yet had the definitive second blessing that made such a difference in your life.

The other danger is complacency and self-satisfaction, where you think, “I have had the second blessing, so now I am about as full of the Holy Spirit as anybody could possibly get. I have arrived.”

Of course, many people who speak of having had a second experience of the Holy Spirit are not that arrogant toward others or that proud and self-satisfied in themselves. But second-blessing theology can produce these practical problems of feeling superior and self-satisfied.

God may give some people an overwhelming experience that suddenly draws them closer to him and fills them with more of his power, while for other people the Spirit may work in less dramatic ways.

And that brings me to the next point: the Spirit is often unspectacular. Sometimes the Holy Spirit does press the fast-forward button, but sometimes he presses the normal play button. You are progressing. The Holy Spirit is working with you a day at a time. You do not have an enormous leap forward where suddenly you have jumped in an amazing way to higher levels of impact and maturity.

We do not need to deny it that dramatic experiences of the Spirit are possible. We can even pray, “Lord, do mighty things in me. If you are going to do it gradually, that is fine with me. But it would be great if you would hurry up the process and help me make tremendous leaps forward in my spiritual life, because I have so far to go.”

There can be amazing experiences of the Holy Spirit. Dwight L. Moody was running a big Sunday school and already having a sizable impact. Then one day the Holy Spirit came upon him and the love of God came upon him so powerfully that he had to ask God to stop or he thought he would die. Moody said, “After that I preached pretty much the same sermons, but the results were not the same anymore.” Thousands came to Christ through Moody's preaching. You should not turn experiences such as Moody's into an entire second-blessing theory or a whole way of explaining the Bible, but you should acknowledge that God does do such things.

When he does, we ought not to quench the Holy Spirit by saying this could not have happened to Moody or that it cannot happen to anybody else in our time. For some of us, it might be quenching the Spirit not to wish that for ourselves. If something extraordinary from the Spirit is happening in us, we can quench the Holy Spirit by saying, “If I ever mentioned that to anybody else, they would think I was weird.” Being a good, respectable person, we might decide to keep on being good and respectable and orderly.

But the Bible urges us, “Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God” (Ephesians 4:30), and “Do not quench the Spirit” (1 Thessalonians 5:19). Do not quench the Holy Spirit, whether he has been working in yourself or in others. If what happens does not fit your exact template for how the Holy Spirit ought to work, remember the words of Jesus: “The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit” (John 3:8).

Even a sermon like this, with several neatly segmented questions and attempts to answer each question, could leave a wrong impression, because the Holy Spirit is more mysterious than that. The Holy Spirit sometimes does amazing and spectacular things quite a while after conversion, and often he works in unspectacular ways.

Should we expect that when God is doing things in us by his Holy Spirit a dove will always come down from heaven and land on your head? Should we always expect a blast of wind and a tongue of fire resting on one's head, or that we will start speaking in other languages? Those were special manifestations. When the Spirit came upon Jesus, there was a dove (Matthew 3:16). When he came upon the first disciples, there were the signs of wind and fire and speaking in other languages (Acts 2:2–3). But that is not how God always, or even most of the time, operates. He gave those as special signs for those occasions.

Very often the Spirit works in unspectacular, steady, and gradual ways. We should be open to extraordinary movements of the Spirit while also being sensitive to and appreciative of the ordinary ways the Spirit operates.

It is not always instant power that comes upon you. Very often it will be steady spiritual disciplines practiced year after year through which you grow. You do not have a fantastic vision sweeping in and dazzling you. You simply read the word of God every day, and its impact accumulates. You pray every day, and your relationship with God deepens and grows. There may be times when the Holy Spirit, as he did with Moody, makes a manifestation of his love to your heart that almost overwhelms you. That can happen. But you also read the Bible, believe what it says about the love of God, keep listening to it, and keep learning of that love. You receive biblical instruction, not just special visions. It is not merely the grand experience of one moment, but the work of the Holy Spirit over a lifetime.

So what happens after being baptized with the Holy Spirit at your conversion? God has a variety of ways of working, sometimes spectacular, sometimes not. What he is really doing is forming the true you in Christ. He is making you who you were designed to be in our Lord Jesus Christ, and he is activating the life of Christ in you as you were meant to live it.

No one human being can express fully the life of God or the life of Christ. God delights to express the life of Christ in a wide variety of ways through the millions of very different people he has saved. One of the glorious things about God's work is that he shows different aspects of Jesus in the life and personality of different people. That is why the Bible says, "And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ" (Ephesians 3:17–18). Together we learn more of Jesus' love, not just in what we experience, but in what others experience and show forth of Jesus.

What the Spirit of Christ is doing in you may be different in some ways from what he is doing in others. Of course, he is doing the same saving work, making people holy, instructing them, and so on. But the way that work takes shape in you will be different according to your personality and according to the abilities, talents, and gifts he gives you.

As the Spirit forms the true you in Christ, you do not have to try to be who you are not. In fact, you should not. It is easy to say, “I read in a book, or I saw on a television program, or I heard on a podcast about something that happened to somebody else, or a revival that happened somewhere, or an experience that someone had. I wish that would happen to me.” Maybe something similar will happen to you. Maybe it will not. But what will happen to you is what God wants to happen to *you*.

You might say, “I wish I could speak the word of God like that gifted speaker.” Or, “I wish I could speak in tongues like someone who says it has been a wonderful blessing in their spiritual life.” Or, “I wish I had the power to do miracles of healing.” It does not hurt to ask. If you have a desire for a particular gift, you may ask for it. But do not ask for it with the motivation that then you would be more spectacular or impressive. Ask for it if God intends that for you. Ask for it if it will bring glory and honor to God. But do not try to be somebody else with someone else's gifts. If you are not a preacher, thank God for the preacher. If he calls you to be a preacher, do it. But do not waste your life wishing you were who you are not. If you have a particular gift, use it, but do not spend much time wishing that you had somebody else's gift or were somebody else.

The key in all of this is that God made you to be you. By his Holy Spirit he is going to bring out the real you, the best you, and wither away the things that are unworthy of him. Then he will bring himself glory through you. He is going to equip you for your calling and for the kinds of things he designed you for, not for somebody else's task and calling. The apostle Paul gives the example of the body. The eye should not spend all its time wishing it were an ear. Be the part of the body that you were designed to be, and do it in the power and strength of the Holy Spirit.

What is Spirit's impact?

- Life
- Union
- Truth
- Holiness
- Power

What is the Spirit's impact? I will summarize quickly. The Spirit's impact is first of all to give **life**. That starts with being born again by the Spirit and having faith. It is life also in the sense of abundant life. Jesus said, “I have come that they may have life, and have it abundantly” (John 10:10). Through the Holy Spirit, Jesus gives abundant life, so abundant that it is eternal life. It is the life of the eternal even now within you, and it is eternal in the sense that it lasts forever. Right now what we have is God's down payment on eternal life. The Holy Spirit is spoken of as God's down payment on that fullness of life that we are going to have.

The Spirit also gives **union**. First of all, union with God, fellowship with Father and Son. He gives assurance that God loves us, and the Spirit moves us to cry out, “Abba, Father” (Romans 8:15). He enables us to know God as our Father. That is part of our union with him. He helps us in our prayer life when we do not know how to pray. Sometimes when all we can do is groan, it can be the Holy Spirit who is motivating and moving that groaning and then translating it into something better, into a prayer that by the time it reaches God's throne is exactly what we need.

“The Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express” (Romans 8:26). So he helps us in prayer and in worship. In uniting us with Christ, he also unites us with others.

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of **truth**. He inspired the writing of the Bible. He illuminates the reading of the Bible so that when you read it, he helps you see things in it that you could not see without the help of the Holy Spirit. He gives us "the mind of the Spirit" (Romans 8:6), "the mind of Christ" (1 Corinthians 2:16). That means we are not only receiving the Word from outside us, but God has implanted his thinking and his mind within us. We will discover more and more of that as we keep growing in Christ. The Spirit of truth also exposes Satan's lies. He also provides personal, individualized guidance in our decision-making. That too is part of the Spirit's impact in the realm of truth.

He is the Spirit of **holiness**. He convicts us of sin. He did that just prior to the time of conversion. On Pentecost, three thousand people were cut to the heart and convicted of sin (Acts 2:37). The Spirit convicts us of sin at the very beginning of our life in Christ, and he continues to do convict of sin throughout our lives. He helps us see where God wants to change us, where he wants us to become more and more like Jesus. That ministry of conviction is part of holiness. The Spirit separates us from the world and makes us more lovers of God than lovers of the world's approval. He gives us victory over sin and over the demons. He helps us flourish. He develops in us the fruit of the Spirit so that the life of the Spirit within us bears the fruit of holiness: love, joy, peace, and the other fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22–23).

A final impact I want to highlight is that he gives **power**. He equips us with a variety of gifts and abilities. Some may be organizational abilities. The Holy Spirit does not only give miraculous abilities or healing abilities, though he can give those as well. Sometimes he gives organizational ability, or the ability to speak a word of encouragement to others. There is a whole variety of gifts, and that is part of his empowerment. Another part of that power is boldness, the ability to stand up strongly for the Lord, to declare clearly and firmly and with authority the reality and truth of Jesus Christ. Along with that power comes impact. The Spirit not only enables you, but also works in the people you interact with so that your life has a positive impact on theirs. When a sermon is preached that blesses people or brings them life, it is because of the Holy Spirit's impact. When there is a great revival, when there is a tremendous acceleration in the effectiveness of the church and thousands of people are reached in a short time in a given region, that too is the release of the power of the Holy Spirit in revival.

All of these are things taught in the Bible and seen throughout the history of the Spirit's impact on the church.

How can we seek more?

- Honor
- Repent
- Surrender
- Ask

I want to end simply by asking this question: How can we seek more? At one level, we should realize what we already have. There's a sense in which, if you are a Christian, you should not be asking for the baptism of the Holy Spirit. You already have it. But there is another sense in which you can be asking, "Lord, help me to live into my Spirit baptism, and help more and more of my life to be yielded to the Holy Spirit."

There is a sense in which, when you receive the Holy Spirit at all, you receive him in his entirety. You do not receive a little tidbit or a small fraction. It is more a question of how much of you the Holy Spirit has, not how much of the Holy Spirit you have. Be that as it may, we pray that our lives will be more and more pervaded by the power and life and love of the Holy Spirit.

So what do we do as we seek that? One thing is to **honor** the Holy Spirit. Marvel at the privilege of having God himself, the third person of the Trinity, living in you. Honor him by not ignoring him. Some of us go through life having received the Holy Spirit and not being very conscious or aware that he is there within us. In our decisions we act as though God is not even in the room, let alone in our hearts. But he is there. So honor him because he is in you.

Another thing is to **repent**. Confess every known sin, and turn away from anything that grieves or offends the Holy Spirit. Remember, the Holy Spirit is not a thing; the Holy Spirit is a person. If you want the blessing of interacting with a person, you cannot live in a way that constantly offends that person while refusing to admit you are wrong. Part of receiving a greater empowerment from the Holy Spirit and a greater life from the Holy Spirit, or to put it another way, part of the Holy Spirit receiving more of us, is to get the junk out of the way, to do some housecleaning, to repent.

Along with that comes **surrender**. Commit every part of yourself and all of your goals to the reign of Jesus Christ. I will say it again: it is not simply how much of the Holy Spirit you have, but how much of you he has. If you want a richer and fuller interaction with the Holy Spirit, part of that is surrendering yourself to him to do whatever he wishes and to do it for the glory of God.

Finally, **ask**. Jesus says "your Father in heaven will give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!" (Luke 11:13). So pray for the Holy Spirit to increase and intensify his activity in your life.

It is good news that we have been baptized with the Holy Spirit of God the moment we belong to Jesus. At the same time, we should not say, "I am glad to hear that I have the Holy Spirit just as much as my most enthusiastic Pentecostal friend does." You may have a little more correct theology on this or that point, but the important thing is that the Holy Spirit fully have hold of you and be filling you more and more with his presence, his life, his power, and his impact.

So it is fitting that we pray for the Holy Spirit.

Prayer

Father, we thank you for the gift of the Holy Spirit. We praise you, Lord Jesus, that in your ascension you gave this crowning gift, the greatest of all gifts that could be given, giving yourself in the person of your Spirit to dwell in our hearts. We pray, Lord, that we may honor

you and rejoice that you live within us. Lord, help us to see what in our own lives hinders your work, things that may still grieve or quench the work of the Spirit in us. Help us to turn away from those things and to repent.

Lord, where we have been holding back, where there are compartments in our life that we want to keep in our own control, help us to yield those fully to you, to surrender every aspect of ourselves, our future, our goals, and our priorities to you. Make of us what you will. Lord, we ask that you will hear our prayer and make the reality of the Holy Spirit dominant in all that we are and all that we do, for Jesus' sake and for the glory of our Father. Amen.

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By David Feddes

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- How can we seek more?

What is Spirit baptism?

- Father and Son give Spirit to indwell and help each believer.
- Unites believers with Christ and his body, the church.
- New Covenant blessing.

When is Spirit baptism?

- At Pentecost for first disciples, years after they first believed.
- At conversion for us today.
- Two-stage experience of first disciples is not the norm for us.

What happens after?

- Not all speak in tongues.
- Some have amazing filling(s) after conversion.
- Spirit is often unspectacular.
- Spirit forms true you in Christ.

What is Spirit's impact?

- Life
- Union
- Truth
- Holiness
- Power

How can we seek more?

- Honor
- Repent
- Surrender
- Ask