

Ghost Stories-3
“The Baptism in the Holy Ghost”
Acts 1:1-8 (NIV)

Hey Newsong!

I want to welcome our first-time guests and those who are worshiping with us online!

We’re continuing our series “Ghost Stories”. It's all about the Holy Ghost!

In week one we learned that the Holy Ghost a.k.a. The Holy Spirit isn’t an “it”... The Holy Spirit isn’t some kind of cosmic consciousness that is floating around out there...

The Holy Ghost isn’t a an “it” He’s a Divine Person...He’s the Third Person of the Triune God...God exists as Father, Son, & Spirit... He’s One God made up of Three distinct Persons...That’s called the doctrine of the Trinity...

The Holy Spirit isn't weird...He's the Spirit of the Living God...

When we are born-again He comes and He lives inside of every saved person...

19 Don't you realize that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself,-1 Co 6:19 (NLT)

Turn to your neighbor and tell them...You are a temple...

In the O.T. God had a Temple for His people...
In the N.T. He has people for His Temple! He lives in us...

And He's our advocate...He's our helper...He's our counselor...He leads and guides us into all truth...

He helps us understand and apply the Word of God...He wants to make us more like Jesus...

In week two Pastor Barbara broke down the difference between the Holy Spirit and demonic spirits...

The bottom line is that the Holy Ghost draws us closer to Jesus...while the spirit of this world (or demonic spirits) draws us away from Jesus...

Now you may be thinking...how do I know which “spirit” I’m following? How do I know which “spirit” I’m listening too?

There’s evidence that can be seen...
If you’re walking with the Holy Spirit...The evidence is called “Fruit”...

If you’re walking with the “spirit of this world” the evidence is called “acts or desires of the sinful nature”

You can read about it in Galatians chapter 5

19 When you follow the desires of your sinful nature, the results are very clear: sexual immorality, impurity, lustful pleasures, 20 idolatry, sorcery, hostility, quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, dissension, division, 21 envy, drunkenness, wild parties, and other sins like these. Let me tell you again, as I have before, that anyone living that sort of life will not inherit the Kingdom of God. 22 But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things! Ga 5:19–23 (NLT)

Notice that the Holy Spirit PRODUCES fruit in us...you may be struggling with certain things...the more we surrender to the Holy Ghost...Who is our friend...our Helper our **paráklētos**

He comes alongside of us and helps us overcome...He produces fruit in our life...

God is so good...

He doesn't just give us His standard and say "tow the line" He gives us His Spirit to live in us and help us...

Today I want to talk about another work of grace that the Holy Ghost gives to us...And it's a powerful gift that so many Christians don't ever unwrap...

It's called "The Baptism in the Holy Spirit"

So at salvation the Holy Spirit comes and lives inside of us...But there is a second work of the Holy Spirit where He comes upon us...

It's called "The Baptism in the Holy Spirit" and if you've never experienced this gift...

I've been praying for you all week, and I believe today's your day to experience it for the first time...

Acts 1:1-8 (NIV)

Pray

Now as we read the first few verses in Acts...you may be thinking...why did Jesus command His disciples to wait for the baptism in the Holy Spirit?

I mean if anyone knew what it was like to preach the gospel, to lay hands on the sick, to cast out demons, it would be Jesus' apostles...

I mean they spent 3 years with Jesus...They listened to His sermons...they saw His miracles...they saw Him die and be resurrected...

Not only that but Jesus gave them the power to heal the sick and cast out demons in **Luke 9**...So if anyone can go into all the world and preach and teach it would be these guys...

Yet Jesus said they had to wait...You see they knew a lot about Jesus...but in order to do what God was calling them to do it was going to take more than knowing...

They had to grow from knowing to going...and to do that they needed God's power!

The disciples had to be excited to go out into all of the world...but how many know that excitement can wear off pretty quick? Especially when persecution comes...

The disciples needed supernatural power to help them on their mission...

Think of it like this...

When a person joins the armed forces they are trained and then given the equipment they need to accomplish the mission...

Jesus is sending them out to make disciples but they had to wait for the promise of the Father...for the baptism in the Holy Spirit so that they could be equipped with the tools they needed...

The baptism in the Holy Ghost gives each and every believer power...The Greek word for power is **dunamis** It means “mighty power” It’s where we get the word dynamite from

It’s with this dunamis power that the disciples would be able to keep talking about Jesus while they’re being persecuted and martyred

It’s with this dynamite power that the disciples were able to perform signs, wonders and miracles in Jesus Name...

It's with this divine Holy Ghost power that the disciples were baptized in that gave them a new prayer language!

And we see this all through the book of Acts...

The power to **WITNESS**

A witness is someone who tells everyone what they have seen and experienced...The word witness in the Greek is **mártys** (mar'-toos). It's where we get the English word martyr...

In other words the baptism in the Holy Spirit will empower you to tell people about Jesus no matter the cost...even if it costs you your life!

Maybe you were baptized in the Holy Spirit a long time ago...Question...Are you still telling people about Jesus? Are you willing to talk to anyone, anywhere, anytime about a real and personal relationship with Jesus Christ?

If not...it's time for a fresh-filling of the Holy Spirit! The Holy Spirit gives us power to witness...

Jesus commands His disciples to wait...Like good soldiers they do what they're told...

2 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.
-Ac 2:1–4 (NIV)

So all the people hear the disciples speaking in tongues and prophesying and they think the disciples are drunk

They're like wow those guys started tail-gating early...Hey the game doesn't start until 1...

Now look at how the baptism in the Holy Spirit empowered Peter to witness...

Now remember this is Peter... the guy who was afraid to admit that he even knew Jesus...

Acts 2:14-21 (NIV)

Peter goes on preaching...The Holy Spirit brings conviction to their hearts...

Ac 2:37-41 (NIV)

The baptism in the Holy Spirit gives us dynamite power to witness...

Power for BOLDNESS

In Acts 3 Peter and John are going up to the Temple to pray and by the power of the Holy Spirit, Peter heals a lame man in Jesus name...

And the same people who had arrested and crucified Jesus arrest Peter and John...They bring them in for questioning

-Ac 4:7–12 (NIV)

The religious leaders saw their boldness and asked them to step outside for a second... they were like what are we going to do about these guys?

Ac 4:18–20 (NIV)

See their boldness? Now watch what happens...Peter and John go back to the other disciples tell them what happened and started praying for more boldness...

Ac 4:29–31 (NIV)

What I want you to see is that the baptism in the Holy Spirit empowers us to be bold witnesses of Jesus...no matter what we're facing...

People are going to hate you because of Jesus...people are going to cancel you because of Jesus...the devil wants you to be scared and intimidated...he doesn't want you to share your faith...

He doesn't want you to tell your story about how Jesus saved you, delivered you, healed you, restored you, provided for you, protected you...

The enemy of your soul will try to intimidate you to keep you quiet... "maybe you shouldn't tell him or her your testimony...they may get offended"

No! That's when you start praying! Lord give me boldness...

Holy Spirit help me say what I need to say...Tell me when I need to say it...And give me boldness in Jesus Name!

If you're afraid to tell others about Jesus... Maybe it's time for a re-filling of the Holy Spirit...

Peter and John were baptized in the Holy Spirit in Acts 2...but you can see that they needed to be re-filled...so do we!

The baptism in the Holy Spirit gives us power to be bold witnesses for Jesus...Would it be okay if God empowered you to be a bold witness for Jesus?

He wants to set a fire deep down inside of you...A fire that's always lit...a fire that will never burn out! He wants to immerse you in His Spirit!

Now right around here some people will say well there's a lot of Christians who have not been baptised in the Holy Spirit who are strong, bold, and anointed witnesses...

I would say yes that's true...God has anointed them in a special way...but you're not them are you? So you need power...and so do I!

Power for **PRAYER**

Now, whenever we talk about the baptism in the Holy Spirit...people get all caught up with the whole speaking in tongues thing...

I like what Evangelist Tiff Shuttlesworth says...

"He says the purpose of the baptism in the Holy Spirit isn't tongues, it's power"

I like that...What we see in the Scriptures is when we're baptized in the Holy Spirit we do receive a new prayer language that gives dynamite power to our prayers!

We call this prayer language praying in tongues or praying in the Spirit...

Now...Some have taught that speaking in tongues is not for today...

Others have actually taught that speaking in tongues is not of God...

Others have taught that if you don't speak in tongues you're not even saved...

These are all false teachings!

Let me break it down for you...

As we read the book of Acts we begin to see a pattern...When people are baptized in the Holy Spirit...they speak in tongues...

Again...the purpose of the baptism isn't tongues...the purpose is power...

But the initial evidence of the baptism in the Holy Ghost is tongues...

Think of it like this...

When you got water baptized you were brought down into the water...what was the evidence that you were just water baptized? You're all wet!

When you are baptized in the Holy Spirit...You are totally immersed in the Spirit and the initial physical evidence of the baptism is speaking in tongues...

Now what are these tongues?

Simply put...speaking in tongues is a supernatural manifestation of the Holy Spirit...

It's where my spirit and the Holy Spirit join together in words I don't understand...

It could be another known language that I never learned...It could be a heavenly language in other words a language not known on earth...

Let's flip back to Acts 2 for a second

2 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.-Acts 2:1-4 (NIV)

Now stop right there for a second...Notice that the 120 disciples in the upper room experienced 3 supernatural phenomena that came from Heaven...

Audible phenomenon...they heard a sound like the blowing of a mighty rushing wind (So think Hurricane, Tornado, or a normal day here in Co-op City) It doesn't mean there was a wind, it just sounded like a mighty rushing wind...

Now this isn't the first time we see this divine manifestation...In the book of Job God speaks to Job out of a windstorm...

In John chapter 3 Jesus told Nikodemus that the Spirit blows where He wills...you can hear the sound but can't tell where it comes from or where it's going...Jesus said that the Holy Spirit moves like wind...

Now interestingly enough, both the Hebrew and the Greek word for "wind" is the same word translated as "Spirit"

Visible phenomenon...they saw what seemed to be tongues of fire...they weren't really on fire...but again what do we see in the Bible...

Fire is a common symbol of God's presence...And fire is connected to the O.T. prophecies of the outpouring of the Spirit in Isaiah, Ezekiel, Joel & Zechariah...

Now, the sound of wind and the sight of fire were special for this first outpouring of the Holy Ghost...In other words we don't see them repeated again in the book of Acts after Pentecost...

But there was also a **verbal phenomenon...** All of them spoke in other tongues as the Holy Spirit enabled them...

This is something that we see continuing through the book of Acts and today when people are baptized in the Holy Ghost...

The Holy Spirit enabled them...He gave them the power...But He didn't speak for them...

They had to open their mouths...

They had to use their voice...

They had to form strange words with their muscles...They had to use their tongue

And as you read chapter 2 you see that they were speaking other known languages...

What they were speaking didn't come from their mind or understanding...the Holy Spirit gave them the words to speak and the power to do it...

In Acts 10 Peter is praying and the Holy Spirit speaks to Him and says there's three guys coming to your house...

They're not Jewish...in fact the owner of the house is a godfearing man named Cornelius...

Oh and by the way he's a Roman Centurian...Now I don't want you to be afraid but I want you to go with them and tell them all about Jesus...

Peter gets to Cornelius' house and there's a group of people hungry and waiting to hear the gospel...

Peter starts preaching...

44 While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message. 45 The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on Gentiles. 46 For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God. Then Peter said, 47 "Surely no one can stand in the way of their being baptized with water. They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have."

48 So he ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked Peter to stay with them for a few days.-Ac 10:44–48 (NIV)

So here we have people getting saved and baptized in the Holy Spirit at the same time...and then they got water baptized!

It happens again in Acts 19...Here's where our ghost story comes in...

There was a guy named Apollos...the Bible tells us that he had a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures...and this guy was preaching Jesus...people are getting saved...

Apollos goes on to the next town and the Apostle Paul comes into the town where Apollos was preaching...

19 While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul took the road through the interior and arrived at Ephesus. There he found some disciples 2 and asked them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?” (Notice that they were believers in Jesus...they were saved...these were guys who heard Apollo’s message and accepted Jesus as Lord...) **They answered, “No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.”**

(It’s possible to be a believer and not know about the Holy Ghost...this is why we’re teaching this series...So Paul gets some clarification)**3 So Paul asked, “Then what baptism did you receive?” “John’s baptism,” they replied. 4 Paul said, “John’s baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus.” 5 On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.** (Paul’s like okay well it’s time for you to take your next step...You’re saved...

you should be water baptized...By the way...if you've never been water baptized...it's time to take your next step...So Paul baptized them in water...watch this...it's so cool)***6 When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied. 7 There were about twelve men in all.-Ac 19:1–7 (NIV)***

So what do we see? We see this pattern...speaking in tongues is the initial physical evidence of the baptism in the Holy Spirit...

But how does speaking in tongues give me power to pray?

In his letter to the churches in Corinth Paul is explaining the difference between tongues in personal prayer and worship and tongues in corporate worship services...

I'll talk about the public use of tongues next week...but let's focus on tongues in personal prayer, and how powerful it is...

2 For anyone who speaks in a tongue does not speak to people but to God. Indeed, no one understands them; they utter mysteries by the Spirit. 3 But the one who prophesies speaks to people for their strengthening, encouraging and comfort. 4 Anyone who speaks in a tongue edifies themselves, but the one who prophesies edifies the church. 5 I would like every one of you to speak in tongues, but I would rather have you prophesy. The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the church may be edified...14 For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful. 15 So what shall I do? I will pray with my spirit, (that's speaking in tongues)

but I will also pray with my understanding; (that's speaking in your native language...English for me) ***I will sing with my spirit,*** (that's singing in tongues...spiritual song) ***but I will also sing with my understanding.*** (that's singing in my native language)
-1 Co 14:2–5;14-15 (NIV)

Paul is saying that tongues is a prayer language that is a hotline straight to God...

We're speaking mysteries...we don't understand what we're praying...but it's building us up...it's strengthening our inner man...

This is why Paul includes it in the armor of God...

18 And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.-Eph 6:18 (NIV)

Again Jude says...

20 But you, dear friends, by building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit,-Jud 20 (NIV)

Let me ask you something...could you use some strengthening in your inner man?

What if the next time you felt tempted in an area...you started praying in tongues?

What if the next time you felt scared, or anxious, or frustrated, or discouraged, or depressed...or spiritually exhausted...

You spent some time praying in the Holy Spirit...

Your spirit and God's Spirit working together to send the perfect prayer straight to God...It's a prayer only God can understand...the enemy can't even understand it...

Have you ever not known what to pray in a situation? Pray in the Spirit!

26 In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans.

27 And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God.

-Ro 8:26–27 (NIV)

Okay so let's close this message with some practical application...How do we receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit?

ASK

Think about this...how did you receive your salvation? You asked God to forgive you...You repented of your sin and received by faith the free gift of salvation...

We're saved by grace through faith...

In the same way...you just simply ask for the baptism in the Holy Ghost...you don't have to beg for it...The Holy Spirit is already living inside of you...and this wonderful gift is just waiting for you to receive it...you simply need to exercise your faith

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; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.-Lk 11:9–10 (NIV)

TRUST

Many people struggle to receive the baptism in the Holy Ghost because they have believed a false teaching...like it's not for today...or it's of the devil...Please hear the words of Jesus and let them minister to you...

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!”-Lk 11:11–13 (NIV)

You’ve got to trust your Heavenly Father...Every gift that He gives you is good! Everything the Holy Spirit has for you is good...it’s tools you need for yourself or for others! Trust Him the same way you trust Him with everything else...

Illustration

God wants to give you this gift...You’ve gotta ask...You’ve gotta trust...You’ve gotta

SPEAK

You've got to put your faith into action...Just like you did when you were saved...

When you got saved the Holy Spirit didn't grab you and force you to respond to the altar call...did He?

No of course not...you felt His leading...you exercised your faith...You physically got up out of your seat and came to the altar, or you physically raised your hand and said...I need Jesus...

You physically prayed a prayer of repentance and trust in Jesus...You did that as the Holy Spirit lead you to do it...

In the same way you have to speak...

You have to surrender your mind, your body, your spirit and allow the Holy Spirit to lead you into speaking your prayer language...

You've got to stop speaking in your native language and start speaking in your prayer language...

The Holy Spirit isn't going to force your tongue to speak...He doesn't make you speak...

Jesus said in Mark 16

17 And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues;-Mk 16:17 (NIV)

They will speak...You have to be willing to speak it out...It's not the Holy Spirit speaking through you...it's the Holy Spirit anointing you to speak...

It may only be a few syllables...it may be a whole lot more...but you have to speak by faith...

You have to let all fear and doubt and anxiety about it go...and release your prayer language by faith

I want to close this service giving you the opportunity to ask God to baptize you in the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues...it's biblical, it's beneficial and it's a beautiful gift!

What's the Holy Spirit saying to you?

Altar Time

Heavenly Father, I believe that the baptism in the Holy Spirit is biblical and beneficial...

I ask You to fill me with the Holy Spirit and with fire and with power. Please give me the faith to release my heavenly language and to pray and to seek Your face and to use that language as a part of my daily walk. In the Name of Jesus I receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit!

