

## **EMPOWERED FOR SERVICE**

Many people wonder why today's church or rather why many believers today are not effective in what God has called them to do. Maybe you are one of those who feel that there must be something more that I should be doing with my life.

I thank God that you have been asking yourself such profound questions and there is an answer to all of them. This brings me to the title of my teaching this morning – I want to talk to you on the subject matter **EMPOWERED FOR SERVICE**.

- You cannot fully operate effectively in the kingdom of God unless you have access to kingdom power, unless you have been empowered from above.
- Empowerment to do what God has called you to do happens through the activity of the Holy Spirit and to be exact, the baptism of the Holy Spirit.
- Many believers are not aware of the baptism of the Holy Spirit and to those who are aware, they are either sceptical about it or don't understand what it's all about.
- If you are to be effective in your walk with Jesus, you need to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit.
- Baptism in the Holy Spirit is about seeking a deeper experience with the Holy Spirit – lets move away from just doctrinal facts or historical facts, which are affirmed with the mind but move on to seeking the experiential realities of the Holy Spirit.
- This is the stuff that draws the attention of the world, of the unsaved people around us – we must seek for extraordinary things.
- The Kingdom of God cannot just be theory, there must a practical outworking of God's kingdom around us.
- Baptism in the Spirit is a biblical term and a biblical experience for believers – lets explore this aspect of a believer's life. There are two aspects regarding baptism of the Holy Spirit.

### **1. Being born of the Spirit**

*1 Corinthians 12:12 Just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body — Jews or Greeks, slaves or free — and all were made to drink of one Spirit.*

- What baptism is Paul talking about here? He is talking about the operation of the Holy Spirit that regenerates your spirit man from being dead to being alive. By so doing the Spirit unites us to Jesus and His body, the church.
- In other words, it is the conversion process – you are born of the Spirit. You are moved upon by the Holy Spirit in such a way that you are brought to faith and united to Jesus.
- This is also referred to as the indwelling of the Holy Spirit – to explain it better, think about having drunk a cup of water, resulting in water being inside of you.

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- If we follow through with that same analogy, your tummy can only take some much water and therefore there is a limit to what you can do with that amount of water.

### **2. Empowered by the Spirit**

- This is the second experience with the Holy Spirit, which we referred to as the Baptism in the Holy Spirit.
- This is the experience that Jesus spoke about after telling His disciples about reaching the world with the good news of salvation.
- We need a power beyond ourselves for service and ministry in Christ's Kingdom.
- When Jesus gave the Great Commission (see Matthew 28:19-20), He knew that His disciples could not fulfil it in their own power. Therefore, He had a special gift in store for them.
- So, immediately after giving them the Great Commission, Jesus commanded his disciples not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father promised,

*Acts 1:4 And while staying with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, "you heard from me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."*

- Jesus was talking His disciples who had already believed in Him as a resurrected saviour – in other words these were born again people.
- In other words, the baptism He was referring to is a different experience from that of being born again.
- Going back to the illustration of drinking water; another way of experiencing water is going to the beach and stepping into the ocean. When the waves go over you, you in water as opposed to water being in you after drinking it.
- When you are baptized in the Spirit, it is as if that initial drink becomes an ocean that completely surrounds us.
- By being baptised in the Holy Spirit, the disciples were going to receive empowerment for the work of the ministry.

*Acts 1:8 "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth"*

- Jesus meant that you will receive extraordinary power for Christ-exalting ministry – this is a need for every disciple of Jesus.
- That experience can occur in so many ways, and you must desire it over and over again.

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- One sign of being baptised in the Spirit is through the speaking of a new language. Scriptures show us that it was a common occurrence in the early church and that it happened during or after conversion.

- It is a definite experience which we can know that we have or have not received.

*Acts 19:1 And it happened, while Apollos was at Corinth, that Paul, having passed through the upper regions, came to Ephesus. And finding some disciples he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?"*

- The disciples that Paul encountered in Ephesus "spoke with tongues and prophesied when Paul laid hands on them.

*Acts 19:6 And when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied.*

- It is an operation of the Spirit distinct from and subsequent to the conversion experience

*Acts 8:12, 14-16 But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized...Now when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them, who, when they had come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit. For as yet He had fallen upon none of them. They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.*

### **How to receive the Baptism in the Holy Spirit**

- First, once you have accepted Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Saviour you just have to ask God to baptize you in the Holy Spirit. The Bible says,

*Luke 11: 13 So if you who are evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!"*

- Second, believe you have in fact received this gift from God. The apostle Paul, writing to the Galatians, said,

*Galatians 3:2 "Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by hearing with faith?"*

- You must believe that if you ask, you will receive.
- God has created you to experience the fulness of His Spirit and Presence – He will not hold this from you.
- The gift of tongues is not a mandate but a choice. If you eagerly desire you will be filled, if not you probably won't.
- There has to be a legitimate hunger for God where you're not just "open to it" but you "pursue it".
- Being able to pray in tongues maximises your relationship with God and gives you access to God's enablement.

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- Don't settle for less than God's very best for your life. Tongues is a wonderful gift that is a door-opener for so much more in the spirit.
- Understand that the gift of tongues is subject to your will and surrender to God. Now lets ask Jesus to baptize us with the Holy Spirit. You can express a fresh baptism this morning, which take you deeper into the things of God.

*Ephesians 5:18 Don't get drunk with wine, because it makes you lose control. Instead, keep on being filled with the Spirit.*

Make this prayer in faith:

"Heavenly Father, at this moment I come to You. I thank You that Jesus saved me. I pray that the Holy Spirit might come upon me. Lord Jesus, baptize me now in the Holy Spirit. I receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit right now by faith in Your Word. May the anointing, the glory, and the power of God come upon me and into my life right now. May I be empowered for service from this day forward. Thank You, Father, that You have heard my prayer. Thank You, Lord Jesus, for baptizing me in Your Holy Spirit. Amen."

- Begin praising God out loud in whatever words come to you. Now let Him give you new words of praise you never heard before.