

# Baptism in the Holy Spirit, Initial Evidence, and a New Model

By Gordon L. Anderson

## Q&A on the Holy Spirit

What about truly born-again people who have accomplished great things for the Lord but do not speak in tongues?

Without question, some believers who do not speak in tongues have accomplished great things for God. However, every student of Scripture must determine whether to base doctrine on God's Word or on experiences of even the most devout believers. Because the Bible indicates that all may speak with tongues in private prayer, if not in the congregation, every believer must determine whether to accept or reject this provision of God's grace.

Scripture makes clear that believers must recognize their accountability to God and not evaluate Christian experience on the basis of human comparison. Paul wrote: "We do not dare to classify or compare ourselves with some who commend themselves. When they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are not wise"(2 Corinthians 10:12). Doctrine must always be based on the Word of God, not on personal experience.

[Abridged from The General Council of the Assemblies of God official position paper on the baptism in the Holy Spirit.]

Is speaking in tongues the only evidence of the baptism in the Holy Spirit and a Spirit-filled life?

Tongues are not the only evidence of a Spirit-filled life, but they are always the initial, or first, evidence that one has been baptized in the Holy Spirit as the entrance into a Spirit-filled life. One purpose of baptism in the Spirit is to empower the believer for witness; therefore, enthusiasm and boldness in witnessing, divine guidance and enabling in the presentation of the gospel, and miraculous manifestations of God's power before unbelievers all may serve as additional evidences of baptism in the Holy Spirit, though not as substitutions for speaking in tongues.

The Spirit-filled life should also demonstrate progressive development toward a complete Christlike character. The fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22,23) should be developing in the life of every believer. It has been observed that some who have received the baptism in the Holy Spirit and claim to be living Spirit-filled lives demonstrate less evidence of the fruit of the Spirit than some who have not received the Baptism experience. Such a fact does not destroy the truth

that the Spirit takes raw material and, if given the opportunity, helps develop Christlike character traits in every believer. Yet development of the fruit of the Spirit can, and should, be enhanced in those who have been filled with the Spirit.

Other supernatural gifts of the Spirit (besides speaking in tongues), though sometimes seemingly evident in the lives of believers who have not been baptized in the Spirit, do not in themselves give evidence of having been baptized in the Spirit. The manifestation of supernatural gifts in the life of a believer who has not been baptized in the Holy Spirit is possible, but being baptized opens the door to a more dynamic, more effective manifestation.

[Abridged from The General Council of the Assemblies of God official position paper on the baptism in the Holy Spirit.]

## **Article**

Traditional Pentecostals have a potential problem with their position on the baptism in the Holy Spirit and their claim that speaking in tongues is the initial physical evidence for this experience. It is not that they are wrong. Their position is correct. But the way some have articulated the position, or have failed to adequately answer the questions raised by those who disagree, makes them assailable from a number of different angles. The charismatic and Third Wave movements, for example, have taken different positions and have attacked the traditional Pentecostal view. I contend that a truly Pentecostal position on the issue of initial evidence — that is not vulnerable to these attacks — can be espoused. It deals with the problems raised by others in such a way as to retain the Pentecostal position while providing answers for the accurate observations that they make.

## **THESIS**

Some Pentecostals have overstated the benefits or results of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. They claim that some elements of the Christian life are only available to the believer following this Baptism. Since they believe that speaking in tongues is the necessary initial physical outward sign for this experience, they argue that these benefits can only occur after a person has been baptized in the Holy Spirit and has spoken in tongues. In its simplest form, then, tongues must precede a number of other spiritual benefits. This overstated position cannot be supported exegetically or experientially. As a result, the Pentecostal position is often rejected and the importance and value of speaking in tongues are lost.

Specifically, some Pentecostals have claimed, to a greater or lesser extent, that power for ministry, gifts, spiritual leadership, and holiness are experienced only after the baptism in the

Holy Spirit evidenced by the initial physical evidence of speaking in tongues. Since compelling evidence against this claim can be adduced from the Bible and from experience, this argument fails.

A truly Pentecostal position avoids the error of overstatement, but still claims that some important things in a person's spiritual life and ministry follow only after the baptism in the Holy Spirit, evidenced by speaking in tongues, and that these blessings can be received in no other way. It also recognizes that there is significant spiritual activity in the life of every believer apart from the Pentecostal experience. By identifying the necessary elements in the Pentecostal experience, as well as those elements that are not included by necessity, a truly Pentecostal position can be maintained. It is, in fact, strengthened and clarified by making a place for the assertions of those who see this issue differently than some Pentecostals have.

## **BRIEF HISTORICAL REVIEW**

A strong case for an experience called the baptism in the Holy Spirit subsequent to salvation can be made from the New Testament, and the Book of Acts in particular. This experience is known by a number of different terms including the Baptism, a filling or infilling, and the Spirit falling or coming on a person. It is evident that speaking in tongues was a common experience in the first century. After the apostolic period, however, this phenomenon seems to have diminished, or to have occurred more frequently only among fringe groups.

Augustine argued that tongues ceased after the first century. Since that time, many have held this "cessationist" position, including some conservative evangelicals and most dispensationalists. Nonetheless, there are numerous examples of this experience through the centuries. In the last 200 years, the frequency has increased. The 19th century Irvingites in England, the Pentecostal revival at the turn of the century in America, the emergence of Pentecostal denominations, the Latter Rain revival, the charismatic movement, and the current rise of evangelicals who hold quasi-Pentecostal positions (Third Wave, for example), all make some kind of claim for the baptism in the Holy Spirit and the issue of speaking in tongues. The problem for Pentecostals is that some of these positions differ significantly from the traditional Pentecostal view, and the arguments are substantial.

Traditional Pentecostals believe that the baptism in the Holy Spirit is primarily an endowment of power for service and that the initial physical evidence is speaking in tongues. Evangelicals commonly believe that the Holy Spirit is given at justification and there is no subsequent Baptism. The charismatics hold that the baptism in the Holy Spirit is an experience subsequent to salvation, but that tongues — while usually accompanying the Baptism — is not necessarily **the** initial evidence; any of the gifts may serve as evidence. Further, they claim that tongues are primarily a prayer language and they de-emphasize the Pentecostal emphasis on power. The

newer Third Wave groups sound a familiar Pentecostal ring by claiming that additional power can be gained for ministry and service, but they are intentionally vague as to whether or not this is a specific experience — the baptism in the Holy Spirit — and they minimize the role of tongues. These different positions have challenged Pentecostals, largely because they are based on biblical and experiential evidence that seems to be more coherent than that offered by some Pentecostals.

## **THE OVERSTATED PENTECOSTAL POSITION AND THE ATTACK AGAINST IT**

Some Pentecostals have made extravagant claims for the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Some have argued that a person must speak in tongues to be saved. Using the lamp oil obtained by the wise virgins in preparation for the bridegroom as a symbol for the Holy Spirit (Matthew 25), they claim that a person must have the Holy Spirit to be ready or saved. Since, in this camp, the baptism in the Holy Spirit is always accompanied by speaking in tongues, one must speak in tongues to be saved. This is preposterous and can be dismissed. But it serves as an example of the exaggerated evidence of the nature of the problem.

Others, however, have done the same thing in a milder form. Some claim that the baptism in the Holy Spirit follows sanctification. Stemming, in part, from the Wesleyan Holiness tradition, this position falls into two camps. One claims that there are two distinct spiritual experiences in the life of the believer: salvation and sanctification, sometimes called the baptism in the Holy Spirit. The other camp has three experiences: salvation, sanctification, and the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Both forms of this position are untenable exegetically, and the life experience of believers refutes it. Sanctification is not the primary result of the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Others have claimed that all power and all ministry gifts follow the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Again, this cannot be supported exegetically or experientially. Those who oppose this claim rightly point to the lives and ministries of great Christians who both did not or do not speak in tongues.

Because of these overreaching claims for the effects of the baptism in the Holy Spirit, the Pentecostal position has been attacked. The argument is: If the evidence for the baptism in the Holy Spirit is a supernaturally gifted life and a significant ministry, then Hudson Taylor, Chuck Swindoll, Charles Stanley, Billy Graham, and many others must have been baptized in the Holy Spirit, even though they have not spoken in tongues. They all have demonstrated powerful and effective ministries. Or, the gifts needed for ministry must be included in salvation and other spiritual activities, as many in the non-Pentecostal camp contend. Furthermore, since Pentecostals insist that the baptism in the Holy Spirit is accompanied by speaking in tongues, the example of these great people proves that Pentecostals are wrong. This argument is

perfectly coherent and has been found to be compelling to many in the charismatic, Third Wave, and non-Pentecostal world.

### **THREE PROBLEMS THIS ARGUMENT HAS CREATED FOR PENTECOSTALS**

First, this argument has the effect of repudiating the entire Pentecostal position. Many have followed this line of thought, rejecting the Pentecostal view entirely, following instead, one of the other schools.

Second, even among Pentecostals there has been an erosion of certainty about their own claims. There seems to be a serious unwillingness to face the issue head-on, fearing, perhaps, that to even open it for discussion might unleash forces that would significantly alter the traditional position. The result, however, of this paralysis is that fewer and fewer people attending Pentecostal churches speak in tongues. David Barrett claims that only 35 percent of Pentecostal church members speak in tongues. Moreover, there is an erosion of commitment to this doctrine among ministers. Long before an issue like this is presented for public debate at General Council, it has already become an issue in the churches and among the ministers. I believe there is a significant amount of prepublic speculation that indicates a large erosion of certainty.

Another evidence of change is that increasing numbers of Pentecostal pastors now rely on special ministries — camps for the teenagers (the camp evangelist had better get them Spirit baptized on Thursday night), or special camp meetings and seminars — to accomplish this dimension of ministry. Baptism in the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues are decreasingly evident as a normal part of many Pentecostal churches.

Third, the way Pentecostals form their Pentecostal doctrines has come under scrutiny. Some of this has been good and has evinced a good response from Pentecostal scholars. But this is not enough. Because of the growth and influence of charismatic, Third Wave, and other quasi-Pentecostal churches, pastors on the local level need to be increasingly astute at demonstrating the credibility of the Pentecostal approach. By what hermeneutic can it be demonstrated that speaking in tongues is normative, and not, rather, normal, but unnecessary? This is a critical issue and failure to answer it adequately will result in a continued decline in certainty among Pentecostals and the transfer of members to other groups.

### **NINE ELEMENTS OF SPIRITUAL LIFE, GROWTH, AND MINISTRY**

To solve this problem we can start by identifying the major spiritual elements of Christian life and set them out in an orderly way. It seems many spiritual activities can be readily identified. I have made a list of nine elements that model the spiritual activity in the life of any Christian. This list could be shortened, expanded, or reorganized. Furthermore, the results of one set of

activities and experiences may overlap with others. Still, there are definite distinctions that are unique because they are achieved through the various activities and experiences believers have with God. The goal is to try to understand what is involved in spiritual life and how it is accomplished. The nine elements are:

1. Justification: the experience of forgiveness, adoption into the family of God, being made spiritually alive, receiving the potential for growth and development, and enjoying fellowship with God.
2. The Word: the source of direction for life, conviction of sin, encouragement, and doctrines to live by.
3. Prayer and fasting: the source of strength, power, growth, and discipline for an overcoming Christian life.
4. Community (or the church): where a person receives the help, support, correction, rebuke, encouragement, and fellowship needed to live a successful Christian life, and the opportunity to minister to others.
5. Water baptism: a symbolic rite that signifies the reality of the Cross in the life of the believer. This experience symbolizes the spiritual crucifixion that takes place in our lives, where death to self is established, and we are made alive to God and dead to sin.
6. Sanctification: the ongoing, progressive work of purifying and perfecting the believer.
7. Suffering: the divinely ordained trials and tests; the chastening that produces strength, character, obedience, and perseverance.
8. Ministry: the call of God to service that is accompanied by empowerment, ministry gifts, and the ability to get the work of God done.
9. The baptism in the Holy Spirit: the experience subsequent to salvation where **more** power for ministry, **more** gifts, **more** miracle-working ability, and many other added dimensions of spiritual power are given. This experience includes the ability to have noncognitive communication with God by means of speaking in tongues. In addition, **more** passion and emotion for ministry are conveyed.

This list shows there are many significant spiritual activities in the life of any believer. We all know people who strongly disagree with the doctrine of the baptism in the Holy Spirit (No. 9), but who demonstrate a godly life and ministry because of their rich experiences in God in the other areas (No. 1 through 8). For example, there are many non-Pentecostal ministers who have not had a Pentecostal experience and do not speak in tongues, but have, nonetheless, wonderful ministries by virtue of their knowledge of the Word, the sufferings they may have endured, and the discipline of a rich prayer life.

## **DIFFERENT MODELS OF SPIRITUAL LIFE AND DEVELOPMENT**

Most Christians agree that the above list represents the critical areas of spiritual life, but other groups would organize the spiritual life of the believer and the experiences that go with it in different ways.

Evangelicals collapse No. 9, the baptism in the Holy Spirit, into No. 1, and eliminate the charismatic gifts and speaking in tongues. Charismatics are satisfied with the list, but they eliminate tongues as the essential item in No. 9 — the baptism in the Holy Spirit — and emphasize its value as a prayer language. They also believe the baptism in the Holy Spirit is for personal edification and spiritual growth more than an empowering for service. Third Wave Christians probably agree with the elements in the list, but de-emphasize the unique experiential quality of No. 9 — the baptism in the Holy Spirit — and see it rather as a gifting that occurs apart from a specific and concrete experience. Also, they eliminate the necessity of tongues for this enabling to occur. Over-reaching Pentecostals see No. 8, ministry, as following from the baptism in the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues. Some even include No. 6, sanctification, as a part of the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

## **THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD POSITION**

The official position of the Assemblies of God is found in its Statement of Fundamental Truths. This statement is explained and amplified in a position paper entitled, “The Baptism in the Holy Spirit: The Initial Experience and Continuing Evidences of the Spirit-Filled Life.” A clear distinction must be made between these documents and anything that Assemblies of God people may have said or written, or whatever general sense may be gotten from stereotypical practices of Assemblies of God pastors and churches.

Article VII in the Statement of Fundamental Truths sets out the Assemblies of God’s position on the baptism in the Holy Spirit. It says:

“All believers are entitled to and should ardently expect and earnestly seek the promise of the Father, the baptism in the Holy Ghost and fire, according to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ. This was the normal experience of all in the early Christian church. With it comes the endowment of power for life and service, the bestowment of the gifts and their uses in the work of the ministry (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4,8; 1 Corinthians 12:1–31)). This experience is distinct from and subsequent to the experience of the new birth (Acts 8:12–17; 10:44–46; 11:14–16; 15:7–9). With the baptism in the Holy Ghost come such experiences as an overflowing fullness of the Spirit (John 7:37–39; Acts 4:8), a deepened reverence for God (Acts 2:43; Hebrews 12:28), an intensified consecration to God and dedication to His work (Acts 2:24), and a more active love for Christ, for His Word, and for the lost (Mark 16:20).”<sup>1</sup>

There is one potentially problematic sentence in this statement. It is the sentence, "With it comes the endowment of power for life and service, the bestowment of the gifts and their uses in the work of the ministry." If this means that **all** power and **all** gifts for ministry follow the baptism in the Holy Spirit (and speaking in tongues), then a problematic claim is made. This would mean that non-Pentecostals — nontongues speakers — have **no** power or gifts for ministry. If **all** gifts follow, then **none** precede. It cannot be any other way. This can only mean that non-Pentecostals do their work in the flesh and not the Spirit. This cannot possibly be the meaning of the authors of this statement.

Help in understanding this issue is provided in a position paper on initial evidence produced by the Assemblies of God in 2000. In addressing the question of the ministries of those who are not Pentecostal it says:

"8. What about truly born-again people who have accomplished great things for the Lord but who do not speak with tongues?

"Without question, some believers who do not speak in tongues have accomplished great things for God."

"13. Can believers who have not experienced the baptism in the Holy Spirit minister with supernatural signs following? As the question is stated, the answer must be yes.

"The question might better be asked, 'Is there any difference between the frequency and effectiveness of the supernatural gifts of the Spirit in the life of a believer after being baptized in the Holy Spirit?'

"The Bible records many miraculous demonstrations of the supernatural in the lives of Old Testament individuals, and the lives of New Testament believers before as well as after their Baptism experience. When Jesus sent out the pre-Pentecost 70, they returned reporting with joy, 'Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name' (Luke 10:17).

"But there was definitely a higher incidence of spiritual gifts operating through Spirit-filled members of the Early Church than there were prior to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon yielded believers. Miracles were wrought through people like Stephen and Philip who did not have apostolic positions. (Acts 6:8 and 8:6,7). The full range of gifts was everywhere seen after the Day of Pentecost. It was as if a high-octane fuel additive propelled the Church to incredible growth and outreach. Activity after the Day of Pentecost was not just an extension of activity before the great outpouring. The Church had experienced a major empowerment for more effective ministry. The baptism in the Holy Spirit, with the initial physical evidence of speaking in tongues, is the doorway leading to a greatly empowered church of Jesus Christ."



The last sentence in the Assemblies of God Statement of Fundamental Truths also reveals the Pentecostal understanding of the results of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. The language here is important. It speaks of something extra, something added on.

“With the baptism in the Holy Ghost come ... **overflowing** fullness ... **deepened** reverence ... **intensified** consecration ... **more active** love ... ” (italics, mine).

The authors do not claim that **all** fullness, **all** reverence, **all** consecration, and **all** love come from the baptism in the Holy Spirit, but that **something more is added** to what God has already done. With this in view, a clearer model of the Pentecostal understanding of the baptism in the Holy Spirit can be fashioned.

### **A PENTECOSTAL DEFINITION OF THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT**

What do Pentecostals mean by the baptism in the Holy Spirit? I think that a definition can be set out that does not claim to be comprehensive, but identifies the major elements in this Pentecostal experience. The baptism in the Holy Spirit is significant additional power for life and ministry given by God subsequent to salvation. The Baptism is characterized by a deep sense of the immediacy of God's presence. By virtue of this, a deep sense of mystery and emotion is often experienced. It is also characterized by speaking in tongues.

Speaking in tongues establishes a noncognitive and nonrational communication with God. It is not antirational. It is an immediate contact with God that does not include human words, nor can it be expressed in human words. This experience results in added faith in God, increased power and gifts for ministry, increased emotion and passion, and an enhanced awareness of the experiential dimension of God's presence in the life of the Pentecostal believer. The baptism in the Holy Spirit does not and cannot take the place of the other necessary spiritual experiences that God has provided for His believers.

Now, a critical question. If the baptism in the Holy Spirit confers additional power for ministry, how much additional power is gained? A little? Quite a bit? A dramatic amount? Considerable evidence indicates that the baptism in the Holy Spirit confers a dramatic amount of power for ministry on the believer who receives this experience.

On November 20, 1998, Pentecostal scholar Vinson Synan presented a paper to the Evangelical Theological Society entitled, “Policy Decisions on Tongues As an Indicator of Future Church Growth.” Synan demonstrates in his paper that Pentecostals have been dramatically more successful in planting and growing churches than those who have rejected the Pentecostal understanding of the baptism in the Holy Spirit and the necessity of speaking in tongues. His statistics are drawn from the development of Pentecostal missions in the 20th century. In Chile, the Methodists grew to approximately 5,000 members, while the Pentecostals

grew to 2,371,000. In Brazil, the Baptists grew to 1,050,000, while the Pentecostals grew to over 21 million. Worldwide, the Christian and Missionary Alliance grew to 1.9 million, while the Assemblies of God has surpassed 25 million. More current year statistics (2003) show that Assemblies of God worldwide members and adherents have grown to nearly 48 million, not including the nearly 2.7 million adherents in the U.S.

These statistics cannot be ignored. These accomplishments are the reason that Fuller Seminary undertook a study of Pentecostal missions that has drawn attention to the spectacular success of Pentecostal ministry. Other scholars are drawing similar conclusions. Philip Jenkins, distinguished professor of history and religious studies at Pennsylvania State University, recently wrote a new book, ***The Next Christendom***, in which he demonstrates that the growth patterns of the Pentecostals will make the 21st century a Pentecostal century. Pentecostal ministry is not slightly more effective. It makes a dramatic difference. The baptism in the Holy Spirit provides a significant amount of power for supernatural ministry resulting in striking accomplishments for the Kingdom.

### **A CLARIFIED PENTECOSTAL MODEL OF THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT**

All that is needed to clarify the Pentecostal understanding of the baptism in the Holy Spirit and its relationship to other schools of thought is the fact Pentecostals do not believe **all** power and gifting for ministry occur only after the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Non-Pentecostals are certainly spiritually enabled for ministry. But the baptism in the Holy Spirit confers dramatically more power for ministry, especially in the supernatural realm of miracles, signs, and wonders; ministries that promote the apostolic or missionary call to plant the church and minister in the supernatural. This **additional** power, enablement through spiritual gifts and passion, is added along with the miraculous and spiritually profitable practice of speaking in tongues; first for personal edification (1 Corinthians 14:4), and when interpreted, for public edification (1 Corinthians 14:13, 26,27).

This clarification of the Pentecostal position has many salutary effects. First, it gives the nine elements in the outline presented above their rightful, important places. Pentecostals can learn from others who have found the greatness of God's provision and spiritual grace from No. 1 through 8. Some Pentecostals give too little attention to these issues in their emphasis on No. 9, the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Second, it puts the baptism in the Holy Spirit into proper perspective. It is not the only important experience in the life of the believer.

Third, it retains the importance, uniqueness, and subsequence of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Pentecostals do not need to protect this doctrine because it is their own unique distinctive. If it is

biblically unsound, it should be discarded. The desire to retain it is due to the fact it is biblical and to lose it — or have it diluted by including some of it in other categories and dispensing with the rest — does great harm to the church, especially in a day when the church needs all the power available, not less.

Fourth, it clarifies the purpose of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. It is given primarily to add significant supernatural power for ministry and to enhance a noncognitive and experiential relationship with God.

Fifth, it retains the vital importance and value of speaking in tongues as the initial physical evidence for the unique experience called the baptism in the Holy Spirit. The noncognitive, nonrational character of speaking in tongues is spiritually healthy when it is in balance with the other elements of spiritual life. The liberty to escape the cognitive dimension and enter into edifying communication with God, connecting in a different way — heart to heart, rather than head to head with the words of human language — should not be undermined. And, by giving the other elements their proper role, it provides safeguards for the legitimate fear that this nonrational experience could result in fanaticism. Read the nine areas of spiritual activity again to see how important it is to have the balance provided by the other eight elements.

Connected to this are the vitality, energy, and passion that the baptism in the Holy Spirit can produce. Pentecostals have discovered anew that the nonrational, even the highly emotional and passionate, are helpful to a Christian who is greatly concerned about the salvation of the world. This is not to say that others do not care; they certainly do, but Pentecostal missions speak of the fruitful effects of a highly passionate ministry corps that function in the miraculous. A leading non-Pentecostal missiologist once told me that Pentecostals in their search for approval from the broader evangelical community are about to lose the very thing that has made them effective — their emotional and passionate approach to life and ministry and their emphasis on speaking in tongues. While Pentecostals need to add to their own experiences the helpful elements of exegesis and hermeneutics, along with other spiritual disciplines, they should not in the process give up the very thing that has made them so effective in the work of the ministry.

Finally, this approach provides non-Pentecostals an explanation why they would be empowered and helped by the Pentecostal experience of the baptism in the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues. Pentecostals do not need to assert that these people would be moving out of the flesh and into the Spirit as the overstaters have claimed, but rather that they are adding another element of spiritual vitality to their lives and ministries, one that would enable them to function consistently in supernatural ministry.

In this connection I am reminded of the response given by a non-Pentecostal after hearing me lecture the essence of this paper to a seminary audience. He said if Pentecostals would be willing to admit that non-Pentecostals have vital and powerful spiritual ministries without speaking in tongues, non-Pentecostals would be more inclined to admit that Pentecostals have something unique that the rest of the Christian world does not have. This would make the claims and benefits of the baptism in the Holy Spirit, as Pentecostals understand them, more credible. I think he is right. Pentecostals have much to share, but it must be done within a framework that appreciates the other elements in a healthy spiritual life and the contributions made by the non-Pentecostal world.

This approach helps Pentecostals respond to other Pentecostals who skip over spiritual activities No. 1 through No. 8 in their haste to get to No. 9 (baptism in the Holy Spirit). Pentecostals need No. 1 through No. 8. It also provides an answer to what I call the Chuck Swindoll argument. Swindoll has a great ministry, but disagrees with the Pentecostal position on the baptism in the Holy Spirit. He obviously has experienced the richness of God in No. 1 through No. 8. However, Pentecostals can respond that there is much more (not all, just more) and that this already rich ministry would be significantly enhanced by another spiritual element.

The baptism in the Holy Spirit is a powerful provision that significantly adds to the life and ministry of any believer. Today, ministries trying to evangelize a lost and dying world face enormous challenges. It behooves every believer to properly understand what God has made available and to take advantage of it, remembering the words of Jesus when He commissioned His disciples: "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" (Luke 24:49, NASB).

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