

Baptism in the Holy Spirit - Purpose

This study does not cover how to be baptised in the Holy Spirit - see the A5 leaflet Baptism in the Holy Spirit. It does cover the reasons why we should be baptised in the Spirit.

This subject is one of the most exciting and dynamic in the bible and also one that Satan desperately wants to stop people from accepting. Many people are robbed of their inheritance due to wrong beliefs. God is stronger and wiser and wants you to move into your full inheritance.

Before studying this experience we need to address an area of potential confusion, namely that there is a difference between receiving the Holy Spirit and Baptism in the Holy Spirit.

When we receive Jesus into our lives, we also receive the Holy Spirit.

After Jesus had been raised from the dead he came to his disciples and **Jn. 20:22** *he breathed on them and said, receive the Holy Spirit.* (The disciples received the Baptism at a later date)

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit is a separate experience though it can happen immediately after receiving the Lord. It is a total infilling of the Holy Spirit which enables the believer to move in the power of God. God is supernatural, and we need to move into the realm of His Spirit.

Purpose of the Baptism

There are 5 main purposes revealed by scripture for the baptism.

1. To strengthen a person spiritually

1 Cor. 14:4 *He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself* The gift of tongues builds us up. It is a spontaneous inspired utterance, led by the Holy Spirit where our normal voice is used, but the conscious mind plays no part, except the will to speak it. The language is spoken to God and it is mysterious: **1 Cor 14:2** *the person who speaks in another language is not speaking to men but to God, since no one understands him; however, he speaks mysteries in the Spirit.* The gift may also help to remove the inhibitions which keep us from praising God. We should speak in tongues as much as possible. Paul says, "I thank God that I speak in other languages more than all of you" **1 Cor 14:18**. In yielding our tongue we no longer seek to understand intellectually. We hand over control of our tongue and allow God to use it according to His own will and purpose.

It is the work of the Spirit to strengthen us in our inner being. **Eph 3:16** *I pray that He may grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power in the inner man through His Spirit.*

2. To strengthen others

1 Cor 12 gives a list of gifts of the Holy Spirit which we can receive after (or during) the Baptism. Many of these - especially the gift of prophecy - are used to guide and strengthen other people. The following gifts give us other supernatural abilities - wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, discernment of spirits and interpretation of tongues. The use of tongues and interpretation is reserved for church meetings, though some people have spoken in a tongue and it happens to be a

human language that a non believer can understand. The other gifts should be used both inside and outside of the church.

3. To guide us towards eternal life

Paul says we have received the Holy Spirit as a deposit, **Eph 1:14** *a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession.* The Holy Spirit remains with us and enables us to obtain our redemption. **Rom 8:13** *if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.*

The Baptism is a holy experience. John the Baptist said, **Matt 3:11** *"I baptise you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I ... He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.* Fire represents cleansing, when we experience the full Holiness of God there is no room for impurity. On the day of Pentecost tongues of fire rested on the believers symbolising the purity that they were to walk in.

4. To be our Counsellor

He gives us direction and helps us with our problems. **John 16:7** *But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counsellor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.* We need to make a conscious effort to make sure we are following His counsel. **Rom 8:5** *those who live according to the flesh think about the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, about the things of the Spirit.*

The Holy Spirit also helps us to pray. **Romans 8:26** *In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express.*

5. To empower us to witness

Acts 1:8 *But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.* This power gives us supernatural gifting and boldness to be able us to witness to those around us. Just before the death of Jesus, Peter denied Him 3 times. After his Baptism in the Spirit he preached boldly to a crowd of about 3000. Later he preached to another crowd that had come together because Peter healed a beggar through the power of the Spirit.

Is tongues the sign of the Baptism in the Spirit?

Holy Spirit Baptism is described in 4 places in scripture, Acts 2:1-4, Acts 9:17-19, Acts 10:44-48, Acts 19:1-7. On all 4 occasions supernatural gifts were present - speaking in tongues or prophesying. The Baptism is not just an emotional experience but a supernatural one. Tongues is likely to be the sign because:

1. Tongues is not mentioned in the bible until the Baptism of the Holy Spirit comes along.
2. Tongues is given to edify yourself. Who would not want to be edified?

Being Re-filled

Sometimes we need re-filling, perhaps after we have experienced a 'dry time' **Ephes. 5:18** *Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, **be filled with the Spirit.*** This verse tells us that we can need re-filling. There are other things besides alcohol which can fill our lives. Many types of distractions can lead us to a place where we are not flowing in the Holy Spirit: too many films, too much TV, wrong relationships, sin, etc. Receiving the Baptism in the Holy Spirit is just the start of a deep relationship with God. Like all relationships it needs to be maintained and developed.