

Two Different Experiences



Foundations (Day 142)
by Derek Prince

A number of objections are often raised against our conclusion that the manifestation of speaking with tongues is the accepted New Testament evidence that a person has received the baptism in the Holy Spirit. For the sake of clarity and thoroughness, therefore, let us consider some of the most common objections.

One standard objection takes the following form: every Christian automatically received the Holy Spirit at conversion and therefore does not need any further experience or any other evidence to have the assurance of having received the Holy Spirit.

Much confusion and controversy will be avoided once we establish one important, scriptural fact: the New Testament depicts two separate experiences, both of which are described as "receiving the Holy Spirit." This means it is possible for a Christian to have "received the Holy Spirit" in one use of the expression but not in the other.

A simple way to distinguish these two experiences is to compare the events of two Sundays, each uniquely important in the history of the Christian Church. The first is resurrection Sunday; the second is Pentecost Sunday.

On resurrection Sunday Jesus appeared to the apostles in a group for the first time after His resurrection.

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

Jesus' breathing on the apostles was suited to the words which accompanied it: "Receive the Holy Spirit." In Greek the same word pneuma means both "spirit" and "breath." The words of Jesus could therefore be translated, "Receive holy breath." Furthermore, the tense of the imperative form "receive" indicates that the receiving was a single, complete experience which took place as Jesus uttered the word. It is therefore an incontestable, scriptural fact that at that moment the apostles did actually "receive the Holy Spirit."

In this first encounter with the resurrected Christ, the apostles passed from "Old Testament salvation" to "New

Testament salvation." Up to that time the believers of the Old Testament had looked forward, by faith, through prophecies and types and shadows to a redemptive act which had not yet taken place. Those who enter into "New Testament salvation," on the other hand, look back to a single historical event: the death and resurrection of Christ. Their salvation is complete.

There are two requirements for receiving this New Testament salvation.

> "If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved." (Rom. 10:9)

The two requirements are to confess Jesus as Lord and to believe that God raised Him from the dead. Prior to resurrection Sunday the apostles had already confessed Jesus as Lord. But now, for the first time, they also believed that God raised Him from the dead. Thus their salvation was completed.

This was the point at which they experienced the new birth. The Holy Spirit, breathed into them by Jesus, imparted to them a totally new kind of life – eternal life – which had triumphed over sin and Satan, over death and the grave.

Devotional

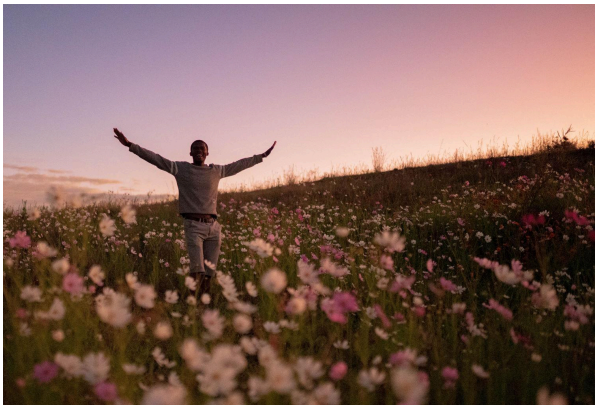
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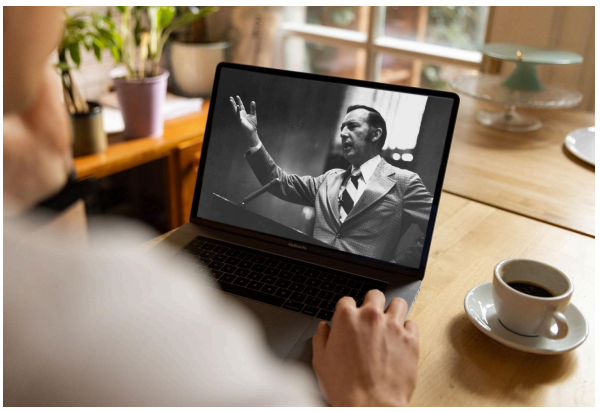
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