

Fanning it into Flame
Sunday, January 08, 2012
Journey Essentials

Last week I started the year off with a message to get us thinking in terms of what is needed to succeed in 2012. Traditionally New Year's resolutions pop into our minds. Not wanting to repeat anything that may not have worked in the previous year, we make goals to work harder, eat less, exercise more, read more, pray more, and the list goes on. But as I pointed out, sheer will power is not enough to make them happen. While our mind, will, and emotions are all part of it, we must always bear in mind what Jesus said: ***“apart from me you cannot do anything.”*** Jesus must always part of the equation. The following is how we make that possible.

At the Last Supper Jesus had his final opportunity before his death to impart some very important instructions to his apostles. Much of it centered on the Holy Spirit in John 13-17. **John 14:15-18 (NIV)** ¹⁵ *“If you love me, you will obey what I command. ¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you **another Counselor** to be with you forever-- ¹⁷ **the Spirit of truth**. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. **But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.** ¹⁸ I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.* The meaning of the emboldened word above, **another Counselor**, carried with it a meaning in the original language, i.e. “another of the same kind.” The reason that they already knew the Spirit was that he was seen in the person of Christ who would be in them after his death, burial, and resurrection. It would be the Holy Spirit, but it would also be Jesus. Jesus taught them earlier in this same chapter that when “you’ve seen me, you’ve seen the Father.” The two are one yet distinct. The same can be said of the Holy Spirit. He is the Spirit of Jesus, yet a person himself. **John 14:25-27 (NIV)** ²⁵ *“All this I have spoken while still with you. ²⁶ **But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.** ²⁷ Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.*

After his resurrection he appeared to a couple of disciples on the Road to Emmaus who did not know it was Jesus. He was giving them the same instruction as that at the Last Supper when he told them to wait for the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. **Luke 24:45-49 (NIV)** ⁴⁵ *Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. ⁴⁶ He told them, “This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷ and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹ **I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.**” Then again Luke records a similar message in **Acts 1:4-8 (NIV)** ⁴ *On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: “Do not leave Jerusalem, but **wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about.** ⁵ For John baptized with water, but in a few days **you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.**” ⁶ So when they met together, they asked him, “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?” ⁷ He said to them: “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. ⁸ **But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.**”**

While the first essential for the journey is receiving Christ as Savior and Lord, the second is the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. Jesus was telling them not to try anything on their own. Wait for the Spirit of God. Acts chapter 2 gives the amazing account of what happened. Sometimes people are hesitant to receive the Baptism of the Holy Spirit because of fear of the unknown or because they've been taught that it's not for today, or the fact that we like to be in control and don't like thinking that this is going to take us someplace we don't want to go. The truth is that Jesus is the one giving these instructions. If you love Jesus, you'll love the Holy Spirit! Now understand this. We receive the Holy Spirit upon our accepting Jesus into our hearts, but the Baptism of the Holy Spirit is a subsequent gift of God that he wants us all of us to have. It can be thought of in terms of God receiving more of us rather than us receiving more of him. We are allowing him to fill every nook and cranny of our life. He wants to give us the gift of his presence to illuminate our hearts to his will, his nature, and his power. This truly empowers us to become who we were always intended to be... just like Jesus! Don't be short-changed on all that God has for you. It will truly enable us to do what he's called us to do.

Scriptural Support for the Baptism of the Holy Spirit

John 7:37-39 (NIV)

³⁷ On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, **"If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink."** ³⁸ **Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him."** ³⁹ **By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.**

Acts 2:1-4 (NIV)

¹ When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. ² Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³ They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. ⁴ **All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.** (The way we receive the Holy Spirit is the same way we received Jesus. It is by faith. We believed the word of God that if we asked Jesus into our heart he would come. We do the same thing with the Holy Spirit. Ask Jesus to fill you and receive him. **Luke 11:9-13 (NIV)** ⁹ *"So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. ¹⁰ For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened. ¹¹ "Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? ¹² Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? ¹³ 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!"*)

Acts 2:14-18 (NIV)

¹⁴ Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: "Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. ¹⁵ These men are not drunk, as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning! ¹⁶ No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: ¹⁷ **"In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. ¹⁸ Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy.**

Acts 8:14-17 (NIV)

¹⁴ When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. ¹⁵ When they arrived, **they prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit,** ¹⁶ **because the Holy Spirit had not yet come upon any of them; they had simply been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus.** ¹⁷ **Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.** (This can be like many of us. We accepted the word of God and were baptized, but had not yet received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.)

Acts 15:28 (NIV)

²⁸ **It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us** not to burden you with anything beyond the following requirements: (He is a person who interacts with us.)

Acts 16:6-10 (NIV)

⁶ Paul and his companions traveled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, **having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia.** ⁷ When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, **but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to.** ⁸ So they passed by Mysia and went down to Troas. ⁹ **During the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us."** ¹⁰ **After Paul had seen the vision, we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.** (Notice that the Holy Spirit is also called the Spirit of Jesus.)

1 Corinthians 12:4-11 (NIV)

⁴ There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. ⁵ There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord.

⁶ There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men. ⁷ **Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.** ⁸ To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, ⁹ to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, ¹⁰ to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. ¹¹ All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines.

1 Corinthians 14:1-5 (NIV)

¹ **Follow the way of love and eagerly desire spiritual gifts,** especially the gift of prophecy. ² For anyone who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God. Indeed, no one understands him; he utters mysteries with his spirit. ³ But everyone who prophesies speaks to men for their strengthening, encouragement and comfort.

⁴ He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church. ⁵ I would like every one of you to speak in tongues, but I would rather have you prophesy. He who prophesies is greater than one who speaks in tongues, unless he interprets, so that the church may be edified. (Paul was not devaluing the gift of tongues here. He was saying that in a corporate meeting we are to edify one another rather than ourselves. He goes on to say later in **1 Corinthians 14:18-19 (NIV)** ¹⁸ *I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you.* ¹⁹ *But in the church I would rather speak five intelligible words to instruct others than ten thousand words in a tongue.*)

There is much to study and learn here. This was to just get your appetites going.