

**FOUNDATION OF FAITH!**  
**BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**  
**PART 2**

This morning we are in part 2 of our study on the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, or really the Baptism with the Holy Spirit in our study on Foundation of Faith. So far in our studies on the Holy Spirit we have seen three Greek prepositions used in regards to the work of the Holy Spirit. First of all the Holy Spirit is *with* us, PARA in the Greek, drawing us to Christ prior to our conversion. The Holy Spirit is drawing out a bride for Jesus, you and me and all those that receive the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives, receive Jesus as their Lord and Savior come to that saving faith!

Then, as we surrender our lives to Christ, asking Him to be Lord and Savior of our lives, then the Holy Spirit comes *in* us, or indwells us, EN is the Greek word that is used. And we saw in John 20:22, after the death and resurrection of Jesus, that Jesus appeared to His disciples and He breaths on them saying “**Receive the Holy Spirit.**” At this point they were New Testament saints as the Holy Spirit was indwelling them. Today, the minute we ask Christ to be Lord and Savior of our life, the Holy Spirit indwells us!

But there is one more Greek preposition that is used of the Holy Spirit and that is *upon* or EPI in the Greek. We see this spoken of in Luke 24:49, where we read, “**Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.**” This work of the Holy Spirit in our lives is the empowerment for service. It is the power to be witnesses of Jesus as we will see.

Now I realize that there are those that say there is no such thing as the Baptism with the Holy Spirit and there is no evidence in the Bible to support this belief. I disagree and we will see that. First of all I want to show you something that I believe is important because there are two baptisms in regards to the Holy Spirit. Again, I do understand that there are those that deny this, but hear me out.

First of all there is the *baptism unto life* and in this baptism it is the Holy Spirit that is the baptizer. In I Corinthians 12:13 we are told, “**For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body - whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free - and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.**” Who is doing the baptizing here? It is the Holy Spirit! And in this baptism we are being baptized into the body of Christ. The purpose is the new life we have in Christ, that eternal life. And the evidence for this is the Fruits of the Spirit!

I don't think anyone here has a problem with that. But then there is a subsequent baptism, this is a *baptism unto power* and this time the baptizer is Jesus. In Luke 3:16 we are told, “**John answered, saying to all, ‘I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.’**” And in John 1:32-34 we are told, “**And John bore witness, saying, ‘I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him. I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’ And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God.’**”

Again, who is the baptizer here? It is not the Holy Spirit but John the Baptist tells us that it is Jesus who will baptize us with the Holy Spirit! This is not speaking of being baptized into the body of Christ, but with the Holy Spirit. And the purpose for this baptism is for power, the power to be a witness for Jesus. What is the evidence that you have this power? It is the gifts of the Holy Spirit in your life and we will speak of the gifts of the Spirit in our future studies because we need to understand what they are about and if they are for today.

I hope that clears this up for you, that there is this *baptism unto life* where the Holy Spirit is the baptizer and there is the *baptism unto power* where Jesus is the baptizer! And I do realize that this may be hard for some of you and we all come up with our ideas of what the Bible has to say, and man has many views regarding this issue, but let's not look to man for our answers, let's look to God through His Word. Either the evidence is there in the early church, or it isn't. And if it is not, then we must discard this idea. But, if the Scriptures support it, then why toss away or negate what God desires to give us? And I think that is important, do we see this practice in the early church, was their evidence for this *baptism unto power* or are we making something out of nothing!

Now besides those that try to deny this *baptism unto power*, there are those in the church today who have developed some strange ideas to what this power is all about. And because of that you see all kinds of strange and weird behavior that has been attributed to the power of the Holy Spirit coming upon a person's life. Understand this; the power that is spoken of is working in us so that we might be a witness of Christ. It is an empowerment for service. Jesus tells us in Acts 1:8 what this power is all about. He said, **“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”** Notice that this power was not “to witness” but to “be witnesses.”

What does that mean? Let me illustrate it this way. A steam locomotive is powered by steam, of course. Now we need to understand that the steam in this locomotive is not there to toot the whistle on this locomotive. The purpose of this power is to run the engine and move the train down the tracks, to help it reach its destination! This empowering with the Holy Spirit does the same. You see, it is not given to us to toot our whistle, to blow our horn, to draw attention to us. No, this power is given so that the message of the Gospel might be moved throughout the world. That we would move along the tracks that God has set for us, not tooting our whistle, but moving the Gospel message forward! May we not forget that or lose sight of that. You see, if we do, then we will most likely toot our whistle, draw attention to ourselves instead of moving the Gospel message forward!

Let me give you an example of what this empowerment is not and then we will see what this is all about. But just because there is the abuse of this *baptism unto power* does not mean it is not real or that the Scriptures don't support it and we will look at that. First of all listen to what took place several years ago. We are told,

The scene was surreal. It looked like a bomb had exploded. Bodies were strewn haphazardly throughout the sanctuary. Some lay motionless on the ground. Others twitched spasmodically. Behind me a woman shrieked, "I'm hot! I'm hot!" In front of me a girl was shaking violently. A boy standing in the aisle chopped his hands feverishly at some imaginary object. Next to him a man whirled round and round in a circle. All the while waves of sardonic [sarcastic] laughter cascaded eerily throughout the sanctuary.

A boy staggered drunkenly across the platform and collapsed at the feet of a man who called himself the "Holy Ghost Bartender." [Rodney Howard-Browne]. The "Bartender" screamed, "Git him, Jesus! Git him, Git him, Git him!" Suddenly he spun around and commanded two muscle-bound men to rise. "These men," he said, "are my guardian angels." Then, as if on cue, he moved deliberately in my direction. What happened next was best described by a charismatic pastor who was an eyewitness: "I witnessed a talking [by] a barroom bully."

When the Holy Ghost Bartender (who also refers to himself as the Holy Ghost Hitman) arrived at my seat, he began threatening to have me thrown out of the sanctuary. "I'm telling you right now," he hissed, "You'll drop dead if you prohibit what God is doing!" Dramatically he gestured toward the crowd and warned them that those like me, who would dare to question that what he was doing was of God, had committed the unpardonable sin and would not be forgiven in this world or the next.

The following day he crowed, “The last time I had a confrontation like that . . . was . . . with a bunch of Mormons . . . you could see their spirit, y’know . . . just a really religious, pharisaical spirit, that’s what it is. Amen? . . . And I smelt it – y’know, I can smell them religious devils from a about a hundred yards – I could smell them blindfolded, man. . . . You could see, last night we meant business.” He labeled his critics “idiots” and warned that they were about to experience either “riot or revival.”

- Hank Hanegraaff, Counterfeit Revival, pp. 21-22

Was this of God? Was this that *baptism unto power* that the Scriptures are speaking of? Absolutely not! First of all what are they doing? They are tooting their whistle, blowing their horn and drawing attention unto themselves. They are not moving the Gospel message forward; in fact you don’t even hear them mention the Gospel message! Secondly, there are no Scriptures, not one to support what they are doing. And thirdly, when you have to threaten people not to question what you are teaching, there is only one reason for that, you don’t have a leg to stand on and thus, you threaten them to get them off your back. Guess what, like in Baseball, three strikes and you are out! This is not at all what the *baptism unto power* is about and we will see what this did in the lives of believers in the early church.

First of all let me share with you regarding this power in the Old Testament. We can see in the Old Testament that the Holy Spirit came upon certain individuals to empower them for service, like Moses, King Saul, King David, Gideon, Samson, and-so-on. Also, the Holy Spirit could be taken away from the Old Testament saints, that power could depart from their lives and we can read of that in the lives of King Saul and Samson. In fact, in Psalm 51:10-12 David cried out, **“Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me away from Your presence, And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, And uphold me by Your generous Spirit.”**

Before the death and resurrection of Jesus, the Holy Spirit was never inside a person, dwelling in them, but He empowered them for service, to do a work. But the Holy Spirit could be taken away from them, they could lose that power. We, as New Testament saints, have the Holy Spirit in us, something the Old Testament saints could not experience, for Christ had not yet come. And that can never be taken away from us. And just as the power of the Holy Spirit came upon certain individuals in the Old Testament, now the Holy Spirit’s power is available to every believer today, for it was given to us, the Church, on the Day of Pentecost, to empower us for service unto God, to be witnesses of Him!

If that is true, and it is, then why in the world is the church so anemic today? Why is the church so ineffective in its work, in its witness of Christ? Because we are trying to do the work without the power! Zechariah 4:6 says, “. . . ‘Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,’ says the LORD of hosts.’” If we would not only believe that, I think most of us if not all of us do believe that intellectually, but if we would let that sink deep down into our hearts and we would apply that to our lives, we would then see mountains being moved!

I like the way Vance Havner put it. He said, “We will move this world not by criticism of it, nor conformity to it - but by combustion within it of lives ignited by the Spirit of God.” When you study the early church, understand in just around 30 years of time or so, a few people had spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the whole known world! And it was not done by their might, their intellect. They had no radio, no television, no E-mail, no Internet, no movies, *JUST* the power of the Holy Spirit flowing in them and through them. And the result of their work, we read in Acts 17:6, “But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some brethren to the rulers of the city, crying out, ‘These who have turned the world upside down have come here too.’”

What a testimony of lives that were changed and how it affected those around them. May that be said of us, turning our communities around to Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit! You see, they were not tooting their whistle, blowing their horn, drawing attention to themselves, but they were moving the Gospel message forward and that is exactly what we are to do.



Remember what Jesus said in Matthew 28:18-20, “**And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.’ Amen.**” What are we to do? Be a witness of Christ and in doing so we will see people come to the Lord, the Gospel message will go forward and we are to teach them the things of God, these new converts. No tooting of our whistle, but just moving the Gospel message forward! That is what this *baptism unto power* is all about!

Now we have spoken a lot about the power, and I think it is important to understand that this is something that is real and I think it is important to understand what this power is all about. Let’s face it, man and power don’t mix because we love that power and we can abuse it if we don’t understand what it is about. But here’s the thing. Is their evidence in the Scriptures that specifically show us this taking place, that there is this *baptism unto power*? Yes there is, and in a minute we will deal with the specifics of seeing people receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit in the book of Acts.

First of all think about this. Before Pentecost came, how brave were the disciples of Jesus? They were cowards. After the death of Jesus we see them hiding behind locked doors, fearful for their lives. At the cross we aren’t told of any disciples being there except John and some of the women. Where were all the rest of them? Where were the men? Probably hiding in fear, thinking they were next in line to be put to death.

When Jesus was being taken captive, being brought to the house of the High Priest, Peter followed at a distance, he didn't want to be noticed or recognized as a follower of Jesus. And when a young girl confronted him on being a disciple of Jesus, as Peter was warming himself by the enemy's fire, Peter denies that he even knows Jesus. Three times Peter was questioned and three times he denied the Lord. He was afraid to be identified with Him, thinking he would be put to death because of that relationship, or at least severely punished for it. How could these fearful men, these men who were hiding, afraid to even say they knew Jesus turn the world upside down for Jesus? How could they move the Gospel message forward? It was not going to be by their own might.

You see, after the Holy Spirit came upon Peter and the other disciples in the upper room, their lives were changed. Now they had boldness to speak the truths of God. Now they had the power to be witnesses of Christ. In fact, all the disciples were put to death for their faith except John who died of natural causes. And they all died horrible deaths, burned at the stake, beheaded, torn apart, skinned alive, and-so-on. Even Peter, who at one time denied the Lord because he feared the consequences of that relationship, was put to death on a cross, dying upside down. There is only one thing that can explain that kind of change and that is the power of the Holy Spirit that came upon them!

Think about it like this. Imagine buying some awesome power tools, they were the top of the line; they could do everything you can imagine. The only problem is that you did not buy the batteries to run those tools. Now as good as those tools may be, as impressive as they may be, without the power they are useless! It is not until they are powered up that they will do what they were created for and that is true with the disciples.

You see, prior to this *baptism unto power* they had all the tools, all the information, they walked with Jesus for some 3 years, but they lacked that power to run those tools and Jesus wants them to wait before they step out! Once they received this power, they could not be stopped and as I have said, within 30 years the Gospel message moved throughout the whole known world!

One more point before we move on and that is this idea that this empowerment for service was just for the first century church, that it is not for us today. I disagree and I will show you why. In Luke 24:49, Jesus said to His men after His resurrection, “**Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.**” He is speaking of being empowered with the Spirit of God for the Holy Spirit already was in them, they were New Testament Christians because in John 20:22 we are told, “**And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit.’**”

Now, like I have said, some still like to argue that the gifts were only for the early church, but listen to what Peter said regarding this promise of the Father in Acts 2:39, “**For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.**” Who is this *baptism unto power* for? It was for them, it was for their children, and it is for all who are afar off, it is for all who ask, this empowerment for service, this *baptism unto power!* I hope that clears that up for you.

Now, with the remainder of our time this morning we are going to look at and study this event, the Baptism of the Holy Spirit or this *baptism unto power* in the early Church. In fact, we will start with its beginning on the day of Pentecost and then look at several instances in which this event took place in the early Church.

## **A LOOK AT THE EVIDENCE IN THE EARLY CHURCH OF THIS BAPTISM UNTO POWER**

### **1. THE DAY OF PENTECOST – ACTS 2**

We are going to look at the Day of Pentecost, because here we see this *baptism unto power* begin. Keep in mind that Jesus appeared for 40 days in His resurrection body before ascending up into heaven. And before He ascended into heaven He told His disciples to wait in Jerusalem for the promise of the Father, the baptism of the Holy Spirit, that power from on high that would come upon their lives.

We then see that some 10 days later 120 of His disciples were waiting in Jerusalem, and we read beginning in verse 1 of Acts chapter 2, **“Now when the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven. And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language.”** Acts 2:1-6.

Now I want you to notice something that is very important here. What were they doing when the Holy Spirit fell upon them? Just sitting there! In the church today it seems that people are being worked up into some chaotic frenzy so that the Holy Spirit will empower them. That is foolish and unbiblical. Nowhere do we see any bizarre behavior related to the baptizing of the Holy Spirit.

Also, these tongues of fire are only spoken of here, on the Day of Pentecost. We see no other mention of them. And I believe that this was a one time event, the tongues of fire, not speaking in tongues!

Now remember what Peter was like before this event. He was afraid to even mention that he was a disciple of Jesus or that he even knew Jesus. But now, after this *baptism unto power* we see that this frail, weak Peter, who was afraid to say he was a disciple of Jesus at one time, now speaks with boldness the message of Christ. And he doesn't pull any punches but lays it all out and the people listen and they are cut to the heart, they are convicted. Peter says beginning in verse 16 of Acts chapter 2, "**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 on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams. And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; and they shall prophesy.'**" Acts 2:16-18.

And out of this witness, out of Peter pointing them to Jesus, 3,000 people got saved as the Holy Spirit worked on the hearts of the people through the preaching of the Word of God. The church got started with a bang. There is one last point that I find interesting here. When the Law was given we saw 3,000 people lose their lives, and here, as grace was poured out, we see 3,000 souls saved! And we see here the boldness of Peter to speak the Word of God as he was empowered by the Holy Spirit. This is the *baptism unto power* that Jesus has given to Peter and to us! So we see it in the early church, at least on the Day of Pentecost. Do we see this *baptism unto power* anywhere else in the Scriptures? You bet we do!

## **2. A REFILLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT – ACTS 4**

As strange as it sounds, in Acts chapter 4 we see Peter and John in trouble for healing a lame man who was lame since birth. And instead of rejoicing, the religious leaders locked Peter and John up. I told you, very strange and yet, because they refuse to accept Jesus, they had to come against what His disciples were doing and thus, they are mad because these men healed a lame man in the name of Jesus! Now after some time they finally gave up, they could find no real reason to keep them any longer, and thus, they threatened Peter and John and told them not to speak or teach of this Jesus any longer.

Again, when you have no leg to stand upon, you threaten those you are coming against and that is what we see with these religious leaders, that is what they were doing! And Peter and John said in Acts 4:19-20, “**... ‘Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.’**” Once again, apart from this empowerment, they could not have done this.

Now, at this point the religious leaders threw their hands up in the air, not knowing what else to do, for the people were praising God because of this lame man being healed. Thus, all they could do is let them go even though they did not want to let them go! Now notice, as they were released, what took place beginning in verse 23 of Acts chapter 4. We read, “**And being let go, they went to their own companions and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said to them. So when they heard that, they raised their voice to God with one accord and said: ‘Lord, You are God, who made heaven and earth and the sea, and all that is in them, who by the mouth of Your servant David have said: “Why did the nations rage, and the people plot vain things? The kings of the earth took their stand, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord and against His Christ.” For truly against Your holy Servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose determined before to be done. Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word, by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus.’** And when they had prayed, the place where

**they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness. Now the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul; neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common. And with great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And great grace was upon them all.**” Acts 4:23-33.

Keep in mind that these people that were gathered together here in Acts chapter 4 were basically the same people that had gathered together on the day of Pentecost. And yet, here we see them filled once again with the Holy Spirit. And the result of that refilling is they spoke the Word of God with boldness and they gave witness of the resurrection of Jesus Christ! Understand this; the purpose of the empowering of the Spirit is not that we might speak in tongues. The purpose of the power of the Spirit coming upon an individual is that they might be bold witnesses of Christ! And like the disciples back then, we too need the refilling of the Holy Spirit in our lives to accomplish the work we are called to do.

Let’s face it, when some look at the baptism with the Holy Spirit they see it as a one time event, but it is not as we see here. They prayed for that powerful boldness and God gave it to them as they asked. In fact, the word, “**boldness**” is PARRESIA in the Greek and it speaks of “telling it all.” In other words, they didn’t hold back, they laid it all out and they were not fearful of what people might do or say to them! Don’t hide the truths of God, but speak it forth in love and if you lack that powerful boldness, just ask for God to fill you once again or maybe for the first time! So there is that refilling of the Spirit as we see here.



### **3. BAPTISM INTO THE BODY OF CHRIST AND THEN THE BAPTISM WITH THE SPIRIT AT A LATTER TIME – ACTS 8**

Another aspect we need to look at is when does this baptism with the Holy Spirit take place? Is it at the time of conversion or does it take place at another time? The baptism with the Holy Spirit is often a separate and subsequent work apart from salvation but it can take place at the time of salvation. In this section we are going to look at the baptism into the body of Christ, salvation and then the baptism with the Spirit at a latter time, this empowerment for service.

Remember the story in Acts chapter 7 as Stephen was brought before the Jewish religious council for speaking about Jesus. And Stephen gave a bold witness to them of who Jesus is and they refused to listen, they closed their ears and they ended up putting Stephen to death.

Now, after Stephen was stoned to death for his faith in Christ, Saul began to persecute the church hard and heavy, scattering believers everywhere, but not quenching the Good News they spoke of. It was like stepping on some burning wood and you can come down as hard as you want, but in doing so you will spread those embers all over the place and there will be little fires all over the place. That is what Saul was doing and, like I have said, as he put his foot down to stamp out Christianity, he was spreading it farther and farther!

And we also see Philip begin to do a work in Samaria and in Acts chapter 8, beginning in verse 5 we read, **“Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ to them. And the multitudes with one accord heeded the things spoken by Philip, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. For unclean spirits, crying with a loud voice, came out of many who were possessed; and many who were paralyzed and lame were healed. And there was great joy in that city. . . . But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized.”** Acts 8:5-8, 12.

Here we see revival break out and as these people got saved, they are then baptized. They are not empowered with the Spirit, but they are baptized into the faith by the Holy Spirit. Now, as news came to Jerusalem of what was happening in Samaria, they sent Peter and John to see if they could help out in any way. How would you like those guys coming to help out at an outreach! And we read in verse 14 of Acts chapter 8, **“Now when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them, who, when they had come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit. For as yet He had fallen upon none of them. They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.”** Acts 8:14-17.

You see, they were baptized into the body of Christ through the witnessing of Philip, and they were full of joy but they were not empowered for service until Peter and John laid hands on them and prayed for them. Again, listen to what we are told here in Acts, “. . . **For as yet He had fallen upon none of them. They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.**” You see, they received Jesus as their Lord and Savior, but the Holy Spirit had not come “**upon**” them as yet. Now, when Peter and John come we see this *baptism unto power* come upon their lives!

And at this point their lives changed, something was different and Simon who previously practiced sorcery wanted that power. We don't know what they did, but it was visible enough for everyone around them to see it. Their lives were truly a witness of Christ! And so we see these people get saved, they are water baptized, and as Peter and John arrive on the scene, they are then baptized with the Holy Spirit. Here is a separate and subsequent work, this *baptism unto power* from their salvation! But can this baptism happen at the same time as a person's conversion? You bet and we will look at that next!

#### 4. **BAPTISM WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT AT THE SAME TIMES AS THEIR CONVERSION – ACTS 10**

Yes, this baptism of the Holy Spirit can take place at the same time as a person comes to know Jesus, at the time of their conversion. Let me show you an example. In Acts chapter 10 we read of a man named Cornelius, who was in Caesarea, and was an Italian Centurion, and was in charge of 100 soldiers. And this man feared God, he was a good man, and he even prayed to God, and yet he was not saved. He recognized, along with his family, the emptiness of the Roman gods and wanted to know the true and living God. And as he opens his heart to the drawing of the Holy Spirit, seeking the true God, we see God speak to his heart in a vision.

And in this vision Cornelius is told to send for Peter, who was in Joppa at this time, and the reason he is suppose to do this is that, “**He will tell you what you must do.**” What is Peter going to do when he arrives there in Caesarea? Share the Good News of the Gospel; he will share Christ with Cornelius. Why? Because he was seeking God, and God said in Jeremiah 29:13, “**And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.**”

Cornelius does not go to Peter's house but sends his men to go and find Peter and bring him back. And so, as they go to find Peter, he is praying on the housetop. Keep in mind that it was not a pitched roof, these roofs back then were functional, flat roofs and even today in Israel you will see that. And as he prayed he became hungry and he fell asleep. And God gives Peter a vision of a sheet full of unclean animals coming down and he says to Peter, "**Rise, Peter, kill and eat.**" Acts 10:13. Well, Peter is a good Jewish boy and Peter says, "**Not so, Lord! For I have never eaten anything unclean.**" Acts 10:14. In other words Peter was reminding the Lord that these animals were not kosher, they were not clean for Peter to eat. Now does God really need to be reminded of things, does He forget some things? Not at all and the problem was not with the Lord, but it was with Peter! You see, you can't say, "**Not so, Lord!**" if He is Lord of your life. All you can say is, "Yes Lord!" In other words, how can you call Him Lord and not do the things He is telling you to do? But Peter, like us did just that.

And we see this occur 3 times, this sheet coming down with unclean animals upon it. And the Lord said to him, "**What God has cleansed [or declared clean] you must not call common.**" Acts 10:15. In others words, "Peter, I have made this kosher, I have made it clean and you can partake of this!" Now what does that mean? Well, as Peter is pondering these things, not sure what is meant by it all, these 3 men, Gentiles, unclean Gentiles come from the house of Cornelius, and knock on Peter's door. Notice, God worked on both sides and the message was confirmed.

Now God is really working on Peter's heart here. You see, according to the Law he was not to eat those animals, but in regards to Jewish tradition a Jew could not allow Gentiles into their home for any reason, for they would be unclean. But Peter allows them in, knowing this is from God. On the following day they head to Caesarea, and upon their arrival, Cornelius is waiting with his house packed with family and friends, all waiting to hear the Good News that Peter was coming with. Cornelius wanted his family and friends to hear what he was going to hear.

And Peter launches into a sermon, pointing Cornelius and all who were in his house to Jesus Christ. And we read beginning in verse 44 of Acts chapter 10, **“While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word. And those of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also. For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God. Then Peter answered, ‘Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?’ And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then they asked him to stay a few days.”** Acts 10:44-48.

Notice, as the Word of God was being spoken, the Holy Spirit moved upon their hearts. The Spirit moves through the teaching of the Word of God, that is the Biblical pattern! They didn't have to learn how to speak in tongues, they didn't have to practice it, but the Holy Spirit came upon them as they gave their lives to Christ and they spoke in tongues and magnified God. Here we see their salvation and the baptism with the Holy Spirit occurring at the same time, and then, after all of this, they were then baptized in water!

Please understand that this speaking in tongues is not a sign that you are baptized into this power. Some churches will tell you that if you don't speak in tongues you are not even saved, which is ridiculous and not Scriptural! How do I know? Because of what Paul said in I Corinthians 12:30, **“Do all have gifts of healings? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret?” These are rhetorical questions with the answer being, “No, of course not!”** God gives to each believer as He sees fit! So speaking in tongues is not speaking of your salvation but it can show that you have this empowerment, but not all speak in tongues and yet they are empowered for service. Again, God is the one who will give these gifts out but here in Acts chapter 10 it was a sign that they were baptized unto power!

And in Acts chapter 11 Peter defends what took place in the house of a Gentile before the apostles and brethren in Judea. And the walls of separation between Jew and Gentile were being broken down by the power of the Holy Spirit working in the lives of people. We read in Acts 11:16-18 Peter saying, **“Then I remembered the word of the Lord, how He said, “John indeed baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit.” If therefore God gave them the same gift as He gave us when we believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could withstand God?’ When they heard these things they became silent; and they glorified God, saying, ‘Then God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life.’”**

You see, Peter was saying that Gentiles and Jews are saved; they can be saved the same way, through Christ! And this gift, this *baptism unto power* is not just for the Jews, but it is also for Gentiles! So we have seen that this *baptism unto power* can take place at a separate and subsequent time in the life of a believer, apart from salvation or, as we have seen here, it can take place at the same time as a person is saved!



Listen to what Charles Finney said as he received this baptism with the Holy Spirit, this *baptism unto power*. He wrote,

As I shut the door of the office after me, it seemed as if I met the Lord Jesus Christ face to face. It seemed to me that I saw Him as I would see any other man. He said nothing, but looked at me in such a manner as to break me right down at His feet. I fell down at His feet, wept aloud like a child, and made such confessions as I could with my choked utterance. It seemed to me that I bathed His feet in tears. I must have continued in this state for a good while. I returned to the front office, but as I turned and was about to take a seat by the fire, I received a mighty baptism of the Holy Ghost. Without any recollection that I had ever heard the subject mentioned by any person in the world, the Holy Spirit descended upon me in a manner that seemed to come in waves of liquid love; it seemed like the very breath of God. I wept aloud with joy and love.

- Charles Finney

We will keep looking at the Scriptures and see the evidence for this *baptism unto power* that has been given to us by Jesus next time. But let me close with this for you to think about! Oswald Chambers wrote,

If we believe in Jesus, it is not what we gain but what He pours through us that really counts. God's purpose is not simply to make us beautiful, plumb grapes, but to make us grapes so that He may squeeze the sweetness out of us. Our spiritual life cannot be measured by success as the world measures it, but only by what God pours through us – and we cannot measure that at all!

- Oswald Chambers

Remember, this *baptism unto power* is not so we can toot our own whistle, so we can blow our own horn, but it is to move the Gospel message down the tracks you might say, to move it forward, to be a witness of Jesus in everything that we do!

Author Jamie Buckingham once visited a dam on the Columbia River. He'd always thought that the water spilling over the top provided the power, not realizing that it was just froth, that deep within turbines and generators transformed the power of tons and tons of water to electricity - quietly, without notice, not like the flashy froth on top.

- Source Unknown

May we come to the power source and not think that our froth is something, it is the power source that gives to us the power to move that Gospel message forward. May we not forget that and I hope you have seen that this empowerment is very Scriptural and it is for today just as much as it was for the first century church. *The baptism unto power!*