

How to Receive the Holy Ghost

Making Contact With the Spirit

(Part 5)

In our previous studies we have scripturally looked into how a person actually receives the fullness of the Holy Spirit. And this is important because in John 7:37-39 Jesus stated the Holy Ghost was for them who believe on him as the scriptures teach

Perhaps you may feel I am exhausting you, but in reality I have not been exhaustive in teaching as far as theology is concerned.

We live in the Television age where sound bytes and multimedia is where it's at, and sometimes it can be difficult to transition our thinking to the place where we understand the value of solid Bible teaching and Bible teaching cannot be done in the few minutes many Evangelical churches allow. Perhaps in the future I will combine some multimedia presentations with solid Bible teaching. But that takes among other things time to set up, and when God provides us our miracle building, I will look into that because of the limitations we have in our current situation.

But perhaps this series of studies is complete enough to inspire and build our faith relative to God's good will toward man in matters of salvation.

And as I've said before I'm trying to build your faith in the promises of God, that you personally can soar to new heights in the Lord, new heights and a deeper walk with God that only comes through expanded faith.

Often the Holy Ghost is thought of only in terms of its baptism and not as a force that acts upon a person from the time that they makes there first visit to church, or when they begin thinking of changing there way of life.

Actually, the Holy Ghost helps a person in several ways, step by step, in directing them to a full and satisfying experience with God.

We must understand that the Holy Ghost, through the preached word, convicts.

It makes its entrance not through the head but through the heart.

Many times we see reason and mental analysis circumvented altogether when the Holy Ghost makes its way gently to the heart's door.

The preacher may try ever so hard to bring forth a logical doctrinal conviction but without the moving of the spirit he cannot succeed because the Holy Ghost is the one who deals with the heart of the unconverted.

It does this because, being a Spirit, it works on the human spirit, and there we know we find the major hindrances to salvation.

People often discern more with their feelings than they do with their minds.

And its only the Spirit can change people from former prejudices and attitudes.

No person on his own, could never walk down the aisle of a church, or kneel by the side of his bed, or in any other gesture turn his heart toward God.

So the Holy Ghost comes again to help the unsaved commit himself publicly or privately to the Lord. Jesus said, *"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him . . ."* (John 6:44).

After he gets to the altar, it is the Holy Ghost that helps him to pray. *"Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought. . . ."* Romans 8:26

The Spirit releases a person from the chains of shy inhibitions. How often have we all seen the very quiet person at the altar show, with loud prayers and demonstrations, the anxiety he felt within.

He could never have done so had not the Holy Ghost loosed him from the bondage of bashfulness and fear.

The Holy Ghost will bring things to the remembrance a person while they are at the altar—things that they should pray about and repent of and sometimes things that he should make right with others.

The Holy Ghost greatly strengthens a seeker, enabling them to make a full surrender.

Every so often a rare person seem to exercise a very strong will in all matters but it is doubtful that the average person could give up some of the pleasures and sinful allurements of the world that he has enjoyed all of his life, if it were not for the strengthening influence of the Holy Ghost.

The Holy Ghost also bears witness with one's spirit that he has been forgiven.

When full and complete repentance has been finished by a person, the Holy Ghost, in a wonderful way, brings this assurance of forgiveness to the heart of the seeker.

He is made to know, beyond doubt, that God has heard him and that his sins are forgiven by God. He feels a great load lifted from his heart, and there comes also a sense of deep cleansing which he has never before experienced.

This is simply another work of the Holy Spirit.

Some people, after receiving forgiveness, stop in their experience thinking that they have received everything God has for them, for surely, with all this moving of the Spirit in their life, how could there be any more?

Other people, after receiving forgiveness, proceed progressively in their experience because of hearing the preached Word of God and are filled with the Holy Ghost right then and there.

All this depends on how thoroughly and resolutely they have repented and how much faith they exercise in God.

There was a young man who had grown up in Pentecost but got far from it finally made up his mind to come to God. He instructed his Catholic wife, as best he could, about the worship practices of the Pentecostal church and what she was supposed to do when she came to the altar.

One went to the altar with a heart filled with faith and the other pursued his search for God in desperation, as if it all depended on him. It was the little Catholic woman who simply accepted the Holy Ghost as a gift that night and received it with thankfulness. Her simple faith caused the Holy Ghost to meet her, as it were, with open arms and lead her gently through the steps of repentance and acceptance of forgiveness from God and on into the fullness of the Spirit.

And let me say this about altars, and praying at an altar. These benches are not holy places in the sense that they hold a special power. The altar becomes a holy place when we use it to step out of self in front of others to acknowledge the moving of God in our life. If you feel you need to pray at an altar don't worry about what anybody thinks, because nobody really knows what's in your heart besides you and God. The altar is a more powerful experience than merely praying at your chair or meditating on God because of that public acknowledgement to God.

Many churches today have no altars, because they want everybody to feel good about themselves and do away with conviction.

When you do away with conviction you are doing away with the work of the Holy Spirit.

Preconceived ideas often picked up around churches, relative to receiving the Holy Ghost, hinder seekers from receiving it quickly and easily or even at all as a gift as God intended.

When you go to a place where people have never heard about the Holy Ghost baptism amazing things happen.

Pastor Winfred Black stated that when he went to Kansas City, Missouri to open up a new work years ago, many of the people who came were absolute strangers to the Holy Ghost baptism experience. It was easy for them to believe that God would give it to them, just as they gave good things to their children. Pastor Black told that many of them received the Holy Ghost right in the baptistery and many others on their first trip to the altar.

Today Pentecost is all over the airwaves, people see the good the bad and the ugly concerning teachings and even abuses of the work of the Holy Ghost.

Whatever God does Satan will try to misrepresent and abuse.

Its up to us allow to work of the spirit to bring us truth into our lives, and the work of the spirit will let you know its truth because its founded on the word of God. The work of the Holy Spirit in your life can help you to overcome years learned faith that is contradictory to the teachings of the word of God

We have looked at these various works of the Spirit to illustrate that the Holy Ghost is not a separate experience which has to be prayed out of heaven.

I would like for you understand and feel that the Holy Ghost is God himself, very near to you, going with you through the various experiences, and leading you on to greater ones.

Making Contact with God

The process of receiving the Holy Ghost is not a mechanical exercise.

It is a spiritual relationship more glorious than we are able to explain.

Since it is a spiritual relationship, it is imperative that close personal contact must be made with the Spirit before a person can expect to be filled. And when that close personal contact is made, you must exercise your expanding faith, and let God fill you with the Holy Ghost right then and there.

What I mean by a close contact with the Spirit is that the person must feel the presence of God very positively.

The presence of God brings to one a sense of wonder, awe, and often a feeling of high spiritual exhilaration.

There is a certain unmistakable warmth about it that touches the heart and causes you to want to cry or say words of endearment to the One whom he feels has called him to repentance and forgiven him of his sins.

Until you feel at least some semblance of what I have just described, there is little need for you to try to make the transition from the order of the flesh to that of the Spirit.

No one can be filled with the Spirit until he comes in contact with the Spirit.

No one can believe for a complete filling of the Spirit until he feels the Spirit begin to move on him.

But how does one make contact with the Spirit?

Since God is love and is honorable and trustworthy, it would seem that we should approach Him according to His characteristics.

When we are trying to make contact with God we must do so with the utmost honesty and sincerity.

This approach is not a mad headlong rush to break into God house, but a calm, trustful and honest approach to the Spirit.

When you pray, the Holy Ghost which led you to this point, and helped you believe in the forgiveness of God, is right there.

But in order to be objective in your faith you must locate Him. *"If haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us."* Acts 17:27

As you notice, Paul described this contact as "feeling after God."

Since God is good and kind and honest, we approach Him according to these characteristics.

Jesus taught us in the Lord's Prayer to how to approach God: *"Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name."* This is a way of saying, "You are my Father, and I am Your child. You are in heaven high and lifted up, and I am here on the earth. But You are still my Father and I

can talk to You without fear. You are a very great Father. Your very name is holy. This is the way I feel about You.”

This respectful approach to God is nothing more than making proper contact with the Spirit on the proper basis, giving God the proper recognition and yet accepting the fact that He is approachable and that He is glad to hear you.

I suggest to the one who has been forgiven and baptized, or willing to be baptized, to make your approach to God in the following manner.

While kneeling or standing at the altar, before you even begin to make the transition from the realm of the flesh to the realm of the Spirit, calmly and honestly, with all the sincerity you have in your heart, approach God with attitudes similar to the following prayer:

“Lord, I thank You for Your goodness to me.

*You have always been good to me. I am not good, but You are good,
and that is where I rest my faith tonight.*

*I thank You for dying for me. I know that if I had been the only sinner in the world, You would
have died just for me.*

I so very much appreciate that, Lord, I thank You for it as sincerely as I know how.

I know that I am not worthy of Your love, but I appreciate it anyway.

*I thank You, Lord, for calling me to repentance. It was not that I loved You, but that You loved
me. I thank You for Your love, and I know You love me right now as I am before You.*

*“I thank You for helping me come to the altar.
I could not have come without Your help.*

*I thank You, Lord, for forgiving me of all my sins. I know that
You hold nothing against me tonight. I am so very
thankful for this. You have been so very good to me.*

*“And, Lord, I am glad that You are going to fill
me with Your Spirit. I appreciate this more than I
can ever tell You. I thank You sincerely for this.*

I am not much, but all I have is Yours.

I am not worthy, but You are worthy;

I am not good, but You are good.

I am not able, but You are able

I just come leaning on You tonight. My faith rests altogether in Your goodness and in Your love for me. I know that You love me, and so I come with thankfulness to You tonight. . . .”

I only illustrate this approach to God not to give you a wrote memorized prayer but to give an idea of what I have seen, time after time, to be the proper initial approach to God as one first comes forward to receive his baptism.

This approach will put one in touch with God anywhere, providing your heart has the right attitude and you have repented of your sins.

If your attitude and heart is right and you have repented, then, as a seeker of the things of God you earnestly speak words and express an attitude similar to that prayer right into the “ear” of God, you will, bit by bit, begin to feel that peculiar warmth of heart, that tenderness of Spirit, that indicates that God, in all His love, has drawn near.

This love and tender care felt by the seeker will lead them into a frame of mind that makes you want to say words of appreciation and love to the one who first loved you.

When this particular approach is made in all sincerity, the person often feels tears start to form in his eyes and a strong impulse come to reach out for more of God.

These reactions indicate that God Himself has drawn near.

Can you imagine it? What an honor! To be in the presence of the President would be one thing, but to be in the presence of the Lord of Glory is far greater.

And to think that He came just to be with you! Do you know why He will come?

He comes just because He loves you wants to be there, and you have indicated that you believe Him to be a God of His word and honorable in all things and one that you can trust.

This pleases Him more than anything you could ever do or say. He simply responds to faith and trust as your child would respond to an invitation to sit in your lap.

So many people believe He is either doesn't exist, is a liar or is dead.

When He finds someone who believes in Him fully, He will respond. You will feel His response to you. What a wonderful thing to have God respond to you!

I hope that I am somehow illustrating that receiving the Holy Ghost is the most personal and intimate thing in all the world.

It is here that you become “as a little child” in simplicity and trust.

Receiving the Holy Ghost is not just a powerful abstract display of power that overwhelms and subjugates the seeker.

It is a spiritual relationship that the person and God enter into together, in which the person comes to know God personally.

You come to see God in a different light. The love of God is shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost. It is here that you become so thoroughly immersed in God and filled with His Spirit that John called it a “baptism” and Jesus called it a “birth.”

You are brought to this point of Holy Spirit baptism on the basis of the most tender offerings a person is capable of, such as trust, confidence, and sincere appreciation, spoken of in the most unashamed way.

This is the spiritual position that to assume if you want to receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

I’ve referred to the Pentecostal Shake, where the person who is seeking the Holy Ghost comes away disappointed they have not received the Holy Ghost because laying on of hands cannot make the heart and attitude right.

There is a time and a place scripturally for laying on of hands, but I cannot shake the Holy Ghost into you.

It’s your desire, faith and attitude that’s going to allow you to make contact with God

Once a basis of mutuality, love, and confidence has been established in this contact, you are ready to proceed into deeper experiences with the wonderful Spirit which you are sensing has come and is moving upon you.

I have seen some who come for the baptism of the Holy Ghost and, immediately after kneeling, begin to repeat one word of praise, such as “glory, glory”, or “Jesus, Jesus, Jesus.” They do this without any attempt to establish contact with God, create in themselves the right

frame of mind, and without any feeling at all of God's presence. This is altogether a pointless exercise.

The Scriptures declares that out of the heart are the issues of life. *"For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness. . . ."* Romans 10:10

Receiving the Holy Ghost is not a mechanical process, or a whim of chance, but a very warm and personal experience which no one is ever able to forget.

Your approach to this experience must be made upon the basis of utmost honesty and confidence and trustful expectancy.

The baptism of the spirit is a spiritual experience and cannot be effected without strong contact with the Spirit.

That contact does not have to be made in church, it can be made anywhere when you get sincere with God

It definitely is an emotional experience and cannot reach its full completion without you extending yourself emotionally to become strongly involved with God.

Don't hold back, make you approach to God and make contact with the spirit

Let your faith rise to new heights with God.