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The Teaching
Legacy
of Derek Prince

Two Wonderful Results

What God Accomplishes in Us through the Baptism in the Holy Spirit

For what purposes is the baptism in the Holy Spirit given? Or, put another way, what results does God desire to produce in the life of the believer through baptizing us in the Holy Spirit? We will seek to answer those questions, at least in part, in this Teaching Legacy letter.

Before addressing those questions specifically, let me emphasize three general points in connection with the baptism in the Holy Spirit:

First, in the life of the believer, the Holy Spirit never plays the role of a dictator. He brings freedom, not bondage. Therefore, He will only direct and control us to the degree we ourselves voluntarily yield that direction and control of our lives and our personalities to Him.

Second, the baptism in the Holy Spirit is one main, integral part of God's total provision for the believer in Christ. As such, it can never properly be separated from other main aspects of Christian experience and duty. Those include regular personal Bible study, a daily life of consecration and self-denial, and active participation in the life of a vigorous and spiritual local church. If the baptism in the Spirit ever becomes isolated from these other aspects of Christian experience, it loses it true significance and fails to achieve its true purpose.

Third, the baptism in the Holy Spirit is a gateway leading not merely to new spiritual blessings, but also to new spiritual conflicts. Therefore, every Christian who receives this experience needs to be forewarned and forearmed. Each of us needs to *"put on the whole armor of God"* (Ephesians 6:13–17). In particular, we need to take up and use *"the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God"* (verse 17).

Now let's consider the results the baptism in the Holy Spirit is intended to produce in the life and experience of each believer. Under that heading are eight main results. In this article, we will be looking at two of them.

Entry into a Supernatural Life

We begin our study in the book of Hebrews where the writer is talking to Christians:

> *. . . who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come. . . .* *Hebrews 6:4–5*

These words indicate that those who have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit have, as a result of that experience, tasted the powers of the world (or age) to come.

The first result of the baptism in the Holy Spirit then is to give the believer a foretaste of an altogether new kind of power—a power that belongs, in its fullness, to

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the next world or age. Through this baptism, the believer commences to experience now, in a measure, the supernatural power reserved for its full manifestation in the next world or age.

Sealed with the Spirit of promise

This introduction to supernatural power in the Holy Spirit is in agreement with the words of Paul in Ephesians. Speaking to Christians who had received the Holy Spirit, Paul says:

> *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, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.* *Ephesians 1:13–14*

Paul here describes the experience of being sealed with the Holy Spirit as *"our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession."* The word translated "sealed" means a pledge or an assurance. Paul refers to an ancient custom of purchasing a field. Once the agreement was completed, the buyer carried away a portion of the earth of the field. This portion of the purchased field was called an "earnest" or "pledge." It constituted legal evidence that the field now belonged to the purchaser, who would return in due course to take full possession of the whole inheritance.

This is a beautiful illustration of what the baptism in the Holy Spirit means to each believer. In this experience, we as believers receive in the here and now a little foretaste or portion of the inheritance of power and glory that awaits us in the next world. This little portion of heaven's power and glory, received in this world, is the assurance that the whole inheritance now legally belongs to the believer, who will in due course return to take full possession of the inheritance. That is why Paul assures us that the Holy Spirit is *"the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession."*

We Spirit-baptized believers already have a little bit of heaven inside us right now. On the basis of this deposit, we know that one day we will enjoy the fullness of that which we have hitherto tasted only in part.

Sacred ground

This idea of "a little patch of ground" is very aptly illustrated by the story of the healing of Naaman, the Syrian leper, recorded in 2 Kings. As a result of his miraculous healing, Naaman came to acknowledge that the Lord, Jehovah, the God of Israel, was the only true God. He knew, however, that he would shortly have to return to an unclean, heathen land, and be associated with the idolatrous ceremonies of a heathen temple. With this in mind, we read that Naaman had one special request to make before leaving the land of Israel:

> *So Naaman said, "Then if not, please let your servant be given two mule-loads of earth; for your servant will no longer offer either burnt offering or sacrifice to other gods, but to the Lord."*
>
> *2 Kings 5:17*

Why did Naaman desire to carry home this portion of earth from the land of Israel? He recognized the holiness of the Lord and, in contrast, the uncleanness of his own land and people. He was determined, therefore, never again to offer worship from unclean earth. The holiness of the Lord demanded that Naaman should stand and worship Him only on earth from the Lord's own land. Since Naaman could not remain permanently in the land of Israel, he determined to carry a portion of Israel's earth home with him to his own land. He would make from that earth his own special place of worship.

So it is with the Spirit-baptized believer. This experience gives to him a new understanding of the words of Jesus: *"God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and in truth"* (John 4:24).

Such a believer can no longer be satisfied with the mere forms and ceremonies of manmade worship. Having been in that heavenly land and getting a glimpse of its glories and the holiness of God, we have brought back a portion of that sacred soil. No matter where circumstances may take us, worship must no longer be on unclean land but on holy ground. Worship is now in Spirit—that is, in the Holy Spirit—and in truth.

Permeated by the supernatural

What is true about our worship as Spirit-filled believers is equally true in every other aspect of our experience. Through the baptism in the Spirit, we enter into a new kind of supernatural life. The supernatural has become natural.

If we study the New Testament with an open mind, we are compelled to acknowledge that the whole life and experience of the early Christians was permeated in every part by the supernatural. Supernatural experiences were not something incidental or additional. They were an integral part of their entire lives as Christians. Their praying and their preaching were supernatural. They were supernaturally guided, empowered, transported (see Acts 8:39), and protected. Remove the

supernatural from the book of Acts, and you are left with a record that has no meaning or coherence. From the descent of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2 onwards, it is scarcely possible to find a single chapter in which the record of the supernatural does not play an essential part.

In the account of Paul's ministry in Ephesus, we find a most arresting and thought-provoking expression: *"And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul"* (Acts 19:11). The Greek phrase for "special miracles" could be freely translated as "miracles of a kind that do not happen every day."

Miracles were an everyday occurrence in the early church. Normally they would have caused no special surprise or comment. But the miracles granted here in Ephesus through the ministry of Paul were such that even the early church found them worthy of special record.

In how many churches today would we find occasion to use the phrase "special miracles"? In how many churches today do miracles ever happen—let alone happen every day?

The truth is that where we do not see and experience the supernatural, we have no right to speak of New Testament Christianity. New Testament Christianity can never be separated from the supernatural or experienced in isolation from it. The supernatural and New Testament Christianity are inextricably interwoven.

Without the supernatural, we may have New Testament doctrine, but it is bare doctrine, not experience. Such doctrine, divorced from supernatural experience, is of the kind described by Paul in 2 Corinthians 3:6: *"the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life."* It is the Holy Spirit, and He alone, who can give life to the letter of New Testament doctrine. Only He can make that doctrine a living, personal, supernatural way of life for each believer. One main purpose of the baptism in the Holy Spirit is to do just that.

New Understanding of the Scripture

The next great purpose of the baptism in the Holy Spirit for us to discover is that the Holy Spirit becomes our Guide and Teacher in relation to the Scriptures. This is plainly stated by Christ Himself in two passages in John's gospel.

> *"But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you."*
>
> *John 14:26*

During the earthly ministry of Jesus, He taught His disciples much concerning His death and resurrection, which the disciples at that time were unable either to understand or to remember. However, Jesus assured them that after the Holy Spirit would come to dwell in them, He would become their personal Teacher. He would enable them both to remember and to understand correctly all that Jesus had taught them. But the Holy Spirit would not confine Himself only to interpreting the teaching of Jesus while on earth. He would also lead the disciples into a full and proper understanding of the whole truth of God's revelation to man.

This is further emphasized by Jesus:

> *"However when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth [more literally, into all the truth]; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak."*
>
> *John 16:13*

Here the phrase "all truth" may be interpreted by reference to the words of Jesus in John 17:17: *"Your word is truth."* Thus Jesus, referring here to the revelation of God through His Word, promises His disciples that the Holy Spirit will lead them into a correct understanding of the entire revelation of God to man through the Scriptures. This includes the Old Testament Scriptures, the teaching of Jesus during His earthly ministry, and also the further revelation of gospel truth given to the church after Pentecost through Paul and other apostles. The Holy Spirit is given to the church to become the Revelator, Interpreter and Teacher of the whole compass of divine revelation in the Scriptures.

On the Day of Pentecost

The fulfillment of Christ's promise that the Holy Spirit would interpret the Scriptures for the disciples is very clearly seen in the events of the Day of Pentecost. As soon as the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the disciples and they began to speak with other tongues, the question was raised: *"Whatever could this mean?"* (verse 12). A few verses later, we read Peter's answer to this question:

> *"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 upon all flesh.'"* *verses 16–17*

Without a moment's hesitation, Peter then goes on to quote and interpret a prophecy concerning the last days given in Joel chapter 2. In

the sermon which then follows, almost half of what Peter says is a direct quotation from the Old Testament Scriptures. Peter applies his teaching of the Scriptures in a most clear and forceful way to the facts of Christ's death and resurrection and of the Holy Spirit's outpouring.

It is difficult to imagine any greater contrast between Peter's exposition of the Old Testament Scriptures here and the lack of understanding concerning the same Scriptures displayed by Peter and all the other disciples during the earthly ministry of Jesus—even right up to the Day of Pentecost. It would appear that this total change in the attitude of the disciples to the Scriptures was not a gradual process. Rather, it was produced instantaneously by the coming of the Holy Spirit.

As soon as the Holy Spirit came to indwell them, their understanding of the Scriptures was immediately quickened and illuminated. Their previous doubts and confusion were immediately replaced by clear understanding and forceful application.

The example of Paul

This same dramatic transformation continues to be a distinctive mark of Spirit-filled believers from the Day of Pentecost onwards. For example, Saul of Tarsus had been trained in the knowledge of the Old Testament Scriptures by Gamaliel, the most famous teacher of his day. Yet in his early years, he had no light or understanding on the correct application of those Scriptures.

It was only after Ananias laid hands on Saul in Damascus, praying that he might be filled with the Holy Ghost, that the scales fell from Saul's eyes and he was able to understand and apply those Scriptures. After this experience, we read in Acts 9:20: *"Immediately he preached Christ in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God."*

Notice the word "immediately." This was not a slow, gradual struggle for understanding, but rather an instant illumination. The moment the Holy Spirit came in, He cast an altogether new light upon Scriptures Saul had known for many years, but had never known how to apply or interpret.

What the Holy Spirit did for Peter, Saul, and other New Testament Christians, He is still willing and able to do for all Christians today. But first, each believer must, through the baptism in the Holy Spirit, personally receive this wonderful, indwelling Guide, Teacher, and Expositor.

The Holy Spirit is the Author

I must also add here that it is perfectly natural and logical that the Holy Spirit should be the Christian's appointed Interpreter and Teacher of the Scriptures. The reason for this is clear: the Holy Spirit is not merely the Interpreter, but He is also the Author of all Scripture. Thus, in the wise provision of God, the Author of Scripture becomes in turn the Interpreter.

In 2 Timothy 3:16 we are told: *"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God."* The word here translated "inspiration" is directly connected with the word for "Spirit." The meaning therefore is that all Scripture is inbreathed by the Spirit of God. More simply, the Spirit of God is the Author of all Scripture.

Again, in 2 Peter 1:20–21, we read: *"No prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit."* Peter here teaches, just as Paul did, that the Holy Spirit, through consecrated human instruments, is the Author of all Scripture. For this reason, the Holy Spirit alone is able also to give the full and correct understanding of all Scripture.

"No . . . Scripture," Peter says, *"is of any private interpretation."* That is to say, no person in his own unaided understanding, apart from the Holy Spirit, is able to interpret Scripture correctly. But each believer who personally receives the indwelling Spirit receives, in Him, Christ's own appointed Guide and Teacher of scriptural truth. And this is the essence of the second of these two wonderful results of the baptism in the Holy Spirit, which are: entrance into a supernatural life and the Holy Spirit as our personal Guide through the Scriptures.

For the full teaching on the eight purposes of the baptism in the Holy Spirit, see the book, Foundational Truths for Christian Living, by Derek Prince.

For further study, we recommend Derek Prince's 2-part CD series:

How to Be Led by the Holy Spirit

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