



Foundations Leaders' Guide

Lesson 5 – Instruction about Baptisms (Part 2)

Objectives

- Continue to get to know group members
- Understand the Biblical definition and importance of baptism in the Holy Spirit
- Understand the individual believer's responsibility to seek all that God has for them

Preparation

- Establish a meeting place and time
- Pray for the members of your group, that throughout the semester they would “be filled with a knowledge of God’s will so they may live a life worthy of the Lord” (*Colossians 1.9-12*)
- Print a notes sheet for each student
- If you are co-leading, determine who will lead which parts of the meeting

Meeting Notes

1. Welcome Jesus

Matthew 18:20: “For where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am among them.”

- ✓ Lead the group in prayer by welcoming Jesus as Lord, and asking Him to teach and transform each member of the group.

2. Welcome Each Other

- ✓ Lead the group in a personal discussion about how each member is doing, how God is working in the group and lives of each member, or any other topics. It can also be helpful for the group to share a funny story or personal story relevant to the day’s lesson.

3. Receive From the Lord

3.1 Review

Spend time reviewing the content from lesson 1, including Standing in the Gap’s mission, the four chairs of discipleship, and the content from any previous lessons.

Teacher’s Note: *Because this lesson is longer than many, it may be a good idea to move quickly through review.*

Teacher’s Note: *Group members should already be familiar with this content. To help them remember and memorize it, ask questions. For example, rather than stating “The purpose of Standing in the Gap is to be and make disciples of Jesus Christ,” ask “What is the purpose of Standing in the Gap?”*

3.2 Instruction about Baptisms (Part 2)

The third foundational teaching about Christ, instruction about baptisms, naturally follows repentance and faith. An important note is that in *Hebrews 11:2*, the word **baptisms** is plural, indicating more than one baptism. This week, we will study **baptism in the Holy Spirit**.

- ? Have you ever heard of the baptism of the Holy Spirit? If so, what has been your experience with it?

As a disclaimer, this topic is the source of many disagreements in the Church. Our goal as Christians should never be to cause division, but to work toward unity while earnestly seeking all of what God has in store for His people.

📖 *Ephesians 4:3-6*

This passage calls us to **make every effort** to keep unity in the Spirit. In addition, Paul’s statement in this passage that there is “one Lord, one faith, one baptism” is commonly used as an argument against the existence of a separate baptism of the Holy Spirit. However, this passage does not seem to be trying to teach a doctrine about baptism. Rather, Paul is expressing the importance of unity, and calling Christians to remember that, despite our differences, we all serve the same Lord and have experienced the same baptism into the body of Christ.

Baptism in water is an experience that is very important to our personal walk with the Lord. Baptism in the Holy Spirit serves a different purpose: to **equip us with power** to minister to others. This can be clearly seen in the experience of Jesus' disciples:

📖 *Luke 24.46-49*

📖 *Acts 1.1-5*

Both of these passages likely refer to the same event. The resurrected Jesus appears to His disciples and commands them to wait for the baptism in the Holy Spirit. In *Luke 24.49*, he states that the disciples will be "**clothed with power from on high.**" The story continues on the day of **Pentecost**, 50 days after Jesus' resurrection:

📖 *Acts 2.1-21, 36-47*

? What does this passage show us about the kind of power God chose to give the disciples? Do you think this is what they expected from Jesus?

Scripture shows a difference between the **indwelling** of the Holy Spirit (the Holy Spirit living inside every believer) and the **baptism** of the Holy Spirit. The disciples had already "received" the Holy Spirit from Jesus on the day of his resurrection. Paul writes that the Spirit of God **lives in** anyone who has been saved and belongs to Christ, helping her/him to live like Christ.

📖 *Optional reading: John 20.19-22*

📖 *Optional reading: Romans 8.9-11*

However, baptism has a separate meaning. You may remember from our previous study that the word "baptize" comes directly from the Greek word "baptizo" (bap-tee-zoh), which means **to immerse, submerge, or dip** something in a liquid. This meaning is consistent through the New Testament and other historical sources. One notable source of the meaning of "baptizo" comes from a pickle recipe by Nicander, a Greek poet and physician who lived around 200 B.C. Nicander writes that, to become a pickle, a cucumber must be **baptized** in vinegar. In this recipe, we see that baptism involves both **total immersion** – the entire cucumber must be submerged – and **permanent transformation** – once the cucumber has become a pickle, there's no turning back! Therefore, to be baptized in the Holy Spirit is to be **totally immersed** in and **permanently transformed** by the Holy Spirit for ministry here on earth.

Baptism in water and baptism in the Holy Spirit are two separate, distinct events:

📖 *Luke 3.16*

📖 *Optional reading: John 1.29-34*

We also see this throughout the book of Acts, and also see that the baptism of the Holy Spirit was **not just for the original apostles**, but for all believers:

📖 *Acts 8.9-25*

📖 *Acts 10.34-48*

📖 *Acts 19.1-7*

? What do these passages speak to you about the baptism of the Holy Spirit?


In all 4 of the passages involving the baptism of the Holy Spirit, there is an **immediate and outward manifestation** that results from the baptism. *Acts 8* is not clear on the details of this manifestation, though something certainly captured the attention of Simon the Sorcerer! In *Acts 2*, *Acts 10*, and *Acts 19*, the outward manifestation of baptism in the Holy Spirit was some kind of **supernatural speech**. Though prophecy and extolling

God are also mentioned, **speaking in tongues** (this phrase literally means “speaking in other languages”) is the only recorded manifestation common to all 3 passages.

Speaking in tongues is a confusing topic, and has been a source of controversy throughout the history of the Church. Even if it is unfamiliar or uncomfortable for us, since it is so connected to the baptism of the Holy Spirit, we should seek understanding on the topic of tongues to be sure we are pursuing all that God has for his Church!


? What has been your experience, if any, with speaking in tongues or hearing others speak in tongues?


In *1 Corinthians*, Paul devotes chapters 12-14 to correcting the Corinthian church’s misunderstanding of spiritual gifts. In chapter 14, he specifically focuses on correcting their use of the gift of tongues:

 *1 Corinthians 14.1-28*


In this case, speaking in tongues, along with **interpreting** the unknown languages, is for the purpose of edifying (building up and strengthening) the church in a group setting. This is consistent with the purpose of other **spiritual gifts**, like administration or teaching, that are mentioned throughout the New Testament. Paul writes that though he desires for everyone to speak in tongues, he desires more that everyone would prophesy (speak a message from God), since it is the most edifying to the church.

Paul also indicates that speaking in tongues is not exclusively for use in a group setting:

 *Optional reading: 1 Corinthians 14.18-19*

 *Optional reading: 1 Corinthians 14.27-28*

The statement “but in the church...” in verse 19 indicates that though in the church he would rather speak in an understood language, his behavior outside the church still involves speaking or praying in tongues. If this is the case, speaking in tongues outside the church setting must be for a different purpose than building up the church. If there is no interpreter, he writes in verse 28 that the one speaking in tongues should be quiet in the church but **still speak to himself and God**. Although this doesn’t edify the church, it still serves a purpose:

 *Optional reading: 1 Corinthians 14.4*

From our study, we can see that the gift of tongues can serve three distinct purposes:

	Description	Purpose
1	Supernaturally speaking other earthly languages that are unknown to the speaker but understood by others	To communicate the good news of Jesus Christ to others
2	Supernaturally speaking an unknown language in the church , which must be interpreted and done in an orderly fashion	To edify the body of Christ
3	Supernaturally speaking an unknown language to God in private prayer	To edify the individual speaking

Paul’s writing in *1 Corinthians 14* agrees with the events in *Acts*, which indicate that everyone who is baptized in the Holy Spirit receives the ability to speak in tongues. In both of these verses, Paul seems to indicate that it is possible, and perhaps even regular, for everyone in the church to speak in tongues:

📖 *Optional reading: 1 Corinthians 14.5*

📖 *Optional reading: 1 Corinthians 14.23*

Speaking in tongues is just one of many **spiritual gifts**. Like the gift of tongues, the purpose of other spiritual gifts is to **edify the body of Christ**. The meaning of Greek word for gift, “**charisma**,” shows us that we receive the manifestation of the Holy Spirit not as a natural talent or learned skill, but as a supernatural gift. Through God’s grace, we are equipped to work for the good of his kingdom. And as we are faithful to use the gifts we have been given, we will grow in our gifts and be entrusted with more. We explore spiritual gifts in-depth in the small group *Network*.

Jesus gives us instructions on how to receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit:

📖 *Luke 11.9-13*

? What do you think it means, in practical terms, to ask, seek, and knock for the Holy Spirit?

In the original Greek writing, the verbs **ask**, **seek**, and **knock** are written in the present imperfect tense, meaning they are actions that do not have a definite beginning or end. This means that Jesus essentially calls us to **go on asking**, **go on seeking**, and **go on knocking** - even if the process is uncomfortable!

Several of the believers in *Acts* also received the baptism of the Holy Spirit through the **laying on of hands**, which we will study in the next session.

To conclude, God uses baptism in the Holy Spirit to equip us with his power so we can better seek his kingdom on earth. Though the Holy Spirit indwells all believers from the moment they are saved, baptism in the Holy Spirit is a separate event. Jesus calls us to ask, seek, and knock for the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

? Have you received the baptism of the Holy Spirit?

? How are you using the gifts you have been given?

? How can you pursue the “greater gifts” to edify the body of Christ?

4. Offer Response to the Lord

- ✓ Lead the group in prayer by thanking the Lord for his presence, and asking his to continue to teach and transform the group through the power of the Holy Spirit.

FAQs

Is baptism in the Holy Spirit necessary for salvation?

No. The Bible never teaches this. Though any serious Christian should be willing to seek all God offers (*Luke 11.9-13, 1 Corinthians 14.1*), we are saved only by faith through God's grace. In *Romans 10.9-10*, Paul writes that to be saved, we must "confess with our mouth 'Jesus is Lord' and believe in our hearts that God raised Him from the dead."

What is the difference between the indwelling and baptism of the Holy Spirit?

We know from *Acts 1.1-9* that Jesus had already been taken up to heaven before the events in *Acts 2*. Therefore, we can see that the conversation in *John 20.19-22*, which happened on the day of Jesus' resurrection, must have been separate from the events on **Pentecost**, which was 50 days after the resurrection.

How do I know if I have been baptized in the Holy Spirit?

The testimony of many Christians is that the event is mysterious and not the same for everyone. Some are not sure if they have actually experienced the baptism of the Holy Spirit. It should be noted, though, that we are called to continuously **ask, seek, and knock**, and not to focus too much on one event. If you have had a definitely experience of the Holy Spirit's power, keep asking and seeking for more. If you have not, keep asking and seeking.

Does God take control of people's bodies when they speak in tongues?

Throughout *1 Corinthians 14*, Paul also shows that the individual speaking in tongues has full control over his or her actions. **God** gives us the ability to use this gift, **but does not move our mouths for us**. The supernatural part is what is being spoken, not the physical action.