

**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 2

THE HOLY GHOST BAPTISM IS FOR US TODAY

GOD IS NO RESPECTER OF PERSONS

“I will pour out of my spirit upon all flesh.” Acts 2:17.

On the Day of Pentecost, Peter had correctly interpreted the prophecy of Joel that the Holy Ghost would be poured out on all flesh, and soon he was to learn a great lesson. He was still full of racial prejudice.

God heard the prayers of a Gentile, Cornelius, and sent him help so that he could receive the Holy Ghost, and thus God opened the door for the Gentiles to receive the Baptism of the Holy Ghost as well as the Jews. He was going to use Peter to minister to this Gentile, but first he must prepare Peter. (Read the entire 10th chapter of Acts before proceeding with this lesson.)

“He (Cornelius) saw in a vision. . . an angel of God . . . saying unto him, Cornelius . . . Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God. And now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter: . . . he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do . . . He called two of his household servants, and a devout soldier . . . and sent them to Joppa.” Acts 10:3-8.

Meanwhile, at Joppa, Peter was seeing a vision from God. (vs. 9-16.)

“On the morrow, as they went on their journey, and drew nigh unto the city, Peter went up upon the housetop to pray about the sixth hour: And he became very hungry, and would have eaten: but while they made ready, he fell into a

trance, And saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth: Wherein were all manner of fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat. But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean. And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common. This was done thrice: and the vessel was received up again into heaven.” Acts 10:9-16.

While Peter pondered upon this, the Spirit spoke to him and said, “Three men are here to see you. Go down and go with them, for I have sent them.”

Peter descended from the roof and found the three men just as he had been told. They were a Roman soldier and two Gentile servants. Realizing also that the presence of these Gentiles must be connected with the vision, he invited them to spend the night, promising to go with them to Caesarea the next day.

This was the beginning of a change. A Jew, a tanner, a Roman soldier and two other Gentiles all under one roof!

Gentiles Receive the Holy Ghost!

“While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished . . . because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God . . .” Acts 10:44-46.

Cornelius was an unusual Gentile.

The Gentile world of that day is described by Paul in Romans 1:21-32. Obviously Cornelius was different. He was a captain over one hundred men, and was Rome’s representative in Caesarea. He was, therefore, a man of power and influence.

He was a good man who feared God, who gave to charity and fasted and prayed. His good deeds and good character commended him to God. He is an illustration of one who is walking in all the light he has. But he needs Christ and he needs spiritual power. “Unto him that hath it shall be given.”

He was a good man. God has respect for goodness. Goodness alone will not save but it will draw God’s blessing and favor. God led Cornelius to a knowledge of salvation because Cornelius was living up to what light he had. God sent an angel to

him to tell him what to do for the hunger in his heart. He was to send men to Joppa to the house by the seaside. There they should inquire for Peter who would then come to Caesarea and tell him what to do.

The story of how God directed both Cornelius and Peter in this incident and got them together is very familiar to all Christians. Pentecostal Christians in particular like to recount how the household of Cornelius was saved and filled with the Holy Ghost and spoke in other tongues.

Upon leaving Joppa for Caesarea, Peter chose several Jewish believers to go with him. This whole matter was very unorthodox and he intended to have witnesses to whatever would happen!

As the group approached Caesarea, they were met by Cornelius. He had come to meet Peter, showing the respect in which he held him. He even attempted to worship him, but Peter stopped him. (Verse 26)

The Romans were taught to worship men as gods, their emperor especially, so Cornelius was doing only what he supposed was right.

Peter found quite a congregation ready when he arrived at the home of Cornelius. The relatives and friends, as well as the family and servants, were gathered.

“Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons:” (verse 34)

Peter proceeded to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, telling of His life, death, and resurrection, His commission to the believers. While he was still speaking the Holy Ghost fell upon the congregation and they received the Baptism of the Holy Ghost as did the believers on the Day of Pentecost. (Acts 11:15).

Time dims for us the significance of this event. This constituted an unprecedented revelation to the church at that time.

The prejudices were not easily discarded. The Jews with Peter were astonished that God should put this seal of approval on the Gentiles. Had not Jesus himself said, “Salvation is of the Jews.” John 4:22b.

Peter sensibly decided that if they were baptized in the Holy Ghost they might as well be baptized in water too, so he baptized them. Then he stayed and conducted a revival! Despite the fact that Peter had the privilege of officially opening the door of

Salvation to the Gentiles, it was Paul who eventually became the Apostle to the Gentiles.

It was, in fact, Paul who was the real champion of salvation to the entire world. He is the one who fought the battle through for the principle that Gentiles can be saved without being circumcised or otherwise fulfilling the traditional rites of Judaism.

This is especially interesting because Paul had been such a devout Jew before he was saved. According to the Jewish Talmud, every orthodox Jewish man of that day said a certain prayer every day.

It was, "Oh, God, I thank thee that I am not a Gentile, that I am not a slave, that I am not a woman!"

How the Holy Spirit changes men! Now Paul, the Christian writes:

"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." Gal. 3:28.

However, Judaism dies hard! Even today whole denominations trust in observance of the law for salvation though the Bible teaches, "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace." Gal. 5:4.

GOD'S GREAT GIFT

The Baptism of the Holy Ghost is the second great gift that God has given us. Second only in that it was necessary for the Lord's sacrifice to precede the coming of the Spirit. "Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin" God had said; and "though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." God had promised that the blood of Jesus Christ would cleanse us from all unrighteousness (un-right-ness), thus providing a clean temple for His Holy Spirit.

Hence, the unspeakable gift of God's dear Son had to precede the coming of the Spirit, spoken of in the King James Version as "the gift of the Holy Ghost." Therefore, the Lord's work on the cross and His resurrection is described as, "He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men."

The Holy Ghost is Himself a gift of God to the believer and He (the Spirit) also bestows gifts to men.

“And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.” Ephesians 4: 11-13.

The foregoing are knowing as the “ministry gifts” and have much to do with the believer's calling. They are not to be confused with the nine supernatural gifts of the Spirit enumerated in I Cor. 12, nor the fruit of the Spirit mentioned in Galatians 5:22, 23.

A Christian is a partaker of the divine nature of Jesus Christ to which we have access through the Holy Ghost. (Unfortunately many today think a Christian is a person who gives mental assent to a code of ethics. Even some Pentecostals think this, and therefore have a shallow spiritual experience that is not sufficient to bring forth a new creation.)

One of the better Bibles that contain notes, has a footnote under Galatians 5:22 & 23, which says, “Christian character is not mere moral or legal correctness, but it is the possession and manifestation of nine graces. Love, joy, and peace which is character as an inward state. Longsuffering, gentleness, and goodness which is character in expression toward man, and faith, meekness, and temperance which is character in expression toward God. Taken together they present a moral portrait of Christ, and may be taken as the apostle's explanation of Gal. 2:20, “Not I, but Christ” and as a definition of fruit in John 15:1-8. This character is possible because of the believer's union to Christ (John 15:5; I Cor. 12:12, 13), and is wholly the fruit of the Spirit in those believers who are yielded to Him” (Gal. 5:22, 23).

Under the Old Testament plan God required “legal righteousness of man,” while under UNMERITED FAVOR commonly referred to as GRACE, God imparts true righteousness to man. This was promised many times in the Old Testament:

“For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people. To whom he said, This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing: . . .” Isaiah 28:11, 12.

“And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophecy; your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaidens in those days will I pour out my spirit.” Joel 2:28, 29.

Along with the idea of “rest and refreshing” the coming of the Holy Spirit is frequently referred to as “rain.”

“For he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month.”
Joel 2:23.

“Ask ye of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain.” Zech. 10:1a.

But to return to the thought of imparted righteousness, the Lord said, “I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.” Jer. 31:33b and Heb. 8:10b.

THE MODERN DAY OUTPOURING OF THE HOLY GHOST

There were Spirit-filled people throughout the Church Age, but the early plentiful outpouring diminished as the church declined in spirituality.

But in 1906 at a small mission on Azusa Street in Los Angeles, California, God sent another mighty outpouring of the Holy Ghost, accompanied with the evidence of speaking with other tongues as on the Day of Pentecost. This ushered in the great worldwide Pentecostal revival that swept over the world with signs, wonders, and miracles.

One of the consecrated men who helped to pray down this latter rain was Frank Bartleman. In his booklet entitled, “How Pentecost Came to Los Angeles,” he describes it to us.

After telling of the many months spent by him and others in deep travailing prayer, he goes on to say:

“One night in the church during a deep spirit of prayer on the congregation, the Lord came suddenly so near that we could feel His presence as though He were closing in on us around the edges of the meeting. Two-thirds of the people rose to their feet in alarm, and some ran hurriedly out of the house, even leaving their hats behind.

“There was no demonstration in the natural out of the ordinary to frighten them. It was a supernatural manifestation of His nearness.

“Later, another afternoon, seven of us seemed providentially led to join hands

and agree in prayer to ask the Lord to pour out His Spirit speedily, with “signs following”. Where we got the idea from at the time, I do not know. He must have Himself suggested it to us.

“We did not have “tongues in mind”. I think none of us had ever heard of such a thing. This was February 1906.

“On April 15, in our meeting, a colored sister spoke in tongues. This created a great stir. The people gathered in little companies on the sidewalk after service inquiring what this meant. We then learned that the Spirit had fallen a few nights earlier, on April 9, in a little cottage on Bonnie Brae Street where prayer meetings were held. A number had spoken in tongues then.

“Evidently the Lord had found the little company at last, outside as always, through whom He could have the right of way. That which man esteems had been passed by again and the Spirit born again in a humble “stable” outside ecclesiastical establishment as usual.

“A body must be prepared in repentance and humility, for every outpouring of the Spirit.

“The Spirit wrought very deeply. We had no human program. The Lord Himself was leading. The services ran almost continuously. The people came to meet God. He was always there.

“The meeting did not depend on a human leader. God’s presence became more and more wonderful. In that old building with its bare floors and low rafters, God took men and women to pieces and put them together again for His glory. Pride and self-assertion, self-importance and self-esteem could not survive there.

“The meetings started themselves spontaneously. I never saw an altar call given. Someone might be speaking. Suddenly the Spirit would fall upon the congregation. God Himself gave the altar call. Men would fall all over the house or rush for the altar. It was a fearful thing to grieve the Spirit. The whole place was steeped in prayer. The Shekinah glory rested there.

“I have stopped more than once within two blocks of the place and prayed for strength before I dared to go on because the presence of the Lord was so real!

“On the afternoon of August 16th, the Spirit manifested Himself through me in tongues . . . All who received this baptism spoke in tongues.”

The subsequent history of that first twentieth century “rain” is well known to us. Thousands have since received their personal Pentecost, speaking with other tongues as the Spirit gave utterance according to this scripture:

“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.

Thousands have confused the anointing(s) and blessings of God with the Baptism of the Holy Ghost. But unless you have received according to Acts 2:4, speaking with other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance, you have not received the Baptism of the Holy Ghost. This experience is for YOU today!

As you continue these studies, you will learn how to receive this blessed experience, which will change your life.

WHAT THE HOLY GHOST BAPTISM IS NOT

It is NOT the Experience of Salvation.

Regeneration - - conversion -- confession -- confirmation -- New Birth -- or whatever you may call being saved is NOT the Holy Ghost Baptism. Salvation is the first step and, of course, is very wonderful, but the Baptism of the Holy Ghost is a separate and distinct experience.

Those who teach that the Baptism is identical with the New Birth base their doctrine upon I Cor. 12:13, “For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body . . . and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.”

They claim this verse teaches that when the sinner repents he receives the Baptism of the Holy Ghost and thus enters into the spiritual body of Christ. But rather, this verse shows that it is the Holy Ghost who brings each member into the body of Christ by an immersion into it. Thus the Baptism of the Holy Ghost and the baptism into the body of Christ are not synonymous terms. They are two separate experiences. Peter said, “Repent and be baptized (now) . . . and ye shall (future) receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” Acts 2:38.

First, we repent and are baptized (in water) and then receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, which is the Baptism of the Holy Ghost according to Acts 2:4.

It is plain that these are two distinct, separate experiences. However, it is possible for one to be saved and then receive the Holy Ghost Baptism almost

simultaneously or to receive it the same day or the same night, but HE RECEIVES TWO SEPARATE AND DISTINCT EXPERIENCES.

That one does not receive both experiences in one is show by the fact that the disciples were saved men, had their “names written in heaven” Luke 10:20b, but were told by Jesus to “wait for the promise of the Father.” Acts 1:4, 5. It was still in the future. “And behold, I send the promise of the Father upon you; but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.” Luke 24:49.

This is further borne out by the fact that the Samaritans did not receive the Holy Ghost at the time they were converted. They had “given heed” to the Word of God and many had received healing; they had been baptized in water but did not receive the Holy Ghost until later, when Peter and John laid their hands upon them:

“Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles that he did. For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them: and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed. And there was great joy in that city.” Acts 8:5-8.

“But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.” Acts 8:12.

“Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.” Acts 8:14-17.

The Apostle Paul was converted on the road to Damascus. (Acts 9:1-6). He did not receive the Holy Ghost until three days later when the Lord sent Ananias to lay hands upon him to receive his sight:

“And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized.” Acts

9:17, 18.

The twelve men at Ephesus were saved men, called “disciples.” They were asked, “Have ye received the Holy Ghost SINCE (not when) ye believed?” Acts 19:2. They were baptized in water in the fifth verse, but did not receive the Holy Ghost until Paul laid hands upon them in the sixth verse.

At conversion, the Christian is not filled with the Holy Ghost (Holy Spirit) but is made a partaker of the Spirit of Christ. “If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his.” Rom. 8:9.

But this is not the Baptism of the Holy Spirit that comes with the evidence of speaking with other tongues. There is a vast difference between having the abiding presence of Christ and being literally FILLED with the Holy Ghost.

Water Baptism is NOT the Baptism of the Holy Ghost.

Water Baptism is taught in the Bible, and all believers should be baptized in water as Jesus commanded. (Matt. 28:19) But it is not the Baptism of the Holy Ghost.

In Philip’s revival in Samaria, some had been baptized in water but not until Peter and John came did they receive the Baptism of the Holy Ghost. (Acts 8) Simon had been baptized in water (Acts 8:13-15) but he had not received the Baptism of the Holy Ghost.

Cornelius and his company received the Baptism of the Holy Ghost but were baptized in water after receiving that experience. The Bible says:

“While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, Can any forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord.” Acts 10:44-48a

Old man “self” is to be crucified. Sometimes this is not as quick a process as many feel it is, but we must “press toward the mark,” for, we “should not serve sin.” When we see Him, we shall be like Him (I John 3:2). Yes, sanctification is a definite, glorious Biblical teaching, but it is not the Baptism of the Holy Ghost.

PURPOSE OF THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY GHOST

The Holy Ghost is for the sole purpose of qualifying men to do the same works that Jesus did, and to witness for him in the earth, and to carry out His work on the earth.