

POSITION PAPER

The Baptism of the Holy Spirit

Introduction

The ministry of the Holy Spirit stands at the very heart of Christian life, discipleship, mission, worship, sanctification, and the life of the Church. From Genesis to Revelation, Scripture reveals the Spirit of God as active in creation, revelation, empowerment, prophetic ministry, regeneration, sanctification, and the advancement of God's redemptive purposes in the earth.

At Church Xtended, we believe the Holy Spirit is not peripheral to the Christian life, but essential to it.

The Church cannot fulfil its divine mandate through human wisdom, natural ability, organisational strength, emotional enthusiasm, or intellectual effort alone. The Church requires the presence, power, guidance, and continual work of the Holy Spirit.

This position paper outlines Church Xtended's theological convictions concerning the person and work of the Holy Spirit, the baptism of the Holy Spirit, spiritual gifts, Spirit-empowered ministry, biblical order, and the ongoing ministry of the Spirit within the contemporary Church.

The Personhood and Deity of the Holy Spirit

Church Xtended affirms the full deity and personhood of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is not an impersonal force, symbolic influence, emotional atmosphere, or abstract spiritual energy. He is the third Person of the Trinity, fully God, co-equal and co-eternal with the Father and the Son.

Scripture consistently attributes divine qualities and personal characteristics to the Holy Spirit. The Spirit speaks, teaches, intercedes, leads, convicts, empowers, grieves, reveals, and sanctifies.

In Acts 5:3-4, Peter equates lying to the Holy Spirit with lying to God Himself. Likewise, Jesus refers to the Spirit as “He,” emphasising His personhood and relational nature.

The Holy Spirit therefore must not be reduced to emotional experiences, mystical abstractions, or merely functional ministry power. He is God Himself actively present and working among His people.

The Holy Spirit in Redemptive History

The work of the Holy Spirit is woven throughout the entirety of Scripture.

In creation, the Spirit of God hovered over the waters. Throughout the Old Testament, the Spirit empowered prophets, priests, kings, craftsmen, judges, and leaders for specific assignments.

However, the prophets also anticipated a future outpouring of the Spirit that would extend beyond selective empowerment into covenantal indwelling and widespread spiritual renewal.

Joel 2:28-29 prophesied:

“And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh.”

Ezekiel 36:26-27 likewise promised:

“I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes.”

These prophetic promises find fulfilment in the New Covenant inaugurated through Jesus Christ.

The coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost was therefore not an isolated spiritual event, but the continuation and fulfilment of God’s redemptive purposes in Christ.

The Promise of the Father

Jesus consistently emphasised the necessity of the Holy Spirit for the life and mission of believers.

Before His ascension, Christ instructed His disciples not to begin ministry prematurely, but to wait for “the Promise of the Father.”

Acts 1:8 states:

“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me.”

The outpouring of the Spirit in Acts 2 therefore marks the empowerment of the Church for witness, mission, proclamation, discipleship, and Kingdom ministry.

Pentecost was not merely a historical moment to be admired, but a theological reality establishing the Spirit-empowered nature of New Testament Christianity.

Church Xtended therefore rejects any theological framework that limits the ministry of the Holy Spirit to the apostolic era alone.

Regeneration and the Indwelling Spirit

Church Xtended believes every genuine believer receives the Holy Spirit at salvation.

Salvation is impossible apart from the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit. Through the Spirit, sinners are convicted of sin, brought to repentance, made spiritually alive in Christ, and adopted into the family of God.

Romans 8:9 teaches:

“Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.”

The Holy Spirit therefore indwells every believer as the seal of redemption and the guarantee of salvation.

This indwelling work produces:

- spiritual transformation;
- conviction of sin;
- growth in holiness;
- intimacy with God;
- assurance of salvation;
- and increasing conformity to Christ.

Church Xtended rejects any suggestion that a believer can be genuinely united to Christ while completely devoid of the Holy Spirit's indwelling presence.

The Baptism of the Holy Spirit

While affirming the Spirit's indwelling at salvation, Church Xtended also recognises Scripture's teaching regarding the empowering work commonly referred to as the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Throughout the book of Acts, believers repeatedly experience distinct moments of Spirit empowerment for witness, boldness, ministry, prayer, prophetic utterance, and supernatural ministry.

This empowerment should not be understood as an optional spiritual elite experience reserved for a select few, but as part of God's gracious provision for the life and mission of the Church.

The purpose of Spirit baptism is not self-exaltation, spiritual superiority, emotional spectacle, or mystical status. Rather, it is empowerment for Christ-centred witness and ministry.

At Church Xtended, we therefore encourage believers to pursue continual fullness of the Spirit through prayer, surrender, worship, obedience, and intimacy with God.

Spiritual Gifts and Their Purpose

Church Xtended believes the spiritual gifts described in the New Testament remain active and available today.

The gifts of the Spirit are expressions of God's grace distributed by the Holy Spirit for the edification of the Church and the advancement of the Gospel.

These gifts include:

- prophecy;
- tongues;
- interpretation of tongues;
- healing;
- miracles;
- discernment;

- words of wisdom;
- words of knowledge;
- faith;
- and other Spirit-enabled expressions of ministry.

We reject cessationism, the theological belief that supernatural spiritual gifts ceased with the apostolic era.

At the same time, we reject sensationalism, emotional manipulation, theatrical spirituality, and unbiblical expressions that distort or misuse spiritual gifts.

The gifts of the Spirit must always operate:

- under the authority of Scripture;
- with humility;
- in love;
- with accountability;
- and for the glory of Christ.

The Spirit never draws attention ultimately to human personalities, but to Jesus Christ.

Tongues and Initial Evidence

Church Xtended recognises the biblical reality of speaking in tongues as a valid New Testament spiritual gift.

We affirm that tongues may function:

- devotionally;
- prophetically when interpreted;
- and as part of Spirit-empowered prayer.

However, while many believers historically and experientially associate tongues with Spirit baptism, Church Xtended does not elevate any single manifestation as the sole definitive evidence of spiritual maturity or God's work in a believer's life.

The ultimate evidence of the Spirit's work is transformed Christlike living manifested through both the fruit of the Spirit and Spirit-empowered ministry.

The Fruit of the Spirit and Sanctification

Church Xtended believes the ministry of the Holy Spirit extends beyond spiritual gifts into the lifelong work of sanctification.

The Spirit transforms believers progressively into the image of Christ.

Galatians 5 describes the fruit of the Spirit as:

- love;
- joy;
- peace;
- patience;
- kindness;
- goodness;
- faithfulness;
- gentleness;
- and self-control.

Spiritual maturity therefore cannot be measured merely by charismatic experience, supernatural manifestation, or ministry gifting.

True spirituality includes:

- holiness;
- humility;
- obedience;
- love;
- doctrinal faithfulness;
- and increasing conformity to Christ.

Church Xtended therefore rejects forms of spirituality that celebrate power while neglecting character.

Order, Discernment, and Accountability

Scripture teaches that spiritual ministry must operate within biblical order.

The Apostle Paul repeatedly instructed the Corinthian church regarding orderly worship, discernment, and accountability in spiritual gatherings.

Church Xtended believes:

- spiritual experiences must be tested against Scripture;
- prophecy must be weighed;

- leadership must exercise discernment;
- and spiritual ministry must edify the Church.

We reject:

- manipulation;
- coercive prophecy;
- spiritual intimidation;
- performative spirituality;
- financial exploitation through spiritual claims;
- and emotionally driven excess detached from biblical truth.

The Holy Spirit glorifies Christ, produces order rather than confusion, and works in harmony with the Word of God.

The Holy Spirit and Mission

The empowering ministry of the Holy Spirit is inseparable from the mission of the Church.

The Spirit empowers believers to:

- proclaim the Gospel boldly;
- demonstrate God's compassion;
- minister effectively;
- pray fervently;
- endure persecution;
- and advance the Kingdom of God.

Church Xtended therefore understands Spirit-filled ministry not merely as internal church experience, but as empowerment for witness and mission in the world.

The Spirit-filled Church must ultimately become a Gospel-centred, Christ-exalting, mission-driven community.

Church Xtended's Position

Church Xtended believes:

- the Holy Spirit is fully God and fully personal;
- every believer receives the Holy Spirit at salvation;

- the baptism and ongoing filling of the Holy Spirit remain available today;
- spiritual gifts continue to operate within the Church;
- the gifts of the Spirit must function under biblical order and accountability;
- spiritual maturity includes both the fruit and gifts of the Spirit;
- the Holy Spirit empowers believers for holiness, witness, ministry, and mission.

We are committed to pursuing the presence and power of the Holy Spirit in a biblically grounded, Christ-centred, and spiritually healthy manner.

Conclusion

The Holy Spirit is not an optional addition to Christian life. He is essential to salvation, sanctification, worship, discipleship, mission, and the life of the Church.

Without the Holy Spirit, the Church becomes powerless religion, organisational activity, and human effort. But through the Spirit, believers are transformed into the likeness of Christ and empowered to advance the Gospel with boldness and grace.

At Church Xtended, we desire to cultivate a Spirit-filled church marked by:

- biblical truth;
- spiritual maturity;
- Christlike character;
- authentic worship;
- supernatural ministry;
- and faithful Gospel witness.

Our desire is not merely spiritual activity, but genuine transformation into the image of Jesus Christ through the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit.
