

The Holy Spirit
The Baptism of the Holy Spirit

Lesson #6 for May 6, 2006

Scriptures: Acts 2:37,38; 9:5,6; 1 Corinthians 12:1-13; 2 Corinthians 7:9-11; Galatians 3:1-11; 5:5,6.

1. **Do you know for sure what the baptism of the Holy Spirit is? When are we supposed to get it? Do you need the baptism of the Holy Spirit to be a true church member? (1 Corinthians 12:3). If you have truly received the baptism of the Holy Spirit are you able to speak other languages? Heal the sick? Raise the dead? Or are these separate independent gifts apart from the gift of the Holy Spirit or being filled with the Holy Spirit? What does it mean to be filled with the Holy Spirit?**
2. **Do you believe that you have received the baptism of the Holy Spirit?** This question has been debated in Christian groups for hundreds of years.
3. Read Acts 1:5. What is implied by these words? Is the baptism which the disciples received on that date different than a modern baptism into the Seventh-day Adventist Church? How do you feel about the following statement: "One thing is sure: Anyone who has surrendered in faith and obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ has been baptized in the Holy Spirit. A loving and lovable Christian, giving of himself or herself for others, is the greatest manifestation of that baptism." (*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide* for Apr. 29)
4. **How does the baptism of the Holy Spirit come? What are its marks? How is it manifest? Do you have friends who have received the baptism of the Holy Spirit? How can you tell?**
5. Many who desire the baptism of the Holy Spirit believe that it will give them special power! **What is the role of power in the great controversy? Does God ever win by the use of power? Why or why not?**
6. Many of those who claim to have the Holy Spirit only want the power! But the Holy Spirit was not given to the disciples until they had finally begun to realize how God desires to work among men. Then they were ready to be used by the Holy Spirit instead of trying to use Him!
7. Men have always wanted to manipulate God in order to take advantage of His power! Eli's sons took the ark into battle trying to force God to help them win! (1 Samuel 4:1-11) Seldom have human beings really understood the work of the Holy Spirit and been willing to be used by Him. Even James and John wanted to sit on either side of the Source of power! It is very dangerous to give power to a self-centered power-hungry person! Think of Adolph Hitler, Joseph Stalin etc.

"Your energies are required to co-operate with God. [Our will is not to be forced into co-operation with divine agencies, but it must be voluntarily submitted.] Without this, **if it were possible to force upon you with a hundredfold greater intensity the influences of the Spirit of God, it would not make you a Christian, a fit subject for heaven.** The stronghold of Satan would not be broken. There must be the willing and the doing on the part of the receiver. There must be an action, represented as coming out from the world and being separate. There must be a doing of the words of Christ. The soul must be emptied of self, that Christ may pour [305] his Spirit into the vacuum. Christ must be chosen as the heavenly guest. **The will must be placed on the side of God's will.** Then

there is a new heart, and new, holy resolves. It is Jesus enthroned in the soul that makes every action easy in his service.”-- {ST, December 28, 1891 par. 2; MB 142.1; HL 304.5}

8. **Does the Holy Spirit who gave us the Scriptures work through our mental capacities or does He bypass them? If we receive the Holy Spirit in some kind of way that bypasses the mental capacities how are we going to be able to distinguish what spirit it is? There are very different spirits at work!**
9. How does the Holy Spirit influence your thinking? Does He work differently than angels do? How can we distinguish between the influence of the Holy Spirit and that of evil angels? Does it require careful thought at times? Or does the Holy Spirit just come in the form of mindless emotional experiences?
10. Is it difficult to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit? Or is it as easy as getting drunk with wine? (Ephesians 5:18).
11. Read 1 Corinthians 12:13. “In the same way, all of us, whether Jews or Gentiles, whether slaves or free, have been baptized into the one body by the same Spirit, and we have all been given the one Spirit to drink.” **Do you understand this verse to mean that every baptized church member in Corinth had received the baptism of the Spirit?** Were they closer to God than Seventh-day Adventists are today?
12. “All believers share the reality of being baptized by the Spirit, and this makes us part of the body of Christ, the church.” (*ibid* for Apr. 30). How many members does this “church” have today?
13. Paul seems to suggest in Romans 8:9 that if you have the Spirit, you will live as the Spirit tells you. Do you feel that your life is directly guided by the Holy Spirit?
14. “Every true believer since Pentecost has received the guarantee of the Spirit, which is the same experience as baptism in the Spirit. The important question for us is this: how willing are we to receive the Spirit?” (*ibid* for Apr. 30) Are you a true believer? Do you have the guarantee of the Spirit and have you been baptized in the Spirit?
15. **What is the relationship between faith and the baptism of the Holy Spirit?**
16. Our lesson suggests that if we have the Holy Spirit He will lead us to a transformed life. Can you look in your own life and see places where the Holy Spirit has led you to change? Does this come before or after water baptism?
17. The lesson makes it clear that we are saved by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. However it goes on to say that good works will follow as a sign that we *have received* the Holy Spirit. It is not a means of our salvation! Do you understand clearly the relationship between these two statements?
18. **Would you agree that “faith without works is dead but so also are works without faith?”** (Teachers summary: page 55).
19. “Only our relationship with God through the Holy Spirit allows us to accept the gift of salvation.” (Teachers summary: page 55) Are we saved by Jesus Christ? By God? By God through the Holy Spirit? How are we to understand these statements?
20. What happens as a result of receiving the Holy Spirit? It “produces a coordinated action for soul winning, and constant advancement in spiritual life, which includes a growth in character development and in faith to receive and impart the blessings of heaven.” (Teacher’s Introduction).

21. Paul goes out of his way in several places to emphasize the fact that the gifts of the Holy Spirit are different to each person. Just as the parts of the human body are different but work together in a harmonious whole, so each Christian is to take his place in the church and exercise any special gift which has been given him or her. Did the disciples receive different “gifts” at Pentecost? What were they? Or did they all speak in tongues?
22. Is it true that those who truly receive and accept the Holy Spirit will be convicted of sin. This is illustrated by the response in Acts 2 and 2 Corinthians 7:9-11. When the Corinthian church mocked and rejected Paul’s personal visit to them he returned to Ephesus and sent them a “Sinai” letter. (2 Corinthians 11-13?) This letter seemed to get their attention and they were convicted of sin. **What did they do as a result? Does the Holy Spirit convict you of sin? How do you respond? What happens if we accept the Holy Spirit’s guidance one day and reject it the next?**
23. **How should the church respond to diversity within its membership? Are we thankful for the differences that we observe? Do they cause divisions among us?**
24. Is it possible to listen to a sermon in our day and know if it is truly spirit-inspired? What criteria could we use to determine this?
25. We have suggested on many occasions that we need to focus on the character of God. Romans 2:4 suggests that the goodness of God should lead us to repentance. In light of this what does it mean to say that repentance is a gift from God? (Acts 3:26; 5:30, 31).
26. When Peter preached his sermon on Pentecost did those who received baptism at that time also receive certain spiritual gifts? Were they able to speak in foreign languages? If the Holy Spirit was represented by the flames of fire that descended upon the apostles what kind of change took place in their lives? Was a similar change expected in the lives of all those who were baptized that day?
27. Read John 14:15,16. Is it clear from these passages that **if we are not ready to fully keep God’s commandments we have not yet received the Holy Spirit?**
28. Through the years many have identified the gift of the Holy Spirit with miraculous happenings. **If miraculous happenings are not a necessary part of the gift of the Holy Spirit how can we tell if someone has the Holy Spirit without them?**
29. If we suggest that the Holy Spirit is constantly at work to bring about change in our lives by convicting us of sin, does that mean that the Holy Spirit works through our conscience? Is there a clear distinction between the Holy Spirit and conscience in your thinking?
30. “Faith is perhaps the most important gift of the Holy Spirit, because it is the gateway to all the other gifts.” (*Adult Teacher’s Sabbath School Bible Study Guide* p. 71). How do you understand these words?
31. Which comes first in the Christian experience? Faith? Obedience? Conversion? The gift or baptism of the Holy Spirit? (Acts 5:32). Does God give the Holy Spirit only to those who are obedient? **“However much we are saved by faith, it’s only Christ’s righteousness credited to us that saves us from the final consequences of sin.”** (*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide* for May 3) What does this mean to you?
32. Read Acts 16:7; Galatians 5:5,6, 22-26; 1 Peter 1:2. It seems clear that at least on some occasions the early apostles were directed in their every activity by the Holy Spirit. Is such a plan possible in our day? Would you be willing to let the Holy Spirit guide in every action

of your life? How do you understand these words from Ellen G. White?

“All true obedience comes from the heart. It was heart work with Christ. And if we consent, He will so identify Himself with our thoughts and aims, so blend our hearts and minds into conformity to His will, that when obeying Him we shall be but carrying out our own impulses. The will, refined and sanctified, will find its highest delight in doing His service. When we know God as it is our privilege to know Him, our life will be a life of continual obedience. Through an appreciation of the character of Christ, through communion with God, sin will become hateful to us.” {*Desire of Ages* 668.3}

33. Where does faith come from? (Romans 10:17) Does God give each one of us an initial sample which we can later grow or let shrink? If the Holy Spirit guides us to do good works and our lives are thereby transformed, does this transformation in our lives prove that we have been saved? That we have received the baptism of the Holy Spirit? Or could good works just be a trap of legalism? How could you determine if someone was in legalism or guided by the Holy Spirit? Could you tell the difference within yourself?
34. Earlier we suggested that the Holy Spirit is the one to guide us toward conversion and transformation of character. “Through faith every deficiency of character may be supplied, every defilement cleansed, every fault corrected, every excellence developed.” {*Acts of the Apostles* 564.0} Does this imply in any way that we do not need the Holy Spirit? How can we know for sure if our efforts at change in our lives are truly led by the Holy Spirit or whether we are just performing “works”?
35. “God’s work is to be carried forward with power. **We need the baptism of the Holy Spirit.** We need to understand that God will add to the ranks of His people men of ability and influence who are to act their part in warning the world.” --Testimonies, Vol. 9, pp. 109-111. (1909) {*Ev* 66.3} If the church still needs the baptism of the Holy Spirit, does that mean that we have not received it? Or we have lost it?
36. The baptism of the Holy Spirit cannot be a one-time experience. Each time we receive it our capacity to receive it increases. The Holy Spirit will fill us to whatever capacity we will allow Him. This needs to be a daily relationship. This will lead to the transformation spoken of by Ellen White in the passages above.
37. Having studied and discussed this lesson could you clearly explain to your Sabbath school class what the baptism of the Holy Spirit means to you?

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khart@llu.edu

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