

# The Baptism in the Holy Spirit

by John Edmiston

## Walking In the Spirit - Series 9 (A Ministry of Eternity Christian Fellowship)

In yesterday's study we looked at the spiritually overflowing Christian life. A life so drenched with God that the dry ground became a 'spiritual wetland'. Now the Greek word for immersed is 'baptizo' from which we get our word baptized. When we are drenched with God and immersed in Jesus we are baptized with the Holy Ghost. The next few studies will look at this baptism in the Holy Spirit.

**Mark 1:8 MKJV** *I indeed have baptized you in water, but He shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit.*

**Matthew 3:11-12 MKJV** *I indeed baptize you with water to repentance. But He who comes after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire;*

Here John the Baptist is telling us that the baptism Jesus would administer would be different in nature and in kind from his baptism. John's baptism was 'with water unto repentance' while Jesus would be the one who would baptize with 'the Holy Spirit and fire'. Jesus Himself makes the difference plain at His Ascension:

**Acts 1:4-5 MKJV** *And having met with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to await the promise of the Father which you heard from Me. (5) For John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized in the Holy Spirit not many days from now.*

A few verses later Jesus states the effect of this baptism in the Holy Spirit:

**Acts 1:8 MKJV** *But you shall receive power, the Holy Spirit coming upon you. And you shall be witnesses to Me both in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and to the end of the earth.*

Here we see that the baptism in the Holy Spirit in verse 5 is identical with 'the Holy Spirit coming upon you' in verse 8. This will prove a key observation later as we examine the difference between the Holy Spirit 'in' the believer and the Holy Spirit 'upon' us.

Now the disciples had already received the Holy Spirit within them after the resurrection:

**John 20:22 ISV** *When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit.*

So the Holy Spirit coming upon them, to baptize them in power was another blessing in addition to the Holy Spirit within them and they were to wait for it in Jerusalem.

Just to make things really confusing there seems to have been THREE 'baptisms' (Hebrews 6:2) in New Testament times: John's baptism, baptism in water in the name of Jesus, and baptism in the Holy Spirit. [Today we do not have John's baptism except for a group in Iraq called the Mandeans that still follow John the Baptist]

First the distinction between baptism in water and baptism in the Holy Spirit:

**Acts 8:14-17 ISV** *Now when the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. (15) They went down and prayed for them to receive the Holy Spirit. (16) Before this he had not come on any of them. They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. (17) Then they laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.*

Up to the arrival of the apostles the Holy Spirit had not 'come upon' (baptized) any of them (v.16). The Samaritans who had accepted the gospel (v.14) had only been baptized in the name of Jesus (that is in water) (v.16). The Samaritans had believed and were baptized in water the name of Jesus but they were still missing something! So the apostles in Jerusalem sent Peter and John to them and they laid hands on the Samaritans and they received the Holy Spirit.

When Peter preaches the gospel the house of the Gentile centurion Ananias things happen in the opposite order with the baptism in the Holy Spirit coming first:

**Acts 10:44-48 ISV** *While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell on all the people who were listening to his message. (45) Then the circumcised believers who had come with Peter were amazed that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the gentiles, too. (46) For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God. Then Peter said, (47) "No one can stop us from using water to baptize these people who have received the Holy Spirit in the same way that we did, can he?" (48) So he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to stay for several days.*

The Holy Spirit falls upon them (v.44), they speak in tongues and praise God (v.46), and all the Jewish believers present acknowledge that the gentiles had received the 'gift of the Holy Spirit' (v.45, 47). The Gentiles have already been baptized in the Spirit and Peter recognizes this and uses water (v.47) to baptize them 'in the name of Jesus Christ' (v.48).

So we see three separate related things: believing in Jesus, being baptized in water in Jesus' name, and having the Holy Spirit come upon the believer in power. A

possible analogy is that it is similar to falling in love (believing), the marriage ceremony (baptism in water), and the consummation of the marriage (the Holy Spirit coming upon us, power to witness and to produce spiritual children).

The baptism in the Holy Spirit is a baptism in the love of God where we praise and glorify His Name and receive the power to witness to Him among the nations of the world. Thus it is often accompanied by the verbal spiritual gifts such as tongues and prophecy.

Before I finish this study I would like to clear up any alarm and confusion and outline the difference between the Holy Spirit 'in' the believer (which happens at conversion) and the Holy Spirit 'upon' us (which may be a subsequent event).

The Holy Spirit within us is the internal work of God in our lives. It is our new nature and is received at conversion. The Holy Spirit within us produces the fruit of the Spirit – love, joy, peace, patience as well as imparting wisdom, revelation and a spirit of excellence and holiness. This is NOT a second experience. If you are a believer you have the Holy Spirit within you.

The Holy Spirit upon us is the external anointing for works of power, witness and ministry (Acts 1:8). It is the enabling work of God that imparts boldness (Acts 4:31) and spiritual gifts as the Holy Spirit Himself decides (1 Corinthians 12:1-11).

Of course these are not entirely separate! They meet in the person of the Holy Spirit and the 'hinge' that connects the Holy Spirit within us and the Holy Spirit upon us is the filling of the Holy Spirit. This is where an external outpouring of the Holy Spirit also enters into us and fills us:

**Acts 4:31 ISV** *When they had prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken, and all of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness.*

**Ephesians 5:18-20 ISV** *Stop getting drunk with wine, which leads to wild living, but keep on being filled with the Spirit. (19) Then you will recite to one another psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. You will sing and make music to the Lord with your hearts. (20) You will always give thanks to God the Father for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

The Holy Spirit within is primary and is essential for salvation. We need a new nature, holiness, love and the fruit of the Spirit. The baptism of the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit upon us, is essential for courage, joy and power in ministry. Together they join up as the daily filling with the Holy Spirit and the abundant Christian life.

So far we have seen that the baptism in the Holy Spirit is identical with the Holy Spirit coming upon a Christian (Acts 1:5,8) so that they are immersed in God and have power and boldness in ministry being equipped with spiritual gifts for the edification of the body of Christ.

We also saw there is a 3-part process that is found in the book of Acts:

- a) Believing in the gospel and having the Holy Spirit placed within you at conversion to produce Christian character and good fruit.
- b) Being baptized in water in the name of Jesus.
- c) Being baptized in the Holy Spirit for the purpose of Christian witness.

In today's study we will look a bit further at the difference between the Holy Spirit in us, and the Holy Spirit upon us. First the work of the Spirit within us:

**Galatians 5:22-23 MKJV** *But the fruit of the Spirit is: love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faith, (23) meekness, self-control; against such things there is no law.*

These verses describe the work of the Holy Spirit in us – producing love, joy, peace and other internal qualities such as wisdom. The first bible character who is specifically called "Spirit-filled" is Bezalel the craftsman who built the tabernacle:

**Exodus 31:1-5 MKJV** *And Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying, (2) Behold, I, I have called by name Bezalel, the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah. (3) And I have filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all workmanship, (4) to devise designs; to work in gold, and in silver, and in bronze, (5) and in cutting of stones, to set them, and in carving of timber, to work in all workmanship.*

This filling is an internal work of God, which made Bezalel wise in his commissioned work. Later we find out that God also made him able to teach others also (Exodus 35:30-35) and that God gave wise hearts to those Bezalel instructed (Exodus 36:1,2).

Now for the work of the Holy Spirit as He comes upon believers:

**Acts 2:14-21 MKJV** *But Peter, standing up with the Eleven, lifted up his voice and said to them, Men, Jews, and all who dwell at Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to my words. (15) For these are not drunk as you suppose, for it is the third hour of the day. (16) But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel: (17) "And it shall be in the last days, says God, I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh. And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. (18) And in those days I will pour out My Spirit upon My slaves and My slave women, and they shall prophesy. (19) And I will give wonders in the heaven above, and miracles on the earth below, blood and fire and vapor of smoke. (20) The sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood, before that great and glorious Day of the Lord. (21) And it shall be that everyone who shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."*

This is the Pentecostal outpouring of grace. In verse 17 it is described as "I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh". This outpouring results in ecstatic states, speaking in tongues, prophecy, dreams, visions, miracles and Peter's ability to bear effective witness to Christ. There is an abundance of revelation for all believers and prophetic gifts are distributed to even the men-servants and maid-servants. And there is such revival power that 'all who call on the name of the Lord will be saved.'

The first bible characters who the Holy Spirit comes upon are the 70 elders:

**Numbers 11:25-26 MKJV** *And Jehovah came down in a cloud and spoke to him, and took of the spirit on him and gave it to the seventy elders. And it happened when the Spirit rested upon them, they prophesied. But they never did so again. (26) But two of the men stayed in the camp; the name of the one was Eldad, and the name of the other was Medad. And the Spirit rested upon them. And they were of those who were written, but did not go out to the tabernacle. And they prophesied in the camp.*

Here we see an ecstatic, temporary religious state accompanied by prophesy. It is not a quiet inner work! It is plain, obvious and observable by others:

**Numbers 11:27-29 MKJV** *And a young man ran and told Moses, and said, Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp. (28) And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of Moses, one of his young men, answered and said, My lord Moses, make them cease. (29) And Moses said to him, Are you jealous for my sake? Would God that all Jehovah's people were prophets, that Jehovah would put His Spirit upon them!*

The Holy Spirit within a person changes their basic nature and character and gives them skill, gifts and wisdom that they retain and can use to teach others.

The Holy Spirit upon a person is for power in witness, revelation and testimony and for the imparting of special spiritual gifts such as tongues, healing and prophecy. It may not affect the person's inner character much at all. Samson frequently had the Spirit come upon him, but seems to have had very poor judgment and character (Judges 14:5,6; 15:14-16, 16:1-31). King Saul even had the Holy Spirit come upon him when he was pursuing David and was out of the Lord's favor. Saul was so affected that he disrobed and entered some kind of ecstatic state for about 24 hours (1 Samuel 19:18-24).

Samson and Saul show that mighty spiritual experiences alone are insufficient. The priority is holiness and Christian character and sanctification without which no one can see the Lord (Hebrews 12:14). We need a deep and genuine repentance and true faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and the presence of the new creation within us (2 Corinthians 5:17). Once that is firmly established we should also seek to have power in ministry and the anointing on all we do - and seek the baptism in the Holy Spirit!

What sort of power does the baptism in the Holy Spirit give us and why is it important? This was a critical question for me as I was very anti-charismatic for many years and only slowly changed my mind as a result of several experiences on the mission field that led me to see an increase in the quality and quantity of the Christian life due to having a strong filling of the Holy Spirit. This journey took me the best part of a decade (from 1986 to 1995) and is too long to detail even briefly here.

My questions were: a) Is it biblical and is it real? b) Does it work? c) Is it safe? d) Is it worth the cost of any rejection I might receive? (In those days charismatics were often kicked out of churches and missionary societies or given minor roles in them). Over time I found "yes" answers to all those questions. If you are still exploring may I say that God is generally in no hurry. Just go at the pace that you can honestly proceed at with intellectual and spiritual integrity.

**Luke 11:9-13 MKJV** *And I say to you, Ask and it shall be given you. Seek and you shall find. Knock and it shall be opened to you. (10) For everyone who asks receives. And he who seeks finds. And to him who knocks it shall be opened. (11) For what father of you, if the son asks for bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a snake for a fish? (12) Or if he shall ask for an egg, will he give him a scorpion? (13) If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?*

The above passage informs us that it is safe to seek spiritual things, especially the Holy Spirit. God is a good Heavenly Father who gives good things to His children. He does not give scorpions instead of eggs or stones instead of bread – or by implication an evil spirit instead of the Holy Spirit. God will not spiritually deceive you as you seek Him. He is simply not like that. His Word, His character and His promises are assurance that it will be well with you as you seek His spiritual blessings.

The passage also assures us that we will receive what we ask for in God. This may take some persistent asking, seeking and knocking however such persistence will pay off in the end. (Also the verses immediately prior to these are about the parable of the persistent friend who receives his loaves of bread in the middle of the night.)

Now the epistle of James warns us that we must ask for godly things, not merely for worldly things to spend upon our lusts and pleasures (James 4:3). Yet in later verses James assures us of the power of persistent prevailing Kingdom prayer (James 5:13-18).

So we are not to ask for things to 'spend upon our lusts' but we are to ask for things to spend upon the Spirit! If we walk in the Spirit we will not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. Our minds are to be set on the Spirit and not on the flesh. And our prayers and our seeking God are to be for the things of the Spirit and not the things of the flesh (though our daily needs are fine and are part of the Lord's Prayer).



Therefore we should especially pray for those things concerning the Holy Spirit that are promised to us in Scripture such as the baptism in the Holy Spirit, the fruit of the Spirit, and for the gifts of the Spirit especially that we may prophesy (1 Corinthians 14 – whole chapter).

The blessings we receive in Christ include 'all the spiritual blessings in the heavenly realms' (Ephesians 1:3). Surely we should ask for these also! We should even ask God to show us what these blessings are (1 Corinthians 2:9-13) so that we can receive them through prevailing prayer!

God is love (1 John 4:16) and in His amazing love He wishes to absolutely lavish us with free gifts from Heaven such as salvation, redemption, holiness, grace, peace, love, joy, boldness and spiritual power. Ephesians informs us that this grace-filled gift giving comes about because of Christ's triumphant resurrection and ascension into Heaven:

**Ephesians 4:7-12 MKJV** *But to every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. (8) Therefore He says, "When He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive and gave gifts to men." (9) (Now that He ascended, what is it but that He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? (10) He who descended is the same also as He who ascended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things.) (11) And truly He gave some to be apostles, and some to be prophets, and some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, (12) for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.*

The baptism in the Holy Spirit is this gracious outpouring of the Holy Spirit from the ascended Lord Jesus so we can witness to Christ, receive spiritual gifts for ministry and operate in the various offices of apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor and teacher.

The power we receive is the power to walk in the Holy Spirit and to do the things that the Holy Spirit wants done.

But what does the Holy Spirit want done? He wants people to be loved and to be built up in Christ, the saints to become holy, the lost saved, and the widows and orphans to be cared for. He wants truth to be proclaimed to those in power, the lepers cleansed, the sick healed, the demons cast out and the dead raised to life.

**Matthew 10:7-8 MKJV** *And as you go, proclaim, saying, The kingdom of Heaven is at hand. (8) Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. You have received freely, freely give.*

I can imagine if Jesus had personally said these words to me at the beginning of my ministry I would have said: "Raise the dead? Did He just say raise the dead? I've just prepared a great sermon on the doctrine of grace and Jesus is telling me to raise the dead?"

I would have raised a thousand objections to healing, exorcism, the raising of the dead and anything to do with leprosy (probably citing the need for a medical degree). I loved theology and knew my doctrine and that is where I was staying! More than that I knew I simply did not possess the power to do even the least of these things.

Since I have sought God's power for ministry through the baptism in the Holy Spirit I have graciously seen Him work some healings and many exorcisms through my ministry. This is not of me, it is of God. Freely I have received. I have yet to cleanse a leper or raise anyone from the dead. But I now know that it is not just up to me and my 'training and abilities'. It is up to God who works in me and through me. I do not understand how He works, but He does work.

Our original question was: What sort of power does the baptism in the Holy Spirit give us and why is it important? The answer is that the baptism in the Holy Spirit gives us power to carry out our God-given ministry. As we ask for more of God the Holy Spirit we surely will receive - and as we have freely received, we freely give.

In our secular world we are used to an existence that is 'empty of God'. However the baptism in the Holy Spirit is the precise opposite – it is simply Jesus wanting everything to be filled with God!

**Ephesians 4:10 MKJV** *He who descended is the same also as He who ascended up far above all heavens, **that He might fill all things.***

Jesus wants a God-filled earth! He wants the glory of God to cover the whole world!

**Habakkuk 2:14 HCSB** *For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the LORD's glory, as the waters cover the sea.*

Pentecost was the initial outbreak of this filling of all things with the glory of God:

**Acts 2:32-35 MKJV** *God raised up this Jesus, of which we all are witnesses. (33) Therefore being exalted to the right of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured out this which you now see and hear. (34) For David has not ascended into the heavens, but he says himself, "The LORD said to my Lord, Sit at My right hand (35) until I place Your enemies as a footstool to Your feet."*

In these verses Peter explains to the Jews that:

- a) God raised Jesus from the dead
- b) That this Jesus was exalted in Heaven and seated at the right hand of God
- c) At this time Jesus received the promise of the Holy Spirit
- d) Jesus then pours out the Holy Spirit upon all flesh in fulfillment of the prophesy of Joel so that it is both audible and visible (*which you now see and hear*)
- e) That this is a sign that Jesus is triumphant and that God will place His enemies as a footstool under His feet (a quote from Psalm 110)



In study number 7 "Connecting Heaven and Earth" we saw that one of the Lord's purposes is to reconnect the broken relationship between Heaven and Earth so that 'Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done - on earth as it is in Heaven' becomes a reality. When Jesus went into the heavenlies, and poured out the Holy Spirit, there was a momentous occasion as God's Spirit began to invade the world once more - in the lives of Christians.

God pours out the Holy Spirit into us as 'earthen vessels' and we become 'temples of the Holy Spirit' (1 Corinthians 3:6, 6:19) and are empowered to be witness for Jesus Christ (Acts 1:8). The fruit of the Spirit in our lives are a sign that God's will is being done on earth as it is in heaven. The gifts of the Spirit are given so we can edify each other and mature together as a holy community full of truth, love and goodness.

So Pentecost, and the baptism in the Holy Spirit, is part of God's long-term plan to retake planet Earth and reconnect humanity with Himself.

**2 Corinthians 5:18-21 MKJV** *(18) And all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given to us the ministry of reconciliation; (19) whereas God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and putting the word of reconciliation in us. (20) Then we are ambassadors on behalf of Christ, as God exhorting through us, we beseech you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. (21) For He has made Him who knew no sin, to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*

So with the baptism in the Holy Spirit connects us spiritually to the heavenly realms so that we can reconcile the world to God.

Now Jesus is the One who pours out the Holy Spirit upon all flesh. It is only through Christ and His work on the cross that we can receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Jesus pours out the Holy Spirit according to His sovereign will. Which raises the question – what is His will in this matter? Peter answers that question a few verses later:

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

It is God's will that every repentant, baptized believer in Jesus Christ should receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (both in them and upon them). The promise is not for just a select group or for people at a particular time but for the hearers, their future children, and for those afar off – indeed for 'as many as the Lord our God shall call'. So God wants all Christians everywhere to be filled with the Holy Spirit at all times.

While it is a promise yet it must be sought in faith (more on that tomorrow God willing).

For today our main point is that the baptism in the Holy Spirit is not some optional extra in the Christian life. Something that is nice to have perhaps 'if you are inclined that way". Nor is it 'an experience' as if it was the spiritual equivalent of a roller-coaster ride at Disneyland. The baptism in the Holy Spirit is a direct result of Jesus' suffering, death, resurrection and ascension into Heaven and is poured out as part of His reign so that His Kingdom may come and God's will be done on earth as it is in Heaven.

The baptism in the Holy Spirit helps us to worship God more powerfully (Hallowed be thy name) proclaim the gospel (Thy kingdom come) and live the Christian life with love and joy (Thy will be done).

It integrates with all the other aspects of the Christian faith since it is simply God filling us with Himself - so that we in turn may fill the world with His glory.

I will tackle two very practical questions: How then can we receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit? And why do some Christians lack deeper spiritual experiences despite having good character and moral lives?

In answer to the first question, there are at least two methods of receiving the Spirit mentioned in the book of Acts:

A) Direct reception when He is poured out at Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4) and at Cornelius' place (Acts 10:44-45)

B) Receiving the Holy Spirit through the laying on of hands - when the apostles went to Samaria (Acts 8:14-17), when Saul's eyes were opened and he was filled with the Spirit (Acts 9:17) and later when Paul laid hands on the disciples at Ephesus (Acts 19:6).

In a powerful revival the Holy Spirit may be poured out on a whole group of people and they will be simultaneously be baptized in the Holy Spirit as at Pentecost. Others receive the Spirit through personal ministry and the laying on of hands,. Christians have received the baptism of the Holy Spirit while praying at home or , in one famous case that began the modern Pentecostal movement, the Spirit was received during devotions at a bible college in Topeka, Kansas.

The laying on of hands also seems to be involved in ministry such as in the commissioning of Saul (Paul) and Barnabas, and in the imparting of spiritual gifts to Timothy:

**Acts 13:2-3 HCSB** *As they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work that I have called them to." (3) Then, after they had fasted, prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them off.*

**1 Timothy 4:14 HCSB** *Do not neglect the gift that is in you; it was given to you through prophecy, with the laying on of hands by the council of elders.*

**2 Timothy 1:6 HCSB** *Therefore, I remind you to keep ablaze the gift of God that is in you through the laying on of my hands.*

From these examples it seems to me that we should:

- a) Fervently pray for more and more of God's infilling and power for ministry and
- b) Seek the imparting anointing and spiritual gifts for ministry by the laying on of hands of senior Christian leaders who have integrity and good Christian character and who are clearly already moving in the Holy Spirit.

God may personally visit us with an outpouring of grace during our quiet times, or even while we are driving! Or the Lord may put us next to somebody who can impart wisdom and spiritual gifts to us via prophecy and the laying on of hands. We cannot dictate the method of the blessing – but we should still seek the blessing!

Now for the second question that this study is addressing. Some Christians cry out: 'But I have served the Lord faithfully all these years, why don't I have any of these spiritual experiences'. The answer is in the statement itself. The person is seeking God's blessing because of his or her service to God, and not by faith and trust in a God who has promised those blessings. They are trying to earn the free gift, instead of just receiving it by faith. We inherit spiritual blessings through promises – and not through works or laws or any effort of the flesh:

**Galatians 3:2-5 HCSB** *I only want to learn this from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law or by hearing with faith? (3) Are you so foolish? After beginning with the Spirit, are you now going to be made complete by the flesh? (4) Did you suffer so much for nothing--if in fact it was for nothing? (5) So then, does God supply you with the Spirit and work miracles among you by the works of the law or by hearing with faith?*

We only receive the Holy Spirit through hearing and through faith in the promise of God. We do not receive the Holy Spirit by obeying laws, being good, or having the right theology. This even applies to ministry in the Holy Spirit:

**Acts 3:12 HCSB** *When Peter saw this, he addressed the people: "Men of Israel, why are you amazed at this? Or why do you stare at us, as though by our own power or godliness we had made him walk?"*

It is not your theology, or your wisdom or your good moral life that will cause you to receive the Holy Spirit, but only your faith in God who has promised the Spirit to you:

**Galatians 3:14,22,29 HCSB** *The purpose was that the blessing of Abraham would come to the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, so that we could receive the promise of the*

*Spirit through faith. .... (22) But the Scripture has imprisoned everything under sin's power, so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. ... (29) And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, heirs according to the promise.*

You also have to stop looking at yourself and your own unworthiness and saying "God would never bless me I am too much of a mess". That is just a reverse form of the works doctrine. The Samaritan woman had a shattered moral life, a huge inferiority complex, and poor theology but Jesus told her that the Holy Spirit could be hers, then and there, just for the asking:

**John 4:9-10 HCSB** *"How is it that You, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" she asked Him. For Jews do not associate with Samaritans. (10) Jesus answered, "If you knew the gift of God, and who is saying to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would ask Him, and He would give you living water."*

The Holy Spirit is the free gift of God. If we ask Jesus he will give us this Living Water to all who ask it of Him in faith. That is the Promise. (Acts 2:33,38,39; Acts 3:14, Ephesians 1:13)

**Luke 11:13 HCSB** *If you then, who are evil, 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?"*

**Revelation 21:6 MKJV** *And He said to me, It is done. I am the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End. To him who thirsts I will give of the fountain of the Water of Life freely.*

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