

Preparation for the Baptism of the Holy Spirit

By Paris Reidhead*

This morning we are dealing with step number “9”. Now recall please that we’re talking about So Great Salvation. We have seen that everything that begins as a crisis is preceded by a process and followed by a process. In this case, there is the process of preparation for the new birth, awakening, conviction, repentance, faith, and then there’s the process following the new birth, the witness of the spirit, temptation, and sin. And victory but it is still a process issuing into a second crisis. The crisis of being baptized with the Spirit and we are now talking about “preparation.” Preparation for the Baptism with Holy Spirit.

I would like to have you bow in prayer with me, Our Father as we come this morning to speak about this most solemn and important of truths, we ask for special anointing of the Holy Spirit of the speaker, and special guidance and anointing on the hears and might it be that together we are sensitive to Thy presence. Father, save us from being among that number that just have fellowship with other people about Thee. But may it be this day that we see Thy face and hear Thy voice and feel Thy touch and sense that Thou art meeting each of us personally where we are and we’ll give Thee thanks in Jesus precious Holy Name. Amen.

Would you turn please to John chapter 17? I want you to notice verse 18. Now, I have to be very careful to restrict myself whenever I go into John 17. Years ago when pastor of the Gospel Tabernacle Church in New York City, I brought a series of message on the prayers of the New Testament. The seven Apostolic Prayers and then I came to John 17 for the purpose of showing how those seven New Testament prayers related to John 17. I’d proposed to bring four messages on John 17. Somehow or other I wasn’t able to keep that. I had completed message 37 and was at the 23rd verse, when I received a letter from someone whose typewriter had a key that didn’t strike carefully. So I knew exactly who it was, even though he had not signed his name. He said, “Pastor don’t you think that there might be something else in the Word of God that would of importance to us beside John 17?” Well, I had to agree. I thought that was true. In fact, I had already considered and decided not to continue. So I say I have to be very careful and restrict myself when I came to John 17, verse 18: “As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world” (Joh. 17:18).

I want you to notice the first word “as”. I am told from Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon, that the word “as” *kathōs* (καθώς) can be translated “just as, accordingly as, in the same manner as, similarly to, or in identically the same way.” Now, take any of those, take all of those and it strengthens the little two letter word “as”. In identically the same way or the same manner that Our Lord said, “The Father had sent Him into the world, even so had He also send us into the world.” We know it is us because down in the 20th verse Christ said He wasn’t just praying for those who were there, “but for them also which shall believe on Him through their word;” and that’s us. So as the Father sent the Lord Jesus into the world, so has He sent us into the world.

Now think for a moment. How was He sent into the world?

First, He was conceived by the Holy Ghost. Mary, the chosen vessel, overshadowed by the Spirit of God. One cell in her body quickened, not by male sperm, but by the divine life of the Holy Ghost. That which was born of Mary was Immanuel, God come in the flesh. From the time of His birth He was Immanuel. He was indwelt by the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

But at the point of beginning His ministry, the Spirit of God, who had been in Him, for if He had not been in Him, He was not God come in the flesh. But the Spirit of God, who was in Him, in His nature, came upon Him after His baptism. Therefore, Christ said that everything done by Him during His ministry was done by the Father through the Holy Spirit.

Now the pattern then is this. We too are born of the Spirit. We are awakened by the work of the Spirit of God. We are convicted of our sin, when He will come He will convict. The Holy Spirit stirs our hearts and inclines us to repent. He quickens that saving faith that reaches two thousand years into the past to embrace Christ. He it is that joins Himself to our spirits in that regenerating work, and He it is that witnesses to us, we are born of the Spirit.

Now for years as a dispensational Baptist, I contended that anyone who talked about sanctification was in error. The people I knew who had something to say on the theme were saying things like this: “When you are saved the Spirit of God is with you, but when you are sanctified or baptized with the Spirit, then He comes in you.”

I knew that was incorrect, because the Scripture says, “If we have not the Spirit of God, we are none of his” (Rom. 8:9). And therefore I had to refuse it. I remember being in Taylor University and looking at Dr. Wingate as he would stand there and tell about the great move of God in Angola, during the years of his missionary ministry there with the Methodist and the glory of God was on his face and in his ministry.

I would sit over here with the senior students at Taylor and tears would run down my cheek, I wanted what God had done for Dr. John Wingate. I remember going to his room, to his apartment at Taylor and asking him to explain to me what it was. And you know he came with that, “He is with you...” I said, “Doctor, I want what you have, but I am sorry. I just can’t.” I excused myself and went. About a month later, my hunger was so great I went over and I said, “Dr. Wingate, please don’t try to explain to me what you have, because that gets us both in trouble. Just ask God, would you that He’ll do for me what He done for you. And let God take care of the explaining. I’m having problems with your explanation, but I want what I see that you have.”

The pattern is that our Lord Jesus was conceived by the Holy Ghost, indwelt by the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and yet He wasn’t ready for His public ministry till the Spirit of God came upon Him. And so with us, we are born of the Spirit and indwelt by the Spirit, but we too as He said “Thou has sent me, so have I sent them.”

I wish you’d turn please to John 20. A page or two over, I want you to notice verses 19 to 22: “Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord. Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, *he breathed* and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost.”

Now, the statement “as the Father sent me, so send I you” carries us back to the pattern we have just considered. What I want you to notice this time is that as He said that “he breathed.” Now, earlier in the day He said, “Don’t touch Me.” Later He said, “Touch Me” (Joh. 20:27). He had gone to His Father, He had presented his finished work, His shed blood, certifying completing the work He’d come to do. Now with His Disciples in the Upper Room, He is telling them, “as the Father sent Him is sending them” and “He breathes.” Now, He breathes in one of two ways, the preposition can be either way. He either went “woo” and breathed on them that way or He went “who” and He breathed on them that way. He either breathed in or on and it would be the same, but in any case, He gives a commandment with that and He said, “Receive ye the Holy Ghost.”

Now, many of the dispensational commentators have said that this was instruction for the Day of Pentecost. I believed that for many years. The difficulty with that is that it is in the aorist imperative and it therefore means, “Receive ye the Holy Ghost NOW”. If they didn’t obey that commandment then, they never obeyed. You couldn’t extend that commandment forty days and have it valid, not according to the laws of Greek grammar. It had to be immediate obedience. It could not be obeyed. It was immediately obeyed.

Why? You see, up until that time the Spirit of God had been with the Disciples and with the believers. But at that moment, I believe not only the company there, but all those who savingly believed on Him, the Spirit of God came in. He said before this He said, “The Spirit of God is with you and shall be in you.” Now He is saying “Receive ye, take ye the Holy Spirit,” which they did. There’s the pattern.

Now let’s look for a moment, this is preparation remember we are talking about. You’ll have to be prepared to understand the pattern of how God is going to work. Now, I want you turn to Ezekiel chapter 36. I believe it will be the place we’ll go Ezekiel chapter 36. I think it is extremely important that we should understand that this was not just a—verse 27— this was not just an after-thought in the heart and mind of God.

We will begin with verse 25: “Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them” (Eze. 36:25-27).

This is a promise. The difficulty, you see, with the Old Testament with the Tabernacle in the Wilderness was that God was too far from the people. Even though He was there in Shekinah presence a pillar of cloud by day and a fire by night, when they got over two or three hills and back in the valley where they lived, they couldn’t see the pillar of cloud. They couldn’t see the pillar of fire and God was back there and so it was much easy for them to forget the precepts and to yield to temptation and to sin. So He said He was going to do a new thing. He would take away the heart of flesh, give them a new heart and then He said He would pour His Spirit upon them, put His Spirit within them.

John the Baptist came preaching, “Repent, the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Mat. 3:2). Then he said that there’s one coming after me who was preferred before me, “He it is that baptizes you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire” (Mat. 3:11).

Isn’t it interesting? You don’t even need to know that there be a Holy Spirit to be born again. I said a few minutes ago it’s the Spirit of God that awakens the sinner, it’s the Spirit of God that convicts the sinner, it’s the Spirit of God that inclines the sinner to repent, it’s the Spirit of God that quickens saving faith, but at no point in that process does the Spirit of God identify Himself, and say, I, the third person of the Trinity, I’m now waking you. The Spirit of God presents Christ to the sinner. He presents Christ to the sinner.

Now we’ve come to the place of the new birth. What did John say when he announced the coming of our Lord: “He it is, Christ it is will baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire” (Mat. 3:11). The Spirit of God presents Christ to the sinner. Now Christ presents the Holy Spirit to the believer. You don’t have to have faith in the Holy Spirit to be are born again. I say again, you don’t even need to know there be a Holy Spirit to be born again. You need to know about Christ and he focuses is on Christ, illuminates the Son of God. But now that you’re in the family, now it is everything is coming down to the place John prophesied and promise that the Holy Spirit would be given by Christ. Now, we need to see that and we need to understand that. There are certain conditions that we have to have.

I’d like to have you turn to Jeremiah 29, verses 11 to 14. There are conditions God established those back in the Old Testament, even as He established the promise that we would be filled with the Spirit, could have the Holy Spirit. Jeremiah 29, verses 11 through 14: “For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. And I will be found of you, saith the Lord:” Here is the promise, He said ye shall seek my gifts, and ye shall find my gifts, when you discover the possibility of having my gifts. Is that what He said? No. Ye shall seek for power, and find power, when you discover the possibility of having power. Is that what He said? No. No. He said however, “You shall seek for me, and find me, when you shall search for me with all your heart.”

Dr. Simpson sang a song years ago, Once it was a Blessing that I wondered “Once it was a blessing, Now it is the Lord. Once His gift I wanted, Now, the Giver own¹.” Preparation here is to get our eyes off what others may have talked about and get our eyes onto Him: “Ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.”

Will you turn to Isaiah, the next book before you, Isaiah chapter 44 and verse 3. This has been in a song with which most of us are familiar. A lovely song indeed it is and one I am sorry we don’t sing more often. “For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring” (Isa. 44:3). “I will pour water upon him that is thirsty.” What are you thirsty for? It, things, gifts, power, or for the Lord?

¹ “Once it was a Blessing” By Albert Simpson, 1891.

Isn't it astonishing the Lord Jesus Christ died out of longing for you? He loved you with an everlasting love. I believe now He wants to be wanted, He loves to be longed for, and the preparation of our heart for the fullness of the Holy Spirit is to get our eyes onto Him. "Ye shall search for me...I will pour water upon him that is thirsty" for me, for myself.

Well, those are some of the promises and some of the conditions, but now I want you to see how the Apostle Paul gave this to us in Ephesians the 3rd chapter, verses 14 to 19. Ephesians 3:14 to 19.

We know that when Paul met the Ephesian believers and was satisfied that they had savingly received Christ, even though that they had only been baptized with John's baptism, that he then baptized them. He wouldn't have done that if he'd had any question about the genuineness of their conversion. Then he prayed for them, that group that were there and they were filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied, that we're told.

Now however, he is writing to the church at Ephesus and he's giving to that church, and to us, certain instructions that we should see in this important matter of preparation. "For this cause," said he in his letter to that church in Ephesus. "I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that you might be filled with all the fullness of God" (Eph. 3:14-19).

It is astonishing isn't it that Paul, who is in Mamertine Prison when he is dictating this. One of the Disciples is outside—some of you have been Mamertine Prison there in Rome under the city hall. Michelangelo redesigned and supervised the construction. They saved the Mamertine Prison, the household prison for the Caesars. And it was there, as much as it is today probably exactly as it is today, that Paul was in prison.

Now, Paul had a wristlet of iron around his right hand and another around his left and a chain and a soldier at the other end of the chain. They had four hour shifts. I guess that explains how there was a church in Caesars household. You put two people there at the end of a chain, chained to Paul. They thought they were keeping Paul in chains. No. He was keeping them in chains, while he got the Gospel told to them.

There was a church in Caesars household. Nero came back from the violin trip he made and he was quite astonished that his concubines and most of the servants and his soldiers had all been born of God, meeting there in the Name of Christ. One of the thing that made him angry and started his persecution, by the way.

Now, Paul is there and he is dictating this letter and a fellow seating there who couldn't see too well, but that wasn't necessary. He got way over here on the side He could look through and see who was there. Paul is dictating this letter and the Disciple is writing it down. Look what happens, "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit *deep* in the inner man; *In order* that *our* Christ *may take up his lasting* dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and *foundationed in faith* in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to *experience* the love of Christ, which passeth *the grasp of your intelligence*, that you might be filled *unto* all the fullness of God."

Can you see Paul's hands go up and those chains rattle as he says, "Now unto him that is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen" (Eph. 3:20-21).

Well you know what Paul did? He put the benediction right in the middle of the letter. He couldn't wait. He just couldn't wait. A little earlier he had said that the middle wall of partition between the Jews and the Gentiles has been broken down, and now here comes the highest revelation that we have, that Christ is going to dwell in the hearts of the Gentile believers, and they are going "to be filled with the fullness of God."

Well that's it. That's what he was telling them. That's what he wants us to hear. Now do you think that's the normal Christian life? Do you think that's what you seek? I look here, I see two and half times as many people as there were in the upper room on the day of Pentecost. Do you think that as we sit here before the Lord that this prayer been answered in our lives to the fullest degree? I don't, I don't. Did you ever stop to think about this, that every warning in the New Testament, all teaching in the New Testament, and all exhortations in the New Testament were given to people who had been baptized with the Holy Spirit? Did you know that? Do you know why I say that? Because that's the only kind there were in the New Testament. There weren't any other kind. So all the warnings and all the exhortations and all the teachings... now what He is saying is there is a relationship and these are the glorious implications of it and I want you to understand it. Now he prayed for them and they had been baptized with the Spirit of God back there when he met them. Then I'm sure the rest of the believers there had as well, but they hadn't understood exactly what the implications of it all were. And even though they had been baptized with the Spirit, if they had done, if that had happened as it did on the day of Pentecost when Peter told them the promise was to them. He prayed for them and they were many of them were baptized with the Spirit. But what did we have in this? Preparation, preparation, preparation. What's he saying? He is saying, I'm praying the God of our Jesus, the Father of glory, will give unto you the Spirit, the Holy Spirit to be strengthened with might in your inner man by the Holy Spirit, so that Christ can take up His lasting dwelling place (Eph. 3:16-17). Now what's he talking about?

Go back down to Jordan River when Christ came and He is going to be baptized. To us baptism is a picture of our relationship with Christ. What was it to the Lord Jesus? To what could He have symbolically have died by baptism? What was it? What did He have? He certainly didn't have sin as you and I have it. What did He have? He had rights, His eternal rights as the eternal Son, the right to be loved, the right to be worshipped, the right to have veneration of His name, the right to His time, and the right to His body...all of those personal rights.

We are told in the Canòsa's portion in Philippians, "And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself," that is, He accepted the limitations of His humanity and He relinquished the right to His rights (Php. 2:8). As eternal Son He made the world, but in order to fulfill His purpose for coming He relinquished the right to act in His own essential deity as Son. He laid aside that right and everything done by Christ in the three years of His public ministry was done by the Father, through the Holy Spirit.

He said, "I don't do anything of myself, I only do what I see the Father do. I don't speak of myself, I speak as I receive commandment from my Father, the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works" (Joh. 14:10).

Why? So that it could be, "As the Father sent me, so send I you." If He had done anything in His essential deity as Son, He never could have prayed that. He never could have said that, but because He accepted the limitations of His humanity, and presented Himself to the Father and the Spirit of God came upon Him, and everything done by Him was done by the Father through the Spirit. He could say, "As the Father sent me, so send I you."

Now, what is He asking us to do? What is He praying for here? That we'll be strengthened with might be His Spirit, deep in the inner man, that we too will be willing to relinquish the right to our rights. We have no right to name and no right to reputation and no right to plan our own future and no right to our time and no right to our treasure, when we come to Him, we relinquished the right to our rights, even as He did to the Father.

Now you think that is easy, just as easy as saying it. Well, I have news for you, it's not easy. God never makes unnecessary provision and when He says, "We're to be strengthened by might by His Spirit deep in the inner man" in order that something can happen. You can be very sure of this that God's provision was essential for what He purposed. And what is it He purposes? That we will relinquish the right to our rights, so that Christ can have the same freedom to live in us that the Father lived in Him that was His prayer, "Father that they all may be in union as Thou didst live in Me. I want to live in them and I want them to live in Me, the way I lived in You. Then the world will know. The world will be able to believe." So what do we have here? We have preparation, preparation. I think it is so important for us to understand that.

I was speaking down in North Carolina in Hendersonville. Dear friends invited me to lunch at the Inn in Hendersonville. Afterwards, one of the women, who was a matron for one of women dorms for many years from Wheaton College. She said,

“Brother Paris, can I talk to you? Please excuse us. I have something I want to share with Paris.” We went down to the end of the porch and sat in a couple of the old wicker rocking chairs. And she told me she said, “Last Christmas, I decided not to go back to Augusta with my friends for Christmas holiday, but to stay and give Christmas to so many of the missionaries’ children who weren’t invited to homes. So we had our own Christmas house party there in Wheaton. We had a lovely time.” But she said, “My heart was so hungry for God. I knew that I needed to be filled with the Spirit. I had read about it. I had talked with others. My heart was so hungry and I was in prayer. One afternoon after Christmas we had just had some lunch together with the girls and I was tired, so I took a nap. During that nap I dreamed. In my dream I was in my own room, except a stand up that was over against the window that had some flowers on it, flower pots on it, had been moved to the center of the room and a large crystal bowl was there. There was a voice and I took it to be in my dream the voice the Lord. He said, ‘I have heard your cry that you want to be filled with My Holiness and I too want this for you. If you’ll empty the bowl, I will fill it.’” And she said, “I looked again not just a crystal bowl, but in that crystal bowl were Christmas tree ornaments, bulbs with different colors without the little end on them to hang them on the tree, but just a solid ball. I went over and I looked at them. I saw that each had a name on them. A word on them and I was to take them out and there was room there, a little wicker basket on the table. Into which I could put the bulbs as I took them out.” And she said, “Some were so easy. I just picked them up and took them out. And then there were just three left. One of them was a person, the other was a privilege, and the other was something very dear, and very important to me. The first one, I said, ‘Lord I can’t do this without Your help.’ I reached in and I took it out. The second one, I said, ‘Lord I can’t take this out without Your help.’ And I felt a release of strength and I lifted it out. I said, ‘Lord, I can’t let go of it without Your help.’ But the third one, I had never realized how important this was, ‘Lord, I can’t even put my hand on it without Your help. I can’t lift it without Your help. I can’t let go of it without Your strength and help.’ When the last one was there, He gave help at each point I asked Him. When it was finished, the hand came out with a pitcher and poured and the crystal bowl was filled.” And she said, “I woke up. My room was as it had been, but I knew exactly what I should do and for the first time I understood that Scripture that I’ve heard you preach on more than one occasion. ‘We be strengthened with might by His Spirit, deep in the inner man, in order that Christ can take up His lasting dwelling place so we can be filled with the fullness of God.’” She said, “I knelt in prayer. I dealt with each of those things and others that He showed me. I began to thank Him that He was going to fill me with His Spirit.” She said, “Before the evening meal my hearts hunger had been satisfied and I knew I’d been baptized with the Holy Spirit, ‘strengthened with might by His Spirit.’”

You say, “Is this a prerequisite for everyone?” No. I’ve known people that were baptized with the Holy Spirit very quickly, but I’ll tell you they never by passed this, they had to come back afterwards, they had to come back afterwards.

When people come to me and say I’m hungry to be filled with the Holy Spirit, you know what I do, I realized this is a marvelous time. Buy yourself notebook tablet and then I want you to write out in long hand every verse in the New Testament that has to do with the person and the work of the Holy Spirit. And after you have written them all out in sequence, then I want you to put them all together. And when you have done that, come back and we can talk. By this time they have a pretty good idea what the Word says about the Holy Spirit. And then we can begin to talk. Why? You say, “Could you do it easier?” Sure. Why should I hurry? Why should I hurry? Why not get them to face the issue? Why not get them to deal with the attitude? And then we begin to talk about the relinquished the right to our rights. This is preparation. Oh you may not have to do it the way I do it, but that’s the way He has taught me, not always...sometimes.

Now where does it lead, well of course this leads us to Romans chapter 12 verse 1 and 2, this too is part of preparation. This is what our Lord Jesus did, this is what He asks us to do, “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service” (Rom. 12:1).

Years ago I used to be asked very frequently to go to the Youth Rallies. In the Alliance we had Youth Rallies on holidays and I would frequently speak on Romans 12:1-2. I gave an invitation, “If you would like to present your body, come and stand here.” Many times the young people in their earnestness would come and fill the front of the church.

Well, it didn’t work very well; not much was accomplished. Then I had a revelation. Now of course I am slow and I recognize that I’m a slow learned. I am sure you would work much faster. But you know what I discovered, it was a great revelation. I discovered that Romans 12 comes after Romans 6. Now you’ve known that all your life, but it was a revelation to me. That

people couldn't present their bodies a living sacrifice until they had presented themselves to the cross, because until you have taken your place crucified with Christ, your body is the vehicle for the fulfillment of all of the interests of your ego.

Two people can't drive the same car. You say to me, "Well, Brother Reidhead, I know you need a car." I got an old one and it only has 200,000 miles, but don't criticize it. I like it. But I'm going to give you another one, so I go out there and there I find...get in. It's yours, get in, get in, it's a gift. So I got in and moved over and let me in. And I look at you, You're giving me a car? You go ahead. I am giving it to you. Now, here is the key, put it in. You run the brake and the gas and I will steer. Now I don't care how badly I need a car, I'd never accept one even as a gift on that basis, because we are going to be in a ditch. The Lord Jesus isn't going to accept the presentation of your body a living sacrifice until you have found your place on the cross crucified with Him. Because until you are prepared to stay there and say Lord from now on as long as I live I'm going to stay here, no plans, no reputation, and no agenda. Just Your Will be done in my life as it is in heaven and I'll stay here and there's that body given. Now, that makes sense, that's meaning, that has importance.

So there's preparation to present your body.

What does He want you to do? He wants you to present your brain, so that living in you He can use your brain to think His thoughts and get them back in the world. He wants you to present your heart, so that living in you He can have a heart to be broken again with compassion. He wants you to present your eyes, so that you can see even your neighbors, for the people He saw that they were His neighbors, as sheep scattered without a shepherd.

He wants you to present your feet so that living in you He can use your feet to go anyplace He wishes to go. He wants you to present your hands, so that He can use your hands to lift the fallen, feed the hungry, and guide the blind to light. He wants you to present your ears, so living in you He can use your ears to listen to the cry of those caught in the briars of sin. He wants you to present your lips so that living in you He can use your lips to speak His Word of redeeming love to those who are without life.

And so He says, "Present your body a living sacrifice"... every part of it, all of it...to Him, so that He is as free to live in you His life as the Father was free to live in Him. That's what He wants from us. That's what He's asking from us, and that's the preparation that we have to make for the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

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