

**PREMINISTERIAL AND CHRISTIAN WORKERS'
BIBLE COLLEGE CORRESPONDENCE COURSES
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**COURSE NO. 2. THE HOLY GHOST BAPTISM--
AND THE GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT**

LESSON 1

THE PROMISE OF THE HOLY GHOST

HOW TO STUDY YOUR CORRESPONDENCE LESSONS

The manner in which you prepare your Correspondence Lessons will determine to a great extent the value of the lessons to you. Listed below are some helpful suggestions. You will also find that when you have completed your Correspondence Course, the same methods of study carried on into your independent study of the Word of God will bring forth much fruit.

PREPARATION FOR STUDY

First of all, you must meet God before you can acquire an understanding of God's Word. Be sure that you have been born again. (John 3:5) If you are not sure, we shall be happy to help you to make sure. Do this before you proceed further.

Second, "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" Acts 19:2. Jesus said, "The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, . . ." John 14:26.

THE HOLY GHOST PROMISED

During Christ's earthly life, He remained Head of the disciples. When He went away, He did not urge them to go on out without a leader. Neither did He appoint one of their number to take His place as Head. He asked them, rather, to wait ("tarry") until the new leader -- the Holy Ghost -- arrived.

“And being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.” Acts 1:4, 5.

“And behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.” Luke 24:49.

“And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.” John 14:16, 17.

“But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” John 14:26.

One day while teaching His disciples, Jesus told them that He had a mission to “send fire upon the earth.” Luke 12:49, 50. Weymouth translates this passage, “I came to throw fire upon the earth, and what is my desire? Oh that it were even now kindled! But I have a baptism to undergo; and how am I pent up till it is accomplished!”

The baptism He spoke of was one of suffering, the death of the cross.

Why was He “pent up,” or “hindered?” Was He not doing marvelous things?

Yes.

But after Pentecost, after He had shed forth the Holy Ghost upon the believers, He was able to do more than ever before. After Pentecost He filled ALL who would believe, and through them He did the same mighty works but in far greater number and amount than ever before.

The last physical act of Jesus was His disappearance from their sight. HE DID NOT GO AWAY. He went out of their sight as far as bodily presence is concerned. He had said, “Lo I am with you always, even unto the end of the age.”

The body in which He had begun to do His work vanished. But it did not cease to exist. It vanished to make way for the body in which He would continue to do and to teach.

THIS BODY IS HIS CHURCH!

His last words to them were a command and a promise.

The command was the enduement of power with which to carry out this command.

The days of limited service were over. The new body was there waiting for the Pentecostal outpouring.

There is no record that any person was ever instructed to “tarry” for the baptism with the Holy Ghost after the day of Pentecost. From that time forward it was just a matter of yielding to His authority, qualifying for, and receiving the promised enduement.

It is a glorious experience, separate and distinct from that of conversion. **HAVE YOU RECEIVED THIS EXPERIENCE, THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY GHOST?** If not, it is for you!

“For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.” Acts 2:39.

John the Baptist promised, “the shall baptize YOU with the Holy Ghost and with fire:” Matt. 3:11b.

Eight hundred years before Calvary, the prophet Joel prophesied, “I will pour out my spirit upon ALL flesh; and your sons and daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions. And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit. And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call.” Joel 2:28-32.

The promise was fulfilled in the second chapter of Acts, for Peter, one of the one hundred and twenty that were filled on that day, said, “this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel;” Acts 2:16-18.

Later, Peter speaking to a multitude said, “For the promise is unto you and to

your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.” Acts 2:39.

Can God’s promise fail? No! A million times no! “For ALL the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.” II Cor. 1:20.

THE PROMISE FULFILLED -- Read Acts Chapters 1 and 2.

The streets of Jerusalem are filled with multitudes. Travelers from all over the known world, even from as far as Asia and Libya, are thronging the city. It is the high spot in the religious life of the Jews -- the Feast of Pentecost, fifty days after the Passover.

There is a troubled air over the scene -- a spirit of unrest. The unusual high spirits of the crowd are dampened by recent events.

When this noted “imposter,” Jesus of Nazareth, was crucified, the terrible darkness that came so suddenly, and the earthquake, frightened everyone. Many rumors and stories have sprung up and everyone has a different version to tell.

More confusion results from the “tale” of the Nazarene’s followers that he came back from the dead. They claim some of them saw him, talked with him, and even touched him! “Ridiculous,” but nevertheless disturbing!

This is contradicted by the story of the soldiers at the grave who maintain firmly that the man’s disciples came secretly at night and stole his body in order to deceive the people.

“But how could they have stolen it with the soldiers on guard?”

“And have you heard that the fellow who tipped off the police to his whereabouts committed suicide? Judas was his name. Poor fellow! He was probably a mental case. Tragic, isn’t it?”

Another rumor is abroad. His disciples, they say, are gathering each day in a certain place.

Why?

No one knows. They say they are “waiting.”

What for? They are not sure. Something about a promise.

The Rushing Mighty Wind

It is morning, bright and clear. Suddenly above the many street noises, the voices, the braying of donkeys, the clatter of spears and of wheels, rises a new sound - strange, frightening.

It is the sound as of a rushing, mighty wind! But there is no wind!

The air is still. Yet all hear the sound. Every other noise ceases as the throngs pause to listen. Into the sound of the wind comes another -- that of many voices! The listening multitudes start to run in the direction of the noise.

The Outpouring

“And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” Acts 2:4.

“And they (the multitude) were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this? Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine.” Acts 2:12, 13.

The 120 disciples who went to the upper room to await the Promise of the Father have been there for ten days. They demonstrate faith in Christ as they wait. This is what He told them to do. He did not tell them how long it would be. They do not know what to expect. An enduement, yes. But what, how, and in what manner?

No one knows.

As the sound of the wind comes to the waiting disciples, another phenomenon occurs. FIRE, a tongue of it over each of them, is seen by them all!

As they exclaim and wonder, each suddenly begins to speak in a language he does not know. Now an inward glow, a holy excitement prevades each of them. It must be expressed -- they laugh, they cry, they shout! They cannot be still!

Out they go, running, stumbling, staggering like drunken men, their flesh unable to contain this tremendous, exhilarating effusion from Heaven.

Into the streets they come, streets already crowded with the curious, the

astonished listeners.

How shocking! These men are drunk! At nine in the morning! And women, too! A disgrace!

For some time the disciples, blessed beyond all imagination, rejoice in full view of the crowd.

They speak, but cannot be understood as the languages are different.

Someone says, "I am from Phrygia. He speaks as they speak there!"

Another, "That is the language of Crete!"

"But these are uneducated men!"

Their bewilderment grows. Finally Peter, one of THEM, mounts a porch and catches the attention of the crowd. He is going to try to give the true explanation. He speaks in the normal Jewish dialect. He proceeds to tell the curious what has happened.

"What meaneth this?" they cry.

"THIS is THAT!" he answers.

SIGNS AND WONDERS -- SUPERNATURAL POWER OF GOD

Peter's Sermon - Acts 2:14-36

(It is suggested that you open your Bible to this scripture, and refer to it as you study this part of the lesson.)

Peter is a preacher now. He is a different man. He is not boasting of his loyalty. He is not concerned for his reputation or his safety. His is not a popular message. He could not choose a more distasteful subject for this crowd. Hear him! He tells them that Joel prophesied this very thing, (Joel 2:28-32).

"The one who is doing this today is the same One YOU nailed to the cross only a few days ago . . . YOU murdered Him, but He is YOUR Saviour. You plotted and schemed to destroy Him, but you were not getting away with anything. God long ago determined that it should be this way. It was His will in order that all men should

be saved.”

In identifying Jesus, Peter mentions His credentials. Oh, yes, JESUS HAD CREDENTIALS! They were HIS WORKS!

“Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him. . .”(vs. 22).

Once Jesus said, “If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works:” John 10:37, 38a.

Can you imagine the consternation and the upheaval in most of today’s churches if the minister would dare to say, “If I do not the works, believe me not?”

Such a statement would empty both pulpit and pews!

Yet this is the standard which God gave us to go by. AND HE HAS NEVER CHANGED THAT STANDARD!

Signs and Wonders -- The Credentials of the Early Church

The outstanding characteristic of the early church was the “signs and wonders” and the miraculous in their midst. It was their trademark. Jesus had said that it would be. “These signs shall follow them that believe;” “He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my father.” Mark 16:17, 18. John 14:12.

How can we call ourselves Christians unless we have the supernatural power of God demonstrated in our midst?

Works of the kind that Jesus did are credentials.

Why this stress on works? What about the fruit of the Spirit? Isn’t that supposed to be our yardstick? Certainly, when it is practical and possible to so judge. BUT WORKS ARE OUTWARD AND VISIBLE. Jesus invited His accusers to consider His works before condemning Him. Peter and John, under arrest for preaching Christ, pointed to the healing of the lame man as their defense. Paul, vindicating himself under criticism, said, “I did the works of an apostle among you.”

The scriptures do not teach anywhere that a man who is displeasing to God can do these works. It is unscriptural to suggest that such a thing could be true. (Luke

11:14-23).

On the other hand, we are shown in the Bible that the unworthy ones who tried to duplicate the works of the apostles were powerless to do so. (Acts 8:18-20; Acts 19: 13-17)

The Bible speaks of false manifestations; and the false prophet will be able to perform some strange feats. But the good works of healing and deliverance, according to the Bible, are not done except by men anointed by the Holy Ghost.

A man may do these works that is not judged as perfect by all who set themselves up as “judges.” Even Christ was called a blasphemer (Matt. 9:3); a glutton and a winebibber (Matt. 11:19; Luke 7:34); a sinner (John 9:24); a deceiver (Matt. 27:63) by the religious leaders of His day.

A man does not have to be perfect (completely perfected) because all men are to “go on unto perfection.” (Heb. 6:1) But he will be a man “approved of God.” Blessing and deliverance cannot issue from an evil source. (Matt. 12:35)

Results of Peter’s Sermon

“Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? . . . and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.” Acts 2:37, 41b.

Unpopular as Peter’s message was, it produced results.

The consciences of his hearers were torn to pieces by the straightforward, anointed preaching. IT HAD AN IMPACT! No wonder the results were so great!

If Peter’s eloquence and good exposition of the Word brought this about, the whole world would now be saved. (We have plenty of both.) But it was not these qualities but the added ingredient of the anointing by the Holy Ghost which produced these results.

Acts 2:41-47 tells us that the converts continued in their faith. This is more spectacular proof of anointed preaching than the number of converts!

Those from other countries carried the Gospel message back with them. Already the message is spreading “unto the uttermost parts.”

Jesus in the flesh had a limited audience. His Spirit working through consecrated believers now bears witness in all directions.

He is no longer “pent up,” no longer “hindered.”

HE HAS CAST THE FIRE AT LAST!

THE PROMISE IS TO YOU!

This experience is promised to saved people of every age. In Peter’s preaching, the list included YOU, YOUR CHILDREN, THOSE AFAR OFF, and even as many as the Lord our God shall call. He also includes all those who have repented. Acts 2:39: “For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.”

It matters not who YOU or your children are, or how “afar off” you or they may be, all are on the list. THE PROMISE IS TO YOU!

John, preaching to a multitude said, “he shall baptize YOU with the Holy Ghost and with fire.” Luke 3:16b.

Then, the promise is for ANY and ALL who will meet the condition, for all of God’s promises are conditional.

Joel said that it was for ALL flesh. (Joel 2:28) However, that “flesh” must be obedient according to Acts 5:32. “The Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that OBEY him.”

Certainly everyone needs this experience today. Even Mary, the mother of Jesus, whom the Lord chose to be His mother because of her purity, felt her need for appropriating this promise. She was among the first to receive. (Acts 1:14)

God’s Recipe for Power:

Jesus said, “Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you.” Acts 1:8a. This is God’s Recipe for Power. Every Christian needs this power and should desire it and seek it earnestly.

This experience is a DIRECT COMMAND!

“And, (Jesus) being assembled together with them, COMMANDED them that

they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father . . .,” Acts 1:4.

SO YOU ARE COMMANDED TO BE FILLED.

Do you love the Lord? You say, “Of course, I love Jesus.” Then there is one way you can prove that you love him, and that is by keeping his commandments, and one of them is that YOU BE FILLED. Jesus said, “If ye love me, KEEP MY COMMANDMENTS.” John 14:15.

Then, if you really love the Lord, you will do as He commanded, and “BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT;” Eph. 5:18b.

Furthermore, since you have been COMMANDED to be filled, there is but one thing for you to do -- determine that you are going to be filled with the Spirit NOW!

You don't know how to be filled? Then study the following lessons carefully. These teachings have helped thousands to receive this marvelous experience, the infilling of the Spirit, which is THE HOLY GHOST BAPTISM.