



The Nuts and Bolts of Ministering Spirit Baptism Part Six

By: Tim Enloe

The Real Nuts and Bolts

The first step in ministering on Spirit baptism is personal spiritual preparation. Have you prayed about the event? Do you have a word from God? Have you asked for His help and guidance? Have you asked for an increase of faith for ministering the Baptism?

The second step involves the teaching or preaching. Simplicity, not brilliance, is what helps people to receive. I have found the more simply I define what Spirit baptism is and what it is for, the more people want to receive it. Simplicity should also be the watchword for the explanation on how to receive. One of the easiest mistakes to make — and I have made this error many times — is to preach on the Baptism and never tell anyone how to receive it. It's information without function. It's like a person buying a new computer with no instructions. If you are not sure how to explain this, take some time and create your own bullet points, then go over them again to make sure they are easily understood.

So, let's assume there has been a simple teaching accurately defining the purpose of Spirit baptism followed by an equally simple explanation of how someone can receive it. The next step is to give opportunity for people to respond and receive. Many times I use the following procedure.

I like to make a dual application to the teaching, such as, "In a moment we will have some prayer time for those who want to receive this gift (specific application). But before we do that, how many would really like to experience a fresh touch from the Holy Spirit today (general application)?" This dual application engages almost everyone in the room. Though not all may feel ready to receive now and perhaps some have already received, almost all can affirm their desire for a fresh encounter with the Holy Spirit. When you feel the consensus in the room, invite everyone to step forward and pray for a few minutes. Inviting everyone to respond together also helps remove the first-time seeker's potential fear of being the "only needy one."

When people begin to gather and pray, I will casually ask, "How many want to be baptized in the Holy Spirit for the first time?" When they respond, I will typically ask them to listen as I restate the three steps to receive — draw near to Jesus, the Holy Spirit will come upon the seeker, and the seeker must yield his or her voice to God. This reinforces biblical expectations for the process.

This is where you, as the minister, can start feeling levels of anxiety and pressure to produce results. Do not go there. Only Jesus can baptize someone in the Holy Spirit, so relax! You have been obedient to proclaim this biblical truth, Now, your only job is to be sensitive to the Holy Spirit and to the people you are there to help. Jesus will do the hard part.

I like to lead a simple worship chorus to help people sensitize their hearts to God. Hunger plus worship equals an amazingly easy atmosphere in which people can receive. When the song is over, I encourage them to begin to praise Jesus out loud. In just a few moments, people will begin to receive.

After several minutes, I will ask, "How many have received so far and have the proof of a new spiritual language?" After they respond, I will then say, "If you haven't yet received, that's fine. Sometimes it takes a little while. However,

there is never a wasted moment in seeking Christ. If you have a few more minutes, please continue to seek Him.” I will then begin to minister to people individually, taking time to listen to the Holy Spirit’s leading. He will help you if you slow down and listen to His voice.

I also try to pay special attention to those who are very introverted. Many times “loners” struggle to receive in a group setting, so be sensitive to the way they are wired. I will frequently ask such a person, “Are you more quiet in your worship? That’s fine. Some people receive better by themselves. Do you think you can find a quiet place where you can be alone in the next day or so?” I encourage them to do so as soon as possible and remind them of the three steps to receive. Many times they receive in their car on their way home from church! They are hungry, and Jesus wants to baptize them.

It is important to reinforce that sometimes it can take a little while because some personalities are very impatient and can easily become frustrated, or worse yet, discouraged.

Finally, I instruct those who have received to try out their new prophetic power as soon as possible. “Visit with a lost person and give God opportunity to speak through you in the next day or so. You now have proof that you can say what God wants you to say.” Otherwise, they can follow the path of many previous Pentecostals and think it is okay to have the power and to do nothing with it. We don’t need any more “pew potatoes.” People who have experienced the Holy Spirit’s power yet refuse to be obedient to witness tend to get rather frustrated and infectious grumpy.

CONCLUSION

I am absolutely convinced from the Scriptures and personal experience that God is still moving in Pentecostal power. I am equally convinced we must contend for a fresh demonstration of His power in our churches and our communities. We must cling to the biblical imperatives of Spirit baptism and its accompanying sign of tongues speaking; but we must also frame these truths in the practical, utilitarian ways the Bible presents. If you don’t think the models you’ve witnessed in the past would fly in your church context, don’t throw the truth out with the bad model. Strategize with the Holy Spirit. Let Him anoint you with creativity to present and minister this truth in unique, nontraditional ways. After all, we can’t do the job without the power.

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