

Pentecost - the Anointing for Ministry

Preliminary Comments

While a person can serve Jesus without the anointing of The Holy Spirit. They cannot minister as Jesus desires them too for two reasons:

They are not anointed (authorised) by Jesus for the ministry they are carrying out.

They must use reason and the Bible to guide them in ministering as they are out of the Will of God for them (ministering without authorisation) and cannot hear the Holy Spirit's guidance as they need too for the ministry they are doing (they are not listening for it or do know how to hear or they would have asked for authorisation from God).. The Holy Spirit's main concern will be to get them on track so He can use them for ministry as they should be used.

Without the anointing (empowerment) of The Holy Spirit you cannot demonstrate the Kingdom of God with signs and wonders. This is why the apostles had to wait in Jerusalem until they were empowered for ministry. This is why Jesus began His ministry only after John The Baptist baptised Him and The Holy Spirit came down on Him.

The church that denies the baptism (empowerment) of The Holy Spirit is powerless in the spiritual realm which is why many church groups are weak and dying and must turn to man's methods to try and survive. They also have difficulty demonstrating Jesus and The Kingdom are real as they do not manifest their presence.

Too many people go out and minister in the wrong area as they have a piece of paper that authorises them to minister in that area but they are not where God wants them to minister and so do not have the empowerment (anointing) of The Holy Spirit and the blessing of God on that ministry. They have not sought God's Will as to where they are to serve and thus are not where God wants them to be and they wonder why they are ineffective in ministry or struggle so much. If they have then they cannot hear The Spirit correctly or they would be where God desires them to minister.

They are ineffective because God cannot Bless or guide that ministry as it is not in His Will. Why do some of these ministries prosper? Because they use man's methods and at times the devil helps them prosper and keep the incorrect ministry going so the minister believes God is blessing that ministry and is encouraged to keep going in it. God can still use this ministry but not as He would like too (Rom 8:28 still applies).

Before you minister ensure you know where God wants you to minister and seek His empowerment (anointing) for that ministry.

To illustrate what happens when man uses reason and is not guided by The Holy Spirit an example is given.

Acts 1:23-26 records the selection of the apostle to replace Judas. Note the apostles had narrowed the field to two people through reasonings that these two were the most suitable. Then they prayed to get God's guidance and of course picked Matthias. If they had been guided by The Holy Spirit they would have waited until He told them who to select and there would not have been a choice but they did not do so. Matthias is not heard from again in the New Testament in any real capacity. The question arises then as to who actually guided them as The Holy Spirit would not have condoned the choice of Matthias and would not have approved of him.

Using reasoning (that Judas needed to be replaced) resulted in wrong choices and gave Satan a chance to sidetrack the work of God. The Holy Spirit does not give a choice as God knows whom He needs, where He needs them and when He needs them. In fact He waited three years to replace Judas with Paul as He had to wait for Paul to convert to Christianity and be trained by Him for three years before Paul was ready for the ministry. God had called Him too.

Just because you are trained in an area does not mean you are the replacement for the leader of that area when they leave. God may want you to develop skills in other disciplines through involvement in other types of ministry work.

Just because a denomination authorises you to preach and places you to fill a vacancy in a church does not mean God wants you to go there.

Now to the passage itself. But first a comment

In the upper room at Pentecost there were men and women gathered there (Acts 1:14). All received The Baptism of the Holy Spirit and anointed for ministry - not just the men. Why were women anointed for ministry if God was not going to use them to minister His Love and truths to people both in and out of the church.

God has a special place for women in His heart which is why he appeared to them first after the resurrection. They can love others in a way men can't which makes them more fragile and easier to be emotionally bruised and damaged than men.

The only criteria for women to minister are:

A single woman does not minister to a single man

They are anointed to minister in the ministry they are working in

Their house and marriage is in order if they are to be involved in a leadership position.

Pentecost and its aftermath (Acts Ch 2)

Notice in v1 that they were all in unity waiting on God. This is the first requirement for God to work, a oneness of spirit with Him and each other. There was no wind, only the sound of a wind so those that "breathe" The Holy Spirit on people based on this wind are in error as there was no wind in the room. The Holy Spirit made His presence known through using cloven tongues that were like a fire. Note: Like a fire not a fire as there was nothing to burn which a fire requires.

There is no statement He actually entered them. He did not need to as He was already in them or they would not have been followers of Jesus and marked as such by The Holy Spirit in them. To Baptise is to immerse so there was not entry of The Spirit in them or it would have been called something else and it would have been noted that the Spirit has entered them. His presence was in that room and they were immersed in His presence.

The anointing does not enter you. You may feel the presence of The Holy Ghost and it may affect your body as He works the Will of God but He does not enter you to anoint you. It is not necessary, as the empowerment is from Him as you declare the Will of God.

I note that Jesus did breathe on the disciples before He Ascended into heaven but it was symbolic to mark them as belonging to Him and not to authorise and empower them for ministry. Any person breathing on people to impart a gift or anointing is doing so incorrectly as they

cannot give the spirit to mark them as belonging to Jesus as that occurs at Salvation and they cannot give what is not theirs to give anyway. It is a sign of faith though and should be treated as such.

Then the gift of tongues came forth from those in the upper room as The Holy Spirit fell on them. This was not angelic tongues but tongues of other people's languages so that they could understand the apostles when they preached to them (Acts 2:4-12). Remember they were being commissioned to spread the good news of Jesus throughout the world and it was necessary for people in other cultures and of other languages to be able to understand them so the disciples were given this gift of speaking in their own language but being understood in the language of the person they were speaking to.

This is the true gift of tongues which is why there must always be an interpreter to tell what was said.

Demons can do a similar thing. Note that there is a demon called a scrambler demon who can make a person hear the opposite of what is actually being said. This is to start division between people.

Anyone teaching that tongues other than this type were present at Pentecost is in error.

If someone else cannot understand what you are saying then maybe the tongues are not from God.

These 'tongues' got the attention of peoples from different races and cultures who could not understand how these Jews could speak in their language. Some thought they were drunk with wine so Peter got up and preached in his own tongue to all that were there and all the different nationalities understood what was said in their native tongue. So another mark of the tongues that occurred at Pentecost is that it was not incomprehensible to the speaker as it was in His own native language that he spoke everyday.

Note that tongues was given to promote the Gospel not to prophesy or edify people. It was to show forth the marvellous works of the Lord Jesus.

The Gift of Tongues at Pentecost was one of the manifestations of The Holy Spirit but there were others all designed to encourage people to believe in Jesus as Lord and Saviour (v21). Signs and wonders are for the promotion of Jesus, His Gospel and The Kingdom of God not to give the church or any of its members prestige or importance.

In v22 Peter declares that these signs and wonders were a continuation of what Jesus did in the midst of them in spite of which they put Him to death. Peter then declares Jesus was raised from the dead and that the signs and wonders He did continues in the followers of Jesus. In v23-36 Peter explained whom Jesus was in terms of the Messiah in the Old Testament and people responded and wanted to know what to do to follow Jesus.

His response was that they should be baptised in the Name of Jesus (so they identified with Him and repent of any baptism to and worship of other gods they had worshipped before) and accept what Jesus had done at Calvary (the remission of sins, redemption etc.), and that they would also receive The Holy Ghost.

3000!! I repeat 3000!! of all different nationalities believed what was preached, were baptised and became followers of Jesus from that one demonstration of signs and wonders and that one sermon (v41).

The unity continued as did the Miracles and daily worship (v42-47) and would do so as long as they followed the teachings of Jesus. So why do we not see the same thing happening today? The answer is simple. We are not following Jesus as we should.

Signs and Wonders

People who seeks signs will not find them unless they serve God's purposes. This is because God wants you to seek Him and not His works.

The devil will give you the signs you are seeking so you will follow his brand of Christianity which divides and destroys the Body of Christ.

This is the danger in Pentecostalism and why there are so many leaders who fall and churches die! They stop seeking Jesus and glory in the signs.

When you stop seeking God and look only for His works you have a form of idolatry. Satan then has access and soon error creeps in, ministers fall and churches die.

Signs are used by God for His purposes and not to fulfil our desires for them. He does not have to perform them and will not if they are sought instead of Him. A revival starts then people come looking for signs rather than Jesus and the revival fades away. Satan creeps in and soon the revival fellowship is destroyed.

The danger of signs and wonders is that they replace He who gives them (as people become blinded by the miracles and lose sight of the miracle giver).

“The Jews seek a sign and the Greeks seek knowledge but we seek Christ crucified” said Paul.

It is well to heed his warning!

Blasphemy of The Holy Spirit

Ignoring The Holy Spirit is disobedience and is not Blasphemy. Blasphemy is more than just ignoring The Holy Spirit .

The verse in question is literally as follows:

LITV Mat 12:32 And whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him. But whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, not in this age nor in the coming one.

There are two definitions of Blasphemy

Blasphemous language (expressing disrespect for God or for something sacred)

Blasphemous behaviour; the act of depriving something of its sacred character

Easton's Bible Dictionary says: *Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost (Mat 12:31, Mat 12:32; Ma _3:28, Mar 3:29; Luk 12:10) is regarded by some as a continued and obstinate rejection of the gospel, and hence is an unpardonable sin, simply because as long as a sinner remains in unbelief he voluntarily excludes himself from pardon. Others regard the expression as designating the sin of attributing to the power of Satan those miracles which Christ performed, or generally those works which are the result of the Spirit's agency.*

Blasphemy (ISBE)

blas'fe-mi (âëáööçìèiá, blasphemē mi'á): In classical Greek meant primarily "defamation" or "evil-speaking" in general; "a word of evil omen," hence, "impious, and irreverent speech against God." In the New Testament blasphemy, substantive and vb., may be (a) of evil-speaking generally.

It appears blaspheming someone is to speak evil of them or to take away something from their sacredness. To Blaspheme The Holy Spirit is to talk evilly (negatively) of Him or to remove some of His Characteristic as God, such as deliberately ignoring or negating His role in the working of the church through His Gifts or empowerment.

The Holy Spirit is so important as your guide that deliberately rejecting Him in any way and not wanting to repent after salvation leads to loss of salvation. When you deliberately reject His Guidance because you want to do what you want to do, you become your own god. You reject The Holy Spirit as God and by this also Jesus as The Holy Spirit represents Jesus to you. Heb 6:4-6 will eventually apply as you have tasted the goodness of God and have continually rejected it.

This rejection is of the person of the Holy Spirit and not just wilful sin you can repent of after being convicted of it by The Holy Spirit. It is rejecting The Holy Spirit personally through wilful, unrepented sin that sears your conscience and rejects His work in you so that you can no longer hear Him and have become your own guide determining what is right or wrong.

Usually others cannot see this rejection as it is hidden at first so the maligning of Him is in the spiritual. Afterwards it is evidenced by your life in the natural. By their fruits you will know them and the fruit of rejecting the Spirit and the resultant blasphemy of Him is a reprobate mind.

To Blaspheme The Holy Spirit you first of all must have been led by Him or know who he is.

People who follow Satan often do so as the church was not there to help them and have no idea who The Holy Spirit is so cannot Blaspheme Him as they do not have knowledge of whom He is to be able to reject Him.

Because of this Jesus accepts them when they turn to Him and The Holy Spirit as they chose Satan because they knew nothing else but what demons had told them and when they knew the truth about Jesus and The Holy Spirit they embraced it.

Sin requires knowledge so until you have knowledge of whom The Holy Spirit is you cannot sin against Him.

Blaspheming God

People talk about 'blaspheming the Holy Spirit', but what about blaspheming God?

Whenever you speak negatively or disrespectfully about God or something He has made or allowed, you cause Him grief by calling His Love into question and you also bring His Name into disrepute - both in the spiritual realm and the physical realm.

(Be very careful about comedies make light of who God is or misrepresenting Him.)

This is why we are to do all things with thanksgiving, without complaining or being critical of whatever happens to us as God is in charge of all our circumstances and is working for our

good through them!

Blasphemy by the church

Blasphemy of God means to call into disrepute His character or person or to denigrate Him in some way.

Is the church guilty of blaspheming The Holy Spirit by ignoring, negating His power and Guidance or not believing He is a personal Holy Spirit, through saying that His power and guidance are no longer a relevant to this day or church age or that you cannot relate to Him on a personal basis?

To do this they ignore The Bible.

If deliberately questioning and,or ignoring the power of God is blasphemy then the church may be guilty of blaspheming God. I can't say either way but it is logical, especially as The Bible clearly shows The Holy Spirit is a personal spirit sent by Jesus to help and guide us in our Christian walk (Jn 16:13).

If ignoring the requirements of God in regard to His will and commands is blasphemy, then the church may be guilty of it.

I don't know.

But at times I wonder.

The Holy Spirit in Acts

Examples of the workings of The Holy Spirit in the life of a follower of Jesus is given to us in the Acts of the Apostles. This shows the guidance and empowerment of The Holy Spirit in the early church and how The Spirit should work today in the life of a follower of Jesus.

You must wait for God to give The Holy Spirit to empower you to minister for Jesus in an area (Acts 1:3)

The Holy Spirit is given to empower you to serve Jesus (Acts 2:1) as is shown by the fact Peter preached openly after he had been anointed by The Holy Spirit to represent Jesus (Acts 1:8). Before that He had gone home to fish and no longer preached Jesus. The resurrection of Jesus convinced Peter Jesus was The Messiah so He went with the other apostles and remaining disciples back to their former occupations as they had not yet been told what their future ministry roles would be. (Pentecost).

The first gift given was the gift of tongues (Acts 2:4) for the purpose of proclaiming Jesus. This is the true purpose of every Gift to bring Glory to Jesus in some way! If man has any glory from a gift being used and it is not the reflected Glory of God then the gift is misused.

It is noted that 3000 people followed Jesus as a result of this first sermon of Peter.

The early Christians all shared what they had with each other and showed their love for each other was real as they shared what their security was in those days (their excess possessions) trusting God to supply their need both then and in the future. They were one in purpose and heart as the church was lead by The Holy Spirit.

They also understood they were stewards of all they had and not owners so did with it what God told them to do.

The next gift that was expressed was that of healing . (Acts 3:6-7). These two signs (evangelistic tongues and healing) were declared to be some of the signs that would follow those that truly believed in Jesus (Mark 16:17-18).

Peter then preached openly to the Jews and their leaders no longer having a spirit of fear to face them and even accepted without complaint the fact he was jailed for preaching Jesus (Acts 3 & 4).

The result of their preaching was another 5000 followed Jesus.

God does not like hypocrites. People who say one thing but really mean another. This he showed by the way He treated Ananias and Saphira (Acts 5:1).

There was a movement of God akin to revival happening in Jerusalem and all were sharing what they had with those who did not. Ananias and Saphiras pretended to do this and God removed them as they had rejected The Holy Spirit in their heart and lied about their Christian activities (what they gave to God). A holy church could not tolerate them and God removed this seed of unholiness from their midst.

The evidence people belonged to The Kingdom was manifested in the lives of the Apostles and Disciples by the power of The Holy Spirit and the signs in Mark 16:7-18 were a part of their daily life. Many were added to The Kingdom, healed and delivered as a natural part of their daily ministry and by this empowerment of The Holy Spirit Jesus was Glorified and Honoured.

As is always the case when God moves Satan raises opposition from the entrenched religious leaders. Those religious leaders who seek God's Will will examine what is happening with a view to embracing it if it is from God. Those controlled by Satan will try and stop it. This is what happened and is still happening in churches and denominations. But the move of The Holy Spirit was too strong and the Christians did the work of God in spite of the threats of the religious leaders. (Acts 5:17)

The other way to stop the a move or diminish it is to raise leaders who say the follow Jesus but live their version of Christianity and give an apparent evidence of this so that others follow Him and do not follow those Jesus trained and authorised. These are men who have promoted themselves and do not have the anointing of The Holy Spirit so are empowered by demons to deceive even the elect (Acts 5:37)

The order in God's body is that those who look after the physical things are separate to those who look after the spiritual side of things. It is only for control purposes a person will want to be in charge of both. Those who are to minister spiritually are not to be concerned about the things of the world in regard to the church but are to wait on God and inform others what He says (Acts 6:1).

The early Christians were so on fire for God they were willing to die for Jesus and preach to those who opposed Him in case they would repent and turn to Jesus. The proclamation of Jesus and The kingdom of God was more important than their life and as they loved Him so much they willingly laid down their life for these (Acts 7). They were not afraid to obey any command The Holy Spirit gave them, even if it cost them their life!

The religious leaders could not control the power of The Holy Spirit and the demonstration of The Kingdom of God so tried to eradicate it. At first they tried to keep them from preaching in the Temple so they could not preach to the followers of these leaders but as that failed

then they tried to remove them or kill them (Acts 8:1)

If you keep Spirit led people out of a church they cannot influence or convict the church leaders of things they should be doing but are not! The leaders cannot be exposed then and the church will not be empowered or led by The Holy Spirit so that it will not represent The Kingdom of God or do the work of Jesus as it should.

As is usual people see things are going well and want to be like the leaders and do what they want so they try and buy what the Christians have and be associated with what is happening. This is when commercialism enters the church and God is 'sold' to people through merchandise, courses etc so people are not trained by the spirit but through man's methods and books. People then associate themselves with a leader rather than Jesus. (Acts 8:18).

The early Christians had no Bible colleges, New Testament Scriptures, denominations or church structures but did what Jesus said to and turned the world upside down.

The work of The Kingdom prospered as it was led by The Holy Spirit and so followed God's plans and not what man reasoned should be done.

The rest of the book of Acts reinforces these things and shows more of the workings of The Holy Spirit in the early church.

The question you need to ask yourself is why these manifestations are not part of your Christian life if they were in the life of early Christians. This demonstration of The Kingdom was so important to the early church so why is it not so important now or has the church lost something it desperately needs to regain.