

Saved First, Then Filled With The Holy Spirit



Foundations (Day 146)
by Derek Prince

For a fourth example, of a different kind (the possibility for people to have been converted to Christ, but not yet to have received the Holy Spirit), we shall now consider briefly the sermon Peter preached in the house of Cornelius and its results (see Acts 10:34-48, we will read verses 44-48).

> "While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who were listening to the message. All the circumcised believers who came with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also. For they were hearing them speaking with tongues and exalting God. Then Peter answered, "Surely no one can refuse the water for these to be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we did, can he?" And he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ."

The Scripture seems to indicate that as soon as Cornelius and his household heard the gospel and put their faith in Christ, they immediately received the Holy Spirit and spoke with tongues. However, we must add that, although in this instance these two experiences happened together, they still remain two quite distinct experiences.

Furthermore, the evidence that Cornelius and his household had received the Holy Spirit was not the fact that they had put their faith in Christ, but the fact that, under the impulse of the Holy Spirit, they spoke with tongues.

In the account of what happened in the household of Cornelius, the following three different phrases are all used to describe the same experience: "the Holy Spirit fell upon" them; "the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on" them; and they "received the Holy Spirit." Where Peter describes the same incident a second time, he uses the following three phrases: "the Holy Spirit fell upon them"; they were "baptised with [in] the Holy Spirit"; "God gave them the same gift [of the Holy Spirit]" (Acts 11:15-17).

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Earlier, two similar phrases were used concerning the Samaritans: The Holy Spirit “had fallen upon none of them”; and “they received the Holy Spirit” (Acts 8:16-17).

Putting these passages together, we find that a total of five different phrases are used to describe this one experience: “the Holy Spirit fell upon” them; “the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on” them; they “received the Holy Spirit”; they were “baptised with [in] the Holy Spirit”; and “God gave them the gift” of the Holy Spirit.

Some modern interpreters would suggest that these different phrases refer to different experiences. However, this is not in line with the usage of the apostles in the New Testament. According to the apostles, these different phrases all denote one single experience – although they describe it from different aspects. It is the same thing for a person to receive the Holy Spirit or receive the gift of the Holy Spirit as it is to be baptised in the Holy Spirit, or for the Holy Spirit to fall upon that person, or for the Holy Spirit to be poured out on that person.

Devotional

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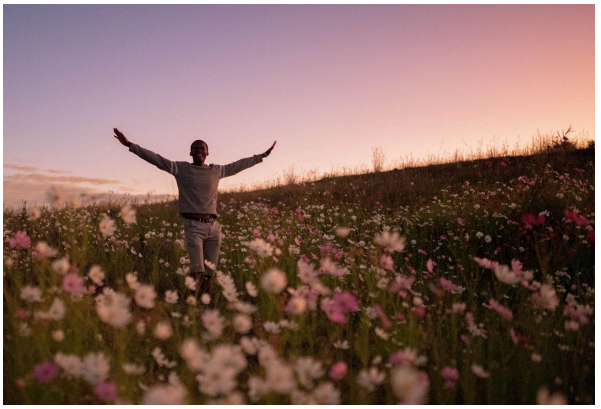

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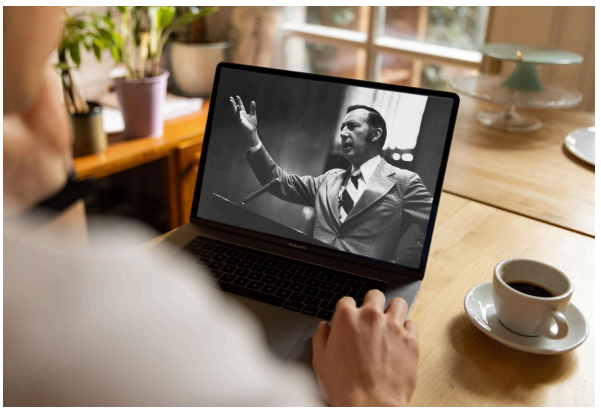

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