Subject: "he being dead yet speaketh." (Heb. 11.4) Thoughts From HEF - Part 5
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"God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh." (Heb. 11.4) Thoughts From HEF (Part 5)

I have recently been (re-)reading HEF's book, "Deeper Life In The Spirit"; this was a book that has always blessed me, so I thought I would just excerpt from it a bit for the benefit of those who have never (or recently) read it - starting at the beginning...Here is part 5 (from pp. 22-33 of the book; emphasis in bold is mine; my thoughts follow the excerpt). Read his teaching, meditate, and be blessed!

How to Receive the Baptism in the Holy Spirit
with the Scriptural Sign Following

Two basic steps are necessary to receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit: the first concerns preparation of the heart to receive the Holy Spirit; the second is the act of faith whereby one receives the baptism with the accompanying evidence.

Preparation of the Heart

In order to reap a harvest the farmer must first prepare the ground to receive the seed. In like manner one's heart must first be conditioned and prepared to receive the blessed Comforter. Some who have desired the baptism in the Holy Spirit have not received it because they have not prepared themselves beforehand. Receiving the Holy Spirit is not something to be taken lightly and rushed into without serious consideration. The basic purpose of God in giving us this anointing from heaven is not merely so we can speak in new tongues, as great a blessing as this experience is; but the baptism in the Holy Spirit is the doorway into the deeper life in the Spirit and the fullness of God. What then is necessary to prepare .the heart for this experience?

1. Believe that the Scriptures teach that the baptism in the Holy Spirit is a personal experience subsequent to salvation which is promised to every believer.

One cannot go beyond this point until the matter of the validity of the baptism in the Holy Spirit as a personal experience for the believer today is settled. God will not surprise a doubting heart with the Holy Spirit. One must have resolved any doctrinal questions as to the possibility of being filled with the Holy Spirit in the same manner as the disciples at Pentecost, or such doubt will act as a hindrance and one's faith cannot be released sufficiently for this experience. All of God's promises are appropriated by faith, and the promise of the baptism in the Holy Spirit is no exception. We must ground our faith in the Word of God, for faith comes by hearing (Romans 10:17) and believing the Word. To remove doubts and correct wrong teaching, we recommend a

sincere study of the Scriptures on this subject. This is how the writer received this experience, and I have been privileged to instruct and lead hundreds of others into this blessing. There is, we believe, sufficient scriptural evidence set forth in this chapter to inspire the necessary faith to receive the Holy Spirit.

The baptism in the Holy Spirit is a clear Scriptural promise to every believer.

a. Old Testament prophecy.

Joel predicted that in the latter days God would pour out His Spirit upon all flesh:

And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy.
â€“ Joel 2:28

This was first experienced on the Day of Pentecost, when the 120 disciples were all filed with the Holy Spirit and spoke with new languages or tongues (Acts 2:1-4). The fact that the promise was not limited to this initial outpouring is seen from Peter's words of explanation of their experience in Acts 2:38-39, where the same gift of the Holy Spirit is promised to all those who receive Christ: "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." The promise of the baptism in the Holy Spirit is without question for all believers who will exercise the faith to appropriate it.

b. New Testament promise.

The classic passage where Jesus promises us the gift of the Holy Spirit is Luke 11:9-13. Verse 13 reads: "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" The willingness of our heavenly Father to give us the baptism of the Holy Spirit is clearly indicated here, since, as a child of God, we already have received the work of the Spirit in regeneration (Romans 8:9, 15-16). The writer has seen many, many Christians come into this blessing merely by quoting to them this verse of Scripture, which was then appropriated by them in faith. Christ also promises the baptism in Acts 1:4-5, 8.

2. Recognize your need of the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Jesus said to His disciples in Matthew 5:3, "Blessed are the poor in spirit." As long as one is satisfied with his present spiritual level of life and testimony; as long as he is content with his present degree of holiness, faith, and power; as long as he is satisfied with his present mediocrity and fruitlessness, or his inability to fulfill his responsibilities to the commission as Jesus intended (Mark 16: 15-20), then the baptism in the Holy Spirit will not hold sufficient interest for him to receive it.

A most tragic situation is when the Christian finds himself satisfied with his present level of spiritual growth and attainment. Occasionally there are those who will ask, "What you say concerning the fulfilling of Joel's prophecy today may be true, but what do I need with the baptism in the Holy Spirit?" This is tantamount to asking, "What do I need with more of the power and presence of God in my life?" To ask such a question reveals an abysmal lack of spiritual perception into the teaching of Jesus concerning the need and purpose of the baptism, and is itself an indication of such need of the Holy Spirit by this individual.

When Jesus said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit," He was saying, "Blessed is that individual who recognizes his spiritual poverty; who is aware of his own insufficiency to fulfill My will in his life, and to give an effective witness, or to minister to the needs of the whole man." When one sees himself, as it were, a spiritual pauper and in dire need of power from on high, then in humility he will cry out for divine enablement, desiring above all else the baptism from heaven. This will never occur until one comes to the end of himself and sees himself helpless before a dying world which is in dire need, which he in his pathetic feeble efforts is unable to meet effectively because he lacks the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

The primary reason multitudes in the organized church of our day do not see their need of the baptism of power from on high is that the church has substituted religious organizations and institutions, church activities, and dynamic programs for the power of the Holy Spirit. If the Holy Spirit were taken out of the world tomorrow, most of the program and work of the churches would go right on and they would not know the difference! Therefore, until one is aware of his spiritual poverty and need of the Holy Spirit, attempting to persuade him with scriptural argument is useless.

3. Receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit must be the greatest expectation of the heart.

One must have a deep hunger and thirst for the Holy Spirit. This thirst must be the most important thing in his life, the greatest expectation of his heart, and the deepest longing of the soul. For now it must be more important than work, friends, eating, or sleeping. One might say, "I don't feel such an urgency or longing, although I would like to have this experience." Then my advice is: do not ask for the Holy Spirit until you feel the need and desire due to your spiritual povertyâ€”until you make it as important as the experience is.

The Christian will not receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit until he recognizes his need for this empowering (point 2, above), but one may be all too aware of his need and still not have a deep desire to receive this experience. A man may be quite conscious of his need of deliverance from alcohol or drug addiction, for example, but at the same time be totally lacking in any desire to give up these things. One may be weak, sickly, and suffering from malnutrition due to an inadequate diet, and still have no real desire to seek a change. Many Christians recognize their spiritual weakness, fruitlessness, ineffectiveness, and need of the baptism, but experience no deep hunger and thirst for the Holy Spirit. God cannot fill one who is not hungry, nor quench the thirst of one

who is not thirsty. Jesus said, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled" (Matthew 5:6). Spiritual blessings, by their very nature, cannot be forced upon one, and for this reason Jesus invites only the thirsty to come unto Him and receive the Holy Spirit, saying,

If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him would receive; for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.
â€“ John 7:37-38

In my ministry I have seen hundreds receive the Holy Spirit, entering into a new spiritual dimension which has gloriously changed their lives. In only a few instances, those who have come for the laying on of hands have not received the baptism in the Holy Spirit; but in each case it was not difficult to determine the reason. Generally, it was due to a lack of faith on their part or a lack of deep-felt hunger for this experience. I have been privileged to pray for Christians who came sometimes from long distances with such yearning in their hearts for more of God's life and power in their lives that they could not rest until they had received the gift of the Holy Spirit.

In one instance, two Catholic women had sought this experience for four years without success. When they heard of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Notre Dame in March 1967, in which I had the privilege of participating, their hunger for the Holy Spirit was such that they left their employment in Canada and flew to South Bend, Indiana, for the purpose of receiving the baptism! It was also my privilege to pray for one of these. She received the Holy Spirit immediately, speaking in new tongues. The other woman, to the best of my knowledge, had already received when she arrived at the meeting.

On another occasion a woman who lived in another state had such a hunger that she arose early one morning and drove to my residence, knocking on my door at 9:30 a.m. asking for prayer for the baptism in the Holy Spirit, Needless to say her thirst was quenched by the Lord. One brother, a missionary from Africa, although aware that receiving this experience could mean his dismissal from fellowship with his denomination (which actually occurred later), nevertheless felt such a need for the baptism of power in his ministry that he deemed the cost was little enough to pay.

Many instances of the satisfaction of this deep-felt hunger for the Holy Spirit could be given; but where such a hunger was lacking, these individuals have not received the baptism. A case comes to mind of a pastor, who, as most Christians, believed that he had received the baptism in the Holy Spirit at the time he was saved. However, upon being shown from the Scriptures that he did not have the baptism because he did not have the scriptural evidence of speaking in tongues, he asked for prayer to receive the baptism, stating that he wanted all God had for him. But he then added, "However, God has blessed my ministry so much that I must admit that I do not have a

real hunger for this experience as probably most of those for whom you have prayed." Needless to say, he received nothing. In fact, I make it a point never to pray for those who do not express a real need and desire to receive the Holy Spirit. These individuals never receive, and it only increases their skepticism and indifference toward the whole experience. Without a genuine thirst for the experience, one cannot exercise sufficient faith to receive the promise. Moreover, God cannot be expected to take one seriously who asks for His best gifts, but who, in turn, manifests no real love and hunger for them.

4. Finally, there must be a willingness to receive the Holy Spirit on God's terms.

This means, first of all, a willingness to receive the baptism with its evidenceâ€”that is, speaking in new tongues. Had the disciples on the day of Pentecost been as prejudiced and uncooperative as some Christians today who attempt to set the "conditions" for receiving the baptism, Pentecost would never have occurred. Receiving the sign of the baptism in the Holy Spirit, contrary to the misconception held by some, is not optional. Occasionally some recognize their need of the Holy Spirit and seek the baptism; but due to a lack of understanding of the need and purpose of speaking in tongues, they ask, "What do I need with the tongues? I just want the empowering of the Spirit." Others, wishing to avoid what they feel is the stigma associated with speaking in tongues, seek the baptism on their terms, without the vocal evidence. But this would be like inviting Jesus into your home because you recognize the need of His presence and power, but forbidding Him ever to speak! It is as if one should ask, "Can I receive Christ as my Savior without having to witness to this fact to others? They would doubtless laugh and ridicule, or perhaps persecute me for my testimony." Obviously, one cannot receive Christ who does not care to pay the cost, and in the same manner one does not receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit who would seek to conceal the evidence and testimony of his experience: supernatural utterance given by the Spirit of God. To reject the sign of the baptism, because one fears the so-called stigma of tongues, betrays a lack of awareness of the basic teachings of Jesus concerning discipleship, for He repeatedly emphasized that His disciples are called to suffer tribulation and persecution for His sake (John 15:18-21; 16:33; Acts 14:23; 2Tim 3:12; 1Pet 2:19). One need not think that receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit is any exception to this. On the day of Pentecost, did they not accuse the disciples of being drunken with wine?

For those who question the need of speaking in tongues as evidence of one's baptism, it is well to ask, "How could one know whether or not he had received the baptism in the Holy Spirit, unless he received it in the same manner as the disciples at Pentecost?" Sometimes Christians, who feel that they have received the Holy Spirit without speaking in tongues, have stated that they do not believe that speaking in tongues is the only evidence of the baptism. Often these are sincere Christians who have had some supernatural experience in their lives, in which God has spoken audibly to them, or they have had a heavenly vision, or some other deeply moving spiritual experience with the Lord, which they identify with the baptism in the Holy Spirit. In one such instance, a young man, while in conversation with the writer, insisted that he had received the baptism because of just such an experience, in which the room where he was praying was

suddenly illuminated with heavenly light and Jesus spoke to him audibly. This he was sure was his "baptism in the Holy Spirit." However, we may point out that the Apostle Paul had almost an identical experience to this on the road to Damascus, in which he too saw a great light which "shined round about him from heaven...and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul..." (Acts 9:3-4). But we read that it was not until three days later that he received the baptism in the Holy Spirit (9:9-17). And there is no question as to whether or not Paul spoke in tongues, as 1 Corinthians 14:18 clearly indicates. Evidence that speaking in tongues is definitely the "sign" of having received the baptism in the Holy Spirit has already been sufficiently set forth earlier in this chapter. It is worth noting that this same young man who thought he had received the baptism of the Holy Spirit without speaking in tongues at the time of his supernatural encounter with the Lord, later when shown his error received the baptism with its evidence, as others have done.

Frequently, Christians wish to be filled with the Holy Spirit because they are all too aware of their spiritual ineffectiveness, weaknesses, fruitlessness, and failure. Out of real spiritual concern, such individuals wish to be more successful and effective as a pastor, evangelist, missionary, or teacher, or desire to live a more victorious Christian life. They sincerely desire the power of the Spirit in their lives, but on their own terms. These individuals will find, however, if they will carefully examine their motives, that their primary concern is not so much God's glory as their own failures! Too often, if we are really honest with ourselves, we are really asking God to change our lives if we do not have to change our beliefs in the process. We have a subtle way of sanctifying our desires many times by telling ourselves that what we wish from God is for His glory, as well as for our good, when in reality, if we would examine our motives, God's will and purpose may play a very minor role in the matter.

For example, a minister once asked me to pray for him to receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit, after he had heard me speak to a group of Christians, telling them of the tremendous change this experience had made in my life and ministry. He confessed that his ministry had been largely unsuccessful, without fruit, and that he needed and desired the baptism. However, he added that he wanted to receive this experience "without the tongues," because the denomination to which he belonged accepted the baptism as valid, but taught that speaking in tongues was not for our day. One who desires the baptism in the Spirit should not ask God, "How can I receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit without tongues?" but "How can I receive the identical experience that the disciples at Pentecost received in the identical way in which they did, so that I might be what they were and do what they did?

So, to receive the baptism on God's terms, we must first be willing to receive with the evidence. But we must also be willing, in the second place, to fulfill God's purpose in giving us the Holy Spirit. This purpose is to bring us into the deeper life in the Spirit and to fill us with all the fullness of Himself (Ephesians 3:19). Our motive must be that we desire this experience in order that we might become holy temples for habitation by the Spirit. To desire the baptism merely to be empowered, whether to speak supernaturally in new tongues, to witness more effectively, or to be endowed with the gifts of the Spirit, fails to take into account the fact that, while these blessings

are to be desired, they are not ends in themselves. The Holy Spirit comes to make us what He is: HOLY. The Holy Spirit does not care to indwell one whose basic desire is not the same as His. While receiving the Holy Spirit is by a simple act of faith, and is not dependent upon our reaching a certain degree of perfection first, nevertheless, there must be a willingness to walk in the Spirit and manifest the fruit and character of the Holy Spirit.

In Acts 1:8 we read that when the Holy Spirit comes He empowers the disciple to witness. Significantly, this is why the Holy Spirit is reluctant to fill one whose primary desire is not holiness of character and life, for one can only witness to what he is. Thus, the Holy Spirit does not want to empower anyone to witness to the wrong things. If one desires to be empowered, but wants to live at about the same spiritual level as before, and does not wish to pay the cost of disciplining himself for the deeper walk in the Spirit, submitting his life completely to the Spirit for His control, then the Holy Spirit would be empowering him to be a witness against Himself! We have power enough already to witness to our spiritual weaknesses and failures. If the Holy Spirit gave us power to witness without changing us, we would only publish our weaknesses and shortcomings before the world.

The heart must be prepared to receive the blessed Holy Spirit. The Christian must be willing to ask himself if he is really willing to be filled with One who will take over the control of his life and be his Lord; One who will not accept rationalizations and excuses for sin in his life; One who will no longer tolerate the self-life he has been living, but will require him to submit himself to His pruning and refining work in order to be crucified with Christ. Unless one can sincerely answer in the affirmative that this is his desire, then he does not want the baptism in the Holy Spirit, but merely the empowering of the spirit to serve his own religious ends.

Receiving the Baptism in the Holy Spirit

1. Believe God's Word which promises you the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38-39).
The terms "baptism," "filled," and "gift" of the Holy Spirit are used synonymously. Cf. Acts 1:5; 2:4; 10:45; 11:15-17.

2. Ask for the baptism in the Holy Spirit (Luke 11:9-13).

3. Confess that you have received the Holy Spirit by faith (Mark 11:24).

For example, say: "Heavenly Father, on the authority of your promise, I now ask for, and by faith receive, the gift of the Holy Spirit, in Jesus' Name."

4. Act on your faith (James 2:17).

The scriptural evidence of having received the baptism in the Holy Spirit is the sign of speaking in a new tongue (Acts 2:4; 10:44-46; 19:1-6; Mark 16:17). In Acts 2:4 we read, "They...began to

speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." God fills you, but you must begin to speak. Determine not to speak a word of English at this time (for you cannot speak two languages at once). Lift up the sound of your voice and the Holy Spirit will give you utterance in a new language supernaturally.

Do not be concerned about "what to say," as the language is spoken supernaturally and does not come through the mind or intellect, but through your spirit quickened by the Holy Spirit. In faith, put your speech faculties into operation (vocal chords, tongue, lips) as in speaking any language, and the Holy Spirit, now indwelling you, will give the utterance.

Remember, receiving the Holy Spirit is an act of faith, and this promise is to be appropriated in the same way as all God's promises are, such as salvation, healing, etc. Some who have not understood this fact have failed to receive because they were looking for some "feeling," "emotional experience," or "special anointing" before they would believe they had received the Holy Spirit. We are to receive the Holy Spirit by faith, and as we act on our faith, the evidence and assurance will follow.

My thoughts (see text in bold)--
--One thing I find interesting about this section of DLS is that Dr. Freeman spends more time on preparation of the heart - about 11 pages in the print edition - than he does on receiving - just a little over 2 pages. "Receiving the Holy Spirit is not something to be taken lightly and rushed into without serious consideration," is what Dr. Freeman teaches us here. A slogan comes to my mind (think it might be something they say in government or the military): "Prior Planning Prevents Poor Performance." I think the HEF would have agreed with that! Those of us today who would want to minister the truth of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit to others effectively, should learn from Dr. Freeman that "Some who have desired the baptism in the Holy Spirit have not received it because they have not prepared themselves beforehand." My understanding is that HEF was used mightily to minister the baptism to many, many people. I myself received it through reading his teachings in this very book. He was skilled in this area, and he understood the absolute importance of proper preparation - getting the doctrinal doubts out, eliminating objections, challenging the heart.

"He being dead...YET SPEAKETH!"
Your thoughts?