

And The Disciples Were Filled With Joy



Foundations (Day 156)
by Derek Prince

One common view today is that the baptism in the Holy Spirit is an intense emotional experience. One word often used in this connection is “ecstasy.” This view of the baptism in the Holy Spirit draws its support mainly from two sources.

First, there are theologians who do not actually have the experience themselves but who theorise about it on the basis of passages in the New Testament or the writings of the early Church fathers. For some reason, these theologians have chosen the word ecstasy or ecstatic to sum up the essential nature of this supernatural experience.

Second, many believers who have actually received the experience, when testifying of it to others, lay the main emphasis on their own subjective, emotional reactions. The result is that they convey, often without meaning to do so, the impression that the essential nature of the experience is emotional. Probably the emotion most commonly mentioned is joy.

Now, in considering the relationship between the emotions and the baptism in the Holy Spirit, we do well to begin by acknowledging two important facts.

First, man is an emotional creature. His emotions constitute an integral and important part of his total makeup. Therefore, man’s emotions have an important part to play in his total worship and service of God. True conversion neither suppresses nor obliterates the emotions. True conversion, on the contrary, first liberates and then redirects the emotions. If a man’s emotions have not been brought under the control and power of the Holy Spirit, then the purpose of that man’s conversion is not yet fulfilled.

Second, in Scripture the word joy is often closely associated with the Holy Spirit. For instance, the fruit of the Spirit, as listed in Galatians 5:22, is first love, then joy, and so on. In this list, joy comes immediately after love itself, which is the primary fruit of the Spirit. Again, we read concerning the early Christians in Antioch:

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> "And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit." (Acts 13:52)

We see, then, that in the New Testament joy is often closely associated with the Holy Spirit.

Nevertheless, the teaching that intense joy or any other strong emotion by itself constitutes evidence of the baptism in the Holy Spirit cannot be reconciled with the New Testament. There are two main reasons for this, which we will discuss in the following days.

Devotional

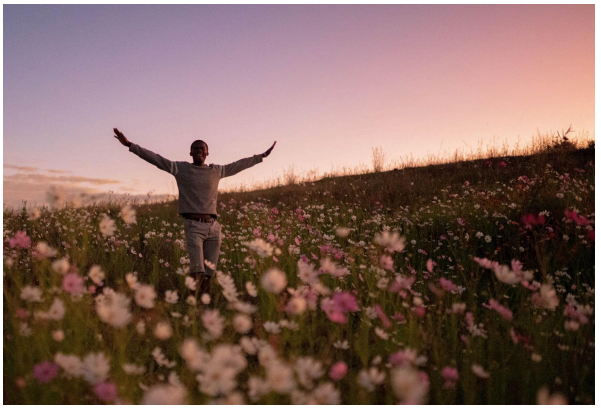
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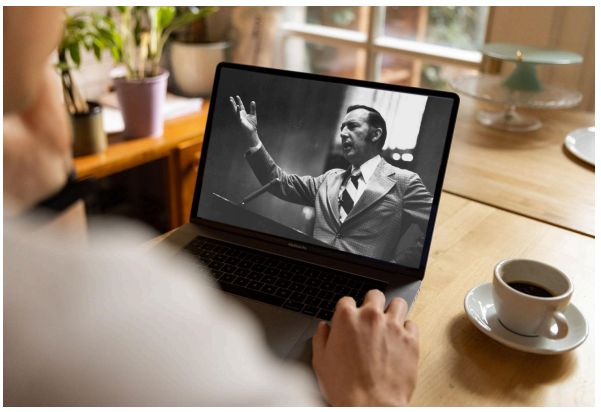
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