

# Hope for Spiritual Awakening

There are clear warnings in Scripture about interfering with the work of the Holy Spirit. In 1 Thessalonians 5:19 we read, "Do not quench the Spirit." I like the Living Bible's version of the same verse: "Do not smother the Spirit's fire." The Greek word translated *quench* means "to extinguish a flame" and to "stifle or suppress."

The church in North America for the most part has quenched the Holy Spirit with some notable exceptions. When an unusual movement of God breaks out, some rejoice—but most investigate and criticize.

When our Lord Jesus Christ opened His ministry in Nazareth, His hometown, He announced the yoke-breaking anointing of the Holy Spirit. (See Luke 6:16-30; Isaiah 61:1-2). The people of Nazareth rejected Jesus' anointed message and sought to push Him off a cliff! When you examine the passage in Luke, you discover Jesus announced the work of the Holy Spirit and the end of racial division. He infuriated His old friends by pointing to Elijah's ministry to a Gentile woman in Zarephath and Elisha's miracle for Naaman the Syrian. They were outraged and offended, so they slandered Him, calling Jesus "Joseph's son" (Luke 4:22). They knew the story of Mary's angelic visit and Jesus' virgin birth. The facts are, they hated the supernatural, and they were closed to outsiders.

The rebirth of Pentecostalism and speaking in tongues began in an interracial group. Consequently there were and are elements of racism, denominational pride and cultural separatism that feed the opponents of the movement. Today, speaking in tongues has moved across the tracks and now is on Main Street!

This is hard for those who view church as a nice group of middle-class and upper-middle-class white people. When the Holy Spirit comes, all the walls must come down. Furthermore,

the Holy Spirit will not be harnessed or housebroken by anyone. The Spirit who hovered over the waters at creation was the same Spirit who released the birth of the church.

The church was born as the outpost of another world—with values, miracle-working powers and its own language! John's announcement was a baptism with the Holy Spirit and fire (Luke 3:16). On the Day of Pentecost, wind, fire and speaking in tongues heralded the arrival of God's fresh presence on Earth.

The Holy Spirit can be grieved, lied to and blasphemed, but He will not be ignored. Furthermore, the Holy Spirit will upset all human order. Adam's dead flesh cannot stand the presence of the Holy Spirit. Satan fears, mocks, intimidates and finally imitates the Holy Spirit.

A move of the Spirit of God according to the Word of God is Satan's greatest fear. The great denominations are appointing committees about church resurgence, but no human plan can replace the power of the Holy Spirit. Paul's ministry was marked by a "demonstration of the Spirit and of power" (1 Cor. 2:4). Read this admonition Paul gave in Galatians 3:1-5 (NIV): "You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? Before your very eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed as crucified. I would like to learn just one thing from you: Did you receive the Spirit by observing the law, or by believing what you heard? Are you so foolish? After beginning with the Spirit, are you now trying to attain your goal by human effort? Have you suffered so much for nothing—if it really was for nothing? Does God give you his Spirit and work miracles among you because you observe the law, or because you believe what you heard?"

Look at that word *bewitched*. Paul here gives a dire warning to the Galatian assembly that a retreat from the supernatural gifts of God back to dead religion was tantamount to witchcraft!

Like Samson, the church has been shorn of its power and now staggers blindly from program to program hoping for a reversal of the grave they are slowly sling into! Where are the leaders who will cry out to God as Gideon did in Judges 6:13?

If the leaders will not rise up and pray, what are we to do? Will we endure dead religion, faith without power or a work-based philosophy to give our lives meaning? No! We must seek after God's full anointing and presence, lest we be "delivered into the hands" of our old, dead existence.

What is necessary to receive the gift of tongues? Jesus gave us the one clear, simple requirement (see John 7:37-39). Here is a promise that changes your life from a stagnant mud puddle to rivers of clear, fresh, flowing waters!

The condition is simple, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink" (v. 37). Simple, is it not? Jesus says, "Thirsty? Come and drink!" One of those "rivers" could be a prayer language. Will you answer the call?

*Adapted from An Essential Guide to Speaking in Tongues by Ron Phillips, copyright 2011 by Ron Phillips, published by Charisma House. As a Spirit-filled Southern Baptist pastor, Phillips brings a welcome balance to this topic, helping you understand that this is a blessing from God that gives you the ability to boldly approach God's throne with the Holy Spirit's language. To order a copy [click here](#).*



## **PRAYER POWER FOR THE WEEK OF 9/10/2012**

This week pray for our church leaders to cry out to God for His presence, anointing and revival. Continue to pray for the elections and ask the Lord to show you what is true and what is not. Ask Him to guide you in the process and pray protection for those running for office. Remember their families and others involved in the campaigns. Continue to

pray for Israel and those persecuted for righteousness at home and abroad. Pray for the military and their families and ask that they return home soon. Remember those suffering losses of income, homes, and loved ones in the recent storms. Call America back to righteous roots and pray for unity in prayer and purpose among believers. Gal. 3:1-5; 1 Cor. 2:4-5; 2 Chron. 7:14

*To enrich your prayer life and learn how to strategically pray with power by using appropriate Scriptures, we recommend the following sources by Apostle John Eckhardt: Prayers that Rout Demons, Prayers that Bring Healing, Prayers that Release Heaven on Earth and Prayers that Break Curses. To order any or all of these [click here](#).*