

C. H. MASON

PILGRIMAGE TO PENTECOST

**A Guidebook to the Church Of God In Christ's
50 Day Consecration**



**Bishop Charles E. Blake, Sr.
Presiding Bishop and Chief Apostle**

Consecration Dates
(Resurrection Sunday – Pentecost Sunday)

“And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” (Acts 2:4)

By, Dr. Elijah H. Hankerson III
President, International Department of Evangelism

Contents

1.	Presiding Bishop Blake on the Holy Ghost.....	3
2.	What are We Praying About the Next 50 Days?.....	5
3.	The Day of Pentecost.....	8
4.	How Will This Pilgrimage Benefit Me?.....	9
5.	We Need Your Help.....	10
6.	Day of Pentecost Suggested Order of Service.....	12
7.	Pray is More Effective When We Fast.....	15
8.	Bishop Mason’s Testimony.....	17
9.	The Founder’s Teaching on the Holy Ghost.....	19
10.	What We Believe About the Holy Ghost.....	21
11.	Acts 2:4 In Different Versions.....	22
12.	Answers to Critics of Tongues.....	23
13.	Facts About the Baptism of the Holy Ghost.....	24
14.	How to Receive the Gift of the Holy Ghost.....	26
15.	Bibliography.....	28

PRESIDING BISHOP BLAKE ON THE HOLY GHOST¹

One of the concerns of our leader, Presiding Bishop Charles E. Blake, Sr., has always been the local church. He feels that in order for the organization of the Church Of God In Christ to be strong; you must have vibrant local churches.

Through ministries like COGIC Urban Initiatives, Inc., Evangelism, Missions and Education, our leader encourages clergy members and churches to expand their thinking to the scope of taking nations for Jesus Christ!

Isaiah 54:2-3 (New King James Version NKJV)²

²“Enlarge the place of your tent, and let them stretch out the curtains of your dwellings; Do not spare; Lengthen your cords, and strengthen your stakes. ³ For you shall expand to the right and to the left, and your descendants will inherit the nations, and make the desolate cities inhabited.

The Presiding Bishop feels that we cannot take nations in our own strength. We must be empowered by the Spirit of the Lord. We must all experience the Baptism of the Holy Ghost. Speaking under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, here are Bishop Blake’s own words:

This is still a Pentecostal church. God is still baptizing with the Holy Ghost and with fire! God is still working miracles.

You need the Baptism in the Holy Ghost. Jesus said, “He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water” (John 7:38).

John said, “(But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified)” (John 7:39). Jesus is now glorified! And, the Holy Ghost is here RIGHT NOW! And you can have the power of the Holy Ghost.

Jesus said, “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth” (Acts 1:8). This power is to do God’s will and power to walk in His ways.

To make it quite simple, the purpose of this Pilgrimage to Pentecost, described in this guidebook, is for (1) every member of the Church Of God In Christ to be filled with

¹ Blake, Presiding Bishop Charles E. n.d.

² Holy Bible. The Open Bible New King James Version. Nelson: Nashville, 2008.

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the Holy Ghost! And, (2) for every member that is already filled, to receive a refilling of the Holy Ghost!

This consecration is to benefit YOU. The dates are: Resurrection Sunday through Pentecost Sunday. We pray that this event impacts your life, and that praying for the empowerment of the Spirit, upgrades from being a 50 day venture to a lifetime endeavor.

What is the 50 days of Prayer?

The 50 days of Prayer was established by Presiding Bishop Charles E. Blake, Sr., for the saints of the Church Of God In Christ to seek the Lord from Easter or Resurrection Sunday through the Day of Pentecost (a period of 50 days).

WHAT ARE WE PRAYING ABOUT THE NEXT 50 DAYS?

Please lift up these 11 petitions before the Lord, for 11 minutes of your prayer time, every day, during the next 50 days. You are not asked to recite or read these off in robotic form. But, please catch the heart and spirit of the request and articulate it to God in the way that He leads you. You will notice that all of the requests are based on the Word of God!

BAPTISM OF THE HOLY GHOST!

Father, Your Word says that we would receive power after the Holy Ghost has come upon us. The Word also says that out of our bellies (innermost being) would flow rivers of living water (John 7:37-39)! Let every member of the Church Of God In Christ receive this experience of being baptized in the Holy Ghost (Acts 1:8)! In Jesus' Name. Amen.

LOVE FOR GOD

Father, Your first commandment is that we love You, with all of our heart, soul and might (Deuteronomy 6:5). You said that if we love you, we would keep your commandments (John 14:15). Help us to be willing and obedient to you (Isaiah 1:19). Let our motive in serving You be loyalty to You and not just how we can benefit from You. As we express our love and devotion to you, help us to love our 'neighbor' as we love ourselves (Mark 12:31). In Jesus' Name. Amen.

HUMILITY

Father, Your Word says that Jesus, Your Son, humbled Himself, even unto death (Philippians 2:8). You also promised that if we humble ourselves you would heal the land and exalt us in due time (1 Peter 5:6). Help us to refrain from one extreme of excessive pride to the other extreme of false humility. Not unto us, O God, but unto Your Name be the glory for the great things you have done, are doing and going to do through the Church Of God In Christ (Psalm 115:1). In Jesus' Name. Amen.

FORGIVENESS

Father, Your Son, Jesus, when He was reviled, reviled not in retaliation (1 Peter 2:23). From the Cross, He said, "Father forgive them... (Luke 23:34)" Your Word also instructs that if we do not forgive, we will not receive forgive us (Mark 11:26). Please forgive us of our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us (Matthew 6:12). We bless our enemies and pray for those who despitefully use us (Matthew 5:44; Romans 12:14). We confess that as much as lies in us (the Holy Ghost), we

will live peaceably with all men; because the Greater One lives in us (Romans 12:18; I John 4:4). In Jesus' Name. Amen.

INNER HEALING

Father, Your Word says that the Spirit of the Lord is upon us to heal the broken hearted (Luke 4:18). We believe and confess that Your Son, Jesus, is the "Balm in Gilead" and the "Great Physician" that can mend the wounded is Spirit (Jeremiah 8:22). Grant beauty for ashes and the oil of joy for mourning to every wounded leader and member of the Church Of God In Christ (Isaiah 61:3). Forgive us, O God, for the wounds we have placed on each other. And, help us to provide spiritual and emotional healing (through the Word of God) to the multitudes that you are ushering into this Your Church Of God In Christ (Psalm 107:20). In Jesus' Name. Amen.

RECONCILIATION

Father, having reconciled us to Yourself, and given to us the ministry of reconciliation, give us the Grace to walk daily in reconciliation with one another, as we serve as Your ambassadors, reconciling the world to you. In Jesus Name, Amen (Matthew 5:23-24; Matthew 6:14-12; Matthew 18: 15-17; Luke 17: 3-4; II Corinthians 5:18-21)

THE BLOOD OF JESUS

Father, we thank you that, according to Revelation 12:11, the blood of Jesus destroys Satan's plans. We plead the blood of Jesus over our lives, our families and our communities. As the blood protected the children of Israel in Egypt (Exodus 12:13), let your blood protect every nation the Church Of God In Christ is planted in from all terror and violence. In Jesus' name, Amen

PRAYER AND FASTING

Father, You promised that you would reward those who seek You in secret (Matthew 6:6). As we recommit ourselves to the practice of fasting and prayer, reward us with Your Presence! Reward us with the more of You! Reward us with a fresh anointing of Your Spirit upon our 12,000 congregations (Psalm 92:10)! Let this be the fast that You have chosen that EVERY yoke is destroyed (Isaiah 58:6). In Jesus' Name. Amen!

REVIVAL

Father, we have the faith to believe that You are going to send revival to our Church and in every nation that we reside in. You promised that in the last days You would pour out of Your Spirit (Acts 2:17). You said there would be signs and wonders (Acts 2:19). But, we know that one of the only ways revival will occur is if we repent and turn from ways not like you. Create within us a clean heart (Psalm 51:10). Wash us. Search us. Cleanse us from unrighteous thoughts, motives, actions and speech. Help us

to truly be holy and sanctified within and without; in public and in private. Help us to be people of integrity in how we conduct ourselves and in how we treat others. Help us to be the ones you are calling for, in these last and evil days. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

REPENTANCE

Father, You promised in Acts 3:19 that if we would repent our sins would be blotted out and times of refreshing would come from your Presence. We are desperate for you! As the deer pants after the water brook our soul pants after You (Psalm 42:1). You are our God, early will we seek you (Psalm 63:1). We long to see Your power and glory in our churches (Psalm 63:2). So please forgive us in any way that we have grieved you or fallen short of your glory (Ephesians 4:30). We confess our sins and we confess that you are faithful and just and we are forgiven (1 John 1:9)! In Jesus' name, Amen.

A PURE HEART

Father, through all of the trouble of terrorism, violence and injustice that is in our world, we pray for peace to abide within the hearts and minds and that you would keep our hearts pure from bitterness, resentment and unforgiveness. Create in us a clean heart and renew a right spirit (Psalm 51:10). Bring forth the ministry of reconciliation in us first and then in our land (2 Corinthians 5:18-5-21). In Jesus' Name, Amen

THE DAY OF PENTECOST

What happened at Pentecost?³

In the Jewish calendar, the day of Pentecost is an annual celebration, also called the Feast of Weeks because it fell 50 days (a “week of weeks”) after Passover (Leviticus 23:15-22). But, for Christians, the festival commemorates the events described in Acts 2:1-41 and specifically Acts 2:1-4:

On the day of Pentecost, Jesus’ disciples were assembled when a sudden sound came from heaven like the rush of a violent wind. “Tongues of fire” appeared, resting on each disciple, and they began to speak (supernaturally) in other languages.

Acts 2:1-4

1 And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

² And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

³ And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.

⁴ And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

People visiting Jerusalem (from all over the world) heard with amazement this group of unschooled Galileans speaking fluently, in various languages. This was the Baptism of the Holy Ghost that Jesus had told his followers to expect!

Luke 24:49

And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.

We are a Holiness/Pentecostal church!⁴

The Church Of God In Christ is a Church of our Lord Jesus Christ where the doctrine of sanctification (or holiness) is emphasized as being essential to the salvation of mankind. Our church is commonly known as being Holiness or Pentecostal in nature because of the importance ascribed to the events which occurred on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2), the 50th day after the Passover (or “Easter” or “Resurrection”) as being necessary for all believers in Christ Jesus to experience.

³ Bell, James Stuart and Stan Campbell. *The Complete Idiot’s Guide to the Bible*. Penguin: New York, 2005.

⁴ Range, C. F. *Official Manual of the Doctrines and Discipline of the Church Of God In Christ*. COGIC Publishing House: Memphis, 1973.

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HOW WILL THIS PILGRIMAGE BENEFIT ME?

What has God given our Presiding Bishop?

This Pilgrimage, of fervently seeking God, from “Resurrection Sunday” to Pentecost was placed upon the heart of our leader, Presiding Bishop Charles E. Blake, Sr., from God for the benefit of every member of the Church Of God In Christ.

The hope and prayer is that (1) every member of the Church Of God In Christ that has not been filled with the gift of the Holy Ghost would be filled, according to Acts 2:4. And, that (2) every believer that is already filled, would receive a “refilling” according to Acts 4:31 and Ephesians 5:18.

It’s possible to be “refilled?”

Certainly! The same believers that received the Baptism of the Holy Ghost in Acts 2:4, later received a renewed experience of being filled in Acts 4:31.

Here’s how the Holy Ghost benefits the believer.⁵

1. Takes up residence (Ezekiel 36:27; John 14:27; Colossians 3:16; 6:19).
2. Sanctifies (Romans 15:16; 1 Corinthians 6:11; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Peter 1:2).
3. Empowers for witnessing (Acts 1:8).
4. Inspires praise (Ephesians 5:18-19).
5. Assists in prayer (Romans 8:26-27; 1 Corinthians 14:14-15; Ephesians 6:18; Jude 20).
6. Equips for victorious or holy living (Romans 8:13; Galatians 5:16; 1 John 4:4).
7. Leads and or guides (Romans 8:14; John 16:13).
8. Reveals (John 16:13-15; 1 Corinthians 2:9-12).
9. Teaches (John 14:26; 1 John 2:20, 27).
10. Comforts (John 14:26; 15:26; Acts 9:31).

⁵ Brooks, P. A. Understanding Bible Doctrine as Taught In the Church Of God In Christ. First Jurisdiction: Michigan, 1981.
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WE NEED YOUR HELP!

We need your help! Every bishop, every superintendent, every pastor, every department head; we need you to use your influence to encourage the people of the Lord to a time of seeking God. The Lord has placed upon our Presiding Bishop's heart the desire to see an outpouring of the Holy Ghost throughout the Church Of God In Christ. The prayer is for (1) EVERY member of the Church Of God In Christ to be filled with the Holy Ghost and (2) EVERY member that is already filled to receive a refilling of God's Spirit!

What is every member of the Church Of God In Christ requested to do? You are asked by the Presiding Bishop to take 11 minutes *out of* your prayer time every day and focus on the devotional reading and prayer requests provided, every day, for the 50 day Pilgrimage from Easter or Resurrection Sunday until the Day of Pentecost.

- **What are the prayer needs?** The prayer needs are listed in the daily devotional, provided by the anointed scholars of the Church Of God In Christ.
- **Why 11 minutes?** This is 11 minutes *of* your prayer time. This will make it more feasible for all of our 6 million members to participate; because everyone is not a seasoned prayer warrior and the Presiding Bishop requests that EVERY saint joins in the prayer. While many of us can handle long seasons of prayer; we want the youth, "baby saints," and everyone to join in this time of consecration.

Suggested 11 Minute Prayer

- ✓ **2 minutes of Adoration:** Honor God for Who He is and express gratefulness for your salvation through His Son: Jesus Christ.
- ✓ **2 minutes of Confession:** Ask for and receive forgiveness for sins known and unknown.
- ✓ **6 minutes of Petition:** Cover the prayer need listed in the devotional for that particular day.
- ✓ **1 minute of Thanksgiving:** Take a minute to praise Him for answering prayer!!!

(If you can do more or less than 11 minutes that's great; as long as everyone does something. EVERY PRAYER COUNTS!!!)

You are requested to fast. Tuesday and Friday are fast days in the Church Of God In Christ. The Presiding Bishop is asking that you use your Friday fast day to petition God's throne during this Pilgrimage to Pentecost. Our fast times are minimum Midnight to 12

Noon and maximum Midnight to 4:00 p.m.; however, whatever time you are able to do within that period will be appreciated. The Office of the Presiding Bishop has provided information on how and why we fast in this guidebook. (If you have health conditions, please consult your physician prior to fasting).

What is each Jurisdictional Bishop requested to do? If you have a jurisdictional event (for example a Worker's Meeting or Jurisdictional Assembly) during the Pilgrimage to Pentecost, you are requested to take 11 minutes out of that event and cover the 11 prayer petitions.

What is each District Superintendent requested to do? If you have a district event (for example a District Fellowship or District Meeting) during the Pilgrimage to Pentecost you are requested to take 11 minutes out of that event and cover the 11 prayer petitions.

What is each Pastor requested to do? Every Church Of God In Christ pastor, around the world, is requested to take 11 minutes out of your weekly prayer service (every week during the Pilgrimage to Pentecost) and cover the Pilgrimage in prayer. (Note: if you have a daily prayer service, please take 11 minutes out of one of those days every week, during the Pilgrimage to Pentecost).

What is every church in the Church Of God In Christ requested to do? On *Pentecost Sunday*, we are requesting that every congregation of the Church Of God In Christ celebrate this joyous occasion (THE DAY OF PENTECOST). You may do this in your morning worship experience or even consider scheduling a special Day of Pentecost Celebration. Each church is requested to give God praise for sending an outpouring of the Holy Ghost upon every member and every church in the Church Of God In Christ. Imagine the wonderful manifestation of God's presence that we will enjoy as the Church Of God In Christ, in all 50 states and many nations of the world, unites in prayer and praise, with one accord!

DAY OF PENTECOST SUGGESTED ORDER OF SERVICE:⁶

Note: This service can be presented during your morning worship. But, what would be even more effective is to have a Day of Pentecost Celebration on a larger scale, for example, district, jurisdictional and even regional. Also, note, that since this is a Pentecostal celebration, the service should be a high-praise, anointed, Spirit-filled celebration.

Suggested Order of Service

- **Call to Worship**
- **Invocation**
- **Old Testament Scripture (Joel 2:28-32)**
- **New Testament Scripture (Acts 2:1-4)**
- **High Praise Service**
- **Welcome**
- **Holy Ghost Testimonies**
- **Choral Selection**
- **Expressions/Remarks**
- **Worship in Giving**
- **Choral Selection**
- **Introduction of Speaker**
- **Sermonic Solo**
- **The Word of God (Pentecostal Message)**

⁶ King, Claude V. Come to the Lord's Table: A Sacred Assembly. Final Command: Murfreesboro, 2012.

- **Old Fashioned Tarrying Service**
- **Benediction**

Suggestions for items of the worship celebration

Below are some suggested elements that might be part of a Day of Pentecost Celebration, so that we all might be WITH one accord. However, you may customize a service for your group – you have great latitude in what the service is like. Include the elements you sense would be most helpful. Choose from the following elements to design your service or plan your own activities as God guides you:

Music and Singing

All musical selections should relate to the Holy Ghost. This will ensure a cohesive worship experience. It would be edifying to have a mixture of “old school” songs along with current religious music.

Scripture Reading

We have provided suggested Scriptures for the service, in the outline above. However, if you so choose to use alternative passage; all Scriptures should pertain to the subject of the Holy Ghost.

Message

Keep in mind that the focus of this celebration is praise God for what He initiated on the Day of Pentecost. We are also expecting both the filling and refilling of the gift of the Holy Ghost. Therefore, the message should include emphasis on salvation, sanctification and receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost. Use the message to call for response and reserve most of your time for responding to the Lord in prayer.

Altar Prayer

The altar call on this day will most likely be longer than that which usually occurs in the average worship service. Use this time to have an old fashioned “tarrying service” to pray for the filling and refilling of the Holy Ghost. Expect God to save, heal, deliver and fill!

Testimonies

Invite individual testimonies from individuals regarding how the Lord filled them with the Holy Ghost. This will inspire the faith of “seekers.” It is not suggested to “open the floor” on this day; as that could lead to the service being “taken off track” from its focus.

Open-ended Closing

As you close the service, invite members to continue responding to the Lord as long as needed. They may want to remain for prayer, continue seeking to reconcile relationships, or to seek out prayer with one of the leaders.

Worship in Giving

Although finances are not the motivation of this service, you will want to ask everyone to sow a special seed into the kingdom of God. Since the consecration is 50 days, consider having a special “Pentecost Offering” of \$50.00 toward the kingdom of God.

PRAYER IS MORE EFFECTIVE WHEN WE FAST⁷

What is Fasting? Fasting will help to ensure that this 50 day Pilgrimage to Pentecost is a success! To fast simply means to voluntarily abstain from eating and/or drinking for an extended period of time. Biblical fasting is a discipline of voluntarily denying one's self of the basics of eating in order to be available for prayer and communion with the Lord. Since it is an ultimate act of self-denial, you are simply entering into an intense training in righteousness.

Why Fast? Listed below are some of the reasons why people in the Bible fasted:

- Repentance: Jonah 3:5 and Daniel 6:18
- Ultimate denial of the flesh: Matthew 4:2
- Spiritual power: Mark 9:29
- Wisdom: Acts 14:23
- Set aside self for holiness: 1 Corinthians 7:5
- Answered prayer: Acts 10:30-31

Why Food? What is the number one thing you trust in for your survival, your very existence? What is the one thing, above everything else, that you can't do without, not only for days but even hours? What is the one thing that will give you an "attitude" if you don't receive it, when and how you want it? What do you spend hours preparing for and is the center of your social and recreational life? What is the one thing that is "a given" in your daily schedule, such "a given" that you would never question skipping it for any serious length of time? Well, you might have realized by now that the answer is food. Jesus said in Matthew 6:33, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things will be added to you." "Seek ye first," not second, not third or fourth, the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, not food. The kingdom of God is His absolute rule in your life.

Preparing For Your Fast. Take time to confess your sins, before and during your fast, knowing that He is faithful and just to forgive you and cleanse you of all unrighteousness (1John 1:9). Remember, fasting is a time for cleansing. The Bible says in 2 Chronicles 7:14, "If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land."

Preparation of Your Physical Body. It is important to prepare your physical body for your fast. You will begin by decreasing the size of your food intake as you prepare to abstain from food.

⁷ Miles Ahead Ministry, San Diego: 1997.
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Examine Yourself. Your motives for conducting a fast will play a large role in the goals you establish. I have talked to several people who have expressed a hesitation to fast because they thought they would be doing it for selfish reasons. Some wanted to lose weight to become more attractive or they wanted to fast just to get a blessing.

Selfish or Blessing? Using this same logic, ask yourself this question: “Why do you pray, read your Bible or go to church?” It’s to be obedient to what God calls us to do and to be blessed! The Lord has been graciously dealing with you since your sinful beginning. The only reason “you love Him is because He first loved you” (1 John 4:10). Your fasting will not and cannot make Him love you any more than He already does. You are not going to trick or force Him into blessing you against His will.

Social Tensions. A frequently asked question about fasting is: “Should you tell people that you are fasting?” Since fasting is a discipline of self-denial and consecration unto the Lord, constant discussion about it will be a distraction. For maximum benefit, it would be best for you not to tell anyone about your fast. Jesus was against the religious leaders drawing attention to themselves by giving people the impression they were suffering for the Lord (Matthew 6:16-18).

After Your Fast. Ending your fast properly is just as important as beginning your fast properly. Just as you prepared yourself to begin a fast, you must prepare yourself to stop or break your fast. Here are a few questions you can ask yourself as you end your fast:

- What are the key lessons learned?
- What new habits or disciplines do you want to keep?
- What new dietary rules will you follow?
- What foods will you begin eating and not eat anymore?
- What dreams and visions have you seen pertaining to your personal walk with the Lord or your ministry?

BISHOP MASON'S TESTIMONY

The founders' personal testimony

The following are excerpts from Bishop Charles Harrison Mason's personal testimony regarding his receiving the Baptism of the Holy Ghost:

"The first day in the meeting I sat to myself, away from those that went with me. I began to thank God in my heart for all things, for when I heard some speak in tongues, I knew it was right though I did not understand it. Nevertheless, it was sweet to me.

I also thank God for Elder Seymour who came and preached a wonderful sermon. His words were sweet and powerful and it seems that I hear them now while writing. When he closed his sermon, he said 'All of those that want to be sanctified or baptized with the Holy Ghost, go to the upper room; and all those that want to be justified, come to the altar.'

I said that is the place for me, for it may be that I am not converted and if not, God knows it and can convert me..."

"Glory!"

"The second night of prayer I saw a vision. I saw myself standing alone and had a dry roll of paper in my mouth trying to swallow it. Looking up towards the heavens, there appeared a man at my side. I turned my eyes at once, then I awoke and the interpretation came.

God had me swallowing the whole book and if I did not turn my eyes to anyone but God and Him only, He would baptize me. I said yes to Him, and at once in the morning when I arose, I could hear a voice in me saying, "I see..."

"I got a place at the altar and began to thank God. After that, I said Lord if I could only baptize myself, I would do so; for I wanted the Baptism so bad I did not know what to do. I said, Lord, You will have to do the work for me; so I turned it over into His hands."

"Then, I began to ask for the Baptism of the Holy Ghost according to Acts 2:41, which readeth thus: 'Then they that gladly received His word were baptized,' Then I saw that I had a right to be glad and not sad."

"The enemy said to me, there may be something wrong with you. Then a voice spoke to me saying, if there is anything wrong with you, Christ will find it and take it away and marry you... Someone said, 'Let us sing.' I arose and the first song that came to me was 'He brought me out of the Miry Clay.'

The Spirit came upon the saints and upon me... Then I gave up for the Lord to have His way within me. So there came a wave of Glory into me and all of my being was filled with the Glory of the Lord.

So when He had gotten me straight on my feet, there came a light which enveloped my entire being above the brightness of the sun. When I opened my mouth to say Glory, a flame touched my tongue which ran down me. My language changed and no word could I speak in my own tongue. Oh! I was filled with the Glory of the Lord. My soul was then satisfied.”⁸

Bishop Mason’s letter to the Azusa Street Mission⁹

“Dear ones, it is sweet for me to think of you and your kindness to me while I was with you. My soul is filled with the glory of the Lord. He is giving great victory wherever He sends us in His name, many being baptized with the Holy Ghost and speaking in tongues.

Praise the Lord. The fight has been great. I was put out because I believed that God did baptize me with the Holy Ghost among you all. Well, He did it and it just suits me.

Glory in the Lord. Jesus is coming. Take the Bible way, it is right. The Lord is leading me out of all that men have fixed up for their glory. Be strong in Him (Isaiah 41:10, 20).

The Lord is casting out devils, healing the sick, and singing the sweetest songs. He has sung hundreds of songs. I do not have time to go back over one to practice it, for the next will be new. Praise His name. I sit under His shadow with great delight. His banner over me is love.”

C. H. Mason
Lexington, MS
November, 28, 1907

⁸ <http://www.cogic.org/our-foundation/the-founder-church-history/>. (Accessed, December 2, 2012).

⁹ Wegman, Lukas K. *The Message of Bishop William J. Seymour*. Wegmann: Jackson, 1992.

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THE FOUNDER'S TEACHING ON THE HOLY GHOST

The following is an actual excerpt from a teaching on the Baptism of the Holy Ghost, by the late Bishop Charles Harrison Mason, founder of the Church Of God In Christ:¹⁰

Jesus said that John truly Baptized with water, but we shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost, not many days hence, Acts 1:5. All the apostles, with Mary, the mother of Jesus and many others that had been clean through the word that Jesus had spoken unto them received the Baptism of the Holy Ghost. All did believe and were clean before they received Him (Acts 2:1-4).

The Baptism of the Holy Ghost is given after One is converted. John the Baptist preached that he baptized with water unto repentance, but one that cometh after him, would baptize with the Holy Ghost and fire (Matthew 3:11).

Cornelius, a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave alms to the people, and prayed to God always and saw and talked with an angel, but had not received the Holy Ghost (Acts 10:1-44).

The Ephesians that believed and were baptized in water, both Apollos and Paul, received the Baptism of the Holy Ghost and they spake with tongues and prophesied (Acts 19:1-6).

The apostle Paul said that they had heard the word of the truth, they trusted, and after they believed they were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise (Ephesians 1:13).

So it is after we believe may receive the Holy Ghost, Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ unto them, and the people with one accord, gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. For unclean spirits came out of many that were possessed with them, and many taken with palsies were healed. And there was great joy in that city (Acts 8:8).

Then Simon, the sorcerer, believed and was baptized in water, he and all the people, but they had not received the Holy Ghost yet.

But when Peter and John came down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Ghost, for as yet He was fallen upon none of them, only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then laid they their hands on them and they received the Holy Ghost (Acts 8:14-17).

¹⁰ Smith, Annie. *Church Of God In Christ Yearbook*. COGIC: Memphis, 1926.
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So the Baptism of the Holy Ghost is the promise of the Father, “and behold I send the promise of My Father upon you” (Luke 24:49). It is for all who believe, you and your children, and for all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call (Acts 2:38-39). He gives power to know and witness for Jesus, everywhere (Acts 1:8). He is another Comforter, to be with us and in us forever (John 16:13). He will glorify Christ. He comes in Jesus’ name, not in Baptist or Methodist or any other name (John 14:26). Jesus received it when He was about thirty years of age (Luke 3:21-23).

WHAT WE BELIEVE ABOUT THE HOLY GHOST

The Holy Ghost¹¹

We believe the Holy Ghost or Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity, proceeds from the Father and the Son, is of the same substance, equal to power and glory, and is together with the Father and the Son, to be believed in, obeyed, and worshipped.

The Holy Ghost is a gift bestowed upon the believer for the purpose of equipping and empowering the believer, making him a more effective witness for service in the world. He teaches and guides one into all truth (John 16:13; Acts 1:8, 8:39).

The Baptism of the Holy Ghost¹²

We believe that the Baptism of the Holy Ghost is an experience subsequent to conversion and sanctification and that tongue-speaking is the consequence of the Baptism in the Holy Ghost with the manifestations of the fruit of the spirit (Galatians 5:22-23; Acts 10:46, 19:1-6).

We believe that we are not baptized with the Holy Ghost in order to be saved (Acts 19:1-6; John 3:5). When one receives a Baptismal Holy Ghost experience, we believe one will speak with a tongue unknown to oneself according to the sovereign will of Christ.

To be filled with the Spirit means to be Spirit controlled as expressed by Paul in Ephesians 5:18-19. Since the charismatic demonstrations were necessary to help the early church to be successful in implementing the command of Christ, we therefore, believe that a Holy Ghost experience is mandatory for all men today.

From our Statement of Faith¹³

We believe that regeneration by the Holy Ghost is absolutely essential for personal salvation.

We believe that the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, according to Acts 2:4, is given to believers who ask for it.

¹¹ <http://www.cogic.org/our-foundation/what-we-believe/>. (Accessed, December 2, 2012).

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ <http://www.cogic.org/our-foundation/our-statement-of-faith/>. (Accessed, December 2, 2012).

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ACTS 2:4 IN DIFFERENT VERSIONS

Traditionally, the Church Of God In Christ has been a “King James Version” Church. The references in most of our literature reflect this fact. However, our people are very scholarly and practice reading verses in different versions; to bring out the full meaning of the text.

Acts 2:4 is the central verse used to describe the Baptism of the Holy Ghost. Considering this verse, in the following five versions, describes a clear meaning of what it means to receive this baptism of power:

Acts 2:4 (King James Version KJV). And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Acts 2:4 (Amplified Bible AMP).¹⁴ And they were all filled (diffused throughout their souls) with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other (different, foreign) languages (tongues), as the Spirit kept giving them clear *and* loud expression [in each tongue in appropriate words].

Acts 2:4 (Contemporary English Version CEV).¹⁵ The Holy Spirit took control of everyone, and they began speaking whatever languages the Spirit let them speak.

Acts 2:4 (New Living Translation (NLT)).¹⁶ And everyone present was filled with the Holy Spirit and began speaking in other languages, as the Holy Spirit gave them this ability.

Acts 2:4 (New International Version (NIV)).¹⁷ All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

¹⁴ Holy Bible. Amplified Version. Zondervan: Grand Rapids, 1987.

¹⁵ Holy Bible. Contemporary English Version. ABS: New York, 1995.

¹⁶ Holy Bible. New Living Translation. Tyndale: Carol Stream, 2004.

¹⁷ <http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=acts%20:4&version=NIV>. (Accessed, December 2, 2012).

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ANSWERS TO CRITICS OF “TONGUES”

The Baptism of the Holy Spirit (with tongues) is for believers of all times.

Our Church, the Church Of God In Christ, teaches that the experience of the Baptism of the Holy Ghost, according to Acts 2:4 is for all believers of all ages. Even though our emphasis is placed more upon living a holy life than just speaking in tongues; nevertheless, we do not believe that the time of “tongues” has passed away. The following Scripture supports our belief.

Acts 2:39. For the promise [of the Holy Spirit] is to and for you and your children, and to and for all that are far away, [even] to and for as many as the Lord our God invites and bids to come to Himself.¹⁸

Why should you speak in tongues?

When a believer speaks with tongues, it demonstrates that the most unruly part of their body is under the Holy Spirits control. This exemplifies total submission to the will of God.

James 3:8. But the human tongue can be tamed by no man. It is a restless (undisciplined, irreconcilable) evil, full of deadly poison.¹⁹

Will the Holy Spirit have you to express yourself in an emotional manner?

It did for the first century believers and, most likely, it will do the same for us. However, again, our emphasis is not on emotion; but power to live holy and to be a witness!

Acts 2:13. But others made a joke of it and derisively said, They are simply drunk and full of sweet [intoxicating] wine.²⁰

Aren’t all “tongues” supposed to be interpreted?

The “gift of tongues,” described by Paul in 1 Corinthians 12:10, was NOT for every believer (1 Corinthians 12:30). That gift has to be accompanied by an interpreter (1 Corinthians 14:28). However the “initial evidence” of tongues, found in Acts 2:4, 10:46 and 19:6 IS for every believer and is distinct from the gift of tongues. This is why, in these particular passages (Acts 2:4, 10:46; 19:6), there was no need or call for an interpreter.

¹⁸ Holy Bible. Amplified Version. Zondervan: Grand Rapids, 1987.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

FACTS ABOUT THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY GHOST

What does it mean to be “baptized” in the Holy Ghost?²¹

1. To be baptized means to be dipped or immersed.
2. To be baptized in the Holy Ghost means to be immersed in the Holy Ghost as a ladle is immersed in a bowl of liquid. It emerges full. To be baptized in the Holy Ghost is the same as being filled with the Holy Ghost (Acts 1:5; 2:4).

What you should know about the Baptism of the Holy Ghost²²

1. **That Jesus is the One Who baptizes people in the Holy Ghost.**

Mark 1:8. I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.

2. **That this experience is not an option but a command.**

Ephesians 5:18. And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit.

3. **That this experience for all believers.**

Acts 2:39. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the LORD our God shall call.

4. **That this experience is subsequent to conversion.**

- The Samaritans received it after they were saved (Acts 8:5-17; 8:14-17).
- Saul received it after he was saved (Acts 9:1-18).

5. **That this experience is God’s gift to His children, not a reward.**

Luke 11:13. If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

²¹ Brooks, P. A. Understanding Bible Doctrine as Taught In the Church Of God In Christ. First Jurisdiction: Michigan, 1981.

²² Ibid.

Characteristics of someone who is filled with the Holy Spirit²³

Acts 1:8. But you shall receive power (ability, efficiency, and might) when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you shall be My witnesses in Jerusalem and all Judea and Samaria and to the ends (the very bounds) of the earth.

Galatians 5:22-24 ²² But the fruit of the [Holy] Spirit [the work which His presence within accomplishes] is love, joy (gladness), peace, patience (an even temper, forbearance), kindness, goodness (benevolence), faithfulness, ²³ Gentleness (meekness, humility), self-control (self-restraint, continence). Against such things there is no law [that can bring a charge].²⁴ And those who belong to Christ Jesus (the Messiah) have crucified the flesh (the godless human nature) with its passions and appetites *and* desires.

People who receive the Holy Spirit have supernatural gifts²⁴

Romans 12:6-8. 6Having gifts (faculties, talents, qualities) that differ according to the grace given us, let us use them: [He whose gift is] prophecy, [let him prophesy] according to the proportion of his faith; 7[He whose gift is] practical service, let him give himself to serving; he who teaches, to his teaching; 8He who exhorts (encourages), to his exhortation; he who contributes, let him do it in simplicity and liberality; he who gives aid and superintends, with zeal and singleness of mind; he who does acts of mercy, with genuine cheerfulness and joyful eagerness.

1 Corinthians 12:7-10. 7But to each one is given the manifestation of the [Holy] Spirit [the evidence, the spiritual illumination of the Spirit] for good and profit. 8To one is given in and through the [Holy] Spirit [the power to speak] a message of wisdom, and to another [the power to express] a word of knowledge and understanding according to the same [Holy] Spirit; 9To another [wonder-working] faith by the same [Holy] Spirit, to another the extraordinary powers of healing by the one Spirit; 10To another the working of miracles, to another prophetic insight (the gift of interpreting the divine will and purpose); to another the ability to discern and distinguish between [the utterances of true] spirits [and false ones], to another various kinds of [unknown] tongues, to another the ability to interpret [such] tongues.

²³ Holy Bible. Amplified Version. Zondervan: Grand Rapids, 1987.

²⁴ Ibid.

HOW TO RECEIVE THE GIFT OF THE HOLY GHOST

The following is an excerpt from a teaching on how to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, by Bishop William J. Seymour, “father” of the 20th Century Pentecostal movement. Bishop Mason (our founder) received the Holy Ghost, under Bishop Seymour’s ministry:²⁵

The Lord Jesus has said in His precious Word, “Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled” (Matthew 5:6). God’s promises are true and sure. We can rest upon His promises. He says, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God” (Matthew 5:8). “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 5:3).

The Lord Jesus is always ready to fill the hunger, thirsty souls, for He said in His precious Word, “He that believeth on Me as the Scriptures has said, out of his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake He of the Spirit which they that believe on Him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified)” (John 7:38-39). But, praise God, He is given to us today.

*All we have to do is obey the first chapter of Acts, and wait for the promise of the Father upon our souls. The Lord Jesus said in His precious Word, “Behold I send the promise of My Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high (Luke 24:49). For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. * * * Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and in Samaria and unto the uttermost parts of the earth” (Acts 1:5, 8).*

They tarried until they received the mighty power of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit upon their souls. Then God put the credentials in their hearts, and put the ring of authority on their finger, and sealed them in the forehead with the Father’s name, and wrote on their heart the name of the New Jerusalem, and put in their hand the stone with the name written that no man knoweth save he that receiveth it. Praise the Lord, for His mercy endureth forever. Let us stand upon His promises. They are sure, they will not break.

The Lord Jesus says, “Behold, I give you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing shall by any means hurt you” (Luke 10:19). Dear loved one, the Lord Jesus when He rose from the dead, said “All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and of the Holy Ghost (Matthew 28:18-19). He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And

²⁵ Wegman, Lukas K. The Message of Bishop William J. Seymour. Wegmann: Jackson, 1992.
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these signs shall follow them that believe; in My name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover” (Mark 16:16-18). And they went forth and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the Word with signs following. Praise His dear name, for He is just the same today.

The first thing in order to receive this precious and wonderful Baptism with the Holy Spirit, we want a clear knowledge of justification by faith according to the Bible. Romans 5:1, “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,” faith that all our actual sins may be washed away. Actual sin means committed sin.

And then the second step is to have a real knowledge of sanctification, which frees us from original sin – the sin that we were born with, which we inherited from our “father” Adam. We were not responsible for that sin until we received light, for we could not repent of a sin that we did not commit. When we came to the Lord as a sinner, we repented to God our actual sins, and God for Christ’s sake pardoned us and washed our sin and pollution away, and planted eternal life in our souls.

Afterwards we saw in the Word of God, “this is the will of God, even your sanctification” (1 Thessalonians 4:3, also John 17:15-19), we consecrated ourselves to God, and the Lord Jesus sanctified our souls, and made us every whit clean.

Then after we were clearly sanctified, we prayed to God for the Baptism with the Holy Spirit. So He sent the Holy Spirit to our hearts and filled us with His blessed Spirit, and He gave us the Bible evidence, according to the 2nd chapter of Acts verses 1 to 4, speaking with other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance.

Praise our God; He is the same yesterday, today and forever. Receive Him just now and He will fill you. Amen. Don’t get discouraged but pray until you are filled, for the Lord says, “Men ought always to pray and not to faint.” Don’t stop because you do not receive the Baptism with the Holy Ghost at the first, but continue until you are filled.

The Lord Jesus told His disciples to tarry until they were endued with power from on high. May people today are willing to tarry just so long, and then they give up and fail to receive their personal Pentecost that would measure with the Bible.

The Lord Jesus says, “Ye shall be filled.” He says that to the person that hungers and thirst after righteousness, and He says they are blessed. So if there is a hunger and thirst in our souls for righteousness, we are blessed of Him. Praise His dear name!

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