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Faith Overcomes the World (1 John 5:4)

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The Baptism of the Holy Spirit

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About Faith

If you are going through a difficult time undoubtedly someone will encourage you by saying "have faith, it will all work out." One meaning is that you should be positive because being negative makes it worse. There are no guarantees. But having faith demonstrates that you are optimistic and are hoping for a good outcome. A factual prognosis may be realistic but Biblical faith has its own rules. God "gives life to the dead and calls into being that which does not exist" (Ro 4:17). Therefore if we follow the Bible "we walk by faith, not by sight" (1Co 5:7). We become "those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all" (Ro 4:16). God instituted faith. He "said to Abram, 'Go forth from your country . . . to the land which I will show you; and I will make you a great nation'" (Ge 12:1-2). Abram acted in faith and "went forth as the Lord had spoken to him" (:4). God later reminded him saying "'I am the Lord who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans'" (15:7). God had promised Abraham an heir saying, "'So shall your descendants be'" (:5). "'Abraham believed God'" (Ro 4:3) and "'faith was credited to Abraham'" (:9).

What Faith Is

Abraham exercised faith by believing. But it isn't mental gymnastics. "Faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ" (Ro 10:17). "By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God" (Heb 11:3). Even though "what is seen" (:3) is visible they were "not made out of things which are

visible" (:3). It requires faith to accept this. "For by grace you have been saved through faith" (Eph 2:8). "It is by faith, in order that it may be in accordance with grace" (Ro 4:16). "It is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast" (Eph 2:89). It was a promise that Abraham "would be heir of the world" (Ro 4:13) and faith ensures "that the promise will be guaranteed" (:16). Hebrews 11:1 defines faith because it says "faith is." If the text consisted of metaphors they would be likenesses, but one part says "faith is . . . the conviction of things not seen" (11:1) which is more of a definition. We weren't witnesses when "the worlds were prepared by the word of God" (11:3) but "that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them" (Ro 1:19) and "His invisible attributes . . . have been clearly seen" (:20). This evidence is not unlike what is presented in a court case which substantiates the truth. You see the reality of what had been previously unproven when it is spelled out by God through faith. Faith is the tangible evidence which comes only from God.

Faith is Surety

"Faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see" (Heb 11:1 NIV). Assurance and certainty apply to "of what" a person has confidence in will come to pass. If it is "of things" (11:1 NASB), it is from, concerning or belonging to the existence of what is desired or expected. Hope must be based upon something potentially happening in the first place. When you are hopeful you are optimistic

that your expectations are reasonable. But from a Biblical standpoint it is faith from God that makes hope authentic. God told Abraham his descendants would be as the number of stars (Ge 15:5). But the time came when "Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in age; Sarah was past childbearing" (18:11). In a natural way there was no substance for Abraham's hope. But God said "'Sarah your wife will have a son'" (:10). Therefore Abraham was "fully assured that what God had promised, He was able also to perform" (Ro 4:21). Abraham was aware of natural impossibilities because it was "against hope" (:18). No realistic person would hope in something impossible. But Abraham "in hope . . . believed . . . according to that which had been spoken" (:18). It was with scriptural hope based upon God's promise. Faith is the substance for hope because the assurance is inherent in the promise. Also, Abraham "with respect to the promise . . . did not waver in unbelief, but grew strong in faith, giving Glory to God" (:20). What God had spoken contained what convinced Abraham so that he could faithfully believe in it.

Word of Faith

Faith is released by words. "By your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned" (12:37). "The tongue has the power of life and death" (Pr 18:21). "The tongue of the wise brings healing" (12:18). Jesus taught "'out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks'" (Mt 12:34). The faith you have is expressed in speech. "What he says will

happen" (Mk 11:23). It works because of the characteristics of the communication. Jesus said "the words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life" (Jn 6:63). He also reveals "'I am in the Father . . . [and] the words I say to you are not just my own'" (14:10). It has to be in accordance with God's words "in you" (:7). The words are there if you meditate on the book of the law (Jos 1:8). They are there because "Your word I have treasured in my heart" (Ps 119:11). "From Your precepts I get understanding" (:104). "The unfolding of Your words gives light" (:130). "Your testimonies . . . are my counselors" (:24). "Jesus answered, 'It is written, 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God'" (Mt 4:4). He repeats it being written in verses 7 and 10. "If they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isa 8:20).

Believe in Faith

Jesus "healed all who were ill" (Mt 8:16). The people who came to him for this had faith in God (Mk 11:22). "Two blind men followed Him, crying out, 'Have mercy on us, Son of David!'" (Mt 9:27). Jesus asked, "'Do you believe that I am able to do this?'" (:28). The blind men answered, "'Yes, Lord'" (:28). Jesus responded, "'It shall be done to you according to your faith'" (:29). Then "their eyes were opened" (:30). They believed Jesus could heal them and were healed because of their faith. "'For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart'" (Mt 12:34). "'The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart'-that is, the

word of faith" (Ro 10:8). A centurion asked for help saying, "Lord, my servant is lying paralyzed at home, fearfully tormented" (Mt 8:4). He said to Jesus, "just say the word, and my servant will be healed" (:8). Jesus responded, "Go; it shall be done for you as you have believed" (:13). Because the centurion believed that all Jesus had to do is speak the command Jesus said, "I have not found such great faith with anyone in Israel" (:10). "The servant was healed that very moment" (:13). The centurion had the faith and believed. A Canaanite woman asked Jesus to heal her daughter. Through their talk Jesus ascertained that she believed he could heal her and said, "O woman, your faith is great; it shall be done for you as you wish" (Mt 15:28). "Her daughter was healed at once" (:28). Both the centurion and Canaanite woman had "great faith." They were persistent and "strong in faith" (Ro 4:20). They believed and kept their focus. If you don't, then circumstances will undermine your confidence and your faith will be too small to get what you want (Mt 14:29-31). Peter "seeing the wind" (:30) lost focus. Thomas' focus was on seeing because he said "Unless I see . . . I will not believe" (Jn 20:25). When he did see, Jesus told him "be not faithless, but believing" (:27 KJV). Jesus said "see my hands . . . stop doubting and believe" (:27 NIV). Not having faith and doubting are synonymous. That is why Jesus said, "do not be unbelieving, but believing" (:27 NASB).

Hear by Faith

"Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved" (Ro 10:13). "How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard?" (:14). Fortunately "faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ" (:17). The Greek term for "word" is "rhema" which means uttered by a living voice. The "word of God is quick" (Heb 4:12) which means it is alive. When God speaks, it is present tense having "been granted for Christ's sake" (Php 1:29) to "believe in Him" (:29). "Having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise" (Eph 1:13). Without knowing the truth you don't have faith to believe. It comes by "listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation" (Eph 1:13). It is "hope laid up for you in heaven, of which you previously heard in the word of truth, the gospel" (Col 1:5). It has worked in you "since the day you heard of it and understood the grace of God in truth" (:6). It is "the hope of the gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation" (:23). "You have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus" (Eph 4:21).

Mystery Revealed

"The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham" (Gal 3:8). "In Him we have redemption through His blood" (Eph 1:7). It is "the mystery which has been hidden from the past ages and generations"

(Col 1:26). The Apostle Paul was a steward "of the mysteries of God" (1Co 4:1). He said "we speak God's wisdom in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God predestined before the ages to our glory" (2:7). It was hidden and God had to reveal it. Paul said "He made known to us the mystery of His will" (Eph 1:9). He said it was "God's grace which was given to me for you; that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery" (3:3). "This grace was given . . . to bring to light what is the administration of the mystery" (:8-9). Paul said "when you read you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ" (:4). We base our faith on God's revelation. It "was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit" (:5). Paul told the Galatians "that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man" (Gal 1:11). He said "I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ" (:12). Furthermore Paul said it was "to reveal His Son in me so that I might preach Him among the Gentiles" (:16).

Paul told the Colossians that "I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit" (Col 1:25). The mystery revealed is "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (:27). It is "God's mystery, that is, Christ Himself, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col 2:2-3). Paul said "the mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church" (Eph 5:32). He prayed that "utterance may be given to me . . . to make known with boldness the

mystery of the gospel" (6:19). He also requested that "God may open up to us a door for the word, so that we may speak forth the mystery of Christ" (Col 4:3). Paul told the Galatians "we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by faith in Christ" (Gal 2:16). Therefore "you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ" (3:26). Paul explained "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me" (2:20). This is the mystery (Col 1:27). "The life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God" (Gal 2:20). We are "those who believe and are saved" (Heb 10:39 NIV).

Have Faith

God made man in the image and likeness of God (Ge 1:26). He "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being" (2:7). Hebrew for "breath" means breath, wind, or spirit. "God is spirit" (Jn 4:24) and he communicates with man. "That which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them" (Ro 1:19). "God has allotted to each a measure of faith" (12:3). "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (10:8). It is "with the heart a person believes" (10:10). It applies to "the hidden person of the heart" (1Pe 3:4) or "inner man" (Ro 7:22). You have to pay attention to God. "Since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood

through what has been made, so that they are without excuse" (Ro 1:20). But "even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God" (:21). It's because "a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God" (1Co 2:14). It's an eternal decision. "Fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Mt 10:28). Paul prayed that "may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete" (1Th 5:23). "Those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth" (Jn 4:24). But spiritual things are foreign to the natural man "because they are spiritually appraised" (1Co 2:14). Therefore you must become a "new creature" (2Co 5:17). When that happens "old things passed away; behold, new things have come" (:17). You become a new person "inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit" (Ro 2:29). "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (Jn 3:6). Then "our inner man is being renewed day by day" (2Co 4:16).

Grow in Faith

"The apostles said to the Lord, 'Increase our faith!'" (Lk 17:5). Jesus had been teaching them and apparently they felt that they didn't have the ability to carry out what had been taught. Jesus said they would need "'faith like a mustard seed'" (:6). One time they couldn't cast a demon out and Jesus said it was "'Because of the littleness of your faith'" (Mt 17:20). Jesus explained "'if you have faith the size of a mustard seed . . . nothing will be impossible to you'" (:20). Previously Jesus had taught that "'The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed . . . [which] is smaller

than all other seeds; but when it is full grown, it is larger than the garden plants" (Mt 13:31-32). Therefore your faith must grow "but God was causing the growth" (1Co 3:6). This demonstrates "your faith would not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God" (2:5).

Abraham "grew strong in faith" (Ro 4:20). He was "fully assured that what God had promised, He was able also to perform" (:21). Abraham had confidence in God. Jesus said "'Have faith in God'" (Mk 11:22). "By grace you have been saved through faith" (Eph 2:8). It is by righteousness "which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith" (Php 3:9). It is based upon "the faith of the gospel" (1:27) and "the hope of the gospel" (Col 1:23) in which "you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast" (:23). Your faith grows as you mature and it is recognizable as when Paul "heard of your faith" (Col 1:4, Eph 1:15). The Colossians had been "built up in Him and established in . . . faith" (2:7). Paul rejoiced to see "the stability of your faith in Christ" (:5). It was Paul's responsibility to be with them "for your progress and joy in the faith" (Php 1:25). He was in the "sacrifice and service of your faith" (2:17). He stated that "your faith grows" (2Co 10:15). Faith grows when you are "striving together for the faith of the gospel" (Php 1:27).

Receive Faith

Abraham was "fully assured" (Ro 4:21) of what God had promised. He attained "the full assurance of understanding, resulting in a true knowledge of God's

mystery" (Col 2:2). How is knowledge received? Paul prayed for people asking "that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding" (Col 1:9). He prayed that God would "give you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him" (Eph 1:17). It is received by the spirit. Paul prayed that "the eyes of your heart may be enlightened" (:18). God "gave us the Spirit in our hearts" (2Co 1:22). He asked for them "to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith" (Eph 3:16-17). When "increasing in the knowledge of God [you are] strengthened with all power" (Col 1:10). You learn "what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe" (Eph 1:19). You "abound still more and more in real knowledge and in all discernment" (Php 1:9) "increasing in the knowledge of God" (Col 1:10). In Christ "are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (2:3). The result is that you "put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him" (3:10). You begin "to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge . . . [and are] filled up to all the fullness of God" (Eph 3:19). You attain "the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man" (4:13). You endeavor to "know Him, and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death" (Php 3:10).

Believe in Heart

"With the heart a person believes" (Ro 10:10) which is the "inner man" (Eph 3:16). Man is composed of "spirit and soul and body" (1Th 5:23). "The Lord God formed man of dust from the ground" (Ge 2:7) which is the body. The brain is a physical organ and we make decisions with our intellect. But you "believe in your heart" (Ro 10:9) which is from another capacity. That source is from when God "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being" (Ge 2:7). Job said the "'Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life'" (Job 33:4). You could limit God's creation if you only considered Solomon saying "they all have the same breath" (Ecc 3:19) or Isaiah stating, "Stop regarding man, whose breath of life is in his nostrils" (Isa 2:22). But a distinction is made by Solomon saying, "Who knows that the breath of man ascends upward and the breath of the beast descends downward to the earth?" (Ecc 3:22). He says "man goes to his eternal home" (12:5) and "the dust will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit will return to God who gave it" (:7). Zechariah states that it is the Lord who "forms the spirit of man within him" (Zec 12:1). He is the "Father of spirits" (Heb 12:9). Moses referred to the Lord as "the God of the spirits of all flesh" (Num 27:16). Jesus "became a life-giving spirit" (1Co 15:45) and "breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit'" (Jn 20:22). Therefore be careful of an "unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God" (Heb 3:12).

Faith Presented

"Faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ" (Ro 10:17). Is the Old Testament less relevant than the New Covenant? When you consider that what happened to Israel was "written for our instruction" (1Co 10:11) it is applicable. We are no different than them. "Elijah was a man with a nature like ours" (Jas 5:17). They had to follow God themselves and God doesn't change (Mal 3:6). "They were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Christ" (1Co 10:4).

God led Israel "performing wonders and signs in the land of Egypt and in the Red Sea and in the wilderness for forty years" (Ac 7:36). "He led them with the cloud by day, and all the night with a light of fire" (Ps 78:14). The Lord said, "Assemble the people to Me, that I may let them hear My words so they may learn to fear Me all the days they live on the earth" (Dt 4:10). Moses said, "You, O Lord, have been seen face to face, that your cloud stays over them, and that you go before them" (Nu 14:14). Later he said, "Has anything been heard like it? Has any people heard the voice of God speaking from the midst of the fire, as you have heard it, and survived?" (Dt 4:32-33). "To you it was shown that you might know that the Lord, He is God; that there is no other besides Him" (:35). Therefore, when we read this we, too, can comprehend. It provides the faith we need. "Only give heed to yourself and keep your soul diligently, so that you do not forget the things which your eyes have seen

and they do not depart from your heart all the days of your life" (Dt 4:9).

Faith Demonstrated

Moses recounted saying, "You were not willing to go up, but rebelled against the command of the Lord your God" (Dt 1:26). They "gathered together against" (Nu 14:35) and grumbled against (:27) God. They "turned back from following" (:43), did not listen to his voice (:22), and spurned (:11) God. "The Lord said to Moses,. . . 'How long will they not believe in Me, despite all the signs which I have performed in their midst?'" (13:11). God said "they are a people who err in their heart, and they do not know My ways" (Ps 95:10). Moses said, "You did not trust the Lord your God" (Dt 1:32).

Joshua and Caleb were optimistic. Caleb said "we will certainly overcome it" (Nu 13:30) because "the Lord is with us" (14:9). He said that God "will Himself fight on your behalf, just as He did for you in Egypt before your eyes" (Dt 1:30). God said, "My servant Caleb . . . has had a different spirit and has followed Me fully" (Nu 14:24). Caleb said "do not fear" (:9), but the people said, "Our brethren have made our hearts melt" (Dt 1:28). They did not know God "and said, 'Because the Lord hates us . . . [he will] deliver us into the hand of the Amorites to destroy us'" (:27). But Moses knew better saying, "the Lord your God is a compassionate God; He will not fail you nor destroy you" (4:31).

Jesus encountered the same problem. The religious authorities observed, "This man is performing many signs. If we let him go like this, all men will believe in Him" (Jn 11:47-48). Jesus tried to deal with their unbelief saying, "But if I do them, though you do not believe in Me, believe the works, so that you may know and understand that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father" (10:38). "Though He had performed so many signs before them, yet they were not believing in Him" (12:37). Jesus asked, "When the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?" (Lk 18:8). Israel "failed to enter [the Promised Land] because of disobedience" (Heb 4:6). "The word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard" (:2). "They were not able to enter because of unbelief" (3:18). Therefore "let us hold fast our confession" (4:14) because "we who have believed enter that rest" (:3).

Faith in the Power of God

Faith has different applications. Christians believe in "the" faith which is professing "by" faith what Christ accomplished on the cross through "having" faith in the power of God who brought it to pass. It is because of faith that God "has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light" (Col 1:12). It motivated Paul to "press on toward the upward call of God" (Php 3:14). It is an upward direction because God "raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ

Jesus" (Eph 2:6). This is "at His right hand in the heavenly places" (1:20). We are "buried with him in baptism and raised with him through faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead" (Col 2:12). "As He is, so are we in this world" (1Jn 4:17). Jesus said, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world" (Jn 17:14). "Our citizenship is in heaven" (Php 3:20). But if heaven and earth are mutually exclusive then how can you be in two places at once? You have a heavenly "position" while in an earthly existence. However, the latter can be upgraded. It is Christ "who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to himself" (:21).

"To the Lord your God belong heaven and the highest heavens, the earth and all that is in it" (Dt 10:14). "It pleased the Father . . . to reconcile all things to himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven" (Col 1:19). His purpose is "the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth" (Eph 1:10). It is "the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name" (Eph 3:15). "God highly exalted Him" (Php 2:9) "far above the heavens . . . to fill all things" (Eph 4:10) "so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth" (Php 2:10). You have a position in heaven even though you live on earth. God "has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ"

(Eph 1:3). There is even the responsibility to disseminate "the manifold wisdom of God . . . through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places" (3:10). But you must "put on the full armor of God . . . [because] our struggle is . . . against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places" (6:12). Take up "the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one" (:16). Therefore, since "you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on things on the earth" (Col 3:1-2).

Faith is Optimistic

An idiom is an expression whose meaning cannot be derived from its words. "Pie in the sky" is such a phrase. You know what it means only from experiences having heard it used in certain contexts. It means that an idea or plan is so unrealistic or impractical that it will never materialize. It is an empty promise or impossible dream. Such a person has his "head in the clouds" meaning that he is a dreamer and out of touch with reality. The empty wish is "pie in the sky" meaning that it won't come to pass. There's a phrase criticizing a religious idealist who is "so heavenly preoccupied that he's no earthly good." In 1911 a labor organizer named Joe Hill wrote the phrase about pie in a song criticizing the Salvation Army song "In the Sweet Bye and Bye." He was critical of preaching which contained promises of future

rewards but did little to alleviate suffering in this life. He wrote, "You'll get pie in the sky when you die." But "faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen" (Heb 11:1). It is not false hope as in the idiom above. But there is a caveat. Proverbs 13:12 says "hope deferred makes the heart sick." When you become depressed it's possible to lose faith if your expectation vanishes. Nonetheless, "Though He slay me, I will hope in Him" (Job 13:15). Don't assume you must accomplish something unilaterally as Israel "presumed to go up to the hill country" (Nu 14:44) and their enemies defeated them. Sarai assumed that "the Lord has prevented me from bearing children" (Ge 16:6) and it resulted in Ishmael being born (:15). At the right time the Lord said "Sarah your wife shall have a son" (18:10) even though she was "past childbearing" (:11). Therefore cast "all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you" (1Pe 5:7). Moses' solution is to "love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul . . . [and] follow the Lord your God and fear Him . . . [and] listen to His voice, serve Him, and cling to Him" (Dt 10:1-4). It is "'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' says the Lord of hosts" (Zec 4:6).

Faith Inherits

When you inherit something it is passed down from an ancestor and you have legal right to possess it. Terah took his family from Ur "to enter the land of Canaan" (Ge 11:31). After he died "the Lord said to Abram, 'Go forth from your country . . . to the land which I will show you'" (12:1). He also said, "'I will

make you a great nation" (:2). "By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance" (Heb 11:8). Then he was told, "Your reward will be very great" (Ge 15:1). But he didn't see how it was possible because his only heir was his head servant (:2). God replied, "One who shall come forth from your own body, he shall be your heir" (:4). Then God directed him, "Count the stars, if you are able to count them . . . so shall your descendents be" (5). Consequently Abram "believed in the Lord; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness" (:6). "God has granted [the inheritance] to Abraham by means of a promise" (Gal 3:18). God said, "I have made you the father of a multitude of nations" (Ge 17:5) which took the form of a covenant. God said, "This is My covenant, which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: every male shall be circumcised" (:10). It was a "sign of the covenant" (:11), and without it, a person "has broken My covenant" (:14). God then said, "I will give you and your descendants after you, the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God" (:8).

In order to accomplish this it would have to be a miracle, but that would prove that only God could do it. When the "Lord appeared to Abram" (Ge 17:1) he said, "Indeed I will give you a son by her . . . and she shall be a mother of nations" (:16). "By faith even Sarah herself received ability to conceive . . . since she considered Him faithful who had promised" (Heb

11:11). God told Abram, "You shall call his name Isaac; and I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him" (Ge 17:19). Furthermore, God said, "I have chosen him . . . in order that the Lord may bring upon Abraham what He has spoken about him" (18:19). They sang, "Thou wilt bring them and plant them in the mountain of Thine inheritance, . . . Thy dwelling" (Ex 15:17). This was Mount Zion in the Promised Land where the temple was later built. Joshua was told by Moses, "Go with this people into the land which the Lord has sworn to their fathers to give them, and you shall give it to them as an inheritance" (Dt 31:7).

Your Inheritance

In the garden God told the serpent that Eve's seed would bruise him on the head, and his would bruise hers on the heel (Ge 3:15). This was what the future had in store. He also foretold to Abram that his descendants would be "strangers in a land that is not theirs, where they will be enslaved and oppressed four hundred years" (15:13).

Through God's planning and action "we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will" (Eph 1:11). God brought Israel "out of Egypt with a mighty hand" (Dt 9:26). He told Israel, "I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and . . . redeem you with an outstretched arm" (Ex 6:6). "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us" (Gal 3:13). Moses prayed, "Do not destroy your people, even Your

inheritance, whom You have redeemed through Your greatness" (Dt 9:26). God had adopted Israel. "They are Your people, even Your inheritance" (:29). "The Lord's portion is His people; Jacob is the allotment of His inheritance" (32:9).

God's plan began long ago since "He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world" (Eph 1:4). "The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham" (Gal 3:8). This understanding "in other generations was not made known to the sons of men" (Eph 3:5). "For ages [it] has been hidden in God who created all things" (:9). "He predestined us . . . according to the kind intention of His will" (1:5) and made it "known to us . . . according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him" (:9). It is the "manifold wisdom of God . . . in accordance with the eternal purpose" (3:10-11). It is an all-encompassing plan. It is a "view to the redemption of God's own possession" (1:14) "to bring to light what is the administration" (3:9) "suitable to the fullness of the times" (1:10). "Since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions . . . those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance" (Heb 9:15). God has "qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints" (Col 1:12). It is an "inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God" (Eph 5:5). "The reward of the inheritance . . . is the Lord Christ whom you serve" (Col 3:24). This conforms with God telling Abraham, "I am thy exceeding great reward" (Ge 15:1 KJV). It

results in "that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus" (Eph 2:7).

Survive by Faith

I grew up when there was constant fear of a nuclear war with Russia. It was believed that godless propaganda produced people who became antagonistic to our way of life. Is it possible to program the mind of someone so they become a particular kind of person? "As he thinks within himself, so he is" (Pr 23:7). You might call it a mind set. In this sense you could expect retaliation to threats because it's "survival of the fittest." But with Christians it is "with the heart a person believes" (Ro 10:10). The Bible often uses the heart as a metaphor for the spirit. You are "renewed in the spirit of your mind" (Eph 4:23). You should "love your neighbor as yourself" (Lev 19:18). We "live by his faith" (Hab 2:4) because "we walk by faith" (2Co 5:7).
"By faith

Sarah . . . considered Him faithful who had promised" (Heb 11:11). "By faith [Moses] . . . endured, as seeing Him who is unseen" (:27). Others had a longer time horizon and "these people died in faith, without receiving the promises" (:13) but they "saw them from a distance" (:13 NIV). However, "God had planned something better for us so that only together with us would they be made perfect" (:40 NIV).

Christ said "you will be hated by all nations because of My name" (Mt 24:9). He also said "an hour is coming for everyone who kills you to think that he is

offering service to God" (Jn 16:2). Some were tortured . . . , experienced mockings and scourgings, yes, also chains and imprisonment . . . , stoned . . . [and] were put to death with the sword" (Heb 11:35-37). It is because "the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God" (Ro 8:7). That is why Jesus said "'I did not come to bring peace, but a sword'" (Mt 10:34). But there should be a point of commonality. However, as citizens of the same country even Republicans and Democrats violently disagree. People in the same geographic region start wars of ethnic cleansing. "Nation will rise against nation" (24:7). It will "wear down the saints" (Da 7:25) "but the people who know their God will display strength and take action" (11:32). They "by faith conquered kingdoms . . . and obtained promises" (Heb 11:33). They "escaped the edge of the sword, from weakness were made strong, [and] became mighty in war" (:34). They all "gained approval through their faith" (:39) and "God is not ashamed to be called their God" (:16).

Overcome by Faith

In the New Testament "He has made us to be a kingdom, priests to His God and Father" (Rev 1:6). In the Old Testament the priests "shall be clothed with linen garments; and wool shall not be on them while they are ministering . . . [because] they shall not gird themselves with anything which makes them sweat" (Eze 44:17-18). In Christianity doing anything that produces sweat is considered doing it "in your own strength." One of Christianity's basic tenets is that "by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not

of yourselves, it is the gift of God" (Eph 2:8). But even though faith is from God it must be exercised. Jude said he "felt the necessity to write you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints" (Jude 3). "From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and violent men take it by force" (Mt 11:12). It sounds like exercising faith is hard. It is "tested by fire"

(1Pe 1:7) and "the testing of your faith produces endurance" (Jas 1:3). "Whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world--our faith" (1Jn 5:4). On an individual level "the faith which you have, have as your own conviction before God" (Ro 14:22). "God has allotted to each a measure of faith" (12:3). "Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith" (2Co 13:5). But if you doubt yourself then your "eating is not from faith; and whatever is not from faith is sin" (14:23). Your relationship with God is strengthened when you exercise faith. Nehemiah was the king's cupbearer. One day the king asked why he was so sad. Nehemiah told him the truth and the king asked how he could help. Then Nehemiah's rapport with God was demonstrated when, on the spot, he "prayed to the God of heaven" (Neh 2:4). God's answer was instantaneous and Nehemiah requested to be sent to Judah to rebuild the city (:5). On a group level God gives various workers "for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of the faith" (Eph 4:12-13). Paul told them

they should be "standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel" (Php 1:27). "He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne" (Rev 3:21).

The Baptism of the Holy Spirit

"Moses received the plans for the Jewish tabernacle from God on Mt. Sinai. Then the Lord told Moses to make sure that he constructed the temple "after their pattern, which was shewed thee in the mount" (Ex 25:40). But we, ourselves, are the "true tabernacle" (Heb 8:2) and "temple of God" (1Co 3:17). Therefore we must be careful to make sure that our lives conform to God's plan for us. The plan begins at salvation when we are introduced to this "city of the living God" (Heb 12:22) and "church of the firstborn" (Heb 12:23). Jesus is the "minister of the sanctuary" (Heb 8:2). He "pitches" our tabernacle (Heb 8:2) from His "throne...in the heavens" (Heb 8:1). He establishes us after the pattern of the tabernacle which is an "example and shadow of heavenly things" (Heb 8:5). Heavenly things can only be created by God Himself, because He is the "builder and maker" (Heb 11:10) and "except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it" (Ps 127:1). This is why Jesus will "baptize [us] with the Holy Ghost" (Mt 3:11). We are to "go on unto perfection" (Heb 6:1) and be "perfect, even as [our] Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Mt 5:48). How do we do this? "This is the work of God, that [we]

believe on him whom he hath sent” (Jn 6:29) and “by him...offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually” (Heb 13:15). We are then “weaned from the milk” (Isaiah 28:9) as the righteousness of God is revealed unto us from “faith to faith” (Ro 1:17). Then we are “changed into the same image from glory to glory” (2Co 3:18) if we behold Him with “open face” (:18).

Solomon's temple illustrates this changing process toward perfection. In the temple “there was an enlarging, and a winding about still upward” (Ezekiel 41:7). Jesus has promised that when you and I are baptized in the Holy Spirit “[we] shall receive power...and [we] shall be witnesses” (Acts 1:8). This empowering also increases our ability to “worship the Father in spirit and truth” (Jn 4:23). The baptism of the Holy Spirit is symbolically the second chamber of Solomon's temple because we go from the “lowest chamber to the highest by the midst” (Ezekiel 41:7). Also, it represents the inner court of the tabernacle of Moses or the holy place. One of the items in the Holy Place is the lampstand which symbolizes the seven spirits of the Lord. It was this same Holy Spirit who was poured forth on the day of Pentecost when the disciples were celebrating this “feast of weeks” (Dt 16:10). Therefore, since it was on Pentecost that the Holy Spirit was given (Ac 2:4), we study this event in relation to the Old Testament feasts of the Lord to better understand the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The priest had to go from the Outer Court through the Inner Court to enter the Holy of Holies. That's why the

baptism of the Holy Spirit is an important step in our Christian walk. We are to "come boldly before the throne" (Heb 4:16). This is the place in the tabernacle where the ark of God's presence is. We are citizens of God's holy city (Heb 12:22,23) because He writes the name of that city upon us, "which is New Jerusalem" (Rev 3:12). However, we must continually seek the city, (Heb 13:14) because we have to make ourselves "ready" (Rev 19:7) as a "bride adorned for her husband" (Rev 21:2). As the Lord prepares us, the city comes "down from God out of heaven" (Rev 21:2). The shadow of the heavenly tabernacle is transformed into the Bride of Christ.

The New Creature Life

Our walk begins with being "born again" (Jn 3:7). We know that we depend upon the Creator for our very life. "The Lord God...breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Ge 2:7). But He breathes again upon a man if that person will "believe on his name" (Jn 1:12). This is how we receive our "new creature" (2Co 5:17) life. When Jesus appeared to His disciples the first time after His resurrection, "he breathed on them, and saith unto them, 'Receive ye the Holy Ghost'" (Jn 20:22). The word *breath* in Greek is *pneuma* and means "spirit" or "wind." It is this Holy Spirit which is breathed into our being. In the Bible there are only two times (which represent the two kinds of life) that God breathed upon man in this way.

The Disciples Receive the Holy Spirit After the Resurrection

It is important to see that the disciples were "born again" when they received the Spirit after Jesus breathed upon them. Jesus had the Holy Spirit to give because "being by the right hand of God exalted, [he had] received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost" (Ac 2:33). Jesus told Mary, "Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father" (Jn 20:17). Up until that time "the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified" (Jn 7:39). Then "by his own blood he entered in once into the Holy Place, having obtained eternal redemption for us" (Heb 9:12). When He returned after entering the Holy Place, the disciples could not "touch him" for we read that He said to Thomas, "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands" (Jn 20:27). If you remember, Jesus had previously said, regarding His ascension, "Touch me not" (Jn 20:17). Also, He would not have told Mary about His ascension at that time if it had not had meaning for the disciples to be able to receive the Spirit when He appeared to them upon His return. We also remember the disciples discussing Jesus' statement: "A little while, and ye shall see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father" (Jn 16:16). Jesus had said, "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you" (Jn 14:18) and "we [the Godhead]...will make our abode with [you]" (Jn 14:23). "At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you" (Jn 14:20).

"When Jesus returned to them, He came with the Comforter. The "Lord is that Spirit" (2Co 3:17). Paul says, "Know ye not...that Jesus Christ is in you" (2Co 13:5).

The Disciples Sealed in Christ at Salvation

Up to this point the disciples knew the Holy Spirit because Jesus had told them "for he dwelleth with you" (Jn 14:17). But since their names had already been "written in heaven" (Luke 10:20) when Jesus appeared to them upon His return and breathed upon them, they "received him, [and] to them gave he power to become the sons of God" (Jn 1:12).

Therefore, because they had been "born of the Spirit" (Jn 3:6), the prophecy that they would receive the Holy Spirit" (Jn 7:39) was fulfilled since they now knew Christ no more "after the flesh" (2Co 5:16) but "in the Spirit" (Ro 8:9). "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his" (Ro 8:9). This is the message of salvation. "By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body...and have been all made to drink into one Spirit" (1Co 12:13). "There is one body, and one Spirit,...one Lord, one faith, [and] one baptism" (Eph 4:4,5).

When you are confronted with the baptism of the Holy Spirit you must know what you have to start with at salvation so you can judge what it is that is to be added and how it relates to your position as a believer. As believers, we are "one body: so also is Christ" (1Co 12:12). As members of His body, He has "blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ" (Ephesians 1:3). It is in Christ "in whom we have

redemption" (Eph 1:7) and "in whom also we have obtained an inheritance" (Eph 1:11). And since it is He "in whom [we] also trusted, after that [we] heard the word of truth, the gospel of [our] salvation", it is He "in whom [we] were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise" (Eph 1:13). In other words, "by one Spirit" (1Co 12:13) we are "baptized into Christ" (Gal 3:27). We are "complete in him" (Col 2:10) at redemption, so the baptism of the Holy Spirit only contributes to our position as believers. These blessings are all available to the person who will "believe on his name" (Jn 1:12), who has been baptized into Christ, and sealed by the Holy Spirit.

Passover as a Picture of Salvation

We see that the disciples received the Holy Spirit from Jesus when He appeared to them, and that they were baptized into the body of Christ "by" and "with" the Holy Spirit. This is accomplished by the blood of Christ at Calvary. But to understand it from the perspective of the feasts of the Lord, we must understand the meaning of the blood of the lamb killed at Passover as a type of the blood of Christ. "We have redemption through his blood" (Eph 1:7). Jesus "hath purchased [us] with his own blood" (Ac 20:28). The children of Israel were told by God, "And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you" (Ex 21:13). In Egypt when the Lord passed over the houses with the blood over the door, He "sealed" or

"protected" the people within from the plague. Without this protection "every open vessel, which hath no covering bound upon it, is unclean" (Nu 19:15). This is why the celebration of Passover requires that "there be no leaven found in [the] houses" (Ex 12:19). Leaven is a type of sin, and our "sins are forgiven" (1Jn 2:12). Therefore, since no leaven is "in our house" because we are "clean through the word which [Jesus has] spoken unto [us]" (Jn 15:3), we are protected by the "seal" or "covering" of the Holy Spirit at redemption.

Israel's Journey as a Picture of Being Sealed and Led by the Holy Spirit

As believers we are "changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2Co 3:18) just as Israel was brought "out of the land of...Egypt through a land that no man passed through" (Jeremiah 2:6). It was a walk "in the Spirit" (Gal 5:25) by following the Lord "Who went in the way before [them]...in fire by night, to shew [them] by what way [they] should go, and in a cloud by day" (Dt 1:33). Israel was all "under the cloud" (1Co 10:1) which illustrates that God seals us with the Holy Spirit when we are saved. He does not take "away the pillar of the cloud" (Ex 13:22). In the same manner the disciples received the Holy Spirit" (Jn 20:22) when they were baptized into the body of Christ" (Gal 3:27) and "sealed..., and given the earnest of the Spirit in [their] hearts" (2Co 1:22). Therefore, as believers, in order for us to do the "work of God...[we must] believe on him whom he hath sent" (Jn 6:29). That's all that is

necessary to be "led by the Spirit of God" (Ro 8:14). Just as Israel was sealed and led from Egypt to Mt. Sinai, so we as believers are sealed and guided in our lives.

Israel's Celebration of the Feasts of the Lord

How else is Israel's experience an example for us, or a pattern by which to better understand our own relationship with God? Israel continued to celebrate the feast of Passover on its journey through the wilderness, just as we daily celebrate our being saved. The Lord said to them, "This day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the Lord through your generations" (Ex 12:14). In addition, the Lord said, "Three times thou shalt keep a feast unto me in the year" (Ex 23:14). Leviticus 23:2,3 shows that feasts are sabbaths, and God has commanded, "Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you" (Ex 31:13).

The feasts are separate, individual celebrations in Israel's history as well as experientially in our lives. "But when the people of the land shall come before the Lord in the solemn feasts, he that entereth in...shall not return by the way of the gate whereby he came in" (Eze 46:9). Each time we meet with the Lord, we are changed and "leave by another gate" which illustrates that the feasts are unique but celebrated in the context of the believers' spiritual lives "three times a year." You see, then, that there is a continuity in the feasts.

There is a progression between Passover and Pentecost in our spiritual lives just as Israel journeyed between Egypt and Mt. Sinal. The progression is fulfilled by observing to "keep the feast of unleavened bread" (Ex 23:15) and then the "feast of harvest" (Ex 23:16). Also, "Thou shalt keep the feast of weeks" (Dt 16:10).

Passover Leads to Pentecost

"In the fourteenth day of the first month...is the Lord's passover" (Lev 23:5). Then "it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the selfsame day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt" (Ex 12:41). Next "in the third month...the same day came they unto the wilderness of Sinai" (Ex 19:1). If God causes an event to take place on exactly the "selfsame day," then it behooves us to consider the timing of other events as well. For instance, there is about one-half of a month after Passover remaining in the first month and at least three days (Ex 19:11) transpire in the third month, which is a passage of approximately fifty days (the word pentecost means "fiftieth"). The Lord said, "shall ye number fifty days" (Lev 23:16) and celebrate the Feast of Pentecost. "The day of Pentecost was fully come" (Ac 2:1) when the Spirit was poured forth because God waited until precisely the right day for it to happen.

We see a similar passage of time in the New Testament between the resurrection and Pentecost where Jesus "shewed himself...forty days" (Ac 1:3)",

and after He departed the disciples returned to Jerusalem, which was a "sabbath day's journey" (Ac 1:12) away. Then in the Old Testament "the Lord said unto Moses, Go unto the people, and sanctify them...and be ready against the third day" (Ex 19:10,11). So Moses and Joshua waited for God to invite them up to Mt. Sinai (Ex 24:13). In the New Testament Jesus "commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me" (Ac 1:4). So they tarried in Jerusalem (Lk 24:49) and "continued with one accord in prayer and supplication" (Lk 24:49) in the "upper room" (Ac 1:13) in preparation for the Feast of Pentecost. We see that the travel, consecration, and waiting situations are similar in the Old and New Testaments.

Pentecost as Separate from Passover

When we see that "all these things happened unto [Israel] for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition" (1Co 10:11), we can understand how the event of Passover has meaning in our lives. In addition, we see clearly because the Old Testament "vail is done away in Christ" (2Co 3:14). Finally, we know that the scriptures "beginning at Moses" (Lk 24:27) concern Jesus because in His life He fulfilled the Old Testament types of Passover and Pentecost. Since Calvary is a fulfillment of the historical event of Passover, and since a direct parallel exists between the expiration of time and experience of Old Testament

Israel and the New Testament disciples, then Pentecost must be a fulfillment of the historical event of Israel's Mt. Sinai experience. Consequently, since Calvary is a picture of redemption, Pentecost must be a picture of what is called the baptism of the Holy Spirit. "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound. They shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance" (Ps 89:15). The "joyful sound" is the trumpet which signals the feasts, and those who understand its implication are able to personally celebrate the feasts of Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles in their lives.

Day of Pentecost as a Separate Experience for the Disciples

We remember that the disciples received the Holy Spirit when Jesus breathed upon them. Then we know that they were sealed and had the Holy Spirit in them. But next, Jesus said, "Behold, I send the promise of my father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high" (Lk 24:49) for "ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence" (Ac 1:5). How could they be baptized after they had been baptized into His body when they received the Spirit? The answer concerns the Greek word *bapto*, which was a common term used in the garment industry. It has the connotation of being made fully wet with fluid in the manner of staining as with a dye. The disciples had received the promise of the Spirit in their hearts (2Co 1:22) and now they were to receive the promise in the form of power "upon"

them. This is shown by the fact that "all were baptized unto Moses in the cloud" (1Co 10:2). "A cloud covered the mount" (Ex 24:15). "And Moses went into the midst of the cloud, and gat him up into the mount" (Ex 24:18). Therefore, the word *baptism* applied here is a picture of another "immersion" of the believer into an additional truth or capacity within God. The Holy Spirit comes "upon" him as if the Spirit has approached (i.e. come upon) him in a new way. We remember that the believer "entereth in" (Eze 46:9) to a new worship experience or meeting with God in each of the three feasts of the Lord (Ex 23:14).

Day of Pentecost Fulfills Historical Event of Israel on Mt. Sinai

"And when the day of Pentecost was fully come...there came a sound from heaven" (Ac 2:1,2) "and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost" (Ac 2:4) and they received "the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Ac 2:38). The disciples had waited fifty days since receiving the Spirit when Jesus breathed upon them, and now had received the gift of the Spirit "upon" them from "on high." Therefore, we conclude that the first feast of Pentecost after the resurrection was not the official beginning of the ministry of the Holy Spirit on earth, but that He was already present when Jesus breathed upon the disciples. In this sense, the proximity of Passover and Pentecost (being only fifty days apart) is significant. Jesus said, "Behold, I send (ie. am continuously sending) the promise of my Father upon you" (Lk 24:49). The disciples had received, were receiving,

and would receive again the presence of the Holy Spirit as He was poured forth.

It is clear that New Testament Pentecost is related to Israel's Mt. Sinai experience. The disciples in the upper room heard God's voice such as it was "a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind" (Ac 2:2), whereas Israel said, "Let not God speak with us, lest we die" (Ex 20:19). At Mt. Sinal "there fell of the people that day about three thousand men" (Ex 32:28), and at Jerusalem "there were added unto them about three thousand souls" (Ac 2:41). Since the disciples had already received the Holy Spirit, "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh" (Ac 2:16,17). So if we wait for Him (Isa 64:4), we will experience this outpouring and see the greatness of God because He will do "terrible things which we looked for" (Isa 64:3).

Speaking in Tongues Is Initial Evidence

With...other tongues...will I speak unto this people" (1Co 14:2). The Spirit gives the "utterance" (Ac 2:4). Isaiah says, "This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest" (Isa 28:12). God said, "I create the fruit of the lips" (Isa 57:19) and will therefore heal, lead, and bring us into rest and peace (Isa 57:18,19). Noah would bring rest because it was prophesied that "comfort concerning our work" (Ge 5:29) would result from his obedience in building the ark. If you are in Christ, you will be saved because you

will "know that" (your) redeemer liveth" (Job 19:25). Speaking in tongues is a restful sign that we have received a "Comforter, that he may abide with (us) forever" (Jn 14:16). "Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief" (Heb 4:11).

"These signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues" (Mk 16:17). It is a personal privilege for any believer who has "heard the word" (Ac 10:44). At Pentecost, "they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues" (Ac 2:4). Also, in the case of Cornelius and his household "the Holy Ghost fell on all them" (Ac 10:44) and "they [those present] heard them speak with tongues" (Ac 2:4). Also, in the case of Cornelius and his household "the Holy Ghost fell on all them" (Ac 10:44) and "they [those present] heard them speak with tongues" (Ac 10:46). Furthermore, Peter and John went to Samaria to help believers receive the Holy Spirit (Ac 8:14-17). As the people were baptized in the Holy Spirit, Simon observed (Ac 8:18) what he could "see and hear" (Ac 2:33). It was the same in Ephesus. When the Holy Spirit fell upon the believers, they "spake with tongues" (Ac 19:6).

But some ask, "What meaneth this" (Ac 2:12)? Can't we be baptized in the Holy Spirit without speaking in tongues? Paul was baptized, for he said, "I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all" (1Co 14:18). He also said, "I would that ye all spake with

tongues" (1Co 14:5) and he ordered the Corinthians to "forbid not to speak with tongues" (1Co 14:39). How is this manifested? God pours "out of [His] Spirit upon all flesh" (Ac 2:17). When the Holy Spirit falls upon you, you are filled, and the utterance of tongues is communicated by the Spirit through your spirit (Ac 2:4). Paul says, "If I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth" (1Co 14:14). This is a heavenly language for he said, "I speak with the tongues of men and of angels" (1Co 13:1). You can also "sing with the spirit" (1Co 14:15). However, some might object that with the spirit the "understanding is unfruitful" (1Co 14:14). But if "we know not what we should pray" (Ro 8:26), the Holy Spirit knows what another person needs (Ro 8:27). Intercession occurs when we pray "unto God" (1Co 14:2) in tongues for that person. You can also "pray that [you] may interpret" (1Co 14:13) to understand what has been spoken. The reward for a person who prays in the spirit is that he "edifieth himself" (1Co 14:4) and a person is established in the Spirit by "praying in the Holy Ghost" (Jude 20). Some argue that speaking in tongues is not for everyone because 1 Corinthians 12:30 asks, "Do all speak with tongues?" However, this reference pertains to one of the nine gifts to the Church wherein "if any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three" (1Co 14:27). This gift is for certain people in specific situations where the "whole church be come together" (1Co 14:23). It is a means by which the unbeliever becomes aware of the existence of God" (1Co 14:22).

Pentecost as a Separate New Testament Experience

Hearing that certain converts in "Samaria had received the word of God" (Ac 8:14)", Peter and John went and "prayed for them" (Ac 8:15). Paul also went to Ephesus and found "certain disciples" (Ac 19:1). These apostles wanted to make sure that the new believers received the Holy Spirit. Paul "said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed" (Ac 19:2)? When they replied that they had "not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost", Paul asked them, "Unto what then were ye baptized" (Ac 19:2,3)?

People are water baptized into the truth they receive. A disciple, then, is a follower of the truth he has learned because he has to "bear his cross" (Lk 14:27) in order to follow Jesus. The new disciples replied that they had been baptized "unto John's baptism" (Ac 19:3) with the baptism of repentance" (Ac 19:4). The truth they had been baptized with was like that of Apollos' teaching. He "taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John" (Ac 18:25) which was "that [people] should believe on him [Jesus] which should come after him [John]" (Ac 19:4). But when Aquila and Priscilla took Apollos and "expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly" (Ac 18:26)", showing that "Jesus was Christ" (Ac 18:28), Apollos received the complete gospel. Thus the new converts "were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Ac 19:5). Peter and John discovered that

the Samaritans, too, were "baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Ac 8:16) but that the Holy Ghost "was fallen upon none of them" (:16). We know that we become "sons of God" when we believe "on his name" (Jn 1:12). But where is the Holy Spirit at salvation such that He might have "fallen upon" us? In the Scriptures we see that:

1. "He that believeth...shall be saved" (Mark 16:16).
2. "Thy faith hath saved thee" (Luke 7:50).
3. "By grace are ye saved" (Ephesians 2:8).

Thus, we conclude that we are saved when we believe with the faith we receive by grace from God. Furthermore:

1. "This spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified" (Jn 7:39).

2. "He breathed on them, and saith unto them, 'Receive the Holy Ghost'" (Jn 10:22).

Therefore, since Jesus had been glorified, the disciples properly received the Holy Spirit because they were recognized as believers. Finally:

3. "In whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise" (Eph 1:13).

4. "Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts" (2Co 1:22).

When you believe, you are sealed with the Holy Spirit. So it is simply by the exercise of faith (nos. 1-3) that you receive (nos. 4-5) the Holy Spirit in your heart (nos. 67). Therefore, we have the Holy Spirit within us when we are saved through belief in the Lord Jesus Christ. So when Peter and John prayed for the Samaritans that "they might receive the Holy Ghost" (Ac 8:15), they were expecting another anointing of the Holy Spirit. When they laid hands upon the believers, "they received the Holy Ghost" (Ac 8:17) just as "when Paul had laid hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on" (Ac 19:6) the Ephesians. Scripture doesn't require that hands be laid on a person for him to be saved, but "Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given" (Ac 8:18). This shows that Passover and Pentecost are separate New Testament experiences. A distinction is also seen in the feasts concerning leaven. At Passover "shall there be no leaven found in [the] houses" (Ex 12:19). Whereas at Pentecost "two wave loaves...shall be baked with leaven" (Leviticus 23:17). However, both feasts have in common the requirement to "be filled with the Spirit" (Eph 5:18) by "singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord" (Col 3:16). But with the baptism of

the Holy Spirit there is a step of faith involved, for "how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him" (Lk 11:13)?

Pentecost in the Life of Jesus

We see that Jesus was obedient to partake of the baptism of the Holy Spirit in His life. Jesus was born of the Spirit (i.e. Passover) because Joseph was told that "that which is conceived in [Mary] is of the Holy Ghost" (Mt 1:20). Then He received the promise of the Holy Spirit for "John [the Baptist] bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him" (Jn 1:32). This was the fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah 11:2 in which Jesus later stated, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach...heal...[and] set at liberty them that are bruised" (Lk 4:18). The feast of Pentecost is therefore kept by exercising the power inherent in the spiritual gifts of the promise as a "freewill offering...according as the Lord thy God hath blessed thee" (Dt 16:10). "And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof" (Lev 25:10). The Jubilee is the bringing forth of the continuous sound of the silver trumpet. It signals the festival and year of Jubilee and is symbolic of the feast. A church which blows this trumpet flows in this ministry and says "to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Shew yourselves" (Isa 49:9). "Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubile to sound on the tenth day of

the seventh month” (Lev 25:9). The impact of the feast of Pentecost carries into the feast of Tabernacles.

Pentecost as Open Heaven

The uniqueness of this feast in Jesus' life is also seen in His baptism when "the heavens were opened unto him" (Mt 3:16). In his dream, Jacob saw the Lord God standing in heaven at the top of a ladder and speaking (Ge 28:12,13) just as when Jesus said to His disciples, "Ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man" (Jn 1:51). Jacob called the place where he was "Beth-el" (Ge 28:19) which means "God is in this place." Jesus sought to be baptized by John (Mt 3:13) and had a meeting with God. The divine communication that resulted under the open heaven followed Him throughout His ministry because "it abode [remained] upon him" (Jn 1:32). Jesus even spoke of Himself as "the Son of man which is in heaven" (Jn 3:13).

Be Baptized With the Holy Spirit

God gives the Holy Spirit "to them that obey him" (Ac 5:32). Jesus was obedient to be baptized by John because He said, "Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness" (Mt 3:15). It took place when Jesus was praying" (Lk 3:21). You don't have to do anything extraordinary to qualify because on Pentecost the disciples were just "sitting" (Ac 2:2) in "one place" (Ac 2:1). However, "these all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication" (Ac 1:14). Peter said, "Repent,...be baptized...and ye shall receive the gift of

the Holy Ghost" (Ac 2:38). But it is possible to "receive not, because ye ask amiss" (Jas 4:3). So "ask in faith, nothing wavering" (Jas 1:6). "How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him" (Lk 11:13)? Therefore, "what things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them" (Mk 11:24). "Every one that asketh receiveth" (Lk 11:10). "No good thing will [the Lord] withhold from them that walk uprightly" (Ps 84:11). The Lord promises to "pour water upon him that is thirsty" (Isa 44:3). So make sure that you don't come behind in [this] gift" (1Co 1:7) because you know "it shall be given you" (Mt 7:7).