

Characteristics of Spirit-Baptized Christians

Evangelistic zeal. Being full of the Holy Spirit and winning the lost go hand in hand. Pentecostals read the book of Acts and believe that the gifts of the Holy Spirit are available for them today. They observe that the early church was focused on evangelism and believe they must behave and respond in the same way. Evangelism is their primary goal. Because of this focus, Pentecostal missions programs have dynamically entered unconverted areas of the world, often at great risk, believing God would enable them to reach these areas for Christ.

Reliance on the Holy Spirit. Those who have been baptized in the Spirit have a unique experience with the Holy Spirit and rely on the Spirit's power and person. When the early church depended on the Holy Spirit to lead them in all they did and to give them the charismatic gifts necessary for the job, they believed they would receive all the power they needed. When you have received the baptism in the Holy Spirit, you will have a similar dependency. You will assume that the Holy Spirit will help you in the same way He did the early church.

A unique power given by the Holy Spirit. Those who have received the baptism in the Holy Spirit believe a unique (not natural) dynamic power will be available to them as they do the will of God. In his book *Azusa Street and Beyond*, Grant McClung Jr. writes: "For Pentecostals, every healing, miracle, spiritual manifestation, is a witness and testimony to the power of God."

Lay leadership. God greatly uses people who are not "professional clergy." The ability to be used by God is for everyone, not just for those who are professionals.

Worldwide, the Pentecostal-charismatic church is growing

largely because laypeople realize the gifts of the Holy Spirit are available to them. This realization enables them to take their personal experience with the Lord to their friends, family members and acquaintances. They pray for and witness to others and ask God to perform healings and deliverances just as their pastors do. They depend on the Holy Spirit to lead them in their relationships, neighborhoods and workplaces.

Countless situations can be described in which "Spirit-baptized" congregation members have demonstrated gifts that many believe are available only to the clergy. Just as God used seven laymen in the early church, he will use laymen and laywomen today (see Acts 6:1-6).

A sense that Jesus Christ is actively involved in one's life. Those who have been baptized in the Spirit quite literally believe that Jesus will go with them to the ends of the earth. They anticipate that this power and authority will be available to them as they remain in right relationship with Him, live the Christian life and witness to people who come across their paths. This understanding has greatly encouraged the typical Spirit-filled Christian to believe that Jesus will give him or her the gifts of the Holy Spirit just as He gave these gifts to the early church.

When we read about the experiences of those in the early church, we become hungry to be used by God in the same way. People came to Christ from all walks of life. God powerfully used this small group of believers to break through the powers of darkness with signs and wonders. People were healed, delivered and wonderfully transformed as the gospel spread throughout the land.

You can be used in the same way. All around you are desperate, hurting and confused people. Your Christian witness and life of faith demonstrated by the power of the Holy Spirit could be the very things that cause others to want what you have.

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