

Receiving the Holy Spirit

Introduction

No other subject in all of Christianity has been the victim of more misinterpretation, false teaching, misunderstanding and outright chicanery than the doctrine of receiving the Holy Spirit. On this matter the word of God has been twisted, blended and beaten into a misshapen mass of utter confusion. The responsibility for this sorry state of affairs rests squarely upon the shoulders of those who have been charged with feeding the sheep. There will surely be a high price paid by these individuals for such scriptural shortsightedness.

Nevertheless God, not being the author of confusion, has indeed charted a clear course through the Scriptures so that anyone who truly thirsts after knowledge cannot help but find themselves face to face with the truth. The choice then becomes acceptance or rejection.

A note of caution is warranted before we proceed. In the ensuing teachings you will indeed be confronted by the Spirit of the word of God. If you are dogmatic and unwilling to count all you think you know as dung, you will learn nothing. For if after encountering these truths you remain unwilling to yield to the Holy Spirit, you will, in that Day, surely no longer be able to offer up ignorance as an excuse.

Finally, if you do not believe that the Bible is the true preserved word of God, not subject to any private interpretation, continuing any further in these teachings is useless, since the Scriptures are the only "proof" I will offer.

Receive the Holy Spirit

And when He said this, He breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit". (John 20:22)

Jesus spoke these words prophetically to His disciples shortly after His resurrection some 2,000 years ago. He is still speaking these same words today. Not as a matter of prophesy, but in exhortation to us that we might taste of the heavenly gift.

Before He was crucified, Jesus promised that although He would shortly no longer walk among men in the flesh, that He would pray the Father to send us another comforter or Helper in order that we not be left as orphans.

If you love Me, you will keep My commandments. And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you, and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. (John 14:15-18)

We can see from these verses that the identity of this comforter is none other than the Spirit of truth or Holy Spirit. And that He cannot be received by the world because the children of the world are under the influence of the god of this world - Satan, and he has blinded them to the truth. However, at the time Jesus spoke these words the disciples knew the Spirit because He dwelt with them (embodied in the man Jesus Christ), and at some future date would be in them.

In the New Testament there are several analogous phrases used to signify receiving the Holy Spirit:

I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandal I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. (Matt 3:11)

If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me as the scripture has said out of His heart shall flow rivers of Living water. But this He spoke concerning the Spirit whom those believing in Him would receive for the Holy Spirit was not yet given because Jesus was not yet glorified. (John 7:37 - 39)

Behold I send the promise of My Father upon you, but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high. (Luke 24:49)

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

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

While Peter was still speaking these words the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word. (Acts 10:44)

And it shall come to pass in the last days says God, that I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh. (Acts 2:17)

Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed ? (Acts 19:2)

And those of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also. (Acts 10:45)

If you knew the Gift of God and who it is who says to you "give Me a drink," you would have asked Him and He would have given you living water. (John 4:10)

For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, if they fall away to renew them again to repentance since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God and put Him to open shame. (Heb 6:4 - 6)

It is clear from the Scriptures that the gift of God is none other than the person of the Holy Spirit, who was sent to the earth realm by the Father some 2,000 years ago in response to the prayer of His Son. This same Spirit has been on earth for the past 2,000 years awaiting to indwell those children of God who would dare to believe and receive Him by faith, for He cannot be earned by works. As with any gift, if you have rendered something in return for it, that gift ceases to be a gift and becomes a wage. There are two and only two prerequisites to receiving the Holy Spirit. The first is that you must be born again,(that is believing in your heart that God raised Jesus from the dead and confessing with your mouth that He is Lord) for the world cannot receive the Holy Spirit. The second is that you must believe, for the receiving of the Spirit is not by works, but by the hearing of faith.(Gal 3:2 paraphrased)

If, dear reader, you have fulfilled these two requirements, it is absolutely impossible for you to fail to receive the gift of God, which is His Holy Spirit. I realize that there are those who would resist this teaching, preferring instead to believe that the Holy Spirit can only be received after exhaustive purification, sanctification, fasting, praying, self flagellation and worst of all, tarrying. This is an extraordinarily dangerous attitude, since it is the same one which subscribes to a gospel of works, not willing to accept the free gift of salvation through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the attitude which says I must sanctify

and cleanse my vessel by self imposed religion and fleshly ordinances; do not touch; do not taste; do not handle. This may look impressive to those who look upon your pristine exterior clothed in purple, and hear your words, though having a ring of truth, nevertheless are laden with the poison of hypocrisy. But it will in no wise leave unrevealed the sanctuary of the inner man; one of a white washed sepulchre full of dead men's bones.

On the contrary, our righteousness is a gift from God through the One Jesus Christ. (Rom 5:17) It is God who accounts to us righteousness because of our faith in Jesus Christ, and it is our works of righteousness that bear witness to the new birth in Christ Jesus. It is most important to realize that works follow righteousness; they do not result in righteousness. For as it is written, **"If righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain" (Gal 2:21)**

Likewise, in receiving the Holy Spirit no amount of self imposed religion will render your vessel "worthy" of receiving the gift of God. Your body becomes the temple of the Holy Spirit upon becoming born again. You give up possession of it, having been purchased by the shed blood of Jesus Christ, and are required to keep it under subjection. Otherwise it will surely be carried away in the lustful desires that come so natural to it. What is born again about us is our spirits, which are made alive to God through faith in Jesus Christ. We must contend with our bodies until they are consumed as dust in the land or redeemed for the incorruptible body, into which those of us who are alive at His coming will be instantly translated. For flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God.

One of the most important jobs of the Holy Spirit in occupying our bodies is to help our spirits overcome both the flesh as well as the carnal mind. This is nigh unto impossible without the gift of the Holy Spirit, for it is not a matter of making our vessels "worthy" to be indwelt by the Holy Spirit through our own efforts, but keeping our vessels, which were made worthy by grace through faith, undefiled and useful for service in the kingdom by the joint effort of the indwelling Holy Spirit taking hold together with our spirits. Only in this way are we able to present our bodies a living sacrifice and keep our flesh crucified daily.

This is the difference between those who walk in the flesh and fulfil its lusts and those who walk in the spirit as we are led by the Holy Spirit who indwells them. One word of caution here: the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is not an automatic guarantee of overcoming, but He is an enabler, whereby as you yield to His leading, you chart a course through the enjoyment of the fruits of His cohabitation with your spirit (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self control). Gal 5:22

You are free to quench the Holy Spirit inside of you, thereby making Him of no effect in your life and making you indistinguishable from a believer who has not received the Spirit. Or worse yet, the indulgences of your flesh may rival those of a non - believer, hastening its destruction that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. (1 Cor 5:5)

At this time a word needs to be mentioned concerning the erroneous doctrine of tarrying, or waiting for the Holy Spirit. On the basis of what Jesus said in Luke 24:49 and Acts 1:4, some have taught that we should, in like manner, tarry for the baptism with the Holy Spirit, indicating that after some specified amount of time God, beholding our patiently awaiting forms, will decide to go ahead and baptize us with His Spirit. I'm afraid these verses have been considerably wrongly divided. You see, when Jesus spoke these words, the Spirit had not yet been given by God because Jesus Himself was still on the earth.

Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. John 16:7

Seven days after Jesus' departure from the Mount of Olives, the Helper indeed arrived in the earth realm to take up His role as teacher, guide and empowerer of the church, as well as convictor of the world. I submit to you that the wonderful heavenly Gift promised through the Son and sent by the Father, the one and same Holy Spirit, has been on this earth for almost 2,000 years. Moreover He's been tarrying on you; waiting for faith to arise in your heart to allow Him to come upon you and indwell your body which is His temple. You see, it is unscriptural and betrays a lack of faith to wait on God to baptize you with the Holy Spirit, for you are waiting and seeking after a gift that has already been given. The key that unlocks this wonderful symbiosis with the Spirit of God is, **Do You Believe ?**

Remember when Peter was preaching to the Gentiles in Cornelius' household, and while Peter was yet speaking the words of the Gospel to them that the Holy Spirit fell upon them. How much tarrying do you think they did ? As a matter of fact, they had not yet been baptized in water, but believed the words Peter was speaking and it was accounted to them for righteousness, through the new birth of the Spirit .(John 3:5), They were able to receive by that same faith the baptism with that one same Spirit.

As it is written, out of the mouth of two or three witnesses, let every word be established. So let us explore another incident of a "tarryless" reception of the Holy Spirit. In Acts 19:1 - 7, we see that Paul encountered some disciples, who, having heard of the ministry of John the Baptist (probably through Apollos), were followers of the Way to the extent that they had been taught. Paul taught them more accurately the way of God, and they believed and were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Paul then laid hands on them and the men received the Holy Spirit. Notice in 19:2 it says that the men had not so much as heard whether there be a Holy Spirit. Rather difficult to tarry on one whom you have not yet heard, isn't it ? I would tell you then, stop tarrying and start believing. Then you will be able to be obedient to our Lord Jesus Christ when He says, "Receive the Holy Spirit."

How Do I Know If I've Received The Holy Spirit ?

This certainly is a logical question to ask, since the Holy Spirit is invisible to the natural eye. How is one to know when they have indeed received the indwelling of the Heavenly Gift? Since this is such an important transaction, I doubt that God, not being the author of confusion, would leave it to our imaginations. On the contrary, there is clear biblical evidence of the signs which signify the baptism with the Holy Spirit. On this next matter I will make no overtures toward compromise or appeasement, but I will share with you the wonderful truths from the Bible.

In order to answer our question, let us examine the witnesses that the word of God provides starting at the beginning - the day of Pentecost. (Acts 2:1 - 4)

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

These scriptures represent the very first manifestation of the promise of the Father spoken of by Jesus. Notice that there were two kinds of supernatural manifestations accompanying His arrival. The first had to do with His presence in the physical room where they were, and was evidenced by the sound from heaven as of a rushing, mighty wind, and the tongues of fire which sat upon each of them. The second had to do with their being filled with, or receiving, or being

baptized with the Holy Spirit, and this was evidenced by their speaking with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

This latter sign is the evidence that you have indeed received the Holy Spirit, and has been established and provided by God that we would have assurance of His promise. For this sign is supernatural and involves the activation of our vocal cords by our spirits and not our souls (mind). It is not a function of speaking some foreign language through any cognitive efforts of our own, but of allowing our spirits, (by the empowering of the indwelling Holy Spirit) to turn that most deadly of our members, our tongue, from an unruly evil; full of deadly poison, (James 3:8) to one which edifies (1 Cor 14:4), builds up our most holy faith, keeps us in the love of God (Jude v.20,21), and with which we might worship the Father.(John 4:23,24).

For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays but my understanding is unfruitful;(1 Cor 14:14) This means that when you pray in tongues, you are not mindful of what you are saying because it is not your mind generating the words. Nor are you speaking to yourself, but to God. And in the spirit you are speaking mysteries or divine secrets.(1 Cor 14:2)

It is vitally important for you to understand the concepts of speaking in tongues and praying in the spirit. Otherwise you will be robbed like the countless others, who through narrow mindedness and willful ignorance, have blinded themselves to the simple truth of God's word as revealed by His Spirit, and have shut themselves off from faith through the word, and have had their bones picked clean by the enemy.

I will now present to you more witnesses to establish the fact that when one is filled with the Holy Spirit, he knows because he hears himself in that supernatural manifestation of speaking with other tongues.

Approximately 10 years after The day of Pentecost, Peter was sent to the house of Cornelius to preach the gospel to the gentiles and:

While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who were listening to the message. And all the circumcised believers who had come with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also. For they heard them speak with tongues and exalting God.(Acts 10:44 - 46)

We can plainly see that the Jewish believers who accompanied Peter were astonished that the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the gentiles as well, for up until that time they still had not completely discerned God's redemptive plan for mankind. How did they know that the gentiles had indeed received the Holy Spirit? They judged by the same sign that was manifested in themselves 10 years before, for they heard them speak with tongues and glorify God.

A third witness can be found in the ministry of Paul in Ephesus.(Acts 19:1 - 7) We have already discussed how he encountered some disciples on the road and preached to them. We saw that after he baptized them, he laid hands on them and they were filled with the Spirit and spoke with tongues and prophesied.

What about Acts 8:17 you say ? When Peter and John laid hands on the Samaritans to receive the Holy Spirit, the Bible doesn't say that they spoke with other tongues. Or does it ? Let's carefully examine these verses. We see that the Samaritans who were formerly carried away by the sorceries of Simon, were turned to the way of God through the preaching of Philip, and eventually Simon himself believed and was baptized. When Peter and John heard this good news, they went down to pray for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit.(You mean the Samaritans didn't automatically receive the Spirit when they believed and were baptized? Hmm!) Now when Simon saw that through the laying on of the hands of the apostles that the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money saying , "Give me this power also, that anyone I lay my hands

on may receive the Holy Spirit." Now what do you suppose Simon was seeing that made this shrewd man, who was well versed in the magical arts, want to pay money to obtain? Obviously there was some supernatural manifestation occurring when Peter and John laid hands on the people. I submit to you that it was the same sign that occurred in the upper room, and in Cornelius' house, and at Ephesus; namely, they spoke with tongues. Moreover, Peter answers him saying, "**you have no part or portion in this matter, for your heart is not right before God.**" Now this word in the Greek which is translated matter is none other than logo, which always conveys a sense of word or speaking as an expression of intelligence. In this verse, the word is more accurately translated as utterance.

Finally, when Ananias laid hands on Paul and he was filled with the Holy Spirit, the Bible doesn't specifically say, "And he began to speak with other tongues," but we know by his own testimony that he spoke in tongues more than all of the Corinthian church.(1 Cor 14:18) Now when do you suppose he started speaking with those tongues ?

I have now presented 5 witnesses from the word of God which clearly associates the receiving of the Holy Spirit with the supernatural sign of speaking with other tongues. There is no other proof necessary for those who hunger and thirst after the truth. For truly, if you have not believed these witnesses, neither would you believe if one were to rise from the dead to attest to their veracity. Jesus Himself testifies to this matter when He says, "**These signs shall follow those who believe: in My name, they will cast out demons, they will speak with other tongues, they will take up serpents, and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means harm them, they will lay hands on the sick and they shall recover.**"

All 5 of these signs are supernatural and are manifestations of the power of the Holy Spirit. It is that same power that Jesus said we would receive after the Holy Spirit has come upon us. To claim that the speaking with new tongues, spoken of by Jesus here, is referring to some natural phenomenon such as no longer cursing, gossiping, or evil speaking, is so ludicrous as to actually defy explanation.

What about 1 Cor 12:30, where it says, "Do all speak with tongues?"

Yes indeed, the Bible does say that, but what is it exactly talking about ? Here one must be careful to rightly divide the word of truth. For this verse has been frequently used by unstable and untaught men who twist it not only to their own destruction, but to also cause the children of God to be robbed of a most wonderful and precious gift.(2 Peter 3:16) What then is Paul saying here?

One must take all of chapter 12 -14 of Corinthians in context in order to understand. First of all, He's not talking at all about receiving the Holy Spirit, but about the exercise of spiritual gifts. You see, there is quite a difference between receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit Himself, and receiving gifts from the Holy Spirit as a manifestation of His indwelling presence. So too, there is a difference between speaking with tongues as a manifestation of praying in the spirit, and the gift of speaking with tongues. The confusion has come from lumping all tongues into one bag. The difference is not in what they sound like, since to the listening ear both manifestations may sound identical, but has to do with what is going on in the spirit.

In praying in the spirit, your spirit, enabled by the Holy Spirit dwelling within is speaking to God. This communication network is established at the time of receiving the baptism with the Holy Spirit and is available to all believers. They may speak to God and worship Him in this manner as often and as long as they wish. This is in contrast to the gift of speaking in tongues which is a manifestation of the indwelling Holy Spirit whereby God will use that individual as a vessel to speak to His church. That is why the manifestation requires interpretation, since the

church cannot be edified unless they know what God is saying. This gift operates through a special anointing which comes temporarily upon a Spirit filled believer allowing him or her to speak as the oracle of God. This will be followed immediately by an interpretation of what was said so that the church which is gathered may be edified. This gift is operated under the unction of the Holy Spirit and is not at the will of the individual. (Although they are free to quench this anointing.) It is also not necessary for God to use more than one "microphone" to speak to His people who may be gathered. Consequently it is not necessary for all believers to manifest this gift of speaking in tongues. However all believers are promised, and should receive, the gift of the Holy Spirit. And when they do, His presence will be manifested by the speaking in other tongues as the Spirit gives the utterance.

You may never be used in the gift of speaking in tongues, but you are guaranteed to be able to speak to the Father in the supernatural manifestation of praying with the spirit if you receive by faith the gift of the Holy Spirit. Again, the only thing standing in the way is, **Do You Believe?** Remember, Jesus said, "These signs shall follow those who believe!"

But what about people in the Old Covenant who were filled with the Holy Spirit? They didn't speak with tongues.

True, there are many examples of people under the Old Covenant being filled with the Spirit, or having the Spirit come upon them, or being anointed by the Spirit. But nowhere is it said that any of them spoke with tongues. We must be very careful to rightly divide the word of truth concerning the first Covenant. First, there are clear differences in the ministry of the Holy Spirit between the two covenants. Under the Old Covenant, the Holy Spirit was not available to everyone who believed, but generally His unction was only for the King, or Judge, the high priest and the prophet. On occasion He also poured out His Spirit on individuals to enable them to accomplish tasks according to His will. (ex. Bezaleel in regards to constructing the ornaments for the tabernacle. Ex 31:3)

We even have examples of His Spirit coming upon unbelievers and malefactors, again, to accomplish His plans and purposes. Examples of this:

1. Balaam received the anointing of the Holy Spirit even though he was a sorcerer and caused great harm to come to the house of Israel. (Num. 24:2)
2. The Spirit came upon the servants of Saul who were sent to kill David, and they prophesied. (1 Sam 19:20)
3. The Spirit came upon Saul (again after He had left him) as he was on his way to kill David, and he prophesied. (1 Sam 20:23)

In the New Testament, it mentions that both John the Baptist and his father Zacharias were filled with the Spirit, but remember that these men lived their lives under the Old Covenant. I believe it is clear from the Scriptures that there is a difference between the advents of the Holy Spirit under the Old and New Covenants; these were separated by the presence of the ministry of Jesus on the earth realm. It is obvious that during the time of Jesus' ministry that the Holy Spirit was not independently in operation as in times past since the scriptures teach that at that time the Spirit had not yet been given since Jesus had not been glorified. (John 7:39) Also, it says that He would pray the Father to send the Comforter, and as long as He remained on earth the Comforter would not come. (John 14:16 & 16:7) Obviously He cannot be sent or come to a place where He is already, but His manifestation to mankind was to dwell with them embodied in the man Jesus Christ, who was the archetype of all the Sons of God who were to follow Him. (John 14:17)

Another difference is that under the New Covenant, the world cannot receive the Holy Spirit. (John 14:17) But to those who believe, it is as spoken through Joel the prophet saying,

"And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh."

Summarizing then; the fact that Old Testament folks did not speak with tongues in no way abrogates its place as a sign of the indwelling Holy Spirit under the New Covenant, since this sign is peculiar to the New Covenant and will surely follow anyone who receives the Spirit in this present dispensation.

Isn't speaking with other tongues of the devil?

There are only two possible explanations for this thinking. Either you are ignorant, in which case I strongly advise you to stop blindly listening to what you have been told and start studying the scriptures for yourself. Or you are a vial liar as the Pharisees were and just as guilty of insulting the Spirit of Grace and subject to the same fate. Be careful, for truly you are snared by the words of your mouth.

Didn't tongues cease and go out with the early church?

Again, a gross misinterpretation of the word of truth. In 1 Cor 13:1-13 Paul is teaching on the superiority of love even to the exercise of spiritual gifts. He teaches how in that day we will no longer have partial revelation of the plans and purposes of God and His wonderful mystery of the Gospel, insight into which we now receive through the exercise of spiritual gifts. We will see clearly and face to face, and the tools we used to peer through that dimly lit mirror will no longer be necessary, since He who lights our path will be clearly manifest, being seen as He is. For we will be like Him, having been conformed to His image through that one thing that will never fail - love. As long as we live in this age, prophesy will continue, knowledge will continue, tongues will continue and love will continue.

Where is the Scripture that says that the only evidence of receiving the Holy Spirit is speaking in tongues?

This is a most frequently asked question by those who willfully ignore the witness of the Scriptures. My response is this. Where does it say that they only evidence of rain is getting wet? The relationship is established by association and by the examples given in the Word, which are multiple

The Benefits of Being Filled with the Spirit

Once you have found out what God has provided in the indwelling Spirit, you will understand why Satan has fought so hard to rob the children of God of this wonderful Gift through doubt and unbelief. The word translated Helper in John 14:16 is Parakletos and it means to speak cheerfully to, to encourage, to call toward. Other connotations of this word in classic Greek text are; *advisor, pleader, proxy or advocate, one who comes forward on behalf of another (intercessor).*

We can see clearly from the definition of this word, that it accurately describes the role that the Holy Spirit plays in the life of the believer. When this Paraclete has taken up residence in His temple, which is our bodies, He is then able to take hold together with our spirits against those elements which conspire to separate us from the fellowship of the Father; namely our flesh, the world and the devil. These three are formidable adversaries and we are woefully ill equipped to overcome them without the help of the Paraclete. He does not fight our battles for us, but operates in a way analogous to the power steering unit of a car. We must have the desire to turn the car and supply the initial effort, then the power steering unit will multiply our initial efforts and translate them into the power necessary to turn the vehicle, much in the same way that the Holy Spirit and our spirits work together to steer our bodies away from sin.

It is through this mutual effort that we are able to enjoy the fruits of walking in the spirit, and avoid fulfilling the lusts of the flesh. This then is clearly the method that God has implemented for us to maintain the holiness that Jesus has purchased for us through His shed blood, and it is not the futile pursuits of self imposed religion and fleshly ordinances. This is freedom indeed!

What other benefits do we derive from receiving the Holy Spirit? Much indeed. In 1st Tim 4:14, the apostle Paul admonishes young Timothy not to neglect the gift which he had received by the laying on of hands, and he felt it important enough to remind him again in his second epistle when he encourages him to stir up the Gift which he had received. **Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of hands. For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind. (2 Tim 1:6,7)** And what is this gift? It is none other than the Spirit of love, power and a sound mind, or the Holy Spirit.

How does one go about stirring up this gift? Simply by exercising that supernatural manifestation of the indwelling Holy Spirit which is the speaking with tongues, or praying with, or in the Spirit. This principle is illustrated very nicely by Jude when he encourages us to do three things: (Jude v.20,21).

1. Build up our most holy faith.
2. Keep ourselves in the love of God.
3. Look for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The way we are to do these things is by praying in the Holy Spirit. With these things as the result of praying in the spirit, we can readily see why Paul was so diligent to exhort Timothy to stir up his Gift. It is every bit as important for us to do likewise.

How else do we benefit from receiving the Holy Spirit?

He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church. (1st Cor 14:4) The word translated edifies is Oikodomeo from Oiko meaning *house*, and domea meaning *to build* and is used here to denote an individual microcosm of the building of the church, and as such implies a growing or maturing in the spiritual sense of an individual believer. As a result of this edification of the believer, their faith is built and they are then capable of being used in more powerful manifestation of the indwelling Holy Spirit such as the Gift of speaking with other tongues, and interpretation, or perhaps prophesy. In due season they might even operate in the very powerful revelation or power gifts. These all affect the church at large and are not limited to benefiting the individual believer. However, one must crawl before they walk, and if their faith is not sufficient to stir up the Gift and build up their own house, how can God use them to build up His?

Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. (Rom 8:26)

This verse indicates one of the most important functions of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer, namely intercession. How does He do this? With groanings which cannot be uttered in articulate speech. Now what are these groanings and who is doing it? They are praying with the spirit and the one doing it is the believer as he is enabled and given utterance by the Holy Spirit. If we are not in the spirit then the Holy Spirit has no channel through which to work, and therefore He is limited. This has dire consequences since our battle is a spiritual one and cannot be fought with carnal weapons. Therefore we must fight this fight in the spirit. But in order for us to be in the spirit, the Spirit must be in us.

Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. (1 Cor 2:12-14)

These verses show why there is so much confusion and ignorance concerning the word of God. Most Christians approach the Bible in an intellectual sense, trying to understand it with their carnal minds. This is impossible, and they end up twisting the Scriptures to their own destruction, as well as, those unfortunate enough to hear their teachings.

It is clear that the word of God cannot be understood with the natural mind, but must be spiritually discerned. How is this accomplished? By two ways. Firstly, receive the Holy Spirit. **Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the spirit who is from God that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. (1 Cor 2:12)** Secondly, study the word. **Study to show yourselves approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. (2 Tim 2:15)**

Both of these ingredients are necessary in order to understand the word of God. Believers who resist the doctrine of baptism with the Holy Spirit, and try to discern the word of God end up, **always learning and never coming into a knowledge of the truth.**(2 Tim 3:7)

Conclusion

There is much more that can be said regarding this doctrine, but I have presented here the truths from the word of God, sufficient to feed those who hunger and thirst after knowledge. Don't take my word for anything I've written here, but study and ponder the scriptures I have presented. Study them until faith arises in your heart, for faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. (Rom 10:17) You will find the only thing standing between you and the Holy Spirit is unbelief. So never mind what you've heard or think you know. Count it all as dung and set your heart on knowing the truth and diligently consider the words of God. You will find that an insatiable desire will stir your heart and you will present yourself boldly at the throne of grace and our Lord Jesus Christ will breath on you and say, "Receive the Holy Spirit."

As the Lord lives, let not one of these words I have spoken fall to the ground, but let them bear witness with the heart of those that will inherit salvation, even as my own heart bears witness that I have told you the truth.

May the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ cause His light to shine upon you, and His grace and mercy be extended toward you unto everlasting life. Amen.