

Proof Accepted By The Apostles



Foundations (Day 141)
by Derek Prince

In three places in the New Testament we are told what happened when people were baptised in the Holy Spirit. We shall consider the actual words used in each report to describe what took place.

First, let us read what happened to the first disciples on the day of Pentecost.

> "And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." (Acts 2:2-4)

Second, we turn to what happened when Peter first preached the gospel to Cornelius and his household.

> "While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word. 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. For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God." (Acts 10:44-46)

Finally, we see what happened to the first group of converts to whom Paul preached at Ephesus.

> "And when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied." (Acts 19:6)

If we now carefully compare these three passages, we shall find that there is one – and only one – outward manifestation which is common to all three occasions where people received the baptism in the Holy Spirit. In each case the Scripture explicitly states that those who received this experience "spoke with tongues," or "spoke with other

tongues."

Peter and the other Jews who already knew what had taken place on the day of Pentecost went to the house of Cornelius reluctantly, against their own inclinations, under the explicit direction of God. At that time the Jewish believers did not realise the gospel was for the Gentiles or that Gentiles could be saved and become Christians. However, the moment Peter and the other Jews heard the Gentiles speak with tongues, they immediately understood and acknowledged that these Gentiles had received the Holy Spirit just as fully as the Jews themselves. They never asked for any additional evidence.

In Acts 11 Peter was called to account by the other leaders of the church in Jerusalem for visiting and preaching to Gentiles. In his own defence he explained what had taken place in the house of Cornelius.

> "And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them, as upon us at the beginning." (Acts 11:15)

Thus Peter directly compares the experience which the household of Cornelius received with that which the first disciples received on the day of Pentecost, for he says, "...as upon us at the beginning." Yet in the house of Cornelius there was no mention of a mighty rushing wind or tongues of fire. The one sufficient manifestation which set the divine seal upon the experience of Cornelius and his household was that they spoke with tongues.

From this we conclude that the manifestation of speaking with tongues as the Holy Spirit gives utterance is the accepted New Testament evidence that a person has received the baptism in the Holy Spirit. In confirmation of this conclusion, we may make the following statements.

1. This was the evidence which the apostles themselves received in their own experience.
2. This was the evidence which the apostles accepted in the experience of others.
3. The apostles never asked for any other alternative evidence.
4. No other alternative evidence is offered to us anywhere in the New Testament.

During the next week we will examine this conclusion further, and we shall consider various criticisms or objections which are commonly raised against it.

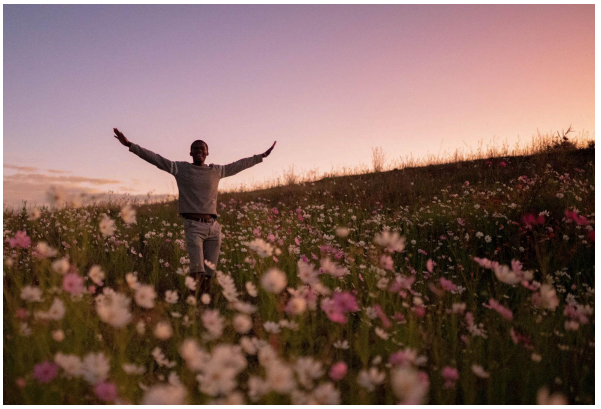
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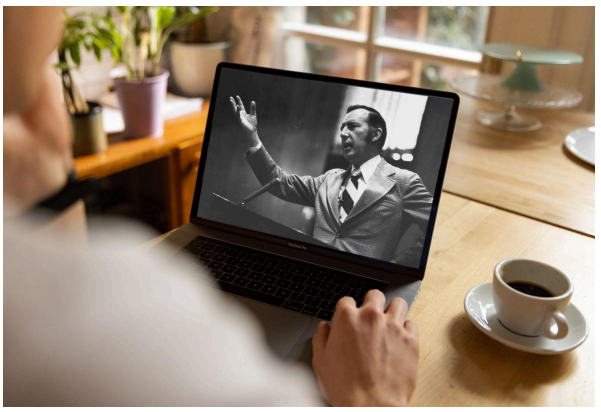
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