

Second Requirement for Spiritual Progress-the Holy Spirit

by Zac Poonen

To live a victorious Christian life and serve God effectively, we need to be filled with the Holy Spirit daily.

Scripture: Acts 2:38, Galatians 5:22, Ephesians 5:18

Topics: "Spiritual Empowerment", "Holy Spirit"

Description

Zac Poonen emphasizes the necessity of being filled with the Holy Spirit for living a victorious Christian life and effectively serving God. He points out that forgiveness of sins and the Holy Spirit are immediate gifts available to all who repent and believe, contrasting this with the modern tendency to delay receiving the Holy Spirit. Poonen stresses that no extra qualifications are needed beyond repentance and faith, and that the fullness of the Holy Spirit brings the fruit of the Spirit and equips believers for ministry. He highlights the importance of daily filling with the Holy Spirit, as it is essential for living according to God's will and fulfilling one's unique ministry. Ultimately, Poonen calls for a deep thirst for the gifts of the Spirit, warning that a church lacking these gifts is ineffective.

Transcript

It is impossible to live a victorious Christian life or to serve God effectively, if we are not filled with the Holy Spirit. Forgiveness of sins and the Holy Spirit are the two gifts that God offers to all repentant sinners AS SOON AS they turn to Him.

There is no need for anyone who turns to the Lord and receives forgiveness of sins to wait for even a single day before he receives the Holy Spirit. That is how it was in the early days of Christianity. In those days, as soon as people repented and believed, they were baptized in water and then received the Holy Spirit at once. That was part of their initial experience. But nowadays, we find believers waiting for years before being baptized in water and then waiting for many more years before receiving the Holy Spirit.

What every believer needs to know is that there is no need for any extra qualification in order to receive the Holy Spirit, other than what is required for the forgiveness of sins - namely, repentance from sin and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is due to ignorance of this fact that many, many believers are not baptized in the Holy Spirit. If only they knew the truth, they would not be deceived by Satan any longer.

To try to be worthy enough to receive the Holy Spirit is as foolish as trying to be worthy enough to receive the forgiveness of sins. The fullness of the Holy Spirit will primarily bring the fullness of the fruit of the Spirit in our lives - fullness of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control (Gal.5:23). Secondly, it will equip us to be powerful witnesses for Christ and effective members of His earthly Body. The anointing of the Holy Spirit is the prime requisite for being an effective member of Christ's Body. Without this, however holy our lives may be, we will be limited in our usefulness to God for His work on earth.

Although Jesus lived a pure and holy life for 30 years, He still needed to be anointed with the Holy Spirit, before He could have the supernatural gifts necessary for Him to fulfil His ministry. God wants to equip us in the same way today, so that we can carry on that ministry, as the Body of Christ on earth. Those who either despise or don't believe in these supernatural gifts will of course not have them. Thus their service for the Lord will also be limited.

We need to be filled with the Holy Spirit DAILY, for this is not a once-for-all experience that takes care of our need forever. "Be (being) filled with the Spirit" (Eph.5:18 - Literal). It is impossible to live the Christian life, as God wants us to, if we are not continually filled with the Holy Spirit. It is impossible to serve God as we should without being anointed with the Spirit and receiving His supernatural gifts. Jesus Himself needed to be anointed. The Holy Spirit has come to make us like Jesus in our personal lives as well as in our ministry (See 2 Cor.3:18).

God fills us with the Spirit in order to conform us to the likeness of Christ in our character, and to equip us to serve as Jesus served. We do not have the same ministry that Jesus had, and so we won't be able to do what Jesus did in His ministry. But we can be as fully equipped to serve God as Jesus Himself was - to fulfil OUR OWN ministry. All that is required is an adequate thirst and faith, on our part, for rivers of living water to flow out through us (Jn.7:37-39). We must earnestly long for the gifts of the Spirit if we are to have them (1 Cor.14:1). Otherwise we will never have them. A church without the gifts of the Holy Spirit is like a man who may be living but who is deaf, blind, mute and lame - and therefore useless.

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