

## BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT: THE SOURCE OF SUPERNATURAL CREATIVE MIRACLES FOR THE MODERN CHURCH

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**Abstract:** *The Church has historically witnessed supernatural miracles, with the baptism in the Holy Spirit playing a significant role, especially during the early years of the Christian movement. The Book of Acts records numerous instances of creative supernatural miracles performed by the disciples, empowered by the Holy Spirit after the Day of Pentecost. The early Church consistently operated within this supernatural realm for the first century, available to all believers. However, the modern universal Church has exhibited varied responses to the baptism in the Holy Spirit as a source of such miracles. While some denominations view supernatural acts as exclusive to the early Church, others outright reject or remain silent. Through a survey-based design, this paper seeks to examine the role of baptism in the Holy Spirit in facilitating supernatural miracles in the contemporary Church. Grounded in the narrative of Acts, the study also explores historical revival movements, such as the Great Awakenings (18th–19th centuries), the Azusa Street revival, and the East African revival, which are all connected to the baptism in the Holy Spirit. By analyzing these events, the paper contends that the modern Church can learn from these movements to rediscover the transformative power of supernatural miracles through the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Such an understanding may influence the Church's mission and its approach to fulfilling the Great Commission.*

**Keywords:** *Baptism in the Spirit, miracles signs, outpouring wonders, infilling miracles, Word of Knowledge, supernatural healing, Spiritual discerning*



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### INTRODUCTION

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit is recognized as a catalyst for supernatural creative miracles within the Church, a belief stemming from the early experiences of the Apostles as recorded in the Book of Acts. After Pentecost, the disciples were empowered by the Holy Spirit to perform extraordinary works, characterized by miraculous signs and wonders accessible to all believers. However, the global Church's response to this supernatural dimension has varied significantly. While some denominations limit the relevance of these manifestations to the early Church, others reject or ignore the subject. This paper investigates the Baptism in the

Holy Spirit as the source of supernatural miracles for the modern Church, drawing from biblical accounts and historical revivals. By employing a survey-based approach, the study explores how the supernatural encounters of the primitive Church—anchored in the Book of Acts—can inform contemporary Christian practice. It also examines the causes and impacts of the great awakenings of the 1700s and 1800s, along with the Azusa Street and East African revivals, all closely tied to the Baptism in the Holy Spirit.

This paper advances the argument that the modern Church, by embracing the Baptism in the Holy Spirit, can once again witness creative supernatural miracles, thereby reshaping its approach to fulfilling the Great Commission.

## **THE SOURCE OF SUPERNATURAL CREATIVE MIRACLES FOR THE MODERN CHURCH**

This section on The Source of Supernatural Creative Miracles for the Modern Church explores key themes such as the Book of Acts and the Pentecost, highlighting the foundational events that ignited the early church. It delves into the spiritual experience of believers and the imagery of baptism in the Holy Spirit, symbolizing deep spiritual immersion. The discussion includes differences in the evidence of Holy Spirit baptism across traditions, insights from the Great Awakening Movement, and the evidence of a Spirit-filled life. Finally, it reflects on how the modern church seeks these miracles, drawing inspiration from long-gone evangelists who exemplified the Spirit's transformative work.

### **The Book of Acts and the Pentecost**

The Book of Acts does not record all the 120 in the upper room, but we are told the Twelve Apostles did miracles, signs, and wonders (Ac. 2:42-43). The 3000 people who heard the message needed public confession of Jesus as Lord, which was evidenced by their repentance and receiving the Holy Spirit. 1<sup>st</sup>Peter 1:22-23 (NKJV) writes this type of confession in the following words, “ Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart, 23 having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever.” We can deduce that from the day of Pentecost, miracles, signs, and wonders were significantly present in the early Church for many years. People were filled with awe - holy fear or strong opposition at the work of the Holy Spirit, which the Apostles manifested in various instances in the Book of Acts. It can be said that there is one Holy Spirit who indwells every believer; nonetheless, each believer is given a measure of grace to accomplish God’s work appointed to them -Ephesians 2:10 (NKJV) “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.”The body of Christ has been endowed with various spiritual gifts in line with God’s purpose and will (Eph. 4:7-13; 1 Cor 12:11), which result from Baptism in the Holy Spirit.

## Spiritual Experience

Over the years, many believers have testified to receiving spiritual experience commonly known as baptism in the Holy Spirit. Some Pentecostal denominations and charismatic Christians emphasize speaking in tongues as the only evidence of Spirit filled. Globally, those who subscribe to this belief number in hundreds of millions. The Bible notes that Jesus' ministry was launched by the Holy Spirit as evidenced in his baptism formula, and so continues even today (Ezekiel 36:25–27; Joel 2:28,29; Matthew 3:16; Mark 1:10; Luke 3:22; John 1:32). Baptism in the Holy Spirit did not end with the Book of Acts. The outpouring of the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2) was the climax of God's promises, made centuries before, about the institution of the new covenant and the coming of the age of the Spirit. Some denomination affirms that the most distinguishing features of the baptism in the Holy Spirit are that it is theologically and experientially distinguishable from and after the new birth, (2) it may be accompanied by speaking in tongues, and (3) it is distinct in purpose from the Spirit's work of regenerating the heart and life of a repentant sinner.<sup>1</sup>

## Imagery of Baptism in the Holy Spirit

There is much confusion associated with the imagery of baptism in the Holy Spirit. The Bible is full of possible images of baptism in the Holy Spirit. John, the Baptist, is the first to use the term "...He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire" (Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33). Jesus repeated the same concept in (Acts 1:5) and Apostle Peter said the same in Acts (11:16). The baptism imagery portrayed in the Bible is immersion. At conversion, the Spirit baptizes into Christ/the body of Christ; in a subsequent and distinct experience - Christ will baptize in the Holy Spirit. The Book of Acts uses the term to refer to the initial descent of the Holy Spirit upon Jesus' disciples. Several terms are used for baptism in the Holy Spirit, including outpouring, infilling, falling, baptism, come on, and filling. The outpouring is seen on the Day of Pentecost, where the apostles were filled with the Holy Spirit.<sup>2</sup> Infilling is a Pentecostal term differentiating experience from the Spirit's indwelling (Rom 8:9-11). Infilling refers to the full penetration of the indwelling Spirit. Falling of the Holy Spirit is the suddenness or forcefulness into a believer (Acts 8:16; 10:44). Baptism in the Holy Spirit is being filled, also coming on of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8). Come on, is an active continuing endowment of the Spirit where there is both possession by investiture with the Holy Spirit. Filling points to an inner penetration or pervasion; both words express totality without and within (Acts 9:17).

Other synonyms would include baptized in the Spirit; the Spirit coming, or falling, upon; the Spirit poured out; the gift my Father promised; the gift of the Spirit; the gift of God; receiving the Spirit; filled with the Spirit. These terms are metaphors conveying the idea that the recipients are thoroughly dominated or overwhelmed by the Spirit, who already dwells in them (Romans 8:9,14–16; 1 Corinthians 6:19; Galatians 4:6). The book of Luke

11:13 talks of "... Father in heaven gives the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him." I am going to send you what my Father has promised but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high" (24:49). The book of Acts is a commentary on the promises made on the Baptism of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4-9). The Gospel of Luke presents the outburst of the work of God, starting with the miraculous births of both John the Baptist and Jesus and to the beginning of Jesus' earthly ministry. Angelic visitations, miraculous conceptions, prophetic utterances, the Spirit's descent upon Jesus at His Baptism, and the empowerment of Jesus for His earthly ministry is an indications of the presence of the Holy Spirit. The culmination of Jesus' accession brings in full force the power of the Holy Spirit where at a personal level, the disciples' experience at Pentecost serves as a paradigm for later believers as well (Acts 8:14–20; 9:17; 10:44–48; 19:1–7).

The Samaritans (Acts 8:14–20) had received the gospel and had water baptism, but with the arrival of Peter and John and the subsequent laying of hands, they were filled by the Holy Spirit. After observing what the apostles did, Simon, the sorcerer, wants to offer money for this type of experience. The conversation of Paul and the subsequent laying of hands by Ananias implies that there is baptism in the Holy Spirit. Another good example of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit is the story of the household of Cornelius at Caesarea (Acts 10:44–48; 11:17; 15:8,9). The Spirit baptism of the new believers in Caesarea parallels that of believers in Jerusalem (Acts 2), Samaria (Acts 8), Damascus (Acts 9), and disciples in Ephesus (Acts 19:1–7). But unlike the experience of their predecessors, they had a unified experience whereby their conversion and their baptism in the Spirit occurred in rapid succession.

### **Differences regarding some of the Evidence of Holy Spirit baptism**

Differences among various denominations arise regarding some of the evidence of Holy Spirit baptism. Some denominations agree that speaking in tongues is the initial, empirical indication that the infilling has taken place and benefits the speaker spiritually. Nonetheless, others hold a contrary opinion. Spirit baptism opens the receiver to the full range of spiritual gifts. The experience of this baptism has implications for righteous living and the power to witness. Baptism in the Holy Spirit must be more than a safeguarded and cherished doctrine; it must be a vital, productive, and ongoing experience in the life of believers and their relationship with the Lord, their interaction with other believers, and their witness to the world. The vitality and vibrancy of the Church can be realized only when believers personally and corporately manifest the power of the Holy Spirit that Jesus experienced and promised to His followers. All believers are entitled to and should ardently expect and earnestly seek the promise of the Father, the baptism in the Holy Spirit and fire, according to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ.

John's baptism opened a door for a believer to repent and be humble to receive the Holy Spirit. There is no formula for spirit baptism since we find in Acts that it happened after conversion, while other times before. When Jesus is baptized with the Holy Spirit, the power transforms the entire person. The Holy Spirit strengthens, helps, supports, advises, and advocates (John 16). The Holy Spirit, as a person, has nature; He speaks, witnesses, helps, and intercedes for the believer. He unites us in Christ (Eph. 4:3-4), regenerates John (3:5, 8), transforms us (2Cor. 3:18; Gal 5:22-24), He illuminates (1Cor. 3:13-16), (, testifies to our adoptions as sons and daughters of God (Eph. 1:1), sustains our praying (Gal 4:16). He gives us all gifts for service (1Cor. 12:4-11). He dwells in believers (Acts 2:18; Gal 3:2) as a sealed guarantee of our salvation that secures our eternal life and fellowship with the Father and Son. The Holy Spirit continues with His ministry until the second coming of Christ.<sup>3</sup>

The gift of healing, well associated with baptism in the Holy Spirit, is needed in our 21<sup>st</sup>-century Church. Sickness and healing were part of the early Church. Isaiah foresaw what Jesus' death would mean to the body of Christ (53:5-7). Exodus promises God's desire to heal us (15:26). Jesus' earthly ministry was full of healing. Healing did not stop with the early Church but has continued throughout history. Various healing evangelists have recorded several instances of miraculous healing ministries, among them Reinhard Bonnke, Lester Sumrall, Kathryn Kuhlman, Oral Roberts, William J. Seymour, Aimee Semple McPherson, and Smith Wigglesworth. The book of James 5:14 tells us that we must pray for the sick. The Baptism in the Holy Spirit is an empowering healing ministry. The spiritual gifts that operated in the book of Acts ought to continue to threaten the body of Jesus today. In John 14:12, Jesus encourages his followers that they will do more than he was doing.

The continuation of the work of the Holy Spirit did not end with the first Church. Over the years, God has intervened in human order to bring spiritual revivals, commonly called spiritual awakening. The First Great Awakening happened in Britain and its thirteen North American colonies in the early 1700s. The new revival challenged the order of the older denominations. Several leaders were known for this revival period, such as DL Moody, George Whitefield, John Wesley, Charles Wesley, Jonathan Edwards, David Brainard, Samuel Davies, Theodore Frelinghuysen, Gilbert Tennent, and William Tennent, among others.<sup>4</sup> They articulated a theology of revival and salvation that transcended denominational boundaries and helped forge a common evangelical identity. Revivalists emphasized providential outpourings of the Holy Spirit. Revival theology stressed that religious conversion was not only intellectual assent to correct Christian doctrine but had to be a "new birth" experienced in the heart. The great awakening is attributed to the fact of the work of the Holy Spirit.

### **Great Awakening Movement**

The first Great Awakening movement came when secular rationalism was emphasized, and passion for religion had grown stale. During the Enlightenment Age, the scientific and logical

view of the world downplayed religion. The infiltration of secularism was causing the Church to crave religious piety. The first Great Awakening resulted in a quantum leap forward in the life of the Church and the nation. The psychological earthquake reshaped the Church's religious, social, and moral landscape. We can conclusively say that Baptism in the Holy Spirit birthed the revival. In the late 1700s and early 1800s, another second Great Awakening was born in New England, lasting until the middle of the nineteenth century. In contrast to the first one, this was less emotionally charged but led to the founding of several colleges, seminaries, and mission societies.<sup>5</sup> Some of the ministers involved in the second awakening are James McGready, Rev. Gardiner Spring, and Charles Finney. Furthermore, historians tell us that several other spiritual awakenings took place in various parts of the world in the late 1800s and early 1900s.

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit has been attributed to sparking spiritual awakenings. It is common knowledge that religious revival or awakening leaves a spiritual impact. It could be said that all spiritual awakenings have something to share in common; they result from a spiritual and moral decline, longing in the heart to be right with God, and reading the word, and the Holy Spirit takes people to a spiritual depth. Most revival meetings record miraculous healing, signs, and wonders. A great example of the association of baptism with the Holy Spirit is the revivals of the early 1900s, which documented creative miracles.<sup>6</sup> For instance, The Azusa Street Revival, led by Seymour, recorded several creative miracles, signs, and wonders.<sup>7</sup> Letson affirms that The Azusa street revival started with a dramatic scene accompanied by baptism in the Holy Spirit.<sup>8</sup> In some instances, people fell under the power of God as they approached; people were baptized in the Holy Spirit, the sick were healed, and sinners received salvation. Robeck notes that during the decade (1906-1915), Seymour had witnessed the teachings of the 'Apostolic Faith' including the call to personal repentance and faith, the pursuit of personal and corporate holiness, and the acceptance of power for ministry through Baptism in the Holy Spirit.<sup>9</sup> Klaus argues that William Seymour preached a message which highlighted the empowerment of Spirit baptism...<sup>10</sup> Omen infers that The Azusa Street Revival spread to other nations, including China, India, Japan, the Philippines, South Africa, the Middle East, and Liberia.<sup>11</sup> Besides The Azusa Street Revival, The Welsh Revival of the early 1900s, led by Billy Sunday, saw millions convert to Christianity. During a revival, through sudden, intense enthusiasm for Christianity, God supernaturally transforms believers and non-believers in a church, locale, region, nation, or the world.

Another example of Baptism in the Holy Spirit was found far away from Europe and America - The East African Revival. The East African Revival was a Christian conversion movement that began in northern Rwanda and southern Uganda in the mid-1900s and spread throughout eastern Africa.<sup>12</sup> John Edward Church and Simeoni Nsibambi of Uganda are known for this revival. The revival was widely called the Balokole ("saved ones). It quickly spread to the Presbyterian and Methodist churches of Kenya and the Mennonite and Lutheran churches of Tanzania, spreading to Burundi and Congo. John Church taught the need for a real outpouring of the Holy Spirit-the second blessing, or "spirit filling"-, and a strong desire

for the higher Christian life.<sup>13</sup>The revival contributed to the significant growth of the Church in East Africa in the mid and late 1900s. The distinctive theology and practice of the East African Revival was its emphasis on the real experience of the saving power of Christ and holy living. According to Nthamburi (1991), the revival among the Quakers at Kaimosi in western Kenya in 1928 was characterized by public confessions, fasting, vigils, and spiritual emotionalism.<sup>14</sup> Drawing from the biblical model, we learn that Baptism in the Holy Spirit is an experience following conversion whereby the Holy Spirit comes upon the believer, empowering one for a sanctified life. Infilling the Holy Spirit in a believer is paramount for a fruitful Christian life. Whether He comes during the sacrament of baptism, before it like the case of Cornelius Acts 11:16, or after conversion, the truth is a believer requires infilling the Holy Spirit. The experiences can differ, but they are critical to Christian life.

### **Evidence of the Spirit-filled life**

Evidence of the Spirit-filled life of a spirit-baptized person is a transformed believer, fruitful, and Spirit fullness.<sup>15</sup>Rust quotes Billy Graham: “The Holy Spirit illuminates the minds of people, makes us yearn for God, and takes spiritual truth and makes it understandable to us.”<sup>16</sup> Without Him, we are powerless. Supernatural encounters witnessed in the Book of Acts were well stipulated in Mark 16:17-18 and John 14:12. Jesus told his followers that they would have the same capability of miraculous power if they believed in him. Let us start by noting some of these miracle signs—the manifestations of the word of knowledge. In 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians, we see diversities of operation through the same Spirit (12: 6). Jesus used this gift as shown in John about Nathaniel (1:45-51). Jesus sent the disciples and told them what to expect (Mark 11:1-7 and Luke 22:7-13). Jesus tells Peter to catch a fish and get the coin (Matthew 17:24-27). The apostle Paul exercised the gift of knowledge when he told the sailors to avoid the trip. The gift of the word of knowledge was so common among the Old Testament prophets. The Church today needs this spiritual gift.

Another spiritual gift needed is the discerning of spirits and miracle workers. Jesus commended the Church at Ephesus because they could discern spirits (Rev. 2:2). The gift helps the Church to shun false teachers and prophets. Acts 26:8 says, “Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?” If we cannot believe in God, we cannot believe in miracles. Baptism in the Holy Spirit prepares the ways for miracles, signs, and wonders, implying that God operates according to laws higher than the laws of nature we know and understand. It is dangerous to follow miracles only because not all miracles are of God; some are of Satan and meant to deceive as warned in 1 Thess. 2:9. Fear of differentiating true miracles and falsehood has made many shun all forms of miracle manifestation. Over the years, the Church has refused to be associated with this gift because it can easily be manipulated. We must expand the limits of what we think God can do and allow the Holy Spirit to use us for His glory.

## The modern Church

The modern Church can borrow a leaf from such to learn that supernatural creative miracles can only happen through baptism in the Holy Spirit. It is on record that Baptism in the Holy Spirit is a catalyst for any spiritual awakening. God has always raised several preachers for such a time in their lives to bring revivals. The British “Prince of Preachers” Charles Spurgeon, American televangelist Billy Graham, and Reinhard Bonnke had real influence in the body of Christ for years. George Whitefield and John Wesley are hailed today for their revivals during their days. Other powerful ministers of the Gospel who emphasized the value of baptism in the Holy Spirit include John Alexander Dowie; Maria Woodworth-Etter; Evan Roberts, Charles Parham; William J. Seymour; John G. Lake; Aimee Semple-McPherson, Smith Wigglesworth; William Branham; Jack Coe; A.A. Allen; and Kathryn Kuhlman. Some of the Modern denominations have been plagued with legalism and spiritual bankruptcy. Any mention of the supernatural creative miracles is thought archaic and nonexistent. Their emphasis is on ethical living devoid of the power of God. Second Tim 3:5 (NKJV) says “having a form of godliness but denying its power. Furthermore, from such people turn away!” Baptism in the Holy Spirit is not a false doctrine, as noted in Acts 1:5: “For John baptized with water, but in a few days, you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit” (NIV).

John 4:24 states that God is Spirit, and those who worship should do so in Spirit and truth. The Bible does not shy away from teaching about baptism in the Holy Spirit as a source of creative miracles, signs, and wonders. Concerning the baptism in the Holy Spirit, we deduce that it is a promise from the Father for all professing believers and that it is one of Christ’s desires to send the Holy Spirit to all his followers. Peter rebuked the onlookers in Acts 3, saying that they should not think it was by his power that he was able to heal the lame man. Some denomination sees it absurd that Baptism in the Holy Spirit was intended for a group of evangelists now long gone. Jesus intended baptism in the Holy Spirit to be for all who profess faith in Christ to be born again. Most of the evangelical churches have replaced baptism in the Holy Spirit with liturgical practices and left the teaching to the Pentecostal denominations. It should be noted that all signs, miracles, and wonders Jesus performed resulted in the baptism of the Holy Spirit, as noted on his baptism day- the Holy Spirit descended on him like a dove. The Book of Acts picks the same teaching such that on the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit descended on all 120 people and later several others. The source of the supernatural creative miracles of healing cannot be disassociated from the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on believing Christians.

Baptism in the Holy Spirit is an act of God, not a formula. It is an operation of the Holy Spirit in a believer and quite distinct from regeneration. Why do we attribute the sanctifying work of the Spirit and his regenerating work but refute the idea of the Baptism of the Spirit in a believer? The same spirit that regenerates and sanctifies the soul is the same one that baptizes in the Spirit. Jesus breathed to the disciples to receive the Holy Spirit as a sign of



regeneration and new life. He further instructed them to wait for the infilling of the Holy Spirit (Luke 24:49; cf. Acts 1:5,8). It looks like there is a possibility that a soul can be regenerated and indwelt by the Holy Spirit, but still not be baptized in the Holy Spirit (Acts 19:6). Then this calls to crave for baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Evangelical and Pentecostal denominations have been looking differently at the Baptism of the Holy Spirit as a source of creative miracles. Pentecostals overemphasize speaking in tongues as a sign that one is saved, thus overcrowding the doctrine of Spirit baptism and thus, the evangelical denominations rejected such. The book of Acts indeed presents speaking with tongues as an initial sign accompanying the baptism in the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:4; 10:45-46; 19:6). Nonetheless, in Pauline's letters, we find that it is not the only manifestation that one is indwelt in the Holy Spirit. Indeed, Baptism in the Holy Spirit makes one bold and powerful in sharing their faith (cf. Acts 1:8; 2:14-41; 4:31; 6:8; Rom. 15:18-19; 1 Cor. 2:4). A believer whom the Holy Spirit indwells experience the presence of God in their lives and walk as Jesus did (1 John 2:6). The paper continues to argue that a genuine baptism in the Holy Spirit is not devoid of the various spiritual gifts mentioned in the Bible. Failure to believe in the creative miracles resulting from Baptism in the Holy Spirit in our generation does not deny the fact that they do not exist among the believers. The manifestation of the various spiritual gifts is a package that comes to various members to edify the Church (1 Cor. 12:4-10). Increased desire to live a holy life full of God is a longing desire for all believers.

The Bible cites several conditions by which the baptism in the Holy Spirit is given. We must accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour by faith and turn from sin and the world (Acts 2:38-40; 8:12-17). This involves surrendering our wills to God (Acts 5:32). We must turn from that which offends God before we can become vessels of honor for our master's use (2 Tim. 2:21). Christians should have a deep hunger and thirst for the baptism in the Holy Spirit (John 7:37-39). We often receive it in answer to definite prayer (Luke 11:13). We should expect that God will baptize us in the Holy Spirit (Mark 11:24). The Baptism in the Holy Spirit is sustained in the believer's life by prayer (Acts 4:31), witness (4:31,33), worship in the Spirit (Eph. 5:18-19), and a sanctified life (Eph. 5:18). However powerful the initial coming of the Holy Spirit upon the believer maybe, if this does not find expression in a life of prayer, witness, and holiness, the experience will soon become a fading glory. The Baptism in the Holy Spirit occurs only once in a believer's life and points to the consecration of the believer unto God's work of witnessing in power and righteousness. The Bible teaches that there may be new fillings with the Holy Spirit after the believer has been baptized in the Holy Spirit (Acts 4:31). Thus, the baptism in the Spirit brings the believer into a relationship with the Spirit that is to be renewed and maintained. Spiritual awakenings start with God's people waking up to the power of God unleashed through prayer. When Jesus commissioned his followers, he was not just inaugurating the historical Church, he was founding a missionary movement.

## Long-gone Evangelists

How do we learn from long-gone evangelists? This is the question we should be asking ourselves. We will take John Wesley and his mode of evangelism as an example. It is true some say Wesley was a gifted evangelist, communicator, writer, social activist, and committed follower of Christ. Did John Wesley advocate baptism in the Holy Spirit? Some scholars affirm that Wesley often used the word *preternatural* (meaning beyond or different from what is natural) to describe the unusual manifestations he witnessed in his services and travels. Paranormal manifestations and healings regularly marked his remarkable ministry. Wesley believed these manifestations were “chiefly supernatural, springing from the gracious influences of the Spirit of God which accompanied his word.”<sup>17</sup> Wesley viewed the miraculous as a sign of God’s endorsement of both his call to ministry and the content of his sermons.<sup>18</sup> Kent believes that the Holy Spirit and various miraculous signs empowered the ministry of John Wesley.<sup>19</sup> In seeking to account for the numerous miracles in his day, Wesley stated that they were necessary “because of the hardness of our hearts, unready to receive anything unless we see it with our eyes and hear it with our ears, that God, in tender condescension to our weakness, suffered so many outward signs.”<sup>20</sup> Today, hearts are again hard, and minds sceptical. Author John White wondered if the twentieth-century resurgence of God’s miraculous manifestations expressed the necessity of God’s intervention in the current “phase of the battle.”<sup>21</sup> Kent stated, “Examples of healing, prophecy, personal protection, special providences, and ecstasy occurred in the Wesleyan societies for a long time.”<sup>22</sup> John Cennick, a contemporary of John Wesley, made the following observation concerning Wesley’s expectation of God’s miraculous authentication of the preaching of the gospel: “Frequently when none were agitated in the meetings, he [Wesley] prayed ‘Lord! Where are thy tokens and signs?’ and I don’t remember ever to have seen it otherwise than, that on his so praying, several were seized and screamed out.”<sup>23</sup> It is a common belief that people are looking for something greater spiritually than what they have.

Historians tell us that in Wesley’s meeting, miraculous demonstrations of God’s power, even skeptics were supernaturally healed, and others were falling and shaking to the ground for hours.<sup>24</sup> Whitefield is reported to have experienced trembling, convulsions, groaning, and fainting during a meeting where Wesley was preaching.<sup>25</sup> Wesley noted that the Apostolic era should be experienced even now. Henry Rack stated that Wesley “believed that much that he saw was indeed the work of the Spirit, whose work of this kind was not confined to past times, as educated contemporaries thought.”<sup>26</sup> Wesley believed that miracles diminished in the Church due to dry, formal orthodox and the presence of faith and holiness.<sup>27</sup> On November 25, 1759, he wrote that the convulsions, trances, visions, dreams, healings, and the like that were so often seen in his ministry existed to “strengthen and encourage them that believed and to make His work more apparent...”<sup>28</sup> Wesley and his brother, Charles, did not naively accept all forms of spiritual manifestation.<sup>29</sup> John Wesley combines supernatural miracles, preaching, and charity in his life ministry. Remarkable manifestations of the Holy

Spirit also marked many other revivalists throughout history.<sup>30</sup>Revivalist of all time have experienced spiritual manifestation during their ministry.

### CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the Baptism in the Holy Spirit is a transformative encounter that enables believers to experience the profound presence of God through supernatural power. As seen throughout history, revivals and awakenings have served as divine calls to repentance and renewal, drawing people closer to God. However, baptism in the Holy Spirit empowers believers to live holy lives, thirst for God's word, and step into a realm of miracles, signs, and wonders. The early Church's testimonies and historical movements such as the Great Awakenings, the Azusa Street Revival, and the East African Revival, affirm the ongoing importance of this spiritual baptism. By embracing the baptism in the Holy Spirit, the modern Church has the potential to witness a fresh outpouring of supernatural miracles, renewing its vitality and mission. This paper highlights the critical need for the Church to rediscover and embrace this mighty baptism, which holds the key to a revival that can reshape its influence and effectiveness in fulfilling the Great Commission in today's world.

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## ENDNOTES

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