

## 7<sup>th</sup> Fundamental Truth – Baptism in the Holy Spirit

1. **The AG Statement of Fundamental Truths states:** All believers are entitled to and should ardently expect and earnestly seek the promise of the Father, the baptism in the Holy Spirit and fire, according to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ. This was the normal experience of all in the early Christian Church.

2. With it comes the enduement of power for life and service, the bestowment of the gifts and their uses in the work of the ministry (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4, 8; 1 Corinthians 12:1-31). This experience is distinct from and subsequent to the experience of the new birth (Acts 8:12-17; 10:44-46; 11:14-16; 15:7-9).

3. With the baptism in the Holy Spirit comes such experiences as an overflowing fullness of the Spirit (John 7:37-39; Acts 4:8), a deepened reverence for God (Acts 2:43; Hebrews 12:28), an intensified consecration to God and dedication to His work (Acts 2:42), and a more active love for Christ, for His Word, and for the lost (Mark 16:20).

4. We will first define the Baptism in the Holy Spirit, then consider its purpose and value, and finally consider what Scripture has to say about its reception.

5. The phrase “baptism in (or with) the Holy Spirit” first occurs in Scripture during John the Baptist’s ministry. In response to questions about his identity, John contrasted his ministry with that of the one (Jesus) who would follow him:

6. “I baptize you with water for repentance...But after me will come one who is more powerful than I...He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit...”—Mt. 3:11-12 (cf. Mk. 1:8; Lk. 3:16; Jn. 1:32-34)

7. In fact, before Jesus ascended into heaven He told His disciples about the coming baptism in the Holy Spirit. Referring to it as both a “gift” and “power from on high,” He enjoined them to wait in Jerusalem for it (Lk 24:49; Acts 1:4-5, 8).

8. Their wait did not last long, for when the day of Pentecost arrived the Holy Spirit “came” (or was “poured out”) upon them (Acts 1:8; 2:33; cf. Acts 10:44-47; 11:15-17). These initial verses provide a great deal of information about the nature of the baptism in the Holy Spirit, namely as:

- a gift;
- bestowed by Jesus;
- an immersion (though not into water);
- an anointing (though not of oil); an event of supernatural power.

10. Most Charismatics believe that the baptism in the Holy Spirit is the key for fruitful Christian living and ministry. Jesus, for example in remarks about the Holy Spirit in general, taught that believers should desire and continually ask for more of the Spirit (Lk 11:11-13).

11. Paul reiterates this advice (Eph. 5:18). Jesus further told His disciples not to begin ministry until they had received the baptism in the Holy Spirit (Lk. 24:46-49; Acts 1:8).

12. The Baptism in the Holy Spirit uniquely brings the Gifts of the Spirit (or charismata) to those who are so baptized (1 Cor. 12:1-11). We should remember that the charismata are manifestations of the Person of the Holy Spirit.

13. To these Paul refers in 1 Corinthians 12 and Romans 12, as well as in other places. The Bible portrays their use as a normal function of the body of Christ, urging believers to “seek,” “desire earnestly,” “fan into flame,” and “use” them (1 Cor. 12:31; 14:1, 4-5, 39; 2 Tim. 1:6; 1 Pt. 4:10) and to be careful not to neglect them (Rom. 12:6; 1 Cor. 14:39; 1 Thess. 5:19-20).

14. The gifts of the Spirit allow the Holy Spirit to have expression in the community of believers. He should be allowed to give continued direction and insight to the Church (e.g., Acts 2:38-39; 1 Thess. 5:19-20), to heal and work miracles, and aid us in our witness to the world by connecting us to the ministry of Him who is our Advocate of heaven (Jn.16:7-11, 13-14).

15. In other words, all believers receive directly from the heavenly ministry of Christ via the presence of the Court Advocate—or Holy Spirit—within us. He graces us with the charismata to more effectively carry out Christ’s ministry as witnesses on earth of the court of heaven. During our communion with Christ, the Holy Spirit communicates to us the desires on Christ’s heart and gives us the enablement to affect His will.

16. Thus, the charismata show God’s love and compassion toward humankind. The fact that Paul pauses between chapter 12 and 14 of 1 Corinthians to spell out in chapter 13 the importance of love as the motivation for the use of the charismata should be evidence enough for this. Luke records that the apostles set out to love and help people, and in so doing they used the powerful tools at their disposal—the Holy Spirit’s gifts.