

Tap Into God's Power

Ordinary believers should see God's power demonstrated regularly in their lives. Here's how to make sure you do.

☒ Once when my children, Daniel and Madison, were small, our family visited Los Angeles. Both the kids were acting their age, poking each other in the back seat of our rental car and making accusations such as "Mom, he looked at me!" and "Mom, she breathed on me!"

I pulled into a service station to fill the car with gas before returning it to the car rental agency. As I did, a young man approached—he was wearing a bandana, had a bucket in his hand and started washing my front window. My first reaction was not very spiritual. I was about to tell him to go away when the Holy Spirit intervened.

Praying that Daniel and Madison would behave, I leaped out of the car and approached the disheveled window washer. "Excuse me, but God told me that you have just gotten out of jail," I explained. "When you were a young boy, you were called of God to preach the gospel and you have been running from the call. You need to go back home and preach the gospel!"

Instantly, the window washer dropped his bucket and rag, turned and started to flee. I figured he thought I was a lunatic. But because I knew the message had been from God, I yelled after him, "Wait a minute, where are you going?"

He turned back and said: "Lady, you are right, I just got out of prison. I was called of God to preach in my grandfather's church and I have been running from God for years. I am going back home to tell everyone what happened, and I am going to preach the gospel."

What happened at the gas station that day is called prophetic evangelism—one means through which God's ordinary people

express the supernatural in their lives.

Many Christians see very little, if any, of God's supernatural power. Others see it manifest regularly in their lives. What sets apart those who see the power from those who do not?

Though God works in different ways through different people, most often people who live supernatural lives have had what can be called an Acts 1:8 experience with the Holy Spirit. They become empowered to do kingdom work by inviting Him to come and fill them.

The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Godhead (God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit). He is in charge of the supernatural here in the earthly realm. All a believer has to do is ask, and He will come.

After the disciples believed in Christ and were born again, the Lord told them He was going to send them the Holy Spirit. The experience they all had in the upper room—which some call “being baptized in the Holy Spirit” and others call “receiving the fullness of the Holy Spirit”—completely changed their lives.

Jesus prophesied to them ahead of time that they would be empowered by the experience: “’But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of earth’” (Acts 1:8, NKJV, emphasis added).

Changed by the Power

It takes an encounter with the Holy Spirit to receive the power to do what God wants a believer to accomplish in his life. I had this kind of experience in 1972, while I was in college.

I had become depressed because of some circumstances in my life, and I was beginning to have trouble at school. My hands

sometimes shook so much that it was difficult for me to play the piano. Each day I would force myself to sit down to practice, but I had to work to steady my hands on the keyboard. You can imagine the seriousness of this situation as I was earning a degree in music education.

One day a friend gave me a book that described the Holy Spirit.

I knew that the Holy Spirit was God, but I was not intimately acquainted with Him. I had heard about what I thought were weird practices, such as speaking in tongues, laying hands on the sick and falling on the floor. But I had met only one or two people who claimed that they actually spoke in tongues.

The book explained that it was important to invite the Holy Spirit to take complete control in your life, and it described speaking in tongues. I was somewhat afraid because I had heard many bizarre stories about people who rolled on the floor and acted strange after being filled with the Spirit.

But I decided to study further. So I read the book of Acts. When I did, Acts 1:8, the verse I quoted previously about receiving power, leaped off the page.

Finally I believed I was as ready as I would ever be to have a serious talk with God about the Holy Spirit. Though I had many questions, I was particularly concerned about speaking in tongues.

At last, my desperation overrode my fears. Sitting cross-legged on the floor, I started to pray: "Dear God, there isn't any gift You have for me that I don't want. So, if You want to give me more of the power of the Holy Spirit and the gift of tongues, I want to receive them."

For a few moments, nothing happened—then all of a sudden it was as if God opened up heaven and poured peace into every part of me. I had never seen anyone lift his hands in the air

to worship God; nonetheless, I lifted mine.

I basked in the peace for as long as I could, but after a while I had to get ready for school. As soon as I stepped into the shower, I started to sing—only it wasn't like any singing I had ever done, and it wasn't in English!

Wow, I thought, this is amazing! I had never sung so beautifully.

In fact, the sounds coming out of my mouth were more heavenly than anything I could have made with my own earthly style—with or without voice lessons! I sang all the verses of "Are You Washed in the Blood?" in a language that sounded like German.

Next I sang "The Old Rugged Cross." I was having a wonderful time! When I finished the second song, I wondered, Can I sing all those verses again in the same way?

By that point I was singing in a different language. It sounded like French. Though I did not know all the languages, I am sure that, as I continued, I sang not only in German and French, but in other languages as well.

The peace of God continued to wash over my soul. The depression lifted, and joy took its place.

Other changes became evident as well. First, the Scriptures came alive. There was so much in the Bible that I had read but never understood in my 15 years as a Christian. (I accepted the Lord into my life at 5 and was 20 at the time of this experience.) But after my experience I began to gain insight into what I was reading.

Second, I became bolder in witnessing. I indeed received power to witness when the Holy Spirit came upon me.

Finally, I began to walk in the supernatural in a way I never had before. For example, I had words of knowledge about people that could have come only from God.

In the beginning, I wasn't sure how to cooperate with what had occurred in my life when I invited the Holy Spirit in with all His fullness. One thing I was certain of, however, was that I was radically changed.

And I was pleased to discover that becoming supernaturally natural doesn't make you weird, as I had thought it would. On the contrary! Rather than acting as if you are from the moon, you walk around with the power of the Holy Spirit and do what comes naturally, only from the perspective of the heavenly realm. When you flow in this manner, even unbelievers will be awed by the amazing power of God. Even though their heads might not truly understand what is happening, their hearts will attest that God is at work.

Signs of a Supernatural Life

Having a Pentecost experience such as the one I had makes us normal in the spiritual realm. God should be able to use all of us as He heals the sick, casts out demons and reveals words of knowledge—because we have access to the power that is the evidence of the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

Peter Wagner, in his commentary on the book of Acts, wrote about the apostle Peter being filled with the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. He explains the difference between this experience and what occurs when a person is born again:

“This [the baptism in the Holy Spirit] is not a mere reiteration of the theological fact that all true Christian believers are indwelt by the Holy Spirit. At conversion, we are all ‘made to drink into one Spirit’ (1 Cor. 12:13). Paul also says, ‘The Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you’ (Rom. 8:11). However, being ‘filled with the Spirit’ is a special empowering of the Holy Spirit over and above the ordinary, something that God desires and that we as individuals are actively to pursue.”

In his book *The Beauty of Spiritual Language* Jack Hayford

refers to this empowering as one of the signs of the Holy Spirit's fullness. Other indications include: love; all the "signs" listed in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10; and the nine fruits of the Spirit listed in Galatians 5:22-23.

If you are born again, you have experienced the difference Jesus makes in your life. Now you can experience the benefit of the Holy Spirit's power. Just say the following prayer, or one similar to it in your own words:

Father God, I ask You to baptize me in the Holy Spirit. I want to be filled to overflowing.

It really is this simple. Since you want everything God has for you, ask Him to enable you to speak in tongues.

1. First ask (see Luke 11:13).
2. Believe that you have received.
3. Ask the Lord to give you a new language with which to praise Him.
4. Open your mouth to speak. The language will not come through your natural process. This is so that you won't think in English, or whatever language you speak, and then interpret accordingly. Rather, it will come out in tongues.
5. Don't be discouraged if you do not speak in tongues at that moment. If you have asked for the Holy Spirit and given Him an invitation to come into your life and fill you completely, He has done what you asked.
6. It is important to repent if you have ever said speaking in tongues is not for today because doing that could have created a blockage. Also, it sometimes helps to break generational curses off your life.
7. As you are praying in the Spirit, write down the thoughts that come to you during that time and expect God to speak new things to you. Don't be surprised if you start speaking in a beautiful language. Some people initially receive only a few words and others complete sentences.

Remember that you have now received power because you have asked the Holy Spirit to come in and fill you to overflowing. However, after your initial baptism, it is important to receive fillings of the Holy Spirit every day.

Wagner underscores the need in his book Acts of the Holy Spirit. He writes: "I make a habit daily of asking God to fill me with His Holy Spirit, and I believe He does, because Jesus said that just as a good father will not give a scorpion to a son who asks for an egg, 'How much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!'" (Luke 11:13).

I believe we are on the verge of seeing a vast number of people swept into the kingdom of God and receiving the Holy Spirit, as we saw in the late 1960s and in the 1970s. We will experience a great outpouring of miracles from ordinary, supernaturally natural believers who have invited an invasion of the Holy Spirit into every aspect of their lives.

Shouldn't you be one of them? Tap into His power today!

Cindy Jacobs is founder and president of *Generals International*, an international prayer ministry. She ministers worldwide on the topics of intercession, spiritual warfare and reconciliation and is the author of several books, including *Women of Destiny* and *Deliver Us From Evil*.

Adapted from The Supernatural Life by Cindy Jacobs, copyright 2005. Published by Regal. Used by permission.