

What Holds People Back From Being Filled With the Holy Spirit

Why is it that some believers ask, but never receive? I believe the answer is twofold.

First, they may need to break through many years of false teaching and tradition that has cluttered their minds. Second, they may not be putting action to their faith by speaking forth in tongues. They may be waiting for a special feeling. But the feeling may or may not come until first there is an act of faith.

Counterfeits

I must confess, I've seen some wild things over the years. I was in one meeting where there was an invitation for believers to receive the baptism with the Holy Spirit.

Probably a hundred people came forward for prayer. I overheard one of the ministers saying to a young lady, "Now, repeat after me. 'Shun-Dah-Mah-Kie-Ah. Shun-Dah-Mah-Kie-Ah.'" He apparently wanted her to repeat his "tongues" so he could report that she had received the baptism with the Holy Spirit. It is no wonder some people are afraid of Pentecostals.

I have heard of others telling people to make up some words to, "prime the pump." So we find people saying, "She-came-on-a-Honda," over and over again, or, "See-ah-my-tie," or, "Taca-Taca-Taco-Bell." Give me a break. God will not bless this kind of carnality. You want the "real thing," not the counterfeit.

My Simple Instructions

Let me give you an overview of the instructions I give people

when leading them into receiving this miraculous gift.

1. I lay the scriptural groundwork.

1. The Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20). Jesus told His disciples to teach their converts “observe all things I have commanded you.” In Luke 24, during his final message, Jesus commanded the disciples to “Wait in the city of Jerusalem until you are clothed with power from on high.” Acts 1: 4, 5, and 8 verify the fact that Jesus was talking about the baptism with the Holy Spirit. Mark 16:17b tells that one of the signs for believers would be that, “they shall speak with new tongues.” Taken with the other related Scriptures, we know He is referring to the enduement of power; the baptism with the Holy Spirit.
2. I quickly bring them through the book of Acts to show them what happened when the first-century believers received the infilling with the Holy Spirit. They spoke with tongues (Acts 2:4, 10:44-46, 19:6). To prepare for opposition from those who say that the speaking in tongues is not mentioned in two other accounts, I explain that in Paul’s account of being filled with the Holy Spirit, it doesn’t mention that he spoke in tongues. By reading 1 Corinthians 14:8, we know he did, because he said, “I thank my God that I speak in tongues more than you all” (1 Cor. 14:8) The other case was in Acts 8 when the revival broke out in Samaria. It doesn’t say they spoke with tongues, but it doesn’t say they didn’t, either. Simon the sorcerer saw something when believers were filled with the Holy Spirit, and he wanted to buy that power. What did he see? Well, if we are going to be true to the scriptural and historical pattern, it had to be that he saw something supernatural happening. It obviously was the initial gift of tongues that Simon saw.
3. I try to point out that praying “in the Spirit” or “with

the Spirit" is defined by St. Paul, as praying mysteries, without our understanding; or in other words, tongues. When you read the terms "praying in (or with) the Holy Ghost," in other parts of the New Testament, it is referring to praying in tongues (languages you have never learned). See 1 Corinthians 14:2, 15 which defines "speaking in the Spirit," (Eph. 5:18-19; Jude 20).

2. After I have walked the candidates through the New Testament, I try to clear up some of their fears.

1. I assure them that they won't get a demon by seeking God for this (Luke 11:9-13).
2. I assure them that they won't curse Jesus while speaking in tongues (1 Cor. 12:3).

3. I give them the prerequisites for receiving.

1. Must turn from the lifestyle of sin and place your trust in Jesus Christ. You must be born again (John 3:3-7).
2. You must desire to be filled with the Holy Spirit, because you desire to obey God, serve God and worship God in a satisfying way (John 4:21-24; Matthew 28:20; Mark 11:24; Luke 24:49).

4. Then, I will sometimes explain and refute the false concepts concerning the baptism with the Holy Spirit..

1. "It happens at the point of salvation." I show them that it never—not once—happened that way in the Bible.
2. "The Holy Ghost will take you over, and it will be uncontrollable." This is nonsense. God will not violate your will. That's why Paul said, "I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with my understanding." It is an act of the human will; not something uncontrollable that will put you in a trance or dominate all your motor functions.
3. "Sometimes you need to tarry a long time." Typically this is an excuse used by the person who never puts

action to his faith. Yes, the disciples had to “tarry” until the day of Pentecost, but after that we have no biblical record that believers had to just tarry, waiting around for the event to happen. It’s true before you begin to launch your ministry, you should wait until you receive the baptism with the Holy Spirit, but you can receive the experience right this minute if you put action to your faith.

4. “You’ll see the words in your mind that God wants you to speak.” No, this is not correct. The baptism with the Holy Spirit is a spiritual experience, not a mental experience. One of the great purposes of speaking in tongues is to put your mind where it belongs – in second place to your spirit.
5. “The Holy Ghost will speak through you.” This is another one of those erroneous ideas that keeps a lot of people from receiving. They are waiting for a voice to speak through them, but it won’t happen.

The Holy Spirit doesn’t speak in tongues. He gives the utterance, but you are the one that speaks. “The Holy Ghost came on them; and *they* spake with tongues and prophesied,” (Acts 19:5). Who spoke in tongues? *They* did. It was not the Holy Ghost. Paul wrote, “I thank my God, *I speak* with tongues...” (1 Cor. 14:18). Who spoke in tongues? Paul did. Again, it was not the Holy Ghost.

5. Next, I warn the candidates for the baptism with the Holy Spirit of the devil’s strategies to discourage them.

1. When you begin to speak in tongues, the devil will likely say, “That’s just you speaking!” Well, he’s partially right. It is you speaking, but it’s the Holy Spirit giving you the utterance. So, in essence, it’s not “just you” speaking. That’s why Paul talked about praying with the Spirit. Again, you do the natural, and the Holy Spirit will do the “super,” and together it’s a supernatural transaction.

2. The devil will probably tell you that you are, “making it all up,” when you begin to speak in supernatural tongues. It’s his ploy to get you to stop. Don’t stop. Keep praying in those strange sounding tongues, and you will find a fresh anointing of power come over your life.
3. The devil will probably bring to your mind some of the erroneous teachings you’ve heard over the years, hoping to destroy your faith. He may suggest, “You are really messing up. This was for the apostles only. You have no promise from God for this. Stop now before judgment falls on you.” What? No promise? We have more than a promise, we also have a command to be filled. Jesus told his disciples to receive this miraculous baptism with the Holy Spirit, and Peter assured us that the promise was for us, our children and those who are afar off (Acts 2:38).

6. I tell the believers wanting to be filled that God has already given the gift of the Holy Spirit.

He has made this wonderful baptism available to us now. You don’t have to beg. Just shout for joy and begin praising God in a language you’ve never learned.

7. At this juncture, I usually tell people that sometimes it is helpful to groan in the Spirit first (Rom. 8:26).

After groaning, then begin moving your lips and tongue, trusting the Holy Spirit to give you the prompting. I tell them not to wait for a special feeling. That may come or it may not come, it doesn’t matter either way because this is a faith event, not merely an emotional occasion.

8. I tell everyone who has asked to receive the baptism with the Holy Spirit to begin worshipping and focusing on Jesus.

Sometimes I’ll have soft worship music playing in the background, but it is not necessary. I instruct them to focus

on Jesus, for He is the baptizer with the Holy Spirit.

9. I tell them that the moment I lay my hands on them, the Holy Spirit will give them the utterance to speak in tongues.

I instruct them to cease all native language praises (in other words for most Americans, this would mean to speak no more words in English for the time being), and immediately begin to praise God in tongues. I am honest and tell them it will sound foolish, but to do it anyway. Once again, I go over the benefits of this experience with them, reminding them that our spirit needs to ascend above our minds. Since the word "spirit" in the Greek language is the same as "air" or "breath," I sometimes will instruct the candidates to take a deep breath when they feel my hands touch them, then begin to praise in other languages.

10. Now it is time to receive.

As the worshippers are praising the Lord, focusing on Jesus Christ, I will slowly walk through the crowd and, one by one, lay my hands on them and say, "Receive the infilling of the Holy Spirit." Nothing happened to me when I was 12 years old in that Lutheran confirmation ceremony when the pastor said those words, but today is a different day. Nearly 100 percent of those who come to us for this baptism in power, receive what they came for within just a few minutes.

You don't need someone to lay hands on you to receive this blessing. The laying on of hands, however, may assist you by giving you a specific point to release your faith. Perhaps you are a believer who just wants the ability to worship God in a deeper dimension. Jesus said these words to a little woman two thousand years ago:

Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. Yet the hour

is coming, and is now here, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth. For the Father seeks such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and truth."

Why wait? You can receive in your home or your back yard. You can receive this wonderful gift at a Bible study group, or even in your garage or pole barn.

Or for further study you can check out my book *Filled*.