

Filled With Fire: The Power and Purpose of Spirit-Baptism

Dr. John Carmichael

[Act 2:1-4 NASB95] 1 When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. 2 And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance.

- Pentecostal church stats: Estimates suggest over 644 million people identify as Pentecostal or Charismatic Christians. Combined, they make up about 26 - 27% of all Christians. According to Christianity Today, Pentecostal and Charismatic traditions are the fastest-growing Christian movements globally and among those in the U.S., driven principally by conversions. A Christian Post article highlights that Pentecostal churches continue to grow in the U.S., fueled by their emphasis on Holy Spirit power, deliverance, supernatural healing, and cultural diversity. They thrive on experiential faith, supernatural expectation, and multiethnic engagement - all of which attract seekers and believers alike. Their growth contrasts with declines in traditional or mainline denominations - even as America's overall Christian identification plateaus.
- According AGTS study: 70% receive before age 39 (50% before age 19).
- In the days following Jesus' resurrection, He gave His disciples a divine instruction: Wait.
- Not wait in fear but wait in faith but for the power that would come from heaven.
- [Luk 24:49 NASB95] 49 "And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high."
- That waiting led them to an upper room encounter that would change the world.
- Spirit-baptism is not just a Pentecostal tradition; it's a Biblical mandate and a supernatural necessity.

What do modern Christians need to know about Spirit-baptism from Acts 2:1-4?

Here are five vital truths that Christians need to know about Spirit-baptism fr

- I. Spirit-Baptism is a Promise to Be Received, Not a Suggestion to Consider**
 - a. Jesus commanded His followers to wait for the baptism in the Holy Spirit.
 - b. It was not optional. It was essential.
 - c. [Act 1:4-5 NASB95] 4 Gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, "Which," [He said,] "you heard of from Me; 5 for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."
 - d. We must treat Spirit-baptism with the same urgency and obedience.
- II. Spirit-Baptism Brings Supernatural Power for a Supernatural Mission**
 - a. The early church didn't start with a strategy; it started with power.
 - b. [Act 1:8 NASB95] 8 but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."
 - c. Power to speak. Power to heal. Power to stand boldly.
 - d. Without the Holy Spirit, the disciples were hiding. With Him, they were proclaiming!
 - e. [Zec 4:6 NASB95] 6 Then he said to me, "This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel saying, 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' says the LORD of hosts.
- III. Speaking in Tongues is the Initial Evidence of Spirit-Baptism**

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- a. On the Day of Pentecost, the first thing that happened when they were filled was they spoke in tongues.
- b. [Act 2:4 NASB95] 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance.
- c. This pattern repeats in:
 - i. Acts 10:44 - 46 - Cornelius' household: "...hearing them speaking with tongues and exalting God."
 - ii. Acts 19:6 - Believers in Ephesus: "...they [began] speaking with tongues and prophesying."
 - iii. What about the other two events where tongues is not mentioned?
 1. Acts 9:17 – Paul, [1Co 14:18 NASB95] 18 I thank God, I speak in tongues more than you all;
 2. Acts 8:17-18 – he "saw" something, [Act 8:17-18 NASB95] 17 Then they [began] laying their hands on them, and they were receiving the Holy Spirit. 18 Now when Simon saw that the Spirit was bestowed through the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money,
- d. Tongues is not the only result of Spirit-baptism, but it is the initial physical evidence. An unmistakable, supernatural sign that something from heaven has entered your life.
- e. Tongues also edify the believer (1 Corinthians 14:4) and is a prayer language (Romans 8:26).

IV. Spirit-Baptism Unifies and Purifies the Church

- a. [Act 2:1 NASB95] 1 When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place.
- b. Unity preceded the outpouring, but the outpouring deepened the unity.
- c. The Holy Spirit breaks down walls between cultures, classes, personalities.
- d. [1Co 12:13 NASB95] 13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.
- e. The fire that fell was cloven tongues. Touching each one personally and corporately.

V. Spirit-Baptism is for Today and For You

- a. Some say it ended with the apostles. But Scripture says otherwise:
- b. Acts 2:38 - 39 - "...you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off..."
- c. "... all who are far off..." includes you — right now.
- d. Mark 16:17 - "These signs will accompany those who have believed: in My name ... they will speak with new tongues..."
- e. This is not emotionalism. It's empowerment. It's not for a denomination; it's for a generation.

- **The early church began in power, not just principles.**
- **You don't need more talent, money, or popularity. You need power from on high.**
- **The same Spirit that filled that upper room can fill your life today.**
- **Don't stop at salvation; move into saturation.**