



The Nuts and Bolts of Ministering Spirit Baptism Part Five

By: Tim Enloe

Anticipation and Expectations

How do you tell a seeker what to anticipate without creating a false or exceptional set of expectations? The answer is in the Scriptures. The Book of Acts has a simple pattern that is repeated three times when people received Spirit baptism: Acts 2 (on Pentecost), Acts 10 (at Cornelius's house), and Acts 19 (in Ephesus) all record the same basic pattern.

The first step in the Acts pattern is to draw near to Jesus. The Acts recipients were focusing on Jesus as they were worshipping or listening to teaching about Him. Jesus was the focus because Jesus is the Baptizer. I like to use Luke 24 as a way of fleshing out how to focus on Jesus. Verse 53 shows us they were pressing in and worshipping Jesus continuously — that's a great place to start.

The second step in the biblical pattern is that the Holy Spirit will come upon the seeker. In Acts, at some stage in each of the processes, the Holy Spirit came upon everyone who received. You can trace the usage of the Greek verb *epi* ("to come upon") in conjunction with episodes of Spirit baptism in Acts. In every occurrence the Holy Spirit came upon everyone who received. You can confidently assure the seeker that the Holy Spirit will come upon them at some time while they are seeking. I always like to demystify this further, "You may or you may not be overcome with goose bumps, but you will at least be gently aware of His presence descending upon you at some distinct time."

The third step in the pattern involves the seeker yielding his voice to the Spirit's prompting. Simply stated, the believer gives his or her voice to God. The first step is initiated by the seeker as he chooses to draw near to Christ in worship. The second step is initiated by Christ as He sends the Holy Spirit upon the hungry seeker. The third step is a cooperative effort between the seeker and the Holy Spirit. The Spirit gives the ability to speak and the person does the actual speaking.

I have consistently witnessed the benefit of letting seekers know what to expect—so much "fear of the unknown" is then eliminated. Even the first Pentecostals had some idea of what to expect. As Christ had previously told them, He would "send [them] what my Father has promised" them (Luke 24:49), that they would be "clothed with power" (Luke 24:49), and that they would "speak in new tongues" (Mark 16:17). Another benefit of setting biblical expectations is that the seeker can recognize his or her progress in the reception process.

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