

TESTING FOR GENUINE BAPTISM IN THE SPIRIT



Background Reading

Acts 1:4-5; 2:2-4; Matthew 3:11;
1Thessalonians 5:19-21; 1 Corinthians 14:29;
1 John 5:7

Devotional Reading

John 16:13-15



Central Verse

“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the Spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.”

1 John 4:1, KJV

“Dear friends, do not believe everyone who claims to speak by the Spirit. You must test them to see if the Spirit they have comes from God. For there are many false prophets in the world.”

1 John 4:1, NLT

Key Terms

Genuine—Being actually what it seems to be: real: non pretended.

Mortify—To subdue or deaden (the body, bodily appetites, etc.), especially by abstinence or self-inflicted pain or discomfort.

Test—A critical examination, observation, or evaluation.

Introduction

There is a difference between receiving the Spirit and being baptized in the Holy Spirit. The Word of the Lord teaches the believer that baptism is the first step of obedience after making a commitment to Jesus Christ as their personal Savior. Deciding to follow Jesus when no one is looking is significant. Still, there's something powerful about publicly declaring, in front of family and friends, that you have given your life to Christ. This speaks volumes about who you are. Then baptism is the next step in the life of the believer.

Because it is an immensely popular thing to be baptized in the Holy Spirit in many religious circles, it becomes necessary to test the spirits to see if they are really of God. Testing is a part of learning and lets believers know what they know and what they can do. The purpose of testing a believer for the Holy Spirit is to let them, as well as the Body of Christ, know if they are really for real or just faking.

Lesson 1 • First Week

It's essential to let the devil know that believers are aware that he is faking because he can do much damage to believers who are not aware that he is among them. A false believer is like a wolf hiding among sheep. Just as there were false prophets in the days of the early Church, there are many false prophets today. People are seeking something from the supernatural, and from a spiritual perspective, they are easily misled by false prophets. Jesus warned believers that there would be many false prophets in these days. Jesus said that the love of many would wax cold, and that day has come. The love of God, obedience to His Word, and a lack of concern for other believers have become the norm in some religious circles. That is not the will of God; He wants His children to love Him and turn away from sin. Jesus said, "If you love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15).

When a believer is baptized in the Holy Spirit, they love God, they also know that God loves them; therefore the spirit of doubt, fear, negativity, guilt, envy, or anger cannot take over the believer's emotions. It is hard to believe that someone is filled with the Holy Spirit when the slightest thing gets them all frustrated, loud, and they act in an unseemly manner. His fruit of the Spirit will bloom, and others will know that He's a child of the King. The Holy Spirit will make Himself known by His speech and His actions, for He will only speak lovingly and kindly.

Discussion

Spiritual growth does not just happen because a person accepts Jesus as their Savior; the believer must also follow the spiritual path laid out through the Word. The believer must study God's Word and abide in it every day. He must grow as he is disciplined in four aspects of his faith by understanding the significance of baptism. Learn to live a Holy Spirit-directed life. He must experience the power of prayer and learn to hear God's voice through His Word. It is the responsibility of the believer to learn to know God on a personal basis, deepen his walk with God, learn to live wisely, and be in a position to receive God's blessings.

As believers deepen their relationship with the Father through the baptism in the Holy Spirit, they will begin to see growth as the fruit of the Spirit begins to be manifested in their life. Having the fruit of the Spirit is objective evidence that the Spirit is working in his life.

A genuine baptism in the Holy Spirit will cause the believer to love, magnify, and glorify God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ more than ever. It is the Holy Spirit who causes love for God to grow in the believer's heart. Therefore, if any other spirit comes that draws the believer's prayer, time, worship, and adoration away from God and the Lord Jesus Christ, it is not of God.

When there is a genuine baptism in the Holy Spirit, it will be preceded by the believer turning away from sin, and he will faithfully obey the Word and the will of God. There will be a visible change in his lifestyle and others will know that the Holy Spirit is abiding in that believer's life. Because if any man is in Christ Jesus, he becomes a new creature, and old things are passed away. There will be continuing evidence of a life being sanctified daily.

Believers will constantly mortify their body. It becomes evident that the believer has been delivered from sin, and he will live according to the power of God inside of him. He will not allow the destructive nature of the enemy to be a part of his life, because he will love righteousness and hate sinfulness.

Conclusion

Baptism comes from the word that means to be immersed, soaked and submerged. There are several baptisms in the Scripture which includes being baptized in the Holy Ghost.

When a believer is truly baptized in the Holy Spirit, they become more aware of the work, guidance, and presence of the Spirit in their life. A believer can be tested by how much they submit, surrender, and live daily in the Word of God. He will choose to trust God, as he walks according to the principles and precepts that God's Word gives.

Questions

1. Why is it necessary for the believer to be tested to see whether he has the Holy Spirit?
2. What is one thing that can be done to test to see if the believer has been baptized in the spirit?
3. What are some of the fruit of the spirit?

Essential Thoughts

When baptized in the Spirit, one will see the fruit of the Spirit operating in the life of the believer.