

When It Comes to the Holy Spirit, Don't Settle for Less

God offers much more than a momentary experience. Let Him totally fill you with His power and turn your life into an adventure.

Years before the Azusa Street Revival, a radical band of zealous ministers crisscrossed the United States advocating a second Christian experience that they called the baptism of the Holy Spirit. These men and women were known as Holiness preachers. They were the spiritual descendants of John Wesley, and like Wesley they taught that sanctification was a work of the Holy Spirit that had to be prayed for and received by faith.

One early Pentecostal pioneer, Benjamin Hardin Irwin, began to teach that a third Christian experience was available to believers. He called it "the baptism of fire" and eventually founded a denomination based on his doctrines—the Fire-Baptized Holiness Church. Irwin eventually stepped into error and began teaching that there are numerous other explosive experiences available to every Christian such as "the baptism of dynamite," "the baptism of oxidite" and "the baptism of selenite."

"The Holy Spirit cares for people ... Ultimately, the more you are filled with the Spirit, the more people you will lead into a genuine encounter with God."

These bizarre teachings were rejected early on by mainstream Pentecostals. While they could find a biblical basis for fire-baptism (John the Baptist mentioned it in Matt. 3:11-12), there is no mention in Scripture of power encounters with combustible geologic elements! Being filled with the Holy Spirit was certainly never meant to be a complicated or

mysterious process.

Yet all early Pentecostal founders—including William Seymour, founder of the Azusa Revival—taught that God desires to fill every Christian to the brim with the Holy Spirit. They correctly observed that many Christians wade into the shallow waters of salvation and never go deeper.

The apostle Paul said, “Do not get drunk with wine ... but be filled with the Spirit” (Eph. 5:18, NASB). Yet how many Christians today really seek this total saturation? How many of us are content to wear only a thin Holy Spirit veneer? How many of us are willing to surrender total control of our lives to the Holy Spirit’s direction?

In the opening of the Book of Revelation, John describes a glorious vision of the triune God. He sees the Father, Jesus the Son and the Holy Spirit—whom He describes as “the seven spirits who are before His throne” (see Rev. 1:4-5). We know there is only one Holy Spirit; so why does John portray Him this way?

Like the seven-pronged menorah that gave light to the Holy Place in Moses’ tabernacle, the Holy Spirit is multi-dimensional. He is one Spirit, yet He is pictured as a candlestick with seven lamps. This is God’s way of showing us that His Spirit is not limited. If we dare to invite Him to fill us, He will take us on a lifelong journey—deeper and deeper into the presence and power of God.

Do you want all dimensions of the Holy Spirit’s fullness? Don’t be satisfied just with a manifestation of speaking in tongues or with the proverbial goose bumps you might feel at an altar service. There is so much more. Jesus is the baptizer in the Holy Spirit. Ask Him to give you:

...More holiness. When we invite Him into our hearts, the Holy Spirit’s fire burns up our pride, greed, impatience, bitterness and selfish attitudes. Ask Him to consume

everything in your soul that is not like Jesus.

...More boldness. When the early disciples were filled with the Spirit, the first thing they did was preach the gospel without fear to everyone around them. If you struggle with timidity, or if you find it hard to share your faith, you need a stronger dose of the Spirit.

...More joy. The Spirit is our Comforter, and when we yield to Him there is no room for anxiety, fear, heaviness, despair or regret. Allow the Spirit to heal every wounded place in your soul so that you can know His joy.

...More supernatural power. When the Spirit fills us, He activates His miraculous gifts in our lives. While we may have natural talents, He gives us new gifts such as prophecy, healing, discernment, miraculous faith and miracles. If you have not moved into this supernatural dimension, ask for a fresh baptism of the Spirit and expect the impossible.

...More wisdom. Jesus never intended for us to trust in our intellect and common sense alone. Regardless of your profession, the Holy Spirit will give you amazing guidance on the job. When you learn to listen to Him, life becomes an adventure of listening and obeying. Those who are filled with the Spirit are sensitive to His voice.

...More revelation of Jesus. The Holy Spirit is our teacher, and He leads us into all truth. His greatest goal is to fill us with the knowledge of Christ so that we can reflect Him everywhere we go. It is only by the Spirit that we can truly know Jesus intimately.

...More love. The Holy Spirit cares for people, He knows what is burdening them, and He wants to speak to them. When we yield our lives to Him unconditionally, we become ambassadors of reconciliation. Ultimately, the more you are filled with the Spirit, the more people you will lead into a genuine encounter with God.

Pray this today:...*Holy Spirit, forgive me for being satisfied with a mere touch when You offer a powerful infilling of Your Spirit. I want all that You have for me. Fill me to the brim and let me experience every dimension of Your presence in my life. Amen.*

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