



part 1 of 2—

Helping a Child Receive the Baptism in the Holy Spirit

by Lorraine Mastrorio

There is no set age limit at which one may be baptized in the Holy Spirit. Any Christian can receive this baptism. So be ready and enthusiastic about helping your students accept this wonderful gift from God.

The Teacher

Before you can help your students accept the baptism in the Holy Spirit, you must have received this baptism yourself—with its initial physical evidence of speaking in an unknown language. You should also have the fruit and gifts of the Spirit active in your life.

If you have not received the baptism in the Holy Spirit with its evidence of speaking in tongues, now is the time to seek it. It is God's desire to give His Holy Spirit to every believer. "If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!" (Luke 11:13, NIV).

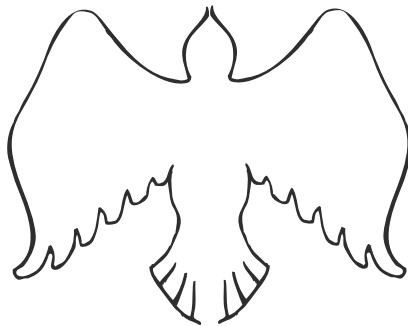
The Person

Make sure the students realize that the Holy Spirit is not an "it" and that the baptism is not

just an exciting experience or a ritual you must experience before you are really accepted in a Spirit-filled church.

The Purpose

Share the following simple Bible-based plan for understanding the Holy Spirit and His role in the believer's life.



1. The Holy Spirit Is God

He is not a presence or a mystery, but God. (See 1 Corinthians 2:11.)

2. The Holy Spirit Is for Every Believer

He is not just for Bible times or for adults or for certain Christians. (See Joel 2:28.)

3. The Holy Spirit Convicts Us of Sin

He is the One who first makes

a person want to accept salvation. He continues this work after salvation. (See John 16:8.)

4. The Holy Spirit Teaches Believers God's Way

He helps us understand who God is and what God wants us to do and be. (See John 16:13.)

5. The Holy Spirit Reminds Christians of What They Have Learned

He can help us remember a Bible verse or a lesson to encourage us or to help us conquer temptation. (See John 14:26.)

6. The Holy Spirit Gives Power to Witness

Witnessing is no easier for children than for adult believers. But the Holy Spirit can give boldness and the wisdom to know how to witness effectively. (See Acts 1:8.)

7. The Holy Spirit Gives Power to Pray

Because we do not know everything, we sometimes do not know how to pray. But the Holy Spirit is God and knows everything, including how we should pray. A Spirit-filled believer has the help of the Holy Spirit in praying as God wants. (See Romans 8:26,27.)



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The Gift

The Baptism Is a Free Gift

The baptism in the Holy Spirit is not something a believer can earn. As you cannot earn salvation, so you cannot earn the baptism in the Holy Spirit. (See Luke 11:13.) It is a gift God the Father wants to give to every believer. (See Joel 2:28.)

The Baptism Gives You a Deeper Relationship with God

One function of the baptism in the Holy Spirit is a deeper relationship with God. It is given to help each Christian know, obey, and love God more. (See John 16:14,15.)

The Evidence

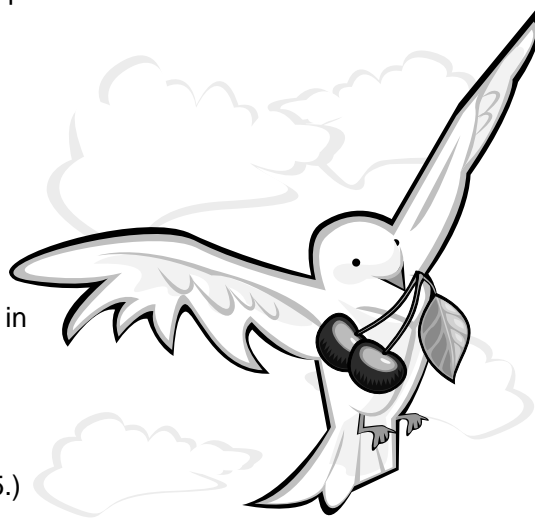
Speaking in Unknown Tongues Is the First Sign

Speaking in a language you do not know as the Holy Spirit enables you is the first physical evidence that a Christian has experienced the baptism in the Holy Spirit. (See Acts 2:4; 10:44-46.)

The Holy Spirit Does Not Force Anyone

The Holy Spirit will not force any person to speak. He provides

the ability, but each believer must provide the willing use of his mouth. The Holy Spirit will not take control of a student. The student must give that control. (See 1 Corinthians 14:32.)



Speaking in Tongues Is Not Learned or Taught

Encourage the seeking student to speak what God gives him. Do not coach him with sounds or words. If students attempt to teach each other how to speak in tongues, gently explain that just as God makes each person unique and gives him or her various talents and abilities, so He gives each Christian the unknown language He chooses for that person. Each Christian should have the privilege and joy of speaking

forth the language God gives, not one that is learned.

What Happens Next?

Pray Daily

Encourage children who receive the Holy Spirit to daily take time to let the Holy Spirit pray through them in tongues. This "edifies" or builds up each believer. (See 1 Corinthians 14:4.)

Develop the Fruit

Remind the student who is baptized in the Holy Spirit that he can expect to see the fruit of the Spirit develop in his life. He should ask God to help him develop these character traits.

Use the Gift

Encourage the Spirit-filled child to be ready to be used by the Holy Spirit in ministry gifts the Holy Spirit chooses and gives. (See 1 Corinthians 12:7-11; Ephesians 4:11,12; and Romans 12:6-8.) Stress that the Holy Spirit controls the gifts and provides the ability. They are not earned nor are they provided for personal gain.

Spread the Joy

Finally, celebrate when a child is baptized in the Holy Spirit. Tell others and encourage the receiving child to tell others as well.

