

FIREPOWER

ENCOUNTERING THE HOLY SPIRIT

3. Baptism In the Holy Spirit

ICEBREAKER

If this is a new group or there are new people, please take a moment to **introduce yourselves**.

To start off your small group, briefly share your response to the following question:

What is something you thought you knew (as a kid) but later (as an adult) found out you were wrong?

Share with your group.



WHAT TO EXPECT

Let's get a big picture of what we'll be learning today...



There are some things about the Holy Spirit that are kind of confusing. Especially when it comes to Spiritual gifts and speaking in tongues. One thing that has left a lot of people scratching their heads is the term "Baptism in the Holy Spirit." Did you know there are actually three different baptisms? In this discussion we will learn the Holy Spirit's role in each of them.

TIPS TO A SUCCESSFUL SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Tip: BE COMFORTABLE WITH SILENCE. Uncomfortable silences are bound to happen. It's okay! A long pause during a group discussion can be powerful. A pause gives space for quieter people to break into the conversation; silence allows people to figure out exactly what they would like to say.

Tip: AVOID TALKING or TEACHING TOO MUCH. Small groups are designed for everyone to share and grow together.

ONLINE Tip: ZOOM &/OR IN PERSON GATHERING. If you're meeting together on Zoom, familiarize yourself with the Zoom features on your electronic device. It is helpful for everyone to know where the mute button is located. Ask the attendees to self-mute to avoid environmental noise when someone else is talking & sharing. Doing this will help with the flow of your SG discussion time.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1.) The word Baptism actually means to dip and to dye. The word comes from the ancient textile trade and describes the process of dying cloth. This is a great picture of the Holy Spirit immersing a believer in a whole new reality as a result of Jesus' death and resurrection. Scripture talks about three different kinds of "Baptisms" or fillings of the Spirit. In each one the Holy Spirit has a role to play. And each one is very important for the life of a believer.

The first is: **Baptism at Salvation**

Paul explains this new life transformation in the following scripture:

"For you [who are born-again have been reborn from above—spiritually transformed, renewed, sanctified and] are all children of God [set apart for His purpose with full rights and privileges] through faith in Christ Jesus."
Galatians 3:26-27 (AMP)

Baptism of Salvation is when the Holy Spirit enters your life the moment when you accept Jesus. There is an immediate change in your life internally that takes place.

Our first encounter with the Holy Spirit is when He convicts us of our sin, shows us that we all have fallen short of God's perfect holy standard. The Holy Spirit reveals to us the judgment that is coming to those who die without a Savior (John 16:8-11). As we **repent, confess our sins** and **receive the gift of Salvation through Jesus**, the Holy Spirit resuscitates our dead inner human spirit which now becomes sensitive to the spiritual things of God (John 3:1-16; Acts 2:38).

Have you received the Baptism of Salvation? If so, share about your experience. If you haven't, what is holding you back? (Example: I don't understand and would like to learn more about what it means to be born-again; I've never had the opportunity; I'm not ready and need time...)

2.) The second is: Baptism in Water

Water Baptism is a beautiful picture of what our Lord Jesus has done for us. When we are water baptized, we are making a public declaration of our decision to follow Christ. By being immersed in the water, it symbolizes dying to our old sinful nature and coming out of the water as a brand-new person inside. It is also an important part of every believer's life. Jesus instructs us to follow His example. Read the following scripture together:

One day Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee, and John baptized Him in the Jordan River. As Jesus came up out of the water, He saw the heavens splitting apart and the Holy Spirit descending on Him like a dove. And a voice from heaven said, "You are My dearly loved Son, and You bring Me great joy."
Mark 1:9-11 (NLT)

God the Father was well pleased with His Son as the Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus in a form of a dove. When we place our trust in God and follow His command, we too, receive the Holy Spirit's favor, just as Jesus did.

It is important to know that baptism in water doesn't save us. It is not a prerequisite for salvation. When we acknowledge that we are in need of a Savior and we repent, confess our sins and receive the gift of salvation through Jesus, we are saved.

Perhaps the Holy Spirit may be gently nudging you to take this next step if you haven't been water baptized yet. If you have been water baptized, share your experience briefly to encourage those who may need to hear your story.

3.) The third is: **Baptism in the Holy Spirit**

Baptism in the Holy Spirit is living a Spirit-empowered life where I make room for the Holy Spirit to actively work in and through me. Giving Him more access to my life, and more of my cooperation. It is submitting, relinquishing control, and trusting in Him so I can be in step with God's will. Read the following scripture passage:

*Do not drink too much wine so that you become drunk. That will destroy your life. Instead, **let God's Spirit fill you.** He will help you to speak to each other with all kinds of spiritual songs. **Sing psalms** from the bible, and Christian songs. **Praise the Lord** with songs from inside yourselves. And **always thank God**, the Father, for everything, by our Lord Jesus Christ's name.*
Ephesians 5:18-19 (EASY)

To be filled with the Holy Spirit is not a one time event. God wants us to keep being filled with the Holy Spirit. How do you get re-filled with God's Holy Spirit? **God's Word** - by speaking and hearing it, singing songs to God and giving gratitude to God.

Share some practical ways you cultivate the presence of the Holy Spirit in your life. How has your relationship with the Holy Spirit changed the way you approach and experience your daily time in the word, worship, and prayer? How does the Holy Spirit empower you in these areas? Where do you need to grow? (Daily devotions, listening and singing to worship music, talking to God - prayer, etc.)

4.) God promised to send His Holy Spirit to bring true transformation in our hearts and so that our lives produce the character of Jesus. God knew that we would need the help of the Holy Spirit to live a righteous life that pleases Him. Without His help, we wouldn't be able to live the kind of life He desired for us to have. Read Jesus' encouragement to us:

"I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper who will be with you forever. That Helper is the Spirit of Truth. The world cannot accept Him, because it doesn't see or know Him. You know Him, because He lives with you and will be in you."

John 14:16-17 (GW)

Since the Holy Spirit lives in us, our lives ought to be a reflection that He is actively working in our hearts. Here are some practical ways to recognize that the Holy Spirit is in us.

1. TRANSFORMATION takes place in our hearts and minds. (Titus 3:4-6)

We undergo a complete transformation inside our hearts and minds where the Holy Spirit causes our behavior to change. The Bible says we are a new creation. (2 Corinthians 5:17)

2. GROWING IN THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT. The fruit of the Spirit are evident in your life—love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. (Galatians 5:22-23)

3. THE LEADING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. We are following His leading in our daily lives. God desires that we follow and obey Him. When we do, He calls us sons and daughters of God. (Romans 8:14)

4. TESTING THE SPIRITS. A person who professes Christ is discerning and will turn to the word of God to confirm the truth. (1 John 4:1)

5. SPEAKING IN TONGUES. After salvation, a believer can be baptized in the Holy Spirit and they will speak in tongues. When Jesus returned to heaven, He sent the Holy Spirit who infilled the disciples who were praying in the upper room. They began to speak in tongues as evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Jesus also said that those who believe in Him will not only speak in tongues but will have the power to cast out demons. (Acts 2:4 & Mark 16:17)

Please know that not speaking in tongues does not mean that a person is not saved. In addition, these five signs of the presence of the Holy Spirit are certainly not all. You can ask God to show you more of Him as you have your quiet time with Him. To always be filled with the Holy Spirit, you can give Him more room in your heart so that He can do a great work in you.

(Please do not debate about this controversial spiritual gift nor force your beliefs about it on anyone in the group. God wants unity and harmony in our relationships, not divisiveness and disharmony. He desires us to be arm in arm, even if we don't see eye to eye.)

Speaking in Tongues is also among the unique supernatural gifts by the Holy Spirit to help build Christ's Kingdom here on earth. Paul explains the purpose and boundaries for speaking in tongues. Read the following scripture passages:

Now there are [distinctive] varieties of spiritual gifts [special abilities given by the grace and extraordinary power of the Holy Spirit operating in believers]...various kinds of [unknown] tongues...these things [the gifts, the achievements, the abilities, the empowering] are brought about by one and the same [Holy] Spirit, distributing to each one individually just as He chooses.
1 Corinthians 12:4-11 (AMP)

For if you have the ability to speak in tongues, you will be talking only to God, since people won't be able to understand you. You will be speaking by the power of the Spirit, but it will all be mysterious.
1 Corinthians 14:2 (NLT)

The person who speaks in a tongue builds himself up...
1 Corinthians 14:4 (CSB)

When we are speaking in tongues, we are directly speaking to God. This is a beautiful spiritual language that only God can understand. Although our human nature may not be able to understand the language, when a believer exercises this gift, it will edify and help build up his/her faith personally.

Have you received the gift of speaking in tongues? Share your experience with your group members. If you haven't received this gift, please don't be discouraged! (Read 1 Corinthians 12:28-30). If you desire and are willing to receive the gift of tongues, pray and ask the Holy Spirit to fill you.

WHAT WILL YOU DO?



Take a look at the **three types of baptism** again:

- 1) **Baptism at Salvation**
- 2) **Baptism in Water**
- 3) **Baptism in the Holy Spirit**

Which one are you missing out on? How can we pray for you to receive that particular baptism?

ADDITIONAL ACTION STEPS:

If this particular study struck a chord in your heart and you desire to know the Holy Spirit in a deeper level, consider praying & ask Him for the spiritual gift of tongues.

CLOSE IN PRAYER

Take a few minutes to close your time together with prayer and to pray for each other's prayer requests. Below is a sample prayer to read if you choose to. You can also choose to write down each other's prayer requests to remember throughout the week.

Sample Prayer:

"Holy Spirit, thank You for offering baptism to us. When we are filled by You, we are refreshed and empowered. You give us joy and peace while also giving us the courage and motivation to share Your the Word with others. Show us how to be continually filled in You, not relying on what we've experienced before but looking for a fresh filling by faithfully making time to read God's word, through singing songs that praise and worship You, and prayer in every occasion. For some of us who may still be on this new journey with our faith in Jesus, help us to gain a better understanding of the Holy Spirit. Where there may be fear or lack of understanding, bring Your truth and peace. I thank You Holy Spirit for being our Comforter, Teacher, and Friend. In Jesus' name we pray, amen!"



Group Prayer Requests:

Name & Prayer request:

Day 1: Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

Acts 2:38 (NIV)

Day 2: For you are all children of God through faith in Christ Jesus. And all who have been united with Christ in baptism have put on Christ, like putting on new clothes.

Galatians 3:26-27 (NLT)

Day 3: And the disciples were continually filled [throughout their hearts and souls] with joy and with the Holy Spirit.

Acts 13:52 (AMP)

Day 4: I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will remove your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.

Ezekiel 36:26 (CSB)

Day 5: A spiritual gift is given to each of us so we can help each other. It is the one and only Spirit who distributes all these gifts. He alone decides which gift each person should have.

1 Corinthians 12:7, 11 (NLT)