

Have You Tarried in Jerusalem?

*And, 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** (Luk 24:49).*

Just before His ascension, Jesus instructed His disciples to remain in Jerusalem until the coming of the Holy Spirit, who would grant them special “power”. Many times previous, Christ prepared His disciples for this event by promising that the “Comforter” would come to teach them all things, “baptize them with fire”, and aid in their ministry efforts (Jn 14:26; Mat 3:11; Luk 12:12). But now that day and hour was an impending reality. Just a little more time and they would experience the much anticipated promise. What followed shortly after is recorded for us in Acts 2. The disciples did indeed receive the Holy Ghost of fire and with it came supernatural power. Their ministry was transformed. Their lives changed. And their spiritual endeavors succeeded exponentially. They blazed through enemy territory like fire brands on a mission to revolutionize the world.

Yet many often forget what preceded this revolutionary change. **The disciples were told to take leave of all their activity and to simply wait**. They didn’t know for how long. They didn’t know why. And they certainly couldn’t have predicted how this event would come to impact them so profoundly. But they waited in obedience to Christ’s instruction and on the day of Pentecost they were well rewarded.

What about today? Are Christians required to follow the example of the disciples and do some of their own tarrying? Many believe not. They are convinced that Spirit baptism takes place automatically upon conversion and that all of the miraculous deeds done by the Apostles no longer exist post the New Testament canon. Sadly, these same Christians are left spiritually handicapped and lack the supernatural power to make a real difference. So how do we go about remedying this malady? How can we convince the numerous “nay sayers” (our fellow Believers in the faith) that there exists something beyond what they possess and more profound than the usual traipsing of normative Christianity? The only dependable way is to settle the matter scripturally.

Note: The primary arguments of Cessationism regarding the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and the miraculous manifestations are covered thoroughly in the first lesson of this series. We will only set out to demonstrate why the Christian must tarry for the Holy Spirit's baptism **presently** for complete empowerment in areas of ministry, evangelism, and deeper sanctification. Our goal is to reveal why every Christian must patiently wait upon God for the anointing of the Spirit before launching a successful gospel outreach, just as the disciples had over two thousand years ago.

If we examine the life of Jesus, we will soon discover that before instructing His disciples to tarry in Jerusalem, as expected, He led by example. His ministry work did not officially commence until the moment of His Spiritual anointing, after which came the manifestations of miracles, signs, and wonders. All four Gospels record this event and place it just prior to His evangelistic efforts (Mat 3:16; Mar 1:10; Luk 3:22; Jn 1:32). Luk 4 and Act 10 also describe this happening:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised (Luk 4:18).

How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him (Act 10:38).

Jesus set the ultimate precedent by following the same procedure later prescribed to His disciples. He waited till he was baptized by the Spirit prior to conducting His full time ministry. But just like Christ was able to witness a remarkable increase in His level of spiritual success subsequent to His anointing, so too the disciples must have noticed a marked difference in their ministry immediately after their own Spiritual immersion. Notice:

Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls (Act 2:41).

Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand (Act 4:4).

So what do these Scriptures teach us? They clearly reveal that both Jesus and the early Apostles waited for the anointing of the Spirit prior to commencing their ministry. **They were not qualified to preach the Word until this event had transpired.** Now if THEY had to wait long enough to be immersed in the Spirit in order to receive supernatural power, why do we suppose we don't??? **Could this be the reason for many of our failures in ministry today? Why our spiritual progress is so sluggish and our maturity and sanctification encumbered by faithlessness? Perhaps our problem is found in the fact that we lack patience. We become so intent on evangelism and ministry that we run ahead of God's program without ever realizing it. As a result, we end up placing the cart before the horse. This is the danger when too much emphasis is placed on religious activity ("get busy for Christ") rather than stressing the need for Holy Ghost power and reality. We sometimes forget that apart from HIM, we can do NOTHING (Jn 15:5).**

But another danger we may fall into is believing that since we were filled with God's Spirit and anointed for ministry yesterday, we are no longer in need for more of the Holy Spirit today. We become immune to our needy condition simply because of a Spiritual experience from history past. This too is a snare that inhibits God from continually moving on our behalf. But Jesus was often getting away from the crowds in order to spend time with His Father so as to renew His anointing (Mat 14:23; Mar 6:46; Luk 11:1). Also the Apostles throughout the book of Acts took time to pray and plead with God for boldness and power to continue preaching the Gospel. Then receiving this **fresh anointing** went out once again with renewed vigor to carry out their ministry efforts. **Notice that they had to be "filled" and refilled with the Holy Spirit more than one time:**

*Then Peter, **filled with the Holy Ghost**, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel (Act 4:8).*

*And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word, **And when they had prayed**, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; **and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness** (Act 4:29-31).*

Conclusion

There is a great need today for Spirit filled revival, especially in the Western world now largely secular and indifferent to the Gospel message. But the problem isn't so much with the unconverted members of society. The problem as I see it lies squarely with the Church. I believe we lack the resolve to patiently wait upon God for His supernatural power to descend upon us. We have learned all too well the philosophy of **instant gratification** from those around us and have carried the same mentality into matters of the Kingdom. And since we are unwilling to seek God with a humble heart and a repentant spirit, as prescribed in the Word, God refuses to reward us with a genuine outpouring of His Spirit. Sadly, instead of reforming our ways, many churches have resorted to counterfeit means and have devised worldly methods of evangelism and Gospel outreach. My prayer is that we would take this teaching to heart and change our methods before it's too late.

In Christ,
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