As we come to the final step of the new birth, we need to refer one more time to John 3:5 to read what Jesus told Nicodemus concerning entering the kingdom of God:

*Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.*

We have already learned that the first step in the new birth is repentance, or the death of the old man. The second step is to bury the dead man in the waters of baptism in Jesus’ name for the washing away of all sins. The baptismal water is where the blood of Jesus is applied to our old nature, and it is the blood that cleanses us. The last step is receiving the life-giving flow of God’s Spirit.

**Natural and Spiritual Birth Parallels**

Often things in the spiritual realm mirror the natural realm. Such is the case with the new birth experience.

In the natural birth, we find water and blood are two elements present in the process of bringing a new baby into the world. We find that water and blood are also a major part of the spiritual birth.

You may have heard of a baby who was stillborn—the spirit of life was not in that baby, so it was dead at delivery. We need to see the Spirit of life in the new birth process also, if we are to have a live birth**.**

And even as every natural newborn baby **cries** as it is being born, so does the **spiritual newborn cry out**—as the person **speaks in tongues** as the Spirit gives the utterance.

We will cover this more later in the lesson.

**The Essentiality of the Baptism of the Holy Ghost**

Many denominations **deny the reality** of the baptism of the Holy Ghost for people today as it happened in the book of Acts. Others feel that the **gift of the Holy Ghost** is real but is merely an **extra blessing**—not required for salvation.

Once again, we turn to **Scripture** to understand the truth of this matter.

We have already read where **Jesus told Nicodemus** that he had to be **born of the Spirit** to enter the kingdom of God. Let’s also read **Romans 8:1–9** to see what Paul had to say about the necessity of the Spirit:

***Rom 8:1****There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*

*Rom 8:2  For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.*

*Rom 8:3  For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:*

*Rom 8:4  That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*

*Rom 8:5  For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.*

*Rom 8:6  For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.*

*Rom 8:7  Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.*

*Rom 8:8  So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.*

*Rom 8:9  But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.*

When the Bible says that a man is **none of Christ’s**, it means that person is **lost**. This is a **definite declaration** of the requirement of the **Spirit of God dwelling in us**.

This passage shows us that it is the **Spirit of God in us** that:

* Gives us **life**
* Sets us free from the **law of sin**, which is **death**
* Empowers us to **walk in the Spirit**, not after the flesh

Let’s continue with **Romans 8:14–16**:

***14*** *For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.* ***15*** *For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.* ***16*** *The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.*

**Adopted into God’s Family**

* The only way to be **led by the Spirit** is to have Him **dwelling in you**, giving spiritual direction.
* When we are **filled with God’s Spirit**, we have the **assurance** that we are the **children of God**.
* His Spirit **bears witness** with our spirit that God has **adopted us** into His family.

**The Promise of the Spirit**

The prophet **Joel** is often quoted and gives one of the strongest promises from God that He would baptize us with His Spirit. It is found in **Joel 2:28–29:**

***28*** *And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:* ***29*** *And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.*

* This promise was to **all flesh**, which means it is for **every man, woman, and child alive today**.

The Lord also spoke through Ezekiel to concerning this promise in Ezekiel 36:25-27

*Eze 36:25  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.*

*Eze 36:26  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.*

*Eze 36:27  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.*

**Promise Spoken in the New Testament**

**John the Baptist**

*Mat 3:11  I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:*

**Woman at the Well**

**John 4:7-14**

*Joh 4:7  There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink.*

*Joh 4:8  (For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.)*

*Joh 4:9  Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.*

*Joh 4:10  Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.*

*Joh 4:11  The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water?*

*Joh 4:12  Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?*

*Joh 4:13  Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again:*

*Joh 4:14  But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.*

Jesus spoke to the woman at the well. He said if you drink of this water you will thirst again but if you drink of the water that I give you it will become inside of you a well springing up into everlasting life. Signifying a river inside of you.

**Jesus Speaking to His Disciples**

*Joh 7:37  In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.*

*Joh 7:38  He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.*

*Joh 7:39  (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)*

*We see that Jesus was again saying there is a river that is going to flow from the innermost being. Verse 39 gives clarity, He was speaking concerning the Holy Ghost.*

***Receiving the Holy Ghost According to Scripture***

Believers of all nations did not receive the Holy Ghost until the Day of Pentecost, after Jesus had been glorified. Take note that believers must believe the way the Scriptures say to believe. Many have felt that when a person believes in Jesus Christ as personal Savior, they automatically receive the Holy Ghost.

However, believing the way the Bible says means more than a mental assent that Jesus is Savior. It means following Him and obeying all His commands. This truth is clearly illustrated in Acts 8:14–17:

*14 Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: 15 Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: 16 (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) 17 Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.*

These were obvious believers who had not yet received the Holy Ghost, but God was faithful to fulfill the promise of Acts 2:38 because they had repented and been baptized in Jesus' name.

**Acts 1:4–5** Jesus gave the last promise to His followers of the gift of His Spirit just before He ascended to Heaven.

*4 And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. 5 For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.*

**The Fulfillment of the Promise**

God fulfilled the promise to the Jewish disciples on the Day of Pentecost when He filled about 120 people in the upper room with the baptism of the Holy Ghost. But God spoke through Joel that the promise would be poured out on *all flesh*, which includes the Gentile races as well.

Paul confirmed this in Galatians 3:14:

*That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.*

We are able to receive the promised Spirit through our spiritual circumcision, which is water baptism in the name of Jesus. That event brings us into the covenant God made with Abraham, through our faith in Jesus’ name.

**The Evidence of the Holy Ghost**

If it were true that we receive the Holy Ghost the moment we accept Jesus as our personal Savior, we would always be left to wonder if we were truly saved—because there would be no clear evidence of God’s Spirit dwelling in us.

Some say that having the fruit of the Spirit is enough proof. But even those who are not saved can exhibit traits of a genuine Christian through self-discipline or self-righteousness.

**The Initial Evidence of the New Birth**

Just as the initial evidence of life in a newborn is the baby’s cry, we can look for a parallel in the spiritual new birth.

**Acts 2:4** *And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.*

The way people knew these believers were filled with the Holy Ghost was by hearing them speak in tongues as the Spirit gave them the words to speak. This was not a surprise to them, because the Lord had already foretold it in Mark 16:16–18:

16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. 17 And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; 18 They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

One of the signs that follows a believer is that they will speak with new tongues. This was also prophesied by Isaiah:

Isaiah 28:11 *For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people.*

**Tongues as a Sign of Receiving the Holy Ghost**

We know without doubt that Isaiah 28:11 refers to speaking in tongues because Paul confirms it in 1 Corinthians 14:21–22:

*1 Corinthians 14:21–22 21 In the law it is written, With men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that will they not hear me, saith the Lord. 22 Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not: but prophesying serveth not for them that believe not, but for them which believe.*

Tongues are a sign for unbelievers, confirming the supernatural work of God.

Let’s look at another example of people receiving the Holy Ghost in Acts 10:43–47:

*43 To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins. 44 While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. 45 And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. 46 For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God. Then answered Peter, 47 Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?*

**Speaking in Tongues Confirms the Gift of the Holy Ghost**

The Jewish men who came with Peter to Cornelius’ house knew that the Gentiles had received the Holy Ghost because they **heard them speak in tongues**, just like they did on the **Day of Pentecost**.

Let’s now read Acts 19:1–7:

*1 And it came to pass that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, 2 He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. 3 And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John’s baptism. 4 Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should 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 his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues and prophesied. 7 And all the men were about twelve.*

Please notice once again, that these men were already believers, but did not know about, or have, the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Only after Paul taught them, and prayed for them, along with the laying on of hands, did they receive the Holy Ghost with the evidence of speaking in other tongues. The study of the Scriptures makes it clear that the only evidence given to us that a person has been born of the Spirit is speaking in tongues.

**WHY TONGUES?**

One of the reasons that people believe God used speaking in tongues is because of what James wrote in James 3:2-8,

*2 For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body. 3 Behold, we put bits in the horses’ mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body. 4 Behold also the ships, which though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth. 5 Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! 6 And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth , the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell. 7 For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind. 8 But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.*

*Since the tongue is so hard to master, it is a good measuring stick to use to gage our submission to God. It is submission to God that allows us to be open to receiving the Holy Ghost. Another reason might be because God used tongues as a form of judgment against the men at the tower of Babel. All people spoke the same language, but because they were in rebellion against God, God confused their language so that they could not continue to do what they were doing.*

*Imagine men who could not understand each other trying to build a huge tower together, especially after God supernaturally changed their language. Now, God supernaturally changes our language to bring us together into one body. It is a sign to unbelievers that God is in us causing us to speak in known and unknown languages as well as prophesying things that only God could know.*

*The last reason that I think of for speaking in tongues as the Spirit gives the utterance is to prove that the resurrection of Jesus truly happened. When God’s Spirit speaks through us, it is proof that He is still alive, because He lives in, and speaks through us.*

**The Promise Is For You**

*People all over the world have been receiving the baptism of the Holy Ghost in great numbers. Those who say it is not happening today have come too late to tell us that, because we have already tasted of the heavenly gift. Acts 2:39 declares who the promised gift of the Holy Ghost is for you.*

*For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.*

*That’s right! The Holy Ghost is for you.* ***Have you received the Holy Ghost since you believed?***