



...'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' Says the LORD of hosts.
Zechariah 4:6

Introduction

Rodney Howard Browne is the self proclaimed "Holy Ghost Bartender." He claims you can get drunk in the Holy Spirit. His followers have been caught on film staggering around like they are drunk on alcohol.

Let me show you...

[Video Clip]

Is holy laughter extreme or to be expected?

Welcome to the debate over the Holy Spirit, His baptism, and His gifts!

- being changed to bring change -

I've come to understand the positions in the debate by using three words: **charismatic**, **charismaniac**, and **cessationist**.

The word *Charismatic* comes from the Greek word *charisma*, which is usually translated in the KJV as "gift." Paul uses *charisma* in First Corinthians twelve to designate the supernatural gifts made available to individual Christians by the Holy Spirit. The term *charismatic*, when applied to religious groups, teachers, or customs usually implies that the participants believe that the spiritual gifts described in the New Testament are **all** available to Christians in modern times. Each Christian should expect to experience one or more on a regular basis. This would include the more supernatural gifts, such as healing and speaking in tongues.

Think of a spectrum, with charismatic being in the center. As you move one way, emphasizing experiences over the Word of God, you eventually end up with what Chuck Smith calls **charismania**. All sorts of odd and unusual phenomena are attributed to the Holy Spirit.

Pastor Chuck writes,

Charisma is a beautiful, natural anointing of God's Spirit upon a person's life, enabling him or her to do the work of God. It is that special dynamic of God's Spirit by which a person seems to radiate God's glory and love.

Charismania is an endeavor in the flesh to simulate charisma. It is any effort to do the work of the Spirit in the energies or abilities of the flesh - the old, selfish nature of a person. It is a spiritual hype that substitutes perspiration for inspiration. It is the use of the genius, energy and gimmicks of man as a substitute for the wisdom and ability of God. It can be demonstrated in such widely divergent forms as planning and strategy sessions, devising programs for church growth, raising funds for the church budget, or wild and disorderly outbursts in tongues that disrupt the Sunday morning message. Whatever lacks a sound biblical basis and demonstrates a lack of trust in the Holy Spirit to accomplish His purposes in the church apart from the devices and abilities of man is the work of the flesh (*Charisma vs. Charismania*).

The charismaniacs normally argue their position from the experiences themselves. In other words, since something obviously happened, it must be a real experience with the Holy Spirit.

- being changed to bring change -
Go back to the center. As you move from the center the other way, towards a more conservative view of the Holy Spirit and His gifts, you end up with a position called **cessationist**. (It's not how cessationists view themselves! They view themselves as biblical).

It describes those who believe that the more remarkable gifts of the Holy Spirit ceased after the first century.

John MacArthur is one of the best-recognized cessationist. He writes,

From A.D. 58 to A.D. 96 when John finished the Book of Revelation, no miracle is ever recorded. Miracle gifts like tongues and healings are mentioned only in 1 Corinthians, which is a very early epistle. Two later epistles, Ephesians and Romans, both discuss spiritual gifts, but neither mention these sign gifts.

Isn't that an interesting point? The later epistles discussing the gifts don't mention the sign gifts. No mention is made of the miraculous gifts; only in this very early epistle. By that time miracles were already looked on as something in the past; read Hebrews 2, 3, and 4: it was something already in the past.

Apostolic authority had already been affirmed; the message needed no further confirmation. And before the first century ended, the New Testament was written, circulated through the churches, and the revelatory gifts had ceased to have a purpose and so they passed away.

We are the charismatics. We are the center. We see no evidence in Scripture that certain gifts of the Holy Spirit have ceased. But we do *not* believe the Holy Spirit works independently from His Word. We see parameters in the Word that guide and direct the proper experiences with the Holy Spirit and the proper exercise of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Thus we reject the practices of hyper-pentecostal charismaniacs.

I want to discuss the baptism with the Holy Spirit. It is what Jesus promised to His disciples, then sent upon them on the Day of Pentecost. It is what Peter said Joel was referring to when Peter gave the first message of the Church Age.

Charismaniacs generally believe the baptism with the Holy Spirit is accompanied by speaking in tongues. Speaking in tongues becomes the evidence you have been baptized with the Holy Spirit.

- being changed to bring change -

We would reject that for at least three reasons:

1. First, when discussing the gifts in First Corinthians twelve, the apostle Paul includes speaking in tongues in a list of gifts that not everyone is given by the Holy Spirit (First Corinthians 12:28-30).
2. Second, the phenomena of speaking in other languages that accompanied the initial baptism with the Holy Spirit on Pentecost is not the gift of tongues later described by Paul.
3. Third, as we will see, the baptism with the Spirit empowers you to be witnesses. It is not something that comes over you to take control and make you do weird things.

Cessationists argue that the baptism with the Holy Spirit is a kind of spiritual benefit that accompanies your salvation. They say you are baptized by the Holy Spirit into the body of Christ the moment you are saved. For them, there is no further baptism with the Holy Spirit. Instead, you can go on being filled with the Spirit if you live a disciplined, obedient life.

We explain the baptism with the Holy Spirit by tracing three Greek prepositions that are used to describe our relationship with Him.

The three Greek prepositions used in the New Testament to designate the different relationships of the Spirit to the believer are: *para*, *en*, and *epi*.

In John 14:17 Jesus said to His disciples concerning the Holy Spirit,

John 14:17 ... you know Him, for He dwells with [para] you and will be in [en] you.

Here a twofold relationship is expressed: *para* (with) and *en* (in). The Holy Spirit was *with* us prior to our conversion. He is the One who brought us conviction of sin and revealed Jesus as the answer.

When we accepted Jesus as our Savior and invited Him into our lives, the Holy Spirit began to *indwell* us.

But God has something more - the beautiful empowering through the *epi* relationship. This is what Jesus was promising His disciples just prior to His ascension.

In Luke 24:49 He said,

Luke 24:49 Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon [epi] you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high."

In Acts 1:8 He said,

Acts 1:8 But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon [epi] you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

We read in Acts 10:44 that the Holy Spirit descended upon [epi] the Gentile believers in the house of Cornelius:

Acts 10:44 While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon [epi] all those who heard the word.

In Acts 19:6, when Paul laid hands upon the Ephesian believers, the Holy Spirit came upon [epi] them.

We read in Acts eight that Philip had gone to Samaria and preached Christ unto them; many people believed Philip's preaching of the things of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, and they were baptized. The Holy Spirit began to indwell them. It is obvious, however, that there was yet a further relationship to the Holy Spirit to be received, for when the Church in Jerusalem heard that the Samaritans had received the Gospel, they sent Peter and John unto them that they might pray for them to receive the Holy Spirit, for as yet He had fallen upon [epi] none of them.

Once we show from Scripture there is a further relationship with the Holy Spirit called the baptism with the Holy Spirit, the next question to ask and answer is, *What is it for?*

To answer that, let's look at what happened when the one-hundred twenty believers were initially baptized with the Holy Spirit. It occurred in verses two and three of Acts chapter two:

Acts 2:2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.

Acts 2:3 Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and *one* sat upon each of them.

It sounded like a rushing mighty wind. There was no wind; only the sound of it. All of a sudden, without any build-up, they were in the midst of a windless spiritual hurricane!

Then there was the sight of fire. The description seems to indicate that fire appeared over them, which divided and spread until a single flame-tongue of fire was over each one of them. It was in the form of a tongue perhaps because it would be through their Spirit-empowered speech that the Gospel would be spread.

The **sound** of the **wind** and the sight of the **fire** were a one-time phenomena at the birth of the Church. They are not repeated. **They were given as symbols to teach us what the baptism with the Holy Spirit is for.**

Wind is a divinely chosen symbol of God the Holy Spirit. He comes from Heaven; He's in the world; He moves at will.

There are many things **fire** symbolizes in Scripture. In this case, let's not miss the obvious. **Wind** affects **fire**. The **wind** spread the **fire** until it **sat upon** each of the one-hundred twenty believers in equal measure.

The Holy Spirit was sent from Heaven **upon** [epi] the disciples. He spread a **fire** over each of them. Newly baptized by Him, as these men and women spread throughout the world preaching the Gospel, that initial **fire** would also spread. *That is what wind-whipped fire always does!*

Their experience matches what Jesus said. Jesus said they would receive **the promise of the Father, the baptism with the Spirit**, in order to **be witnesses** who spread the Gospel to the uttermost parts of the earth. So we can say that the baptism with the Holy Spirit is the **wind-whipping** power that comes **upon** us in order to spread the Gospel like a **fire**.

We've seen the baptism with the Holy Spirit explained and defined. How is it received?

Jesus called it a **gift**, and **the promise of the Father**. A gift is received; a promise is claimed. **You are baptized with the Holy Spirit when, sometime in your Christian walk, you realize it's a promise and then receive, by faith, that God the Holy Spirit has empowered you to be witnesses.**

Many godly men have explained the baptism with the Holy Spirit as just this sort of one-time realization. Thomas Aquinas, Martin Luther, George Whitefield, John Wesley, Jonathan Edwards, John Flavel, Charles Simeon, Andrew Murray, D. L. Moody, R. A. Torrey, H. A.

Gordon, Stephen Olford, Billy Graham and many other prominent men of the past have testified to similar experiences.

D. L. Moody was an American evangelist in the 1800's, to the point that some have claimed he was the greatest evangelist of the 19th century.

Moody was already a successful minister but by his own admission later, he lacked power in his ministry. One day two women came up to him after a service. They said, "We have been praying for you."

"Why don't you pray for the people?" he asked.

"Because you need the power of the Spirit," they said.

Moody thought he had power. He had the largest congregations in Chicago, and there were many conversions.

He could not get this off his mind and he said,

There came a great hunger in my soul. I did not know what it was and I began to cry out to God as never before. I felt I did not want to live if I could not have this power for service. Well, one day, in the city of New York - oh, what a day! - I cannot describe it, I seldom refer to it; it is almost too sacred an experience to name. Paul had an experience of which he never spoke for fourteen years. I can only say that God revealed Himself to me, and I had such an experience of His love that I had to ask Him to stay His hand. I went to preaching again. The sermons were not different; I did not present any new truths, and yet hundreds were converted. I would not now be placed back where I was before that blessed experience if you should give me all the world - it would be as the small dust of the balance.

R. A. Torrey was another well-known pastor, author and evangelist of the late 1800's. He gives this testimony:

After I had been a Christian for some years, and after I had been in the ministry for some years, my attention was strongly attracted to certain phrases found in the Gospels and in the Acts of the Apostles, and in the Epistles, such as "baptized with the Holy Spirit," "filled with the Spirit," "the Holy Spirit fell upon them," "the gift of the Holy Spirit," "endued with power from on high," and other closely allied phrases.

As I studied these various phrases in their context, it became clear to me that they all stood for essentially the same experience; and it also became clear to me that God has provided for each child of His in this present dispensation that they should be thus "baptized with the Spirit," or, "filled with the Spirit."

As I studied the subject still further, I became convinced that they described an experience which I did not myself possess, and I went to work to secure for myself the experience thus described. I sought earnestly that I might "be baptized with the Holy Spirit." I went at it very ignorantly. I have often wondered if anyone ever went at it any more ignorantly than I did. But while I was ignorant, I was thoroughly sincere and in earnest, and God met me, as He always meets the sincere and earnest soul, no matter how ignorant he may be; and God gave me what I sought, I was "baptized with the Holy Spirit." And the result was a transformed Christian life and a transformed ministry.

At this point in my life, I have come to think of the baptism with the Spirit as this one-time realization, light going on in my head understanding, that the power to **be witnesses** to Jesus is a promise to realize and receive one-time by faith.

This matches the experiences believers had in the Bible. And it matches many testimonies I've heard from believers who, *after* they had been saved, came into an understanding of the Holy Spirit's empowering them to **be witnesses**.

[Testimony]

Calvary Hanford
- being changed to bring change -