**Believe so that the Holy Spirit dwells in you**

**<Matthew 25:1-12>**

**“Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish. Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight a cry was heard: ‘Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!’ Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’ But the wise answered, saying, ‘No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.’ And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut. Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open to us!’ But he answered and said, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.’”**

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| *To whom does the Holy Spirit come?* |
| *He comes to those who are forgiven  for their sins by believing in Jesus'  baptism and His blood.* |

**Who are represented by the virgins that have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit?** 

In the passages above, there are five wise virgins and five foolish virgins. The five foolish ones ask the five wise ones to share some of their oil. But the wise told the foolish ones, *“No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.”* So, while the foolish ones went out to buy oil, the five wise virgins who had oil with their lamps went into the wedding ceremony. How then can we prepare oil for the Lord? The only thing we need do is to wait for Him with the forgiveness of sins in our hearts.

We can find two kinds of faith among people. One is the faith in the gospel of the forgiveness of sins. This leads to receiving the Holy Spirit. The other is simply being faithful to one’s own religious creeds – indifferent to whether or not the Lord has forgiven one’s sins.

To those who are faithful to their own creeds, the beautiful gospel remains burdensome. Like the foolish virgins who went out to buy oil when the bridegroom was coming, those who move from one house of worship to another in the hope of receiving the Holy Spirit are deceiving no one but themselves. Such people are ignorant of the fact that they must have faith in the beautiful gospel in their hearts prior to the Day of Judgment. They wish to receive the Holy Spirit by impressing God with their zeal. We will look at the confession of a deacon who made great efforts to receive the Holy Spirit. This confession will be helpful to you.

“I did everything to receive the Holy Spirit. I thought that if I devoted myself to my own faith fervently, I could receive the Holy Spirit and so I moved from one prayer house to another. The people at one of these prayer houses played the electric piano and drums as part of the service. The pastor who led the meeting called those who wished to receive the Holy Spirit one by one and as he slapped the person’s forehead, he started speaking in tongues. He ran around with a microphone and cried “Receive fire, fire, fire” and placed his hand on people’s heads, causing some of them have fits and faint. I had my doubts as to whether this practice was about receiving the Holy Spirit but I was already addicted to these meetings. Despite all this, I never succeeded in receiving the Holy Spirit.

After that experience, I went up to the mountains and tried crying and praying all night while holding onto a pine tree. I even tried praying in a cave but that didn’t work either. After that, I tried praying all night long for 40 days but I never managed to receive the Holy Spirit. Then one day I was invited to a seminar on the Holy Spirit. The seminar was held once a week, and lasted for seven weeks.

The seminar was on God’s love, the Cross, Jesus’ resurrection, the laying on of hands, the fruit of the Spirit, and spiritual growth. At that time when the seminar program was almost over, the preacher in the seminar put his hands on my head and prayed for the Holy Spirit, and I did as he told me to. I relaxed and raised my palms to face the sky and cried out “la-la-la-la” over and over again. Suddenly, while I was crying “la-la-la-la,” I started speaking fluently in a strange language. Many people congratulated me on receiving the Holy Spirit. But when I was alone at home, I was afraid. So, I started working as a volunteer worker for the seminar. I thought I should volunteer for as much work as possible so I traveled around the country to render my services. And when I laid my hands on some patients, their illness seemed to be healed, even though they relapsed soon after. And then I had visions before my eyes and found I could prophesy. Surprisingly, my prophecies always came true. From that time, I was invited to all sorts of places and treated like a celebrity. But I was still afraid. Then one day, I heard a voice say, “Don’t wander around from place to place like this, instead go and help your family receive salvation.” However, I didn’t know what salvation was. I only knew what others had told me – that if I didn’t use this gift of the Holy Spirit, He would take it away from me. On the one hand, I was afraid to use my abilities and yet I couldn’t stop doing so.

One day, I heard that a female shaman wished to believe in Jesus and so I visited her with my friends. We did not inform her in advance that we would be visiting her. But the female shaman was already waiting for us outside her gate and said, “I knew you would be coming.” Then she suddenly started throwing water at us and said, “There is no difference between Eastern shamanism and Western shamanism!” She called us “Jesus shamans,” pointed at us and said, “This guy is frightful, but that one is not.” What the female shaman said came to me like a blow to the head. I began thinking that all I had been doing was no different than what the shaman does. Nothing I ever did brought the Holy Spirit to me because I still had sin in my heart.”

From this confession, we learn that receiving the Holy Spirit is beyond our abilities. Because such a faith is not based on God’s gospel, those who live this kind of religious life don’t have oil in their lamp.

The lamp in the Bible refers to the church and the oil refers to the Holy Spirit. The Bible implies that those who attend church, whether it is God’s church or not, without receiving the Holy Spirit are fools.

The foolish ones burn their emotions and bodies day by day. The foolish burn their feelings along with their zealous bodies before God. If we were to say that our emotions amount to 20cm and it takes one day to burn 1cm, then it would take only 20 days to consume in fire all our emotions. The emotions behind their faith gain new strength through early-morning prayers, all-night prayers, fasting prayers and revival meetings, but their emotions also burn throughout their lives. They are addicted to this never-ending process of burning their own emotions.

Their emotions are burned in the name of Jesus. They attend church and burn their emotions but their hearts are still confused and search for something else. The reason for this is that their faith comes from bodily experiences; therefore, they have a constant need to reinforce these feelings so that the flame won’t die out. However, they cannot receive the Holy Spirit with this kind of faith. Burning their emotions will not lead them to receive the Holy Spirit.

All of us should prepare the proper faith to receive the Holy Spirit in the full presence of God. Then and only then will we be worthy to receive the Holy Spirit. How do we gain the faith that makes us worthy to receive the Holy Spirit? The truth lies in the beautiful gospel that was accomplished by Jesus’ baptism in the Jordan and the shedding of His blood on the Cross.

God referred to us as *“A brood of evildoers” (Isaiah 1:4).* We must admit this to ourselves. People are originally born with 12 kinds of sins (Mark 7:21-23). Human beings cannot help sinning from the day they are born until the day they die.

In John 1:6-7, it is written, *“There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. This man came to be a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe.”* John the Baptist baptized Jesus and passed all the sins of the world on to Him, saying, *“Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29).* We were saved from all our sins thanks to John’s baptism on Jesus Christ. If John had not baptized Jesus and had not proclaimed that He was the Lamb of God who took away the sins of the world, we couldn’t have known that Jesus took all our sins with Him to the Cross. Nor could we have known the way to receive the Holy Spirit. But thanks to John’s testimony, we came to understand that Jesus took away all our sins and we were able to receive the Holy Spirit.

With this faith, we became brides who are completely prepared to receive Jesus, the bridegroom. We are the virgins who believe in Jesus and are fully prepared to receive the Holy Spirit.

Do you believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit with all your heart? Do you believe that Jesus Christ took away all your sins with His baptism by John? The Bible says, *“Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Romans 10:17).* We must believe that Jesus was baptized by John and died on the Cross in order to receive the Holy Spirit. We must realize that receiving the Holy Spirit can only come from believing that Jesus came to earth as a human being and was baptized by John, that He died on the Cross and was resurrected.

Even today, there are two groups of believers, just as the ten virgins in the story above were of two types. Which side are you on? You must receive the Holy Spirit by believing in the water and the Spirit. Do you attend church, but yet still find yourself waiting for the Holy Spirit to come to you? You must know the true way in which to receive the Holy Spirit.

With what beliefs can we receive the Holy Spirit? Can you receive the Holy Spirit through the ecstatic enthusiasm of Shamanism? Can you receive the Holy Spirit in a state of coma? Can you receive the Holy Spirit by believing in fanatical religions? Do you have to pray to God for forgiveness of your sins consistently? The Bible says that when Jesus had been baptized and came up from the water, the Spirit of God descended like a dove. He was baptized in order to bear all our sins, and to tell us that He would be crucified to pay the wages of all our transgressions.

Jesus was baptized by John to bear the sin of the world and went to the Cross so that we could be saved and receive the Holy Spirit. This is the truth. Jesus was baptized by John, judged for all our sins on the Cross and resurrected. We must believe in Jesus’ baptism by John and His blood on the Cross in order to receive forgiveness for our sins. We can see from Jesus’ baptism (Matthew 3:13-15) that the Holy Spirit comes peacefully like a dove on those of us who are cleansed by believing in His baptism.

To receive the Holy Spirit, it is essential to believe in Jesus’ baptism by John and in His blood on the Cross. The Holy Spirit comes on a person as peacefully as a dove when he believes in the forgiveness of sin. Those who have already received the Holy Spirit should know that this has been made possible due to the forgiveness of sin by faith. The Holy Spirit descends on those who believe in the forgiveness of sin with all their heart.

Jesus Christ came by the bread and wine of eternal life (Matthew 26:26-28, John 6:53-56). When Jesus came out of the water after His baptism, there was a voice from heaven, saying, *“This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” (Matthew 3:17).*

It is easy to believe in God as the Trinity. God is the Father of Jesus and Jesus is God’s Son. The Holy Spirit is also God. The Trinity is One God to us.

You must know that you will never receive the Holy Spirit by believing only in the Cross or by trying to sanctify yourself by righteous deeds. You can receive the Holy Spirit only when you believe that John baptized Jesus to put all our sins on Him, and that He was crucified to atone for all our sins. How simple and clear the truth is! It is not difficult to receive the forgiveness of sin and the Holy Spirit.

God spoke to us in simple terms. An ordinary man’s IQ is around 110 to 120. His gospel is easy enough for ordinary people to understand. Even for the children at the age of 4 or 5, the beautiful gospel is never difficult for them to understand. But if God spoke to us about the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in a more sophisticated way, could we have ever understood Him? God justly forgave all our sins and gave the Holy Spirit as a gift to those who believed in it.

God tells us that we cannot receive the Holy Spirit through the laying on of hands or prayers of repentance. The Holy Spirit does not come on account of fasting or devotion or even praying all night in the mountains. What kind of faith results in the reception of the Holy Spirit within us? It is faith in the fact that Jesus came into this world, was baptized to take away all our sin, died on the Cross, and was resurrected.

**Do we really have to believe in this?** 

Why do we have to receive forgiveness of sins and thus receive the Holy Spirit? In order to be the citizens of God’s Kingdom, we need His Spirit. Therefore, to receive the Holy Spirit, we need to believe in Jesus as our Savior, in His baptism and blood, and finally, we must be forgiven for our sins.

Why does God grant the Holy Spirit to those whose sins have been forgiven? The reason is to stamp them as His people. To seal those who believe in Jesus based on God’s word, He gives them the Holy Spirit as a guarantee.

So many people maintain the wrong kinds of faith. It is so easy to believe in Jesus’ baptism and receive the Holy Spirit. It is easy to those of us that have already received the Holy Spirit, but it is impossible for those who have not received the forgiveness of sins. They do not know the truth and instead search for other ways to receive the Holy Spirit, such as sinking themselves into a religious coma through fanatic actions. They are so ignorant that they become confused by the seeds that Satan has sown, and fall under the influence of superstitious religions.

The Holy Spirit dwells in those who believe in Jesus’ baptism and His blood on the Cross and who receive the forgiveness of sin. Only those who believe in God’s salvation can confess, “I have no sin.” If a person does not believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, then they cannot say that they have no sin. Likewise, God has granted the Holy Spirit as a pledge to His children who believe in Jesus’ baptism and blood on the Cross and have received the forgiveness of sin.

Who testified that Jesus’ baptism and blood took away all our sins? Jesus, His disciples, and the Holy Spirit testified so. Who planned to save all people from their sins? The Holy Father did. Who carried out this plan? Jesus Christ did. Who finally guaranteed that this plan was carried out? The Holy Spirit did.

God wanted to make us His people and therefore determined to save us from all our sins through Jesus’ baptism and blood. Therefore, the Divine Trinity guarantees our ultimate salvation and approves the forgiveness of our sins.

In Matthew 3:17, it is written, *“This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”* Those who have the Holy Spirit of God are the people of God. They are His children. *“This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”* Jesus is God originally. God the Father tells us, “If you want to receive forgiveness for your sins, believe that the sins of all mankind were taken away forever by Jesus, My only begotten Son, receive the Holy Spirit, and become My children.” Those who believe in this will receive forgiveness for their sins and become sons and daughters of God. He gives them the gift of the Holy Spirit to seal them as His children. We receive forgiveness for our sins only when we believe in Jesus’ baptism and together with blood.

When people do not evacuate their hearts and do not believe in the gospel of forgiveness, they tend to believe that original sin is gone already but that they should nevertheless ceaselessly pray the prayers of repentance to bring forgiveness for their actual sins. If they fall victim to thoughts like this, the Bible becomes incomprehensible and confusing. Therefore, they come to have different beliefs than those of His disciples.

Some say the Holy Spirit comes on them “through prayers.” But this is not strictly true from a Biblical point of view. This may sound plausible, but the Bible says that when Jesus emerged from the water after being baptized by John, the Holy Spirit descended on Him like a dove. What this proves is that if we wish to receive the Holy Spirit, we only need to believe that Jesus came into this world, was baptized by John in order to take away all the sins of the world, was judged on the Cross for them and was resurrected to become our Savior.

What does God say to us when we believe in this truth and receive the Holy Spirit? He says, “You are my son. This is My beloved son, in whom I am well pleased.” God will say the same thing to those who come to believe in Jesus and be forgiven for their sins in the future. This truth is God’s promise to make us His children.

But people still think that there are other ways to receive the Holy Spirit. Do you think that the Holy Spirit will come upon you through your cries and earthly efforts? God’s works are dictated only by His will and He gives the Holy Spirit only to those who receive forgiveness for their sins. He says, “I had My Son baptized so that He could take away all your sins and had Him crucified to be judged for them. I appointed My Son as your Savior. If you accept the forgiveness of sin that My Son accomplished, then I shall send you the Holy Spirit.”

Our Father does as He wishes. Even if a man remains on his knees all night and cries for Him until his lungs are ready to burst, God won’t necessarily send him the Holy Spirit. He will only rebuke him, saying, “You have not yet accepted the true knowledge and continue to cling to mistaken beliefs. The Holy Spirit will be withheld from you as long as you refuse the true faith.”

In this world, the decisions of human beings may change according to circumstances, but the law that God established for forgiving sins and granting of the Holy Spirit remains immutable. If you fall under the spell of mistaken beliefs, it is difficult to find the right path again. The Bible says that Jesus is a stumbling block to those who are disobedient (1 Peter 2:8).

People who believe in Jesus and yet do not know why He was baptized only believe in half of the gospel of redemption and will certainly fall into Hell. Therefore, when you first believe in Jesus, you should know about Jesus’ baptism and His blood, of which the gospel of forgiveness of sin is composed. And if you receive the forgiveness of sin, then you will also receive the Holy Spirit.

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Let us think about Jesus’ life on earth. Jesus became a man and took away all the sin of this world with His baptism. He also died on the Cross and was judged for our sins in order to save us from the fires of Hell. Those who believe in Him receive the Holy Spirit as a gift.

Therefore, all of us must follow the true path in order to receive the Holy Spirit. What is needed is to think according to the words of the truth. When we do this, Jesus will keep you and bless you. Those who empty their hearts and believe in His words can live in truth by receiving the forgiveness of sin, and be led by the Holy Spirit. Moreover, they can lead others along the right path with the help of the Holy Spirit.

Believe in the redemption accomplished by Jesus’ baptism and His blood. Only then can we follow Him with faith and receive the blessing of the forgiveness of sin, of eternal life and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Jesus is the Lord of forgiveness, who took away all the sins of the world through His baptism and death on the Cross. Jesus cleansed all our sins and gave the Holy Spirit to those who believed in the gospel of truth. You can receive the Holy Spirit by adopting the true  faith.