

# Receiving Without “Tarrying”

What the Scriptures teach about receiving the Holy Spirit

By Harold Horton

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*"Come unto Me, and drink"—John 7:37.*

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I believe in tarrying before the Lord, long and earnestly. I believe in waiting on God. They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up as eagles. I am impressed with the special benefits received in the intimate presence of God in the place of patient prayer and adoration. But I could weep as I see brave seekers for the Spirit waiting at the "altar" hours on end, praying, weeping, crying out, agonising, sweating for the baptism in the Holy Spirit; and after all their waiting, getting up disappointed, going home empty, to come back next week, repeat the tarrying, praying, singing, praising, agonising - going home once more disappointed, to try again another week. And so on for weeks, months, sometimes even for many years. This, I say, breaks the heart of one who sees the utter simplicity of the scripture plan, and is anxious to see the Lord's people filled with the mighty Spirit. I would affectionately challenge the reader, whatever are the views he has promoted, to find anything in the scripture like this repeated seeking and failing and coming and going, and waiting and departing - still empty, still unsatisfied, still seeking. Thank God for the loyalty and perseverance of these grand seekers. It amazes me how consistently they come to "tarry" and come again to "tarry", repeating the process an infinite number of times, without result. Is God really like that? Is He really so unwilling to relinquish the gifts He has so freely given and so freely offered? Once again I say, in all the scriptures there is nothing at all resembling this tarrying and going and coming again and tarrying and going, empty still, hoping for the best, trusting that some fortunate day the Lord will somehow relent and "fill with His Spirit". And think of the tragedy

of thousands who have engaged in this heart-breaking programme, and finally given up in despair, seeking no more, disappointed, disillusioned, hopeless.

The reader asks maybe: But does not the Lord command us to "tarry" for the Spirit? The answer is that He certainly commanded a few, His disciples (and all who would obey His command) to "tarry in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." But this was a local and a dated command - to those only who lived and loved Him before the Holy Ghost had descended on the Day of Pentecost. This tarrying we shall see, was temporary, and exclusive to those pre-Pentecostal seekers. Look at the command. "Tarry in the city of Jerusalem." Does not that strike one as something unusual from the lips of the Saviour of the world? "In Jerusalem." So that if today we seek to obey literally this command of the Lord, we should go to Jerusalem to do our tarrying.

Consider: Jesus never said anything like this concerning any other heavenly blessing. He did not (for instance) say to sinners: "Come unto me in Capernaum and I will give you rest." Or "Him that comes unto me in Bethany I will in no wise cast out." It is not said in James' epistle, "Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders in Jerusalem." It is not written to the Ephesians, "Be filled with the Spirit in Corinth." It is agreed by all that we can be saved, healed, comforted, baptised, anywhere today. But here there were some few who had to leave the place where they were and go to another place altogether for their blessing. Should we not at once gather from this command that here was an unusual instruction for an unusual occasion? The words "in the city of Jerusalem" connected with the command to "tarry" make it absolutely clear that the Lord was speaking to a limited few on a limited occasion? These were to tarry at Jerusalem, not for the baptism but to wait for the descent of the Holy Spirit, for "the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because

that Jesus was not yet glorified!" (John 7:38). When at last the Spirit descended on the Day of Pentecost the seekers did not wait one further moment. They, the whole 120 of them, were suddenly "filled with the Holy Spirit", and immediately "began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." On the Day of Pentecost also a further 3,000 received the Spirit immediately on repenting and being baptised in water, without waiting, praying, singing, agonising—all of them received at once, with no exceptions or disappointments. How unlike our present day "waiting meetings!" Again I repeat, it is a good thing to wait upon the Lord, for there in the secret place we receive many blessings and delightful surprises. But on no occasion did anybody wait for the baptism in New Testament days. Before the coming of the Spirit they could not receive—they had to tarry for His coming. Since Pentecost it is both unnecessary and unscriptural to tarry. The order now is "Drink". While therefore, it is good to wait on the Lord for further mercies and ministry, it is infinitely more satisfying (and more scriptural) to wait with the Spirit than to wait for the Spirit. How much more enjoyable is the tarrying after the Comforter has entered!

Look further at the Acts of the Apostles and see how the people of the Lord received the Spirit. Eight years after Pentecost, Philip went to Samaria and preached Jesus unto them. They received the Word and were gloriously saved, so that there was "great joy in that city." Now Philip was a great, anointed, miracle-working evangelist. He was successful in getting hundreds saved and scores healed. But (and let not this surprise the reader) he had no ministry concerning the baptism in the Spirit. Some have this ministry and some have not. This fact cannot be gainsaid. Some have faith for salvation and others have not, some for healing, some for casting out demons, some for the baptism in the spirit. "According as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith." All have not the

same ministry. Philip had faith to get them saved and healed—I repeat; but he had no ministry on the lines of the baptism. He sent to Jerusalem for Peter and John, who possessed this special gift of ministry for the baptism. They came to Samaria, laid hands on the new converts, and immediately without waiting or praying or praising, without exception or disappointment, they all received the gift of the Holy Spirit. No tarrying meeting there. Then ten years after Pentecost at Caesarea, Peter went by revelation into the house of Cornelius the Gentile, with a few of his Jewish friends. There he began to preach the gospel to the good, religious, but unsaved people. Almost before he had finished his "firstly" the Spirit interfered blessedly with the sermon, stopped it, and fell in torrents on those who heard and believed the Word; and they all - without seeking, or waiting or singing or praying or praising - they all received the Spirit and spoke with other tongues and magnified God. No tarrying meeting there. No going home disappointed. No coming again at some future date to make another sincere attempt to receive. No waiting for the next "waiting meeting". Then twenty years after Pentecost Paul went to a few new converts (twelve men, to say nothing of the women) in Ephesus. He found by direct questioning that they were not yet baptised in the Spirit. Indeed they were totally ignorant of the existence of the Third Person of the Trinity. Paul instructed them, baptised them in water, laid his hands on them, and immediately, without waiting, praying, praising, with no (or little) theological knowledge, even in their ignorance, without exception or disappointment, they all received the Spirit and spoke with other tongues and prophesied. Again no waiting and going home empty and coming again and going away empty; no repeated disappointment and heart-break, no tarrying meeting there. Then Paul himself, ignorant of the things of God, blinded with revelation of his own sinner-hood and Jesus' Saviour-hood, when Ananias according to revelation laid his hands on him, immediately, without struggle or begging or praising,

without tarrying, without disappointment, received the Spirit, unworthy as he was, ignorant as he was, young convert as he was. No tarrying meeting there.

There is absolutely nothing in the scripture one degree like what we call a "waiting meeting" today; where, say, a dozen come to seek the Spirit, and all go away disappointed, to come again by invitation next week to wait and seek, and go away again empty, and so on week after week, month after month, year after year. Neither is there any "tarrying meeting" in the scripture, whereas in our day a dozen stay to seek, where one receives with mighty amaze and acclaim, and where the remaining eleven go home disappointed. In every case in the Scripture where a company sought the Spirit every one received right away, and not one went away disappointed. If we taught this today, our own precious, patient and obedient people would also receive in the same way, and rejoice, not in a waiting meeting (a disappointment meeting) but in a glorious baptism the very first time they sought, as the hands of believers with faith for that kind of ministry, were laid on them. I repeat what I have often said before—in every case except the two spontaneous outpourings of the Spirit, on the Jews at Jerusalem, and on the Gentiles at Caesarea, everybody who ever received the Spirit received at once in this way as hands were laid on them. So it was at Samaria. So it was at Ephesus. So it was in Paul's case. So it would and should be today if we taught our people that way. They would again expect to receive that way, instead of by an interminable system of "trial and error", seeking and not finding, coming and going, going away again empty. Our people are delightfully responsive. They believe what we tell them. So they ought, if we are oracular ministers of the Word. If we tell them to wait they will wait. But why not be scriptural and tell them to receive—and expect them to receive? Why not as the Lord told them, tell them to come to Him and Drink—not wait, tarry, pray, shout, sweat, praise, prostrate, and go away empty.

Come and "drink", you thirsty souls. Not come to try to drink, and go away thirsty still, to try again on some future occasion or occasions, and still remain unsatisfied. Oh Lord, how good are Thy dear people! How lovely and obedient and long-suffering and patient. But Lord, how thirsty they are, and how my heart longs to see them drink at once and go away drenched and glowing and delighted! How many hundreds have I seen filled in this way in one minute, just sitting on their seats as on the Day of Pentecost, where the "Holy Ghost filled all the house where they were sitting!" (Even kneeling makes us no holier or readier or more scriptural). But how many more hundreds have I seen go broken-hearted away from "waiting meetings" with nothing but an indescribable ache and an empty heart! Really now, you dearly beloved brethren, who have for years been challenging this scriptural teaching—with great sincerity I am sure—but really, brethren, can you find one vestige of Scripture for all this interminable seeking and failing and tarrying and getting nowhere? Can you find one verse anywhere that gives the slightest encouragement for this endless discouragement. The only scripture I have ever heard anybody adduce for this tarrying is the one already discussed, where the Lord commanded those before Pentecost to tarry—not for the baptism, but for the coming of the Comforter. I am aware that Luke's gospel records that "they were continually in the temple praising and blessing God." Which means they were occupying with praises the interval between the ascension of the Lord and the descent of the Holy Ghost. When He descended, their praises were caught up immediately in other tongues, blessedly indicating that at once they had received Him in His fullness. Their pre-Pentecostal praises were not a price paid but a holy beguiling of a dry interval.

Not one after Pentecost was ever invited or expected to tarry or praise or sing or even pray for the baptism, or the coming of the Comforter. The Comforter has been here now on earth for nearly

2,000 years. No need to tarry any more then. The room where you now sit reading this article (if I am fortunate enough to have held your attention for a few moments) is just as full of the Holy Ghost as the Upper Room was on the Day of Pentecost. We really have no need to ask or sing or beg that the Lord will send the "power just now." The power has been here and has never left the earth for one moment for the last twenty centuries! Believe it. Even our hymns, if we are not careful, can lead us into unbelief. Better no more sing: "Send the power!" Better sing: "O Lord, here's the power just now." Better not sing, "Thy floodgates of mercy on us throw open wide." Better sing, "Thy floodgates of mercy are now thrown open wide!" Jesus said, "Come, drink!" When you drink, how long does it take you? How long do you pray or praise or shout or sweat before you drink? Praising is good spiritual exercise; so is singing choruses—but they are not "drinking" nor receiving the Spirit. In any case, before you can receive the Spirit and speak with other tongues you will have to stop both praising and singing. Try to "drink" while praising or singing, and see how difficult it is! Jesus said, "Drink". That is about the last thing thirsty seekers will do. They will do anything but that. There is not even any need to turn on the "water" these days; for the Fountain has been turned on, the Source has been springing for nineteen centuries. All that the thirsty have to do is to come to Jesus the Fountain, and Drink. That is absolutely all he has to do. Anything other than this is really unbelief and good works—ritual. Praying and fasting are good (within reason—repeat within reason), but even those are not drinking nor receiving the Spirit. We cannot buy the baptism with prayer and fasting or praising or sweating or perseverance. The Spirit is a Gift. "You shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." "How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him." "The Holy Ghost, whom God has given to them that obey Him." What is obedience here? Just doing what He asks us to do - Drink, and nothing else. Doing anything for the



baptism is trying to purchase the gift of God like Simon. The only difference being that he wanted to pay cash and we seek to pay good works.

If you open your being now with strong desire and simple faith you can receive as you read this message. Circumstances make absolutely no difference. Place and time are no object. Just where you are, God the Holy Ghost is. Drink in now. By an act of simple faith breathe in the Holy Spirit, the Breath of God, and an utterance will be given you at once, which, if you are simple in faith and prompt in courage you can speak out at once - now. If you can drink water now, you can drink of the Spirit now, as Jesus tells you. When you want a drink you do not pray to the Tap. You do not call on the Water Board to see if this is the right occasion for a drink. You do not even consult your receipt file to see if you have paid your water rate up to date. When you are thirsty, all you do is drink. That is all Jesus asks you to do. Then Drink!

Why should some good Pentecostal leaders feel that a baptism that is easy is not genuine? Is not salvation easy? Could it be easier? How long did you pray to be saved? How many times did you ask to be saved without receiving salvation? How many songs did you sing, fasts did you make, tarryings did you observe before you were saved? Do you expect those who desire salvation to come and come again to meetings to try to be saved, and go home unsuccessful and come another night, in the hope that an unwilling God might then be more propitious? "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink" - of salvation or the Spirit. Jesus paid it all. There is absolutely nothing for me to do but to drink of what He in mercy offers. It is mischievous teaching that the baptism in the Spirit is the end of tremendous soul travail. That is pride. It is not an end; it is a simple beginning. It is misleading to tell our dear people that the baptism is a prize for arduous seeking or for running a breathless race. It is not a reward; it is a gift. Such

teachers are unconsciously making a virtue out of their unbelief. Why did the children of Israel wander forty years in the wilderness instead of going into Canaan by the direct route in eleven days? Because of unbelief and ignorance. Why should we then instruct our dear seekers after Canaan, the Pentecostal Land, to fail after the same manner of unbelief? I have heard some employ a cynical word in reference to this direct route. They say that those who teach seekers the scriptural way of drinking at once of the Spirit, are "railroading" them into the baptism! This is designed to be a squelching indictment. Railroading? Well. Do we not try as hard as we can to "railroad" sinners into salvation? How often do we tell sinners to come and seek before they are worthy of salvation? And do we not unblushingly attempt to "railroad" the sick into healing? And did not Jesus do the same thing—and the apostles also? How long did it take Peter's wife's mother to be healed? Or the leper? How many waiting meetings did the woman bent double or the paralytic attend before they were worthy to receive healing? Is not "railroading" more scriptural than globe-trotting? Like the Israelites' forty-year detour in the wilderness before they entered the Land they might have entered at once. Why should we lead our lovely seekers all through legal sand and ritualistic barrenness, emptying, stripping, surrendering, before we encourage them to take the plunge into Jordan and enter the Land? Is not this programme of struggling and seeking and missing a new ritual we have invented, a ritual that certainly is not in the Word of God? That journey of the Israelites through the wilderness was not a pilgrimage; it was a gigantic digression - a digression that the Lord did not want at all. Would it not have been good if someone had encouraged them to get into Canaan the direct way? Then is it not good to have those today who are encouraging seekers to get into the Holy Ghost land by the direct route? "Railroading!" Yes. If I could I would not only "railroad" them into heavenly blessing; I would "Spitfire", "jet-plane" them into the glorious experience of

the Holy Spirit! And so would God - if He could.

Of course I agree that you learn many lessons as you wait before God. But you will find afterwards that the chief lesson you learned that way (by waiting), so far as the baptism is concerned, is that you need not have waited at all! I have actually heard brethren say (in defence of their repeated unscriptural waitings for the baptism) that all the blessings in "waiting meetings" happen "after midnight!" Why do the blessings happen only after midnight? Because no blessing is expected before midnight. Why not elevate faith to the point where we expect the blessing immediately we seek it? "For everyone that seeks finds." "Everyone that asks receives." Why not I say advance faith to the point where we receive at once? If God says to us "be filled with the Spirit", He certainly does not wish us to wait until He fills us. If God had said to us "Be filled with bread or wine or milk" He would expect us to take Him at His word and be filled with bread or wine or milk by our own personal act of grasping faith. When God says, "Be filled with the Spirit", He expects us to reach out and be filled by our own voluntary act. In this matter of the baptism we are not waiting for God: God is waiting for us; waiting for us really to believe that He invites us to drink, and to bring ourselves to the point where we actually drink and are thus filled. That is well beyond the tarrying point.

Another mischievous warning, with no sort of scriptural warrant, is that which cautions seekers against "getting in the flesh." What exactly do our friends mean when they say this? And where in the Bible is this warning found concerning the baptism in the Spirit? And who in any case is clever enough to know what is in the flesh and what is not? In the flesh? Whatever sort of a baptism is it that we get if it is not "in the flesh?" How can we speak either in tongues or in English, except in the flesh? Is not our very agent of speech made of solid flesh? Did not God promise that He would pour out His Spirit "upon all *flesh*?" The Holy Spirit did not come

to fill a lot of mystic hearts and minds and spirits and ghosts and phantoms and spectres. He came to fill our flesh. "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost?" That is your flesh body. "Out of his belly", said Jesus (literally his physical cavity holding his lower organs) "shall flow rivers of living water." Of course the heart and mind and spirit get their portion of the Spirit as an overflow from the body of flesh. It would be good if our pastors ceased doing the enemy's work by intimidating seekers with this entirely non-scriptural warning. In the flesh! Thank God that when I am under a mighty anointing (and I always ought to be) my very flesh trembles and thrills with the power of the Spirit. So does yours—if you are filled with the Spirit. Thank God that when I speak with tongues, or preach in English, it is my flesh that speaks, my flesh filled with the Spirit. How could you speak without your flesh? Try it. God has so transformed the fleshly body that sinned against Him that He has filled it all with His divine Spirit. He has so transfigured the fleshly tongue that once, maybe, blasphemed His Name, that now that flesh organ blesses Him in other tongues. Fear not, beloved seekers, this popular caution concerning the flesh. Let your "heart and your flesh cry too for the living God." The Psalmist said his mouth (flesh) should praise God with joyful lips (flesh). How can you praise God in the spirit unless you praise Him also with your flesh? Try it.

When Joshua at last crossed the Jordan with the host of Israel (wonderful type of coming out of wilderness barrenness into Holy Ghost liberty and fruitfulness) I say, when Joshua crossed into Canaan he did not walk into Jordan with the feet of his spirit or the legs of his mind. He walked into Jordan with his feet of flesh, propelled by his legs of flesh. It was not his spirit nor his soul nor his mind that felt the water of Jordan, but his actual feet and legs of flesh. It was his flesh that trembled and thrilled with the touch of the blessed River. Would it not be good if we heard the last of this

misleading talk of "the flesh?" When the Lord filled me with His Spirit, the whole of my 160 lbs. of flesh trembled and responded to the mighty divine infilling. Your body of flesh is the repository of the Holy Spirit. "Upon all flesh!" Fear not. On the contrary rejoice in great confidence if you find yourself in the flesh praising God in the Spirit, and thrilling with His divine presence. This is actually the correct and entirely scriptural reaction to the coming of the Third Person of the Trinity.

"Receive the Holy Ghost", said Jesus. "Which they that believe on Him should receive." Receive - not tarry. If we tarry for twenty years we are not tarrying for the Spirit to come, for He is here long ago. We are tarrying only for faith. Then why not begin with faith? Fear is the principal obstacle to receiving. Fear of doing something ourselves ! That is just what Jesus expects us to do. "Let him come and drink." That is what Joshua did (under another type). He actually picked up his own feet of flesh and put them in the tide, ready to drown on the command and the promise of God. He took the first steps, by self-volition and self-propulsion, fearlessly. He did not open the waters; God did that. But the miracle did not occur until he had taken those first deliberate steps. That is what they actually did on the Day of Pentecost. "They began - they began - they began to speak, as the Spirit gave them utterance." God has given "utterance" many years ago to thousands of disappointed seekers, but they have failed to recognise it. That is why they are still disappointed. Intimidated by suggestions of the enemy, they fail to "speak" the "utterance" they have long ago been "given" by the Spirit. Beloved seeker! God met you the very first time you earnestly sought Him. He gave you the gift you sought and the utterance to ratify and evidence it. But through fear or unbelief or ignorance (all of the adversary) you did not believe it. Therefore you are now seeking and seeking and seeking what God gave you months, maybe even years ago. He is waiting for you to

He gave you the first time you came to Him and asked Him. "These signs shall follow them that believe: in my Name they shall speak with new tongues." The moment you "believe" you "speak". If you do not "speak" it is because you have not yet really believed. "The Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive." See the associated words? Believe - Receive. That is all. When you believe you receive. When you receive, and then only, you have the sign that you have believed. One is the positive and indispensable counterpart of the other. Believing could not possibly go without receiving, If you have not received it is because you have not believed you have received (Mark 11:24). Try that logic out on salvation. Were you not saved as soon as you really believed? Until you were saved you had not really believed. Believing is salvation (Rom.4:3). Believing is receiving. Waiting is unbelief. Struggling is unbelief. Either for salvation or the baptism. Believing is receiving. God has nothing left to do to save you. He has finished the work long ago. It is up to you now to receive that finished salvation. So with the Spirit. God has nothing to do that He has not already done. He hath shed forth the Spirit long ago. It is up to you now to come and drink; that is, to lift your faith high and fill at the open Fountain.

The enemy will challenge that, both the statement and the experience. He will bring up all his troops. Run through them. He will erect his wall. Leap over it. Deliberately drink. That is exactly what the Lord expects you to do. Come to Him; resist every discouragement; and help yourself. Drink. Drink. Drink. "Let him that is athirst come." Let him take. Take freely. No payment of works or waiting or praying. Take. Drink. Receive. Speak. That is all. "I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak." Take, without money and without price. Take violently as Jesus said "The kingdom of heaven is gotten by force (margin) and the violent take it by force" (Matt.11:12). The

kingdom will not leap into your lap. The Spirit will not jump down your throat and move your tongue. You must drink of the Spirit and move your own tongue. That is faith - the opposite of fear. Fear that has kept you out of your inheritance all this time. Leap in now. Violently seize. True courtesy in the kingdom of God is not standing (as it were) cap in hand, apologising for your unworthiness or lack of faith or understanding. True courtesy is leaping in now and seizing the blessing God offers you. "Let him come to me and drink." Drink now. That is blessed politeness. That is true courtesy. That is heavenly etiquette. That is not presumption; it is blessed faith. God loves that. Do that now and you will find yourself filled with glory, speaking a language you never learned - the language that betokens the entry of the Comforter, the Holy Ghost.

The one condition, then, is faith. Come. Drink. But an imperative pre-requisite is thirst. "If any man thirst." Obviously no man will drink if he is not thirsty. No one will receive the Spirit unless he is obsessed with an overmastering and passionate longing for the Spirit; a parching thirst that drives you to the Fountain, as the burning need of a thirsty hart drives it to the water courses. God does not secretly, surreptitiously, from behind, press the Spirit upon the half-hearted. "He fills the hungry soul with goodness." "He pours floods upon the dry ground." "He satisfies the longing soul." You must seek the Lord in earnest that He may grant you an irresistible thirst. Even then, if you are fearful, you will still fail to drink. In humility you must seek that perfect love that casts out fear. Then you must lay aside any pre-conceived theological ideas that may hinder; and finally you must by grace seize present active faith - and drink.

But this is not tarrying for the baptism. It is just logically adjusting your soul to the necessary and required conditions. First thirst. Then believe. Then drink. That is all. If you believe promptly, you

will receive promptly. Then, when you have received the glorious and mighty and ecstatic Spirit of God - tarry and tarry and tarry, and drink and drink and drink, as often and as long as you like, for other matters concerning your soul and the kingdom. Seek and seek and seek faith and more faith and further faith. Then press in triumphantly and possess all your Pentecostal possessions, and inherit all those other spiritual blessings with which also you have already been blessed in heavenly places in Christ.



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