



The Nuts and Bolts of Ministering Spirit Baptism Part Three

By: Tim Enloe

Misconception #3: Where

Have you ever listened to yourself tell someone how you were filled with the Holy Spirit? Preachers love to use Technicolor adjectives to describe their personal experiences. Perhaps you were in the spiritual “Area 51” when you were “beamed up” to the mother ship, seeing heavenly visions as you were being filled. Or maybe it wasn’t actually that grand.

I bring this up not only to confront dishonesty — no matter how well-meaning a person may be — but to convey the dangerous assumptions the listener can draw from such descriptions of otherworldly close encounters.

The where I’m addressing refers not only to the atmosphere in which someone can receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit, but also the actual venue. Is it only at red-hot camp meeting “Holy Ghost nights”? Or can someone receive after eating a stale doughnut at a men’s prayer breakfast? Is it only after the minister has thoroughly rubbed his shoes on the wool carpet — and adequately static-charged his fingertips — or can it happen in someone’s car on the way to work? I believe we have overromanticized the reception process so much that many ordinary folks exclude themselves from receiving.

It’s not nuclear physics; it’s simple obedience. If you are firmly convinced that Jesus is the Baptizer in the Holy Spirit, then wherever He is, it can happen — and He’s omnipresent.

One of the easiest traps to fall into is to place too much credence on perceived emotional responses. Many ministers feel extreme, yet unnecessary, pressure to build emotionally charged atmospheres, places where their own personal testimony can be replicated for their congregations. I find it enlightening and burden-lightening to know that the Acts accounts of Spirit baptism never give one shred of emotional detail such as, “They were all filled and began to speak in other tongues as they cried precisely 1.4 ounces of tears.” It is obvious that emotional responses are part of the way God made us, but it is also true they are secondary phenomena. Yet we still are more moved by what we can see rather than by the invisible reality. We have a tendency to misrepresent how the Baptism is received and then be disappointed when it doesn’t happen our way.

When you minister on Spirit baptism, there are some exceptional days when you can almost hear the wind and see the fire of Acts 2. These are wonderful occurrences, but they are just that — exceptional. Many times I’ve witnessed large groups of people receive rather quietly; that’s all right too. The point is they receive this new power to be God’s prophetic mouthpieces.

Take your heavy backpack off! You don’t have to create a highly charged atmosphere or be in a special meeting for people to be filled with the Holy Spirit. The bottom line is Jesus is the Baptizer, and He wants to show himself to people as their personal Baptizer in the Spirit today. Why not seize more opportunities — even nontraditional ones — to lead people into Spirit baptism?

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