

STUDY 5

Baptism as Receiving the Spirit

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THE NEEDED BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Spirit of God (Heb. *ruach 'elohim*) was present at the creation of the world, hovering over the waters (Gen. 1:1–2). In Romans 8:18–23, we find the Spirit communicates the deep expectation of creation's future glory to us as we await the fullness of our redemption. Between creation and consummation there has not been a time in history when the Spirit of God has not been at work, deeply involved in the plan and purpose of God for His creation, and involved as the agent of the Father's action as faithful Creator. In *The Day of the Spirit*, Geoffrey Bingham enumerates the elements of the multi-faceted intention of God, describing nine elements.¹ In summary, that intention is that in eternity God will have with Him a peer community, participating in the fullness of the glory of His Son, in full communion with Him, and serving Him in His eternal purposes for His creation.

At the creation, the Lord God shaped the man from the dust of the ground and he became a living being (Heb. *nephesh chayyah*) when the Lord God breathed into him the breath of life (Heb. *nishmath chayyiyim*, Gen. 2:7). This phrase does not exactly correspond with the Spirit of God in Genesis 1. However, in Ezekiel 37, when the prophet sees the valley of very dry bones, hopeless and lifeless (vv. 2, 11), he is called to prophesy to the bones that the Sovereign Lord will make breath (Heb. *ruach*) enter them and cause them to come to life (v. 6). This vision presents the revival of God's people by the Spirit in terms of God's Edenic breathing into Adam. Putting this together, Man² is created to be a Spirit-filled being, participating in the purpose of God for His creation as a vice-regent under His great Kingship.

The gift of the Spirit of God is essential for Man's dynamic living in the gift and destiny of this glorious mandate. That mandate involves, in Genesis 1:26ff., the man and the woman fruitfully filling the earth, subduing it and ruling over the creation; and in Genesis 2:15, the tending and guarding of the garden of God's presence.

¹ See Geoffrey Bingham, *The Day of the Spirit* (NCPI, Blackwood, 1985), pp. 11–14.

² In this study, 'Man' stands for the male–female unity which constitutes humanity, and 'man' refers to specifically male persons.

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Putting these together we can say that the gift of the Spirit was for Man's participation, under and in fellowship with God, in the total sanctification of the creation.

A person reading only the Scriptures mentioned above would see that something has happened in the intervening history such that humanity as a whole, and Israel in particular in this prophecy, are in desperate need of a new infusion of the breath of God, a new receiving of the Holy Spirit. The temptation of Man by the serpent in Eden, and his foolish and evil submission to it, was a denial of the word of God. God's word and His Spirit always operate together, and to deny the word was to deny and resist the Spirit.³ God had warned that the day he ate of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, Man would die. So, Man died. He had lived by the presence of the Spirit, and so we must assume that he was no longer a living soul, filled with the Spirit of God, energised by God for his knowledge of God and service of Him in His plan for the world's sanctification. As a 'dead man walking', he:

- no longer knew God; in fact he sought to evade God, and suppressed the truth of God with acts of wickedness, and so became darkened in his mind, foolishly exchanging God's glory for that of idols (Gen. 3:8; Rom. 1:18–23);
- was no longer energised by the Spirit—in fact he was energised by another 'spirit', the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit now at work in the sons of disobedience (Eph. 2:2); and
- no longer had the liberty and joy of the service of God; in fact he was the slave of sin, enslaved by his passions, under the control of false gods and powers, and slavishly fearful of death and judgement (John 8:34; Rom. 6:16–22, esp. v. 19; Gal. 4:3, 8; Titus 3:3).

Instead of destruction, God revealed His gracious, salvific purpose—put in place before the beginning of creation—that the serpent would be destroyed through a descendant of the woman, even as the serpent bruised that descendant with his poison (Gen. 3:15). This must have meant, amongst its many elements, that God's saving purpose involved the breathing again of His Spirit into Man to make him live before Him. From this point in history there were those who heard this promise, and the subsequent promises of God's saving intention, and had faith in God and were the people of God, and were people of the Spirit. There were also those who refused this gracious promise and were people of the flesh. The Holy Spirit worked in the line of faith, raising up a prophetic lineage who spoke of the intentions of God for His creation, and through whom God made His promises clearer. These prophets spoke of the grace that was to come, because the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating the sufferings he would undergo and the glories that his sufferings would establish (1 Pet. 1:10–12).

Included in that prophetic line was a repeated and growing promise of the coming outpouring of the Holy Spirit (e.g. Isa. 32:14–15; 44:2–5; Ezek. 36:25–27; Joel 2:28–29). But the prophets' main concentration was on the promise concerning the Seed, the promised Son, the Messiah, the anointed (with the Spirit) King who would fulfil the plan of God, securing the Kingdom of God (e.g. Isa. 9:6–7; 11:1–2; 42:1; 61:1–2; etc.).

³ See Geoffrey Bingham, *The Day of the Spirit*, p. 29.

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THE SPIRIT BAPTISER COMES

With that long history of prophetic build-up, it is little wonder that John the Baptist's message caused such a stir in Israel. He called people to repentance because the Kingdom of heaven was at hand (Matt. 3:1–3), that is, all of the prophetic promises about God's plans for the restoration of His creation were about to be fulfilled. In Isaiah 57:14ff., the prophet had spoken of a time coming when one would call for the preparation of the way (so also in 40:3ff.; cf. Matt. 3:3; Mark 1:2–3; Luke 3:4–6). In Isaiah 57:15 this is linked directly with the promise and intention of God to *revive the spirit* of the lowly and the heart of the contrite. The 're-spiration' of Man was at hand. There were three strands to John's message: the nearness of the Kingdom of God, the forgiveness of sins and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Israel was called to be baptised; an extraordinary demand, as up to now it had been only proselytes from among the Gentiles who had been required to undergo this ritual washing. This baptism was all preparatory (Luke 3:15–18), for one was coming whose sandals John was not worthy to untie, who would baptise with the Holy Spirit and with fire. The matter of the plan of God, the Kingdom of God, would be resolved finally by him.

Luke shows that the coming of Christ was accompanied by an eruption of the work of the Holy Spirit. Jesus' conception had been by the power of the overshadowing Holy Spirit (Luke 1:35; cf. Gen. 1:2). In Mary's womb Jesus had been recognised by John, who leapt for joy whilst still in the womb of his mother Elizabeth, as the Spirit filled him (Luke 1:15, 39ff.). At John's birth, Zechariah had been filled with the Holy Spirit and burst out in glorious prophecy both of the fact of the time of fulfilment now coming, and of John's particular role in that time as forerunner (Luke 1:67ff.). At the time of Mary's purification Jesus had been taken to the temple and the old man Simeon, filled and moved by the Spirit to enter the temple courts, saw him and prophesied over him as the embodiment of God's salvation (Luke 2:25ff.).

All of this leads to the baptism of Jesus by John, at the end of the long line of the people of Israel. Jesus' baptism was marked off from all the others by the fact that in his prayer after baptism, the Spirit of God descended from an open heaven, and the voice of the Father declared, 'You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased' (Luke 3:22).⁴ Putting together the reference that this made to Isaiah 42:1–2,⁵ and Psalm 2:7,⁶ he was being anointed as Messiah and commissioned for his work in establishing the Kingdom of God. Luke then immediately records the genealogy of Jesus, tracing back to Adam (Luke 3:23ff.). Adam's mention here, with the Spirit's association with the water baptism, seems to be Luke insisting that we understand this event in the light of the plan of God for the restoration of the whole creation, and of Man as a key part of the restoration.

Immediately Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, was led by the Holy Spirit out to the desert where he was tempted by the devil (Luke 4:1–13). Again, the parallels with the opening chapters of Genesis are clear. Satan's line of attack was to lead Christ either

⁴ Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are from the English Standard Version.

⁵ 'The *servant* of Isaiah's prophecy is the one who has God's Spirit upon him with a view to proclaiming justice (*mishpat*) to the nations' (Geoffrey Bingham, *The Day of the Spirit*, p. 51).

⁶ The frequency of reference to this psalm in the New Testament shows that the early church saw Jesus in the light of the psalm. Jesus is the King placed alongside God, bringing the nations, 'the ends of the earth', to subjection despite their rebellion.

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to doubt, or more likely to presume upon, his Messianic Sonship.⁷ The Spirit-filled King triumphed over this attack, through obedience to the commands of the Father, and returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit (Luke 4:14). At Nazareth he ‘launched’ his public ministry, declaring in effect that he was the one whom Isaiah had looked to when he saw the one upon whom was the Spirit of the Lord, empowering him for the task of the liberation of the world.

From this point on in Luke, the Holy Spirit, who has been everywhere in these early chapters, suddenly seems to drop from view. There are only a few references to him,⁸ but a theme that has been in the background to this point is now brought to prominence, that of the Kingdom of God. The two are of the one piece, and the Holy Spirit is the agent of the establishing of the Kingdom. Jesus’ ministry cannot be understood apart from the Kingdom (and nor can the gift of the Holy Spirit). The Kingdom of God is the reign and rule of God, and in particular it is His exercising of this reign and rule to accomplish His purposes in and for creation. That intention is that there be a filling of creation with His glory, and the exclusion and destruction of all evil from it, led by the full participation of humanity in His glory. This must involve the ‘re-spiration’ of Man, for glory comes only as ‘the Spirit of glory and of God’ rests upon him (1 Pet. 4:14).

THE SPIRIT—THE GIFT OF THE CRUCIFIED, RISEN AND ASCENDED LORD JESUS

John the Baptist had prophesied that Jesus would baptise with the Holy Spirit and fire. In John the Apostle’s gospel we see that John recognises Jesus as the Lamb of God, the one who removes the world’s sins (John 1:29). At Jesus’ baptism a little later in the passage, John sees the Spirit descend and remain on Christ and knows that Jesus will baptise with the Holy Spirit (John 1:32–34) and so he is the Son of God. These two—the taking away of the world’s sin through sacrificial death and baptising with the Holy Spirit—are deeply connected. Later in John 4, as Jesus spoke with the Samaritan woman, he promised to her that he would give water that would well up into an ever-flowing stream even to eternal life (v. 14), even a life of worship of the Father in Spirit and in truth (vv. 23–24). She recognised that only Messiah could do this, and Jesus identified himself to her as that one (vv. 25–26). In John 7:37–39, in the temple at Jerusalem, Jesus called all those thirsty (i.e. ‘dis-Spirited’) to come to him to drink. Again he promised streams of living water to flow from them as they did so. John adds as a comment:

Now this he said about the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were to receive, *for as yet the Spirit had not yet been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified* (John 7:39, emphasis mine).

The outpouring of the Spirit on needy and thirsty humanity required the glorification of Jesus. In his high priestly prayer immediately before his arrest and

⁷ The ‘*If you are the Son of God . . .*’ really carries the sense, ‘You and I both know that you are the Son of God; so since this is the case . . .’ It is an attack which intends to have Christ act independently and to arrogate to himself the setting of his course, rather than seeing his life as one essentially of obedience to the Father.

⁸ Luke 10:21; 11:13; 12:10, 12.

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crucifixion (John 17), Jesus prayed for the Father to glorify him that he might glorify the Father (v. 1).⁹ All this was so that he could give eternal life to all whom the Father gave him, that is, to bring them into renewed relationship with the Father through Christ (vv. 2–3). The whole of the prayer had his coming arrest, death, resurrection, and glorification—ascension in view. The outpouring of the Spirit required this action; without it the flow of the Spirit into human beings to bring new life would be impossible. In connection with the death of Christ, Hebrews 9:14 tells us that it was by the eternal Spirit that Christ offered himself unblemished to God. By the power of the Spirit, then, the following happened:

... God put [Jesus] forward as a propitiation by his blood . . . (Rom. 3:25);
... he made him to be sin who knew no sin . . . (2 Cor. 5:21);
... [he] sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins . . . (1 John 4:10); and
He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree . . . (1 Pet. 2:24).

All this catches up Isaiah's prophecy:

Surely he has borne our griefs
and carried our sorrows;
yet we esteemed him stricken,
smitten by God, and afflicted.
But he was wounded for our transgressions;
he was crushed for our iniquities;
upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace,
and with his stripes we are healed.
All we like sheep have gone astray;
we have turned every one to his own way;
and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all (Isa. 53:4–6).

In the Spirit's power Jesus identified himself, as his baptism had prefigured, with the totality of humanity—the 'old Adam' in all the poverty of spirit, all the death of Man in sin that this meant—and bore it all before the holiness and wrath of God.¹⁰ This action is all needed for the accomplishing of all that work was for—the securing of the Kingdom and the renewing of Man in the life of God. All was done for the universal outpouring of the Spirit. And we know that Christ saw the fruit of the anguish of his soul, and was satisfied (Isa. 53:11). It was now 'Spirit', for he had been glorified.

In the 'Johannine Pentecost' of John 20:19–23, the risen Lord Jesus appeared to the disciples and breathed (cf. Gen. 2:7) on them, saying: 'Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of anyone, they are forgiven; if you withhold forgiveness from anyone, it is withheld.' This referred to their proclamation of the gospel, and their announcement to the hearers of what either their receiving of that gospel by faith or

⁹ This must have involved the equipping and strengthening of him by the Spirit of glory and of God. In fact, Heb. 9:14 tells us this must be at least part of the prayer.

¹⁰ P. T. Forsyth, in 'The Divine Self-emptying' in *God the Holy Father* (NCPI, Blackwood, 2009 [1957], first published 1897), pp. 39ff., has a section headed: 'IV.—The Incarnation as the Miracle of Grace Is Not in the Birth, but in the Death of Christ'.

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their rejecting it meant for them—forgiveness or condemnation, life or wrath (cf. John 3:36). The breathing on them by Christ indicated that the power of the Spirit they would need would involve the inclusion of them in the full dynamic of the restoration of creation. The power of the gospel is its energy for the recreation of the whole world, and the proclaimers of the gospel must have that power work in them, as well as them working in its power.

In Acts 1:1–8, Jesus is seen with his chosen apostles between his resurrection and his ascension. He appeared to them over the forty-day period, speaking with them about the Kingdom of God. He ordered that they not leave Jerusalem but wait there for the promise of the Father (v. 4; cf. Luke 24:49): ‘you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now’ (Acts 1:5). This is with a view to their participation in the mission of the Kingdom:

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth (Acts 1:8; cf. Ps. 2:8).

Wait they did, for what turned out to be ten days devoted to prayer (not the apostles only, but a band of about 120). When the day of Pentecost arrived, there was the sound of a rushing wind from heaven, filling the house, and the appearance of tongues of flame resting on the heads of each one, and ‘they were all filled with the Holy Spirit’ (Acts 2:1–4). Not one was missed or excluded. Each was given power to speak in other tongues in order to declare the wonderful deeds of God—the great acts of God in the glorification of Jesus Christ. Peter, speaking of this event to the gathered crowd, identified it as the fulfilment of Joel’s expectation of the universal outpouring of the Spirit in the last days (Acts 2:16ff.). This was so because Jesus of Nazareth whom they had crucified and killed had been raised by God, vindicated and established as the one at the right hand of the Lord (as anticipated in Ps. 110):

Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing. For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he himself says,

‘The Lord said to my Lord,
Sit at my right hand,

until I make your enemies your footstool’ (Acts 2:33–35).

RECEIVING THE SPIRIT AND BAPTISM IN ACTS

The Spirit-filled community immediately began the work of the proclamation of the gospel. As they did so, people came to repentance and faith, worked in them by the Spirit through the gospel. In Acts there does not seem to be a set pattern for the relationship of hearing gospel preaching, believing it, reception of the Spirit, and baptism that would become normative for the people of God, except that the four are considered to be an indivisible package:

- In Acts 2, Peter ‘supplemented’ his proclamation of the gospel when the hearers, cut to the heart, asked what they were to do. He urged them to repent and be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of their sins, and he promised the gift of the Holy Spirit (v. 38). We read that those who

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received his word were baptised—about 3,000 souls (v. 41). It is not explicitly stated that they ‘received the Holy Spirit’, but that must surely be the case, for their life together was the expression of love in action (vv. 42ff.; cf. Rom. 5:5). In Acts 4:25ff., after Peter and John had been released by the Sanhedrin and the community had gathered in prayer and praise to God for the Messiah Jesus and to ask for boldness to continue to speak of him, they were *all* filled with the Holy Spirit, not as something subsequent to their believing but as the ongoing reality of what began when they believed.

- In Acts 8, following the persecution of the church in Jerusalem that issued from Stephen’s death, the believers, apart from the apostles, were scattered and the gospel was preached throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria (vv. 1, 4). In Philip’s ministry in Samaria we see the pattern: proclamation of Christ, reception of the word of God, baptism in the name of Christ, and then a subsequent falling of the Spirit with the prayer and laying on of hands by apostles Peter and John (8:4ff.). The testimony to Christ in the gospel from Jerusalem to all Judea and Samaria and then to the ends of the earth was a task entrusted to the apostles, and each stage of the further expansion of that task needed the involvement of the apostles. This helps us to see that ‘It was not normative for hearers to believe and be baptised and *not* receive the Spirit’.¹¹
- In Acts 9, Christ appeared to Saul and confronted him with his opposition to the truth (vv. 4–9). Ananias was called by the Lord to visit Saul and lay hands on him for the recovery of his sight. The Lord had chosen Paul to be the one to bear his name before the Gentiles. Ananias put this together and when he visited Paul he said, ‘Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus . . . has sent me [to you] so that you may regain your sight *and be filled with the Holy Spirit*’ (v. 17). Paul was then baptised.
- In Acts 10, Peter, spoken to by the Spirit after his vision of the unclean animals made clean by God’s word, went to the home of the Roman, Cornelius. He received a welcome and spoke the word of the gospel and, while he spoke of Christ, the Holy Spirit fell on those who heard the word. As at Pentecost, the gathering spoke in tongues, extolling God. Peter’s immediate verdict was that baptism could not be withheld from these who had received the Spirit just as they had. A little later (11:15ff.) when Peter reported on these events in Jerusalem, the believers there glorified God for also granting to the Gentiles a repentance that leads to life (see also Acts 15:8).
- In Acts 13, at Pisidian Antioch, Paul proclaimed Jesus as God’s Messiah (13:13ff.) and ‘as many as were appointed to eternal life believed’ (v. 48). We are not told about baptism, but after Paul’s departure we are told that the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit, a mark of the presence of the Kingdom of God (v. 52; cf. Rom. 14:17).
- In Acts 19, Paul found at Ephesus a group of John the Baptist’s disciples. He asked if they had received the Holy Spirit when they believed. They replied, ‘No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit’. It seems to me unlikely

¹¹ Geoffrey Bingham, *The Day of the Spirit*, p. 87.

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that they were unaware of the *existence* of the Holy Spirit, given that the promise of the Spirit was such a keynote in John the Baptist's message. It is more likely that they did not know that it was 'yet Spirit' (cf. John 7:39), that is, that the Baptiser with the Holy Spirit had accomplished what was needed for its outpouring. They had received only John's baptism, and so were not aware of the fulfilment of all that John had been looking to by the Messiah Jesus Christ. In other words, they were not yet believers in Christ. Paul called them to believe in Christ, and they were baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus, and when Paul laid his hands on them the Holy Spirit came on them and they spoke in tongues.

The point of this survey is to indicate that it was the norm, without being prescriptive in manner or order, for repentance and faith in Jesus Christ as Messiah to arise from gospel preaching; for baptism to be the sign and seal of that faith; for forgiveness of sins to be granted them and for the believers to receive the Holy Spirit. It was all of one package and was all part of beginning in the Kingdom. Baptism with the Spirit is integral to salvation through faith in Christ.

FILLED UNTO ALL THE FULLNESS OF GOD

The danger with such a survey is that it may distract from the remarkable fact: *men and women received the Spirit where the gospel was preached in the Spirit's power.* This is so remarkable because it meant that men and women were filled unto all the fullness of God (Col. 2:10; Eph. 3:19; Rom. 15:29). Faith in Christ, baptism and the gift of the Holy Spirit, from the hearing of the gospel, belong together as the point in which the reality of the Kingdom of God comes home to us.

Spirit of Faith Come down; Reveal the Things of God

Jesus spoke about the coming ministry of the Holy Spirit in John 14 and 16. He spoke about the events that lay ahead of him in his death, resurrection and ascension as being the preparation of a place for us with him in his Father's house. From there he would come back and take us to be with him. Until then he would ask the Father and another Counsellor would be given—the Spirit of truth. By the ministry of the Spirit, we would then be sure of the presence of Christ and the Father with us. All of this is in the context of our loving Christ and obeying his commands. Nobody knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God—those things cannot be accepted by the natural (unregenerate) person as they are folly to the blind mind, but by the Spirit 'we have the mind of Christ', for the Spirit has revealed this to us (1 Cor. 2:7–16). When the Father sent the Holy Spirit, he would teach us all things and remind us of everything Christ had said. This would be the source of incomparable peace to us. In John 16:13–15 a similar thing is said:

When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

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When the Holy Spirit declares the things of Christ to us, this is not simply an information session about the events and significance of the cross. Rather, these things come with deep conviction (1 Thess. 1:5), such that we know ourselves to be on the inside of them. Revelation only operates sparingly. Only the Holy Spirit, by whom Christ offered himself, is able to show us that inner spiritual reality of the cross, and its meaning for the judgement of sin and the salvation of the world. As the Spirit brings home the message of the gospel we should expect that there would be in the hearers deep conviction—and flooding joy!—about the forgiveness of and cleansing from sins, and reconciliation with the Father. (What kind of gospel preaching would be satisfied with less than that?)

The conviction of all this comes and we come to know God as Father! The Spirit within us cries, ‘Abba! Father!’ (Gal. 4:6) and we cry, ‘Abba! Father!’ (Rom. 8:15). This worshipful cry of adoption is only from those who, having been in slavery to the elemental principles of the world and to fear, have come to see that God has sent forth His Son to redeem those under the law by standing in their place under the law’s condemnation. This knowledge issues too in the putting away of all idols.

Just as the cry to the Father is Spirit-produced, so too the call of the worshipping and proclaiming church, ‘Jesus is Lord!’ This statement is the full heart declaring the reality of Christ’s headship over the Kingdom and confidence that the Kingdom will prevail. Such a statement is true only on the lips of those who not only mouth them, but who do what the Lord Jesus tells them (Luke 6:46; cf. Matt. 7:21). With baptism in the Holy Spirit comes an energising power, such that those who live according to the Spirit have their minds set on the things of the Spirit (Rom. 8:5), which stands in contrast to the fleshly mindset which is at enmity to God and cannot submit to His law. Where the Spirit is at work, God works in us, ‘both to will and to work for his good pleasure’ (Phil. 2:13). Paul can speak of the fact he worked harder than all the other apostles, ‘though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me’ (1 Cor. 15:10).

The baptism of the Spirit brings a person to life! The dry bones are clothed with flesh and come to life and live!

THE SPIRIT AND THE BRIDE SAY, ‘COME!’

The primary effect and intention of all this is to fill the people of God with true dynamic for the proclamation of the gospel out to the ends of the earth. The gospel is the gospel of the Kingdom and all the world must hear of Jesus Christ to whom everything, even to the ends of the earth, has been granted as his inheritance. Unless the greatness of the vision of the Kingdom, the utter graciousness of the Father in including us sparingly in the Kingdom through the death and resurrection of Christ, and the working of the Spirit in us as the people of the Kingdom together to take the gospel of the Kingdom to the ends of the earth has been brought to us dynamically, then we have not ever really understood the matter of baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Emil Brunner says:

Mission work does not arise from any arrogance in the Christian Church; mission is its cause and its life. The Church exists by mission, just as fire exists by burning. Where there is no mission there is

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no Church; and where there is neither Church nor mission, there is no faith. It is a secondary question whether we mean Foreign Missions or simply the preaching of the Gospel in the home Church. Missions, Gospel-preaching, is the spreading out of the fire which Christ has thrown upon the earth. He who does not propagate this fire shows that he is not burning. He who burns, propagates the fire. This 'must' is both things—an urge and a command.¹²

¹² Emil Brunner, *The Word and the World* (SCM Press, London, 1931, p. 11), quoted in Samuel Marinus Zwemer, *Evangelism Today: Message Not Method* (Fleming H. Revell Company, New York, 1944), p. 7.