

The Critical Truth Many Christians Miss About the Baptism of the Holy Spirit

It was asked of one brother that travels among the house churches in the Chinese Church and speaks with the underground leaders, "How do the Chinese choose the leaders?" The answer was simple; the brother responded: "Whoever is the hungriest after God, they are the leaders." Such a need is present in our time for more leaders who are hungry for the Lord and baptized in His Holy Spirit.

There is a vast difference between one who seeks the baptism of the Spirit simply for power and one who seeks to know the Lord intimately and desires to be His vessel, fully surrendered. One seeks God for what he can get; the other seeks Him for what he can give. There is a crying need to see believers seeking God for God Himself and nothing else. Jesus Christ spoke of these whom God the Father seeks who will worship Him in Spirit and truth. One who worships God only out of obligation and reward is not a true worshipper. God is making a separation in the end times between those who are serving Him for their own selfish desires and those who have the true bridal love for Jesus Christ. This Bride will be endued with power from on high, having her vessels full of oil when the Bridegroom comes.

One of the greatest reasons God hesitates to pour out His Spirit on His church is that we will not cherish the blessing. When someone has gone without food for many days, a simple piece of bread is enjoyed immensely and cherished. In the same way, God requires us to have a hunger for the things of God and to pray and wait on Him. Such waiting and hungering after God produces in us a respect and value for the gift He is giving. The Holy Spirit is given by the grace of God, it is

not earned by righteous deeds. Yet, God does require an obedient heart which desires God's will and not its own. Some are just looking to get the power of the Spirit for their own purposes, their own kingdoms, their own ministries.

Christianity was birthed in the baptism of the Holy Spirit and will only continue as we have this empowering from above. When we look at church history, the only truly significant stories of men that influenced and built the kingdom of God were men who were filled with the Holy Spirit. This anointing is something that not only signifies leadership in the church but also usability before God for His work. Christianity in this way is quite simple; it is a work of the Spirit of God. This simplicity can offend men, but God clearly states in 1 Corinthians 1:27-28 that He uses the weak, the unwise, the unlearned and the despised of this world.

Sadly, even the weak soon learn how to be strong, how to rely on their own experiences, successes and victories. It becomes a dangerous practice of taking glory away from God for accomplishments we believe we have achieved. We then deny the proper recognition and glory which belongs to God alone because it is His work. God will only entrust His work with those He knows will give Him 100 percent of the glory for what is done and take no glory to themselves.

In the same way many denominations, churches and ministries start off as a vibrant move of the Spirit of God but then turn into methods, traditions and formulas. Such groups then depend on their history, on the last move of God, on structures, buildings and all other things rather than a fresh dependence on God daily for their purpose and growth. God is always looking for the willing vessels that will trust Him afresh for the impossible, for in such cases He gets the glory, and the individual being used simply gives the glory to this God of the impossible. Every true move of the Holy Spirit primarily elevates and glorifies the person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

So may we be renewed in our hunger and desire to wait before the Lord for this precious infilling of the Spirit of Christ. The true baptism of the Spirit is given through personal abiding relationship with God. It is not something apart from this. We need to be like a child before a Father and have that simple dependence and faith. God is always more willing to bless us than we can imagine. The qualifying evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit is a life of unselfish love and exaltation of the person of Jesus Christ. {eoa}

Hear a powerful free message on given by the late Leonard Ravenhill on the baptism of the Holy Spirit titled, "Are We Willing to Drink His Cup?"

Greg Gordon *is founder of .*