SEMINAR 3
The New Life

GOAL

To witness to the fact that the good news is indeed good news, to let the people know that a new life is available through (a fuller) reception of the Holy Spirit, to help them to see that this new life centers in an experiential relationship with the Lord.

“I came so that they may have life and have it abundantly” (Jn.10:10)

The third seminar is a very personal seminar. It is the seminar in which we center on the new life that each person can have. It is the seminar in which we explain to people what it means to be baptized in the Spirit. It is probably here that the most people turn to Christ in a new way, because they can see in concrete terms the kind of personal changes that are being offered to them.

The heart of this seminar is the personal testimony. The speaker should make the bulk of his presentation a personal testimony of how he came to be baptized in the Spirit and the difference it made in his life. The personal testimony can make a powerful change in people’s attitudes. It can also be the most effective teaching method. People can receive a lot of theory about what it means to be baptized in the Spirit, but when they can hear a story of what happened to someone when he was baptized in the Spirit, they really begin to understand what the baptism in the Spirit is.

The Third Seminar

A. The Talk

1. The Father wants all men to have new life. He sent his son Jesus into the world so that we could be given the source of new life, the Holy Spirit.

2. When the Holy Spirit comes to a person, he becomes a changed man; he is given the power to know God and to live a new life. (Include personal testimony here.)

3. Full life in the Spirit begins when we are baptized in the Spirit.

4. Baptism in the Spirit is only the beginning of a new life. Inform them about being prayed with in two weeks and about meeting with their discussion leader to talk about it during the week before they are prayed with.
SEMINAR 3
Expanded Outline of the Presentation

I. The Father wants all men to have new life. He sent his son Jesus into the world so that we could be given the source of new life, the Holy Spirit.

A. Often the Christianity which we have come in contact with has not been spiritually alive, but today God is renewing his Church by a fresh outpouring of his Spirit.

B. The Father wants all men to have new life in him.

C. The Father sent his Son into the world to bring us new life:
   1. Jesus is Lord; if we accept his lordship, we can experience a new freedom and a new life.
   2. In him all our sins can be forgiven (no matter what we have done), and every barrier between us and the Father can be taken away.
   3. After Jesus rose from the dead and ascended to the Father, he sent the Holy Spirit to bring us new life (Acts 1:1-5).

II. When the Holy Spirit comes to someone, he becomes a changed man (Acts 2 or Acts 19:1-7).

A. He comes to know God by experience:
   — he comes to know God as his Father who loves him and cares for him
   — he experiences God’s love and presence in a new way
   — he experiences God speaking in his heart, teaching him, guiding him
   — he comes to know Jesus as his Lord
   — the lordship of Jesus begins to be the basic principle for his way of life

B. He can pray in a new way:
   — his prayer becomes more centered on God less on himself
   — his prayer is more often prayer of praise and thanksgiving
   — he discovers that he can pray in tongues; the gift of tongues is:
     — a means of spiritual growth
     — prayer the Spirit inspires within us to praise God
     — prayer the Spirit inspires within us when we cannot pray adequately

C. The Bible comes to life.

D. The fruit of the Spirit develops within him (love, joy, peace, etc.—Gal 5).

E. He can receive the gifts of the Spirit to serve God (prophecy, healing, discernment of spirits, inspirations to speak—1 Cor. 1 2).
Ill. Full life in the Spirit begins when we are baptized in the Spirit.

A. When we are baptized in the Spirit, the Holy Spirit comes to us in such a way that we can experience his presence and see it change us.
   — for many of us, this will not be our first reception of the Holy Spirit, but the release of his power that already is within us.

B. Different people see different changes happen to them as a result of being baptized in the Spirit:

1. Those who have not been Christians will be given a full working of the Spirit, those who have already experienced something of the Spirit’s presence in their lives can receive all that is lacking. Everyone can experience a new presence and working of the Spirit.

2. Those of us who have been Christians will see that our years of Christian living have provided us with many resources that will be brought to life by the new presence of the Spirit in us.

No Christian should lack contact with God or be powerless as a Christian.
   — everyone, even beginners in the Christian life, can be baptized in the Spirit.

IV. Baptism in the Spirit is only the beginning of a new life.
A. With the help of committed Christians as our brothers and sisters, we can grow to spiritual maturity.

B. We can develop a daily communion and friendship with Christ.

C. We can experience a new peace and joy, see ourselves being healed, becoming loving people.

D. We can develop better relationships.

COMMENTS ON THE PRESENTATION
(Explaining baptism in the Spirit)

Controversy can be completely avoided if we explain things in the right way. This talk tries to explain what it means to be baptized in the Spirit. The approach we used centers on a few principles.

1) Talk mainly about the Holy Spirit himself and what he does in the life of believers If people can see what is promised in the gift of the Spirit, they will discover for themselves if there is anything missing in their lives If they see something is missing, they will be ready for a change. What they call that change is secondary (baptism in the Spirit is a good name for it, release of the Spirit is fine).
2) Use personal testimony. Explain what has happened to normal contemporary human beings. If people can see that something has happened to people like themselves that has not happened to them, they will begin to develop a hunger to have the same thing themselves.

3) Never say that a Christian does not have the Holy Spirit, nor that he did not receive the Holy Spirit either when he believed or when he was baptized. Let each person sort out his own Christian past for himself.

4) Since the seminar may contain some people who have not been Christians before, and some who have been excellent Christians before, we should keep in mind that for some, the fifth week of the Life in the Spirit Seminars may be their first reception of the Spirit and for some it may be the release of what was already in them. We should speak about being baptized in the Spirit in a way that applies to both groups.

5) The approach we are taking in the seminars allows us to pass through the “doctrine curtain” to reach the heart. That is not to say that there will not be some people who will need to understand things in a more doctrinal way. Those people we can help outside the seminar by explaining things more fully to them or by giving them the right books to read.

The way we talk about being baptized in the Spirit can make a big difference in how people approach it. Emphasize the following:

- It is a special experience that we can “get”. Or we can talk about people who “got it” and people who have not yet “got it”.
- We should center our concern upon the Holy Spirit and upon the new life can have through a new relationship with him.
- Being baptized in the Spirit only means being introduced to an experiential relationship with the Holy Spirit. It is meant to be the beginning of a new kind of life lived in a fuller power of God. Someone who has been baptized in the Spirit and who does not go on to live in the Spirit is probably not much better off than someone who has not been baptized in the Spirit and does not live in the Spirit.
- Living in the Spirit has to be the center of our concern, not being baptized in the Spirit. In order to avoid thinking of being baptized in the Spirit as an “it,” a thing in itself, it is better to avoid using the phrase “the baptism in the Spirit.” It is better to speak of being baptized in the Spirit. We do not receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit (scripture never speaks that way). We enter into a new relationship with the Holy Spirit. We do not get a thing called the baptism in the Spirit that we get to keep all our lives.
- When we are baptized in the Spirit we do not “get” anything. Rather we enter into a new relationship with the Spirit of God.

(I) The first section of the talk is meant to be a introduction. Its purpose is to recall the offer of new life that has been spoken about before in the seminars and to connect that offer of new life with the Holy Spirit. We have new life because the Holy Spirit is given to us. The purpose of the introduction is also to recall that it is Jesus who gives us this new life. Jesus is the baptizer in the Holy Spirit. He makes it all possible.
(II) Section II is meant to be the outline for a personal testimony. In it the speaker shares what has happened to him. In the course of the sharing, he can mention how items A-F happened to him.

There are a number of passages in scripture which can be used to introduce the section on what happens to a person when he is baptized in the Spirit. Acts 2, Acts 8, Acts 10-11, and Acts 19 all contain scenes in which people receive the Spirit. Whatever passages are used, the speaker should emphasize one thing: it is the real change that takes place in a person that is the convincing sign that the Holy Spirit is doing something new in him. Such changes are usually such that other people can see that something new is going on in that person’s life, and that he is really different. It should not be just a secret, invisible change that no one (the man himself included) knows has happened. The speaker should avoid saying that just because a person has no way of establishing such a statement. All we should say is that when the changes are the kind of things we would expect God to do, we can rightly conclude that the Holy Spirit is present and working in that person in a new way.

Acts 19:1-7 is a particularly good passage to use. Paul comes to Ephesus and there meets a group of “disciples”. He apparently thinks they are Christians, but he senses that there is something wrong. So he asks a question, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?” For us, that would be a strange question to ask. Few of us would think of asking whether a person had received the Holy Spirit when he believed if we saw something missing in his Christian life. And if we were asked such a question before being baptized in the Spirit, many of us would not know how to answer. If we had been asked if we had received the Holy Spirit, we would not have known how to tell. And yet Paul apparently expected every Christian to know that they had received the Holy Spirit. He expected a yes or no answer. With the group of disciples in Acts 19, it turned out that his suspicions were confirmed. They had only received the baptism of John the Baptist and had not been instructed as Christians. Paul completed their initiation into Christ and when he laid hands on them for the Holy Spirit something happened to them. They spoke in tongues and prophesied.

(II.C) The main presentation of the gift of tongues should be in the form of a personal testimony. Tongue should be explained as a gift of prayer, usually a gift of praise. Tongues can also be used with interpretation to build up a group of Christians, but we do not want to go into that too much here. What is important for people to understand at this point in the seminar is that tongues can be a great help to their prayer life. Moreover, a short description of what it is like to pray in tongues is very valuable to people at this point.

(II F) This is the only place in the seminars where the spiritual gifts are spoken about. The presentation could be longer or shorter depending on the need of the people. If we make the presentation short, we will definitely want to recommend reading at the end.

(III) We want to say something simple in this section. We want to say that there is a life in the Spirit which can be experienced, which we can see concrete results from. What happened to the early Christians and what happened to the speaker can happen to us. This life in the Spirit begins
when we are baptized in the Spirit, when a change is made in our relationship with the Holy Spirit such that we can begin to experience his presence in a new way. Different Christian are at different points in their relationship with the Holy Spirit. Some have already experienced some of the thing which happened to the speaker, but everyone can expect that all the things which come from being baptized in the Spirit (A-F) and are not now part of their lives will become a part of their lives.

(IV) The last section is meant to emphasize the idea that baptism in the Spirit is not an end in itself. It is meant to be the beginning of a new life in the Spirit. We will need help for this new life. We will need to go on, and going on will not be automatic, but it can happen if we want it to.

HELPFUL MATERIALS:

Clark’s *Baptized in the Spirit and Spiritual Gifts* is in clearing up questions about what it means to be baptized in the Spirit. Gee’s *Concerning Spiritual Gifts* and Christenson’s *Speaking in Tongues* are helpful for questions in the area of speaking in tongues and spiritual gifts.