

Module 4: Mandate of a Disciple

Chapter 6: Baptism in Spirit

So far, in module 4 we have looked at the mandate of the disciple which is setting the captives free in soul, spirit and body, and also at preaching and teaching the Truth of the Lord. Just as important is that it is the mandate of the disciple to baptise someone in both water and in Spirit.

For Jesus said *Matthew 28: 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit ...*

Again, as stressed in chapter 5 of this module, it is the mandate and the duty of a disciple not only to be baptized but to also baptize others. For it says in *Acts 2 (New King James Version): 38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.*

The baptism of water goes hand in hand with the baptism of the Spirit. While baptism of water is our commitment to God to lead a new life, washing away the old ways, so that we can be worshippers in Spirit and in Truth, just so the baptism of the Spirit empowers and equips us for ministry and to lead a life where we abide in the Lord.

Let us read *Acts 19:9 And it happened, while Apollos was at Corinth, that Paul, having passed through the upper regions, came to Ephesus. And finding some disciples 2 he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" So they said to him, "We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit." 3 And he said to them, "Into what then were you baptized?" So they said, "Into John's baptism." 4 Then Paul said, "John indeed baptized with a baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on Him who would come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus." 5 When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 6 And when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied. 7 Now the men were about twelve in all.*

Acts 19 speaks of the greater work of the Lord by baptism. Many considered in the day that the baptism of John as being similar to a ritual cleansing, which sets one apart for ministry [priestly service]. What they failed to understand is that the true purpose of the baptism in the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit was to bind that person to the Kingdom of Heaven under the New Covenant of Grace sealed by the Blood which allows for the Holy Spirit to renew a man's spirit.

Remember, baptism of water and Spirit was not an option with Jesus. It is vital for our spiritual life for we cannot continue to live an old life while we seek after Him. It says in *John 3: the New Birth: 1 There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. 2 This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him." 3*

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Jesus answered and said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” 4 Nicodemus said to Him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?” 5 Jesus answered, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7 Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.

There is no greater process of being renewed than the infilling (baptism) of the Spirit (John 3), where Jesus says we cannot see the Kingdom of God until we have been reborn in the Spirit. Truly, we cannot know who we are – meaning the way God sees us – until we can see what God sees. And we will only know who we are called to be in God’s eyes when we allow Him to show us and reveal it in us. But this happens when we embrace Him, pursue Him and truly hold onto Him until He blesses us with this insight and revelation. This comes by the infilling of the Spirit.

To be reborn in the Spirit, or in other words to be baptised in the Spirit, was according to Jesus of vital importance and if we are not baptised in the Spirit we cannot see the kingdom of God. To “see” means walk in the reality of the Kingdom here and now. We are on numerous times reminded that if we truly love the Lord, then we are called to obey His commandments and His full doctrine. And to be filled by the Spirit is of such a matter – it is not optional like fashion, but of dire necessity. And so the words of Jesus when He says, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God”, should jolt us to realise the absolute importance of walking in the Spirit.

We read of Jesus’ baptism in water and spirit in *John 2: 29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! 30 This is He of whom I said, ‘After me comes a Man who is preferred before me, for He was before me.’ 31 I did not know Him; but that He should be revealed to Israel, therefore I came baptizing with water.” 32 And John bore witness, saying, “I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him. 33 I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’ 34 And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God.”*

Jesus Himself was baptised in the Spirit, and only after this momentous event did Jesus walk in the fullness His ministry. Jesus was indeed the Son of God, and He was the Anointed One to reconcile the world to the Father, but His teachings and miracles flowed from the work of the Holy Spirit. If Jesus ministered in the power of the Spirit, how much more do we not need the Spirit today as mere mortals?

Let us remember *Romans 8 : New King James Version (NKJV): Free from Indwelling Sin: There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the*

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Spirit. 2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. 3 For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, 4 that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. 5 For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. 6 For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. 7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. 8 So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God. 9 But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His. 10 And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. 11 But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

It is clear we are called as disciples to lead a life in the Spirit, not in the flesh. For by the Spirit we also walk in a life of knowledge, power, understanding, counsel and wisdom (Isaiah 11). We simply cannot abide in the Presence of the Lord without the Spirit of the Lord dwelling in us.

We also realise the importance of a disciple being led by the Spirit when we read about the fruits of the Spirit in *Galatians 5: 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. 24 And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.* It is therefore important for the disciple to be baptised in the Spirit, but also to disciple others by showing them how to lead a life under the guidance of the Spirit. For when we are led by the Spirit of the Lord, we walk in the ways, nature and in the glory of the Lord, reflected in our behaviour and character.

In our pursuit of the Lord and knowing our Lord, we must always keep in mind the basic truth given to us in *1 Corinthians 2: Spiritual Wisdom: 6 However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. 7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory, 8 which none of the rulers of this age knew; for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. 9 But as it is written: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him." 10 But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. 11 For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. 12 Now we have received, not the spirit*

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of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.

We as disciples of the Lord cannot understand the ways of the Kingdom, or the voice of the Lord, without having the Holy Spirit. Our natural reasoning will never lead us to spiritual truth. Before we can understand the truth, we need our minds transformed from their natural, earthly perspective, until we can see with the eyes of Christ, hear with His ears, and understand with His heart. For true disciples, this is the ultimate pursuit. For us to therefore follow God, to live out our callings, we need to be reborn in the Spirit.

We cannot grow into spiritual maturity without the Holy Spirit. We cannot draw closer to God or conformed to His image without the Holy Spirit. We cannot minister and be servants of the Most High without the Holy Spirit. Without the Spirit, we will follow a religion, and a not relationship. Without the Spirit, we will continually battle the flesh and operate under the dominion of the flesh.

We cannot be a disciple without being led by the Spirit. For John 16 sums up the work of the Spirit in the life of the disciple: *Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. 8 When he comes, he will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment: 9 about sin, because people do not believe in me; 10 about righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; 11 and about judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned. 12 "I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. 13 But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. 14 He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you. 15 All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you."*

Only through a birth in the Holy Spirit and a submission unto the Lord can we truly walk in love, fear, obedience, truth and glory. Only in the Spirit can we know the ways of the Lord, be empowered in the gifts of the Spirit to be workmen approved for His Kingdom, and to walk in His life, hope and faith.

It says in 2 Corinthians 3: *17 Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. 18 But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.* There is liberty in the Spirit, meaning we are no longer bound by the chains of religion, tradition, legalisms, and carnal matters. Indeed, only the Spirit of the Lord can unveil us by stripping away the bondages of old habits, and the strongholds of our spirit and soul.

This is why it so important to be a Spirit-filled disciple, for a disciple is one that follows in the ways, truth and manner of the Kingdom. It is our

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mandate to be led by the Spirit and to disciple others to be filled by the Spirit of the Lord. It says in *Ephesians 5: (NKJV): 18 And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit ...*

Remember, the Church only got birthed on the day of the Pentecost at the outpouring of the Spirit, and subsequently in the power of the Holy Spirit the Gospel has over the last 2000 years or so been spread throughout the world. We are only reborn as children of God when we are filled by the Spirit.

The truth is simple – without the Holy Spirit we as Christians are lost on our spiritual journey. A Christian faith without the Spirit is a religion of dead rules and regulations and customs.

Without the Spirit, we will but continue to flounder in our spirit, in our character, in our daily lives and in our ministry.

Without the Spirit we remain but self-conscious, sin conscious, world conscious instead of God and Word conscious.

Without the Spirit, we are subjected to a time where we remain in bondage to the fears and the uncertainties and the perplexities of life, instead of being set free in the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

Without the Spirit, we will but remain wandering according to our own self-worth and self-image, instead of seeing ourselves in Christ and being raised anew in the truth and reality of the Lord. Only in Spirit does our self-worth and self-image change into the image of Jesus.

Indeed, without the Spirit we “cannot enter the kingdom of God”.

A disciple has therefore been called to walk in the fullness of the Spirit. The question has been raised what does it really mean to walk in the fullness of the Spirit? What does it mean to walk in the guidance of the Spirit? Some will answer this implies walking in the gifts of the Spirit. Others will point to the fruits of the Spirit. There are those who refer to the Spirit’s wisdom and council and being able to speak in tongues.

When you however consider the true work of the Spirit in the life of the believer, then you realise that without the Spirit we are like a cork drifting on the ocean hoping to find a distant shore. The fullness of the Spirit extends way beyond mere gifts or callings; it deals with our fundamental essence of being a follower of the Lord.

This is why it is so important to be filled by the Spirit. When we contemplate the fullness of the Spirit, we have to consider the following:

- The Spirit is the Conformer of our Morality and Character
- The Spirit Awakens us to become Spiritually Conscious and Conscientious and no longer carnal and worldly orientated

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- The Spirit is the One who equips, empowers and strengthens us for ministry
- The Anointing of the Spirit destroys our flawed ways of thinking and perceptions that translates into our negative behaviour, our habits, our emotions and our actions
- The Spirit brings us into alignment with the will of God through the Truth
- In all, things, from day to night and from night to day, the Spirit is our guide, advisor and counsellor when it comes to our daily lives.

In a nutshell, the Spirit of the Living God works in our spirit, He works in our soul (emotions, character, mind-sets, morals, values), He trains and equips and empowers us for service and He works in Truth and Power to set us free from strongholds of thoughts and emotions and behaviour that dictate our lives. The Spirit is the Anointing that breaks our yokes and burdens.

Without the Spirit, therefore, we will not be renewed in our minds and in our character to become more like God. Without the Spirit, we will stay worldly and carnally-minded instead of being spiritually orientated. Without the Spirit, we will remain in bondage to our emotions and thoughts and behaviour and habits, which have not come under the liberating power of the Blood. Without the Spirit, we will try to be in service of God without the anointing and the wisdom.

In the end, we cannot ministry and be unto service of the Lord unless we become spiritually conscious and conscientious. This calls for the work of the Holy Spirit. We cannot become spiritually liberated to grow closer to God unless our emotions and thoughts and habits come under the Lordship of Jesus. This calls for the work of the Holy Spirit.

We cannot become more like God in character and in our morals and values while our spiritual man remains dormant and we haven't submitted ourselves completely to the freedom of the Truth. The work of the Holy Spirit in our lives in all its dimensions are interconnected and intertwined.

To therefore walk in the fullness of the Spirit implies a complete submission to God in order for Him to work in us, be it in our spiritual man, be it in our soul, be it in our ministry or be it in the liberating truth of divine deliverance. Only then, indeed only then when we have submitted completely in the all-encompassing work of the Spirit, will we be able to move in greater power and authority to do God's work for then we will flow in His will and in His Sovereignty.

This is why we need to be disciples walking in the Spirit, who have been baptised in the Spirit and who baptise others in the Spirit by teaching them about the Spirit, and showing them how to lead a life submitted to the Spirit.