

# **A Primer on the Holy Spirit**

## **Teaching Notes**

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# I

## INTRODUCTION

The Person of the Holy Spirit is the least known and most commonly misunderstood Person of the Trinity. Like a rear-view mirror – or spiritual satellite dish, whose sole function is to focus us away from itself to something else - is he often overlooked, taken for granted, and – even worse – not wholly honored as God. Yet, while he is wondrously illusive, the Holy Spirit is an essential Player in everything God has done, is doing, and will do in his Created Order.

The Bible commands us to be perpetually and actively (meaning: taking all diligence to do so) filled with the Holy Spirit. (Ephesians 5:18) While not everybody in the world-wide Body of Christ agrees as to what the fullness of the Spirit looks like (some, for example, don't attest to the gifts of the Spirit for this day and age), we all agree about the business of being filled with the Spirit. A Christian who is not daily transfused with the Holy Spirit is like someone with kidney problems refusing dialyses. In other words, the presence of the Holy

Spirit throughout the Body of Christ is as essential as blood in the body of a saint.

## **Unseen and Indefinable**

The Holy Spirit may be the most mysterious Person in the Trinity. A big part of who He is, is about giving sole recognition to the other two players in the Trinity, the Father and Son. Thus, we run into difficulty when seeking to ascertain who the Holy Spirit is and what He does because when we seek to engage experience with the Holy Spirit, we usually find ourselves engaging with the Father or the Son instead!

Yet, we know, Jesus depended exclusively upon the power of the Holy Spirit throughout His ministry. Indeed, the Holy Spirit accredited, or proved, Jesus' identity and His ministry to an unbelieving and skeptical world (Hebrews 2:4). This same fact held true throughout the early church (I Corinthians 2:2-4).

In our day, the Holy Spirit continues to do the same things that Jesus did. However, now we are the instruments of his song! (Mark 16:17; Romans 15:19) Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we are both *inwardly* transformed into the character of Christ (the fruits of the Spirit - See Galatians 5:22, 23) and *outwardly* powered-up to reveal the love of God in the world and for the church today (the gifts of the Spirit - See 1 Corinthians 12; 13:8; 14:1f; Romans 12:3; Ephesians 4:11, 12).

## **Roles and Symbols in Scripture**

Words fall short of Kingdom descriptions – they point us in the right direction. In Scripture, the Holy Spirit is symbolized as fire (Acts 2:1,2), wind (Acts 2:1,2), water (Jn. 7:37-39), a seal or stamp (Eph. 1:13), oil (Act 10:38), a dove (Jn. 1:32), cloud of God's glory (Exodus 40:34, 36-38, Numbers 9:15-23, 1 Kings 8:10-11), and the indweller of the Saints (1 Corinthians 3:16, 6:19, 2 Corinthians 6:16).

His activities include creating (Genesis 1:2), comforting (John 14:16,26), teaching (John 14:26), convicting of sin (John 16:8), guiding and directing (Romans 8:14), praying through people (Romans 8:26,27), baptizing into the Kingdom (1 Corinthians 12:13), anointing (1 John 2:20,27), dwelling within believers (1 Corinthians 3:16), producing love, joy, peace, steadfastness, self control, etc. (Galatians 5:22,23), giving supernatural gifts (Hebrews 2:4), raising us from the grave, as He did for Christ (Romans 8:11), empowering (Acts 1:8), and giving glory to Christ. (John 16:14). In addition, He is the author of the Old Testament (2 Timothy 3:15-17; 2 Peter. 1:21) and the author of the New Testament (John 14:25, 26; Rev.1:10, 11).

Perhaps the most difficult thing to understand is that the Holy Spirit is a Person.

Many times, when referring to the Spirit's presence in a meeting, we will instinctively say something like, "The Holy Spirit was everywhere tonight. It was really blessing us." But the Spirit is no more an "it" than you are. He is a real Person – complete with feelings, desires, will, and destiny. Thus, He can be

blessed, affirmed, honored, respected, loved, worshiped, invited into life, called upon, relied upon, and invited into our morning devotions. He can be blasphemed (Matthew 12:31, 32), lied to (Acts 5:3), tested (Acts 5:9), resisted (Acts 7:51), grieved (Ephesians. 4:30), quenched (1 Thessalonians 5:19), and insulted (Hebrews 10:29).

He is Christ in Us. The Holy Spirit brings us to Christ. He then gives us everything we need to live into God's will and destiny for our lives. Throughout this pilgrimage of faith the Spirit continually fills us (Ephesians 5:10 [gr.: continually be filled]), as needed, for the tasks that lie ahead. The Holy Spirit is concerned that we live victoriously, as Jesus would. Thus, He provides all followers of Christ with everything we need to do just that. It doesn't matter if you are Baptist or Egyptian Orthodox; African or American; boy or woman: the Spirit is for us all.

"For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body -- whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free -- and we were all given the one Spirit to drink." (1 Corinthians 12:13)

Jesus is the one who baptizes in the Spirit (Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:7, 8; Luke 3:16; Jn 1:33; Acts 1:5, 2:33, 11:16). We'll speak more on this later. I believe the "baptism of the Holy Spirit" is a distinct and separate experience that is included in the salvation package. It is not conversion, nor is it baptism – but integrates itself within and around those events. In most cases, the baptism of the Holy Spirit comes after conversion – but not always. It can happen while others pray

for you to receive it, or it can happen sovereignly by Jesus, when you're least expecting it – or (even worse) unbelieving of it! Repeated, ongoing fillings occur throughout life. (Acts 4:8, 13:9, 52; Ephesians 5:18)

Christians need the Holy Spirit to live out the Christian life. His empowerment manifests in both the gifts (1 Corinthians 12- 14), which include speaking in tongues (Act 2:4; 10:1-48; 11:1-18), and fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5). The Spirit also empowers us to persevere in sound doctrine (Acts 2:41), worship (Acts 8:26-39), the preaching of Jesus (Acts 9:1-19, 22, 26; 1 Corinthians 14:18), and joy (Acts 13:48-52).

## II

# HOLY SPIRIT IN OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS

In Old Testament Scripture the Holy Spirit is revealed as a member of the “council”, or Trinitarian communion of God (Genesis 1:26, 3:22, 11:7, Isaiah 6:8, 1 Kings 22:19-23, Job 15:8 and Jeremiah 23:18). On earth he is the experienced Presence of God, working in human hearts for the advancement of Israel (Kingdom of God) and preparing Israel prophetically for the [then] future Messiah.

The Holy Spirit was present upon the earth even before the creation of man:

Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters (Genesis 1:2).

But there is a distinct difference between the action of the Holy Spirit among the people of Israel in the Old Testament and the believers of the New Testament.



We see the action of the Holy Spirit in the lives of some of the people in the Old Testament. We see that the Spirit of the Lord "came upon" some of the central figures of the Old Testament at certain times. But this was an exceptional occurrence. The following scriptures are a few examples of this:

The Spirit of the LORD came upon him, so that he became Israel's judge and went to war. The LORD gave Cushan Rishathaim king of Aram into the hands of Othniel, who overpowered him (Judges 3:10).

Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon Gideon, and he blew a trumpet, summoning the Abiezrites to follow him (Judges 6:34).

The Spirit of the LORD came upon him in power so that he tore the lion apart with his bare hands as he might have torn a young goat. But he told neither his father nor his mother what he had done (Judges 14:6).

The Spirit of the LORD will come upon you in power, and you will prophesy with them; and you will be changed into a different person (1 Samuel 10:6).

So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on the Spirit of the LORD came upon David in power. Samuel then went to Ramah (1 Samuel 16:13).

Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon me, and he told me to say: "This is what the LORD says: That is what you are saying, O house of Israel, but I know what is going through your mind (Ezekiel 11:5).

In an interesting passage, we have insight as to how He (the Spirit) anointed others. We also have a glimpse of the heart of Moses, who desired that everyone could be anointed with the Spirit to prophecy.

In the story, God told Moses to gather together 70 elders of the people and told him He would take the anointing of the Holy Spirit that was upon him and place it upon the 70 elders (Numbers 11:17). When the Holy Spirit came upon the elders, they prophesied. Even two men in the camp that did not come out to the meeting tent began to prophesy. When the people came to Moses, they complained that the two men were prophesying in the camp. But Moses replied,

"Are you jealous for my sake? I wish that all the Lord's people were prophets and that the LORD would put his Spirit on them!" (Numbers 11:29).

Moses looked forward to the time when all of the people of God could receive this anointing of the Holy Spirit. The beginning of that happened at Pentecost. Joel prophesied the event and Peter made reference to it when explaining to bewildered onlookers why each of them was hearing the praises on God in their own languages. This is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

"In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy (Acts 2:16-18).

The Spirit began there. But it reaches to us.

Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you? (1 Corinthians 3:16).

Moses' desire was fulfilled at Pentecost. Now all believers have been anointed with the Holy Spirit – a marvelous companion in life and a marvelous guarantee that we are going to heaven.

And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a

deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession--to the praise of his glory (Ephesians 1:13-14).

Other roles of the Holy Spirit before His full release at Pentecost include:

### **Creator**

The Spirit (Hebrew: ruach = breath) of God creates life (Job 33:4; Psalm 139:13-16) and breathes life on dry bones (Ezekiel 37:5).

Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters (Genesis 1:2.)

By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all their hosts by the breath of His mouth (Psalm 33:6).

The LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being (Genesis 2:7).

## **Anointer**

As mentioned, in the OT only particular people were singled out and anointed for the work of ministry. “Ministry” included both “spiritual” and “non-spiritual” gifting which included everything from prophets of God to construction workers of the Tabernacle; everything from spiritual leaders to violent, raging warriors. Here are just a few examples:

For leadership: Gideon (Judges 6:34); David (1 Samuel 16:13); Moses (Numbers 11:16-18).

For Power: Micah (Micah 3:8); Samson (Judges 15:14).

For Skill and Construction: Bezalel (Exodus 31:1-5).

## **Forecaster**

The Holy Spirit spoke through prophets to declare seasons of purging and preparation (Isaiah 4:3-5) in order to receive the good things of God (Isaiah 32:15-18, 44:4-5, and 59:17-21, Ezekiel 39:29). He also spoke specifically about the coming of the Messiah (Jeremiah 23:5-6, Micah 5:2, Isaiah 7:14, 9:6, and Zachariah 9:9-12 – just to name a few!) and, of course, a time when all people would experience the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (Joel 2:18-29).

## **Blending of Roles**

The Spirit of the OT was a more precise manifestation than we know today. He fell on particular people for particular projects for particular times. In general, people could only dream of a time when the Spirit would be everywhere and God would reside no longer in a tent, but in the human heart – as He does today.

There are similarities in the way the Spirit moved in both the OT and today. This expresses a wonderful unity between the testaments. He created then, he creates now; he anointed then, he anoints now. He spoke through his people then, he speaks through His people now. He prepared Israel in repentance to receive the fullness of the promised Messiah, and he prepares his Bride, the Church, for the second coming of Christ, that same Messiah.

Perhaps the most significant difference between the roles of the Holy Spirit in OT times and today is found around the idea of geographical locale. Back then, the Holy Spirit was more/less centralized over a geographical site, an event, or abiding within/upon various anointed individuals. He burned in fire at the Tabernacle of Moses and spoke through particular prophets, for example. Today, of course, the Holy Spirit has been poured out on all flesh. He is equally in all churches – whether they be in the Amazon or the Artic. Indeed, wherever there are Christians, He will be there as well; just as the prophet Joel prophesied.

"And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people.  
Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will  
dream dreams, your young men will see visions. Even on

my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days. (Joel 2:28-29)

# III

## HOLY SPIRIT IN THE LIFE OF JESUS

Jesus was anointed with the Holy Spirit from conception to his Ascension. He came down from heaven by the power of the Holy Spirit, became incarnate from the Virgin Mary (BCP 358; Luke 1:35). He grew in age and wisdom in the Holy Spirit (Luke 2:40). He was baptized in the Holy Spirit at the Jordan River (Mark 1:10). The ministry of Christ (teaching and miracles) was accomplished through the ongoing dependency and power of the Holy Spirit. After he died, he was resurrected from the tomb by the power of that same, great Holy Spirit (Romans 8:11).

In his book The Glorious Disturbance, p.54, Ernest B. Gentile adds that Jesus went to the Cross by the Spirit (Hebrews 9:14), was resurrected by the Spirit (Romans 8:11, 1 Peter 3:18), preached to the spirits by the Spirit (1 Peter 3:19), gave commandments to his followers by the Spirit (Acts 1:2), breathed the Spirit upon the disciples (John 20:22), and sent the Holy Spirit to his followers (John 16:7, Acts 2:33).

### His Call



Jesus intentionally lived into who He was in the Spirit. The focus of his Spirit enablement was three-fold: Proclamation, healing, and liberation.

"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." Then he rolled up the scroll gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him, and he began by saying to them, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing" (Luke 4:18 -21).

... how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him. (Acts 10:38, 39)

Jesus' preaching was different from those of the religious orders of the day in that Jesus' words had "authority."

When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, because he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law (Matthew 7:28-29).

Anointed and life-giving preaching (John 6:63) was a hallmark of Christ's ministry. He spoke the Word of God and **did** the Word of God. His presentations were far removed from canned scripts; they were prophetically honed to speak directly into the Father's need in the situation at hand. This type of sensitivity can only be accomplished through the moment by moment dependence on the Holy Spirit, which Jesus modeled for us through His short thirty-three years.

## **Miraculous Works**

The Bible references 35 miracles done by Christ – 17 bodily cures, 9 miracles over forces of nature, 6 cures of demoniacs, and 3 raised from the dead (done in sync with the Father's will as revealed in the Holy Spirit to Jesus). The works of the Word served as a credible witness that Jesus was the Son of God.

When the sun was setting, the people brought to Jesus all who had various kinds of sickness, and laying his hands on each one, he healed them. Moreover, demons came out of many people, shouting, "You are the Son of God!" But he rebuked them and would not allow them to speak, because they knew he was the Christ (Luke 4:40 – 41).

Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves (John 14:11).

## **Jesus' Dependence on the Holy Spirit**

Though God, Jesus chose to be intentionally dependant on the Father when he ministered. This is how he modeled Spirit-led ministry. When entering a situation He'd assess the situation and most likely discern what His Father was doing.

There may have been times when He wanted to do more, or less (especially after a long day!). Yet Jesus did nothing other than what he "sensed" the Father doing through the Holy Spirit.

To Jesus, obedience to his Father may have been the most important value of his ministry. Consider the following:

Jesus gave them this answer: "I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does. For the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does. Yes, to your amazement he will show him even greater things than these. By myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me

(John 5:19, 20, 30).

”For I did not speak of my own accord, but the Father who sent me commanded me what to say and how to say it. I know that his command leads to eternal life. So whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say”  
(John 12: 49, 50).

”Don’t you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. but the world must learn that I love the Father and that I do exactly what my Father has commanded me”  
(John 14:10, 31).

Thus, in all situations (preaching, teaching, healing the sick, speaking words of comfort – even knocking over the money changers in the temple), Jesus knew what the Father was doing through the intervention and revelation of the Holy Spirit. Once he heard the “word,” He willfully and intentionally submitted to the Voice. In other words, he was totally dependent upon the Holy Spirit in his ministry. It was the Holy Spirit who told to him what to say, how to say it, when to start, and when to stop.

## **Jesus’ Teaching on the Holy Spirit**

Everything about the Kingdom is spiritual, for God is a Spirit (John 4:24). It only makes sense, then, that one needs a spiritual birth in order to be born into the Kingdom of God (John 3:3, 5-6, 8).

Jesus often taught about the Spirit. He spoke about:

- worshipping the Father in Spirit and Truth (John 4:23-24),
- the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 12:31-32),
- the Spirit's dependence and empowerment in times of persecution (Matthew 10:20; Mark 13:11, Luke 12:12),
- as the writer of Scripture (Matthew 22:43, Mark 12:36),
- as a member of the Trinity (Matthew 28:19),
- and promised (John 7:39; and chapters 14-16).

At the Last supper Jesus told them he would be leaving them but would not leave them as orphans. His plan was to exchange his Presence with "another Jesus," the Presence of the Holy Spirit, who would take up residence within them.

Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him." By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified (John 7:39).

In his book The Holy Spirit in You, Derek Prince writes, “We are better off with Jesus in heaven and the Holy Spirit on earth than we would be with Jesus on earth and the Holy Spirit in Heaven.”

### **More than Jesus?**

Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves. I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father (John 14:11 – 13).

This passage raises eyebrows. Jesus is saying that those who have faith in Him will do two things. Firstly, they will do the same things that Jesus was doing. Think of that. The same miraculous works that Jesus did will be done by those “faithing” in Him. (That means you and me.)

You may think, “Jesus was God. He did miracles because He is God.”

Yes, He is God. But he intentionally limited the sphere of His ministry to the dependence on the Holy Spirit – the same Spirit that fell at Pentecost, rippled

through the ages, and alighted atop our heads. The Spirit in Jesus was mighty. That same Spirit lives in you.

It should be noted that some of the things Jesus did in the power of the Spirit were not “miraculous.” His teachings, discussions, parables and the road to the Cross were every bit as Spirit-filled as the signs and wonders. When Jesus says we’ll be doing the same things as He did, that also includes suffering, persecution, and the Cross (Mark 8:33 – 35).

Secondly, Jesus stated we would do greater things than what He did. The term “greater things” means instances, not specific works. The fact of the matter is that, though He was God, Jesus was fully human and not omnipresent on any level. He could only be in one place at a time. When He was sitting with His disciples around a campfire after a full day of ministry He was only there – and not anywhere else – limited by His geographical locale.

On the Ascension of Christ and the ensuing falling of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, Fulton J. Sheen writes, “[Jesus’] continued presence on earth would have meant a localized presence; the descending of the Spirit would mean that He could be in the midst of all men who would be incorporated into Him.”

With many filled with the Holy Spirit the marvelous works of the Father would be all the more increased. Even today, millions of missionaries are scattered around the globe, each doing wondrous works of the Father through the Holy Spirit.

That is what Jesus meant by greater works. So, in a sense, you could say the world-wide Body of Christ is doing more than the Galilean Prophet could ever imagine.



# IV

## PENTECOST

The Jewish feast of Pentecost was one of the annual Historical Feasts. Other feasts include: Sabbath (Leviticus 23:2-3); Blowing Trumpets (Numbers 29:1); Day of Atonement (Leviticus 23:26-31); Purim (Ester 9); Tabernacles, or Booths (Exodus 23:16, 34:22, Leviticus 23:34, Deuteronomy 16:13), and Hanukkah (John 10:22).

Pentecost is sometimes called the Feast of Weeks. (Exodus 23:16, 34:22, and Numbers 28:26). It celebrated the day of first fruits from the harvest which were brought in from the fields and presented before the Lord in the form of an offering of thanksgiving. It's appropriate the Spirit fell at Pentecost because the Holy Spirit is the "first fruit" of Christ's ascension.

It's interesting to note that, according to Jewish tradition, universally received at the time of Christ, the day of Pentecost celebrated the anniversary of God appearing in a fiery bush and giving the Law on Mount Sinai. (Temple, Edersheim, p.206)

### Fire

Other Biblical illustrations of fire include: God as a consuming fire (Hebrews 12:29, Deuteronomy 4:24); fire accompanied answered prayers/revelations (1 Chronicles 21:26, Exodus 13:21, 19:18, 1 Kings 18:24), around God's throne (Daniel 7:9) and visible Presence (Exodus 24:17, 3:2), as judgment (Numbers 11:1, 16:35, 1 Kings 18:38-39), consecrations around sacrifices given at the Tabernacle of Moses (Leviticus 9:22-24) and the Temple of Solomon (2 Chronicles 7:1), and symbolically in human hearts/temples when "tongues of fire" appeared at Pentecost (Acts 2).

### **The "Falling" Promise: Fulfilled in the Feast**

As Christ left earth to return to heaven, he promised his disciples he would send a Comforter to assist them in continuing the work he began.

He said,

"I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor" (John. 14.15-17, 26).

And,

"When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father (John 15.26).

And,

"I will send him to you" (John.16:7, 13-15, 24).

Forty days later, during the feast of Pentecost, it happened. The Holy Spirit shook the framework of the upper room and alighted upon 120 praying men and women. The first manifestation of the Spirit was the disciples' ability to speak in known languages; recognizable by many gathered in Jerusalem for the feast. Today the same Spirit rattles the framework of the saints for the same reason, to make known the glorious acts of God through his Son, Jesus Christ.

This is the direct fulfillment of Joel's prophecy, given by that same Holy Spirit:

And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days (Joel 2:28-29).

While the "Pentecost" was unique, it was only the beginnings of continuous infillings (or mini-Pentecost's) that have continued in Scripture and through the ages.

It began with:

*Disciples:*

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them (Acts 2:1-4).

But the “falling” continued. There are numerous times and places where the Spirit fell just as violently and with the same repercussions as the initial cloudburst:

*Jews:*

After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly (Acts 4:30-32).

*Samaritans:*

When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. When they arrived, they prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit, because the Holy Spirit had not yet come upon any of them; they had simply been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus (Acts 8:14-17).

*Gentiles:*

All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name." While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message. The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles (Acts 10:43-45).

*Later, Peter recalls this event:*

As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit came on them as he had come on us at the beginning. Then I remembered what the Lord had said: 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit' (Acts 11: 15, 16).

God, who knows the heart, showed that he accepted them [the Gentiles] by giving the Holy Spirit to them, just as he did to us (Acts 15: 8).

*In Ephesus:*

While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul took the road through the interior and arrived at Ephesus. There he found some disciples and asked them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" They answered, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." So Paul asked,

"Then what baptism did you receive?" "John's baptism," they replied. Paul said, "John's baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus." On hearing this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied. There were about twelve men in all (Acts 19:1-7).

In summary, Scripture indicates the Holy Spirit fell on groups of people (Acts 2:4, 4:29-31,33, 6:3 13:14-52) and individuals (Acts 4:5-8, 6:5-8,10, 9:17, 13:9, 11:24). In addition, we often associate the work of the Holy Spirit on the, i.e. for the, individual. Yet it is important to note that there were outpourings upon groups of believers as well.

## **Results: Fulfillment of the Great Commission**

The results of the baptism of the Spirit from Pentecost are quite diverse and all point to the missionary zeal of the Lord to evangelize the planet. The Spirit was an active Person and assisted the early church in a variety of ways:

- *Divine Guidance*: Philip (Acts 8:39-40); Peter (Acts 10:9-17, 19-20 with 11:12), Agabus (Acts 11:28, 21:11); Paul (Acts 16:6, 18:5, 20:23, 21:4).
- *Commissioning/Ordaining*: Missionaries (Acts 13:1-4); elders (Acts 20:28).
- *Resolving Conflict*: Settlement of doctrinal conflict (Acts 15:1-29).

- *Inspiring*: Peter (Acts 1:16); Paul (Acts 28:25).
- As *comfort and joy* (Acts 9:31, 13:52).
- *Indwelling*: as a marvelous gift (Acts 2:38-39, 8:15-19, 10:44-47, 11:15-17, 15:8).

In the “great commission,” Jesus told his followers to preach the Gospel beginning from Jerusalem after they had been clothed with power from on high (Luke 24:45-49) and they would witness his power in all Judea, Samaria, and out to the rest of the world (Acts 1:8). The above instances of the pouring out of the Spirit are in line with the geographical locales of the Great Commission, meaning at least two things:

1. Pentecost was a prophesied event that ignited the followers of Christ to fulfill the Great Commission

*And*

2. The teaching and experience of the baptism of the Holy Spirit was a necessary component in witnessing the Good News, and in the fulfillment of the Great Commission.

## V

# THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

The significance of the baptism in the Spirit is multifaceted. It connects us to Pentecost. It bears witness to the continued outpouring of the Spirit through the ages. It fuels the great commission, and thus prepares the earth for the Second Coming of Christ. It unifies all Christians to Christ and to each other and it provides a uniform experience of the continued presence of God.

### **What Jesus Said**

When Jesus breathed on the disciples after returning from the dead they received the Holy Spirit (John. 20:21). But he also told them to:

... stay in the city until you have been clothed with power  
from on high (Luke 24.49).

And to,



... wait for the gift my Father promised...

Because,

... in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.

...You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you (Acts 1.4-5, 8).

Jesus knew that God would fulfill the prophecy written by Joel:

And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days (Joel 2:28-29).

This all happened at Pentecost, when the Spirit fell on those gathered and empowered them to share the Good News to every tongue and nation. That same experience has trickled through history into our day.

When people are filled with the Holy Spirit today it happens in a variety of ways; there is no defined praxis. It is described in many ways; from within, from without, or from above. Sometimes he even fills us when we are praying for others! Other times it can happen when no one is around.

In Scripture, people were filled in a variety of ways as well; sometimes at the moment of conversion (Acts 19.5ff), sometimes a while after having received Jesus as Savior (Acts 8.15f; 9.17f), sometimes before having confessed Jesus as Savior (Acts 10.44), sovereignty (Acts 2.1-4; 10.44), or through the laying on of hands (Acts 8.15; 9.17; 19.5).

Regardless how it happens, it is important that the event does happen and continues regularly. Everything in “the Kingdom” is spiritual – salvation, fruit, gifts, anointing, heaven and even God Himself. Thus, it is important to get spiritual, through the Holy Spirit.

### **Why “Baptism in the Spirit?”**

Firstly, it’s a promise to us as God’s children, and given with the expectation that it will be received.

It’s a convincing and authoritative apologetic when sharing the faith. Jesus’ teachings were balanced by “word” and a “demonstration of the Spirit’s power.” People had heard of the saving power of God. In Christ, they actually experienced it. We, too, must have the spiritual edge to minister to others.

At the Ascension, Jesus instructed the disciples to wait until after they had received power from the Spirit until they did ministry.

I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high (Luke 24:49).

They prayerfully and anxiously waited in the “upper room” until they had been endowed with power from God (Acts 2:1-4). After their Pentecostal experience, ministry broke out and they turned around and did the same things that Jesus did when empowered by that same Holy Spirit (Acts 2:43; John 14:12). Jesus knew what they were up against.

And He has instructed us in the same way. If it was good for them, it is good for us!

### **Outer Walk – Inner Character**

The Spirit carries on the work of the Father, which is a two-fold work: the expansion of the Kingdom of God, through the gifts (1 Corinthians 12-14) and the development of the Christian’s character to the fashion of Christ, through the fruit (Galatians 5:22).

### **Comfort, Strength, and Companionship when Doing God’s Work**

Jesus' Descriptions of the [Coming] Spirit include: Another Helper<sup>1</sup> (John 14:16-17); a dweller within the disciples (John 14:17), a mediator (John 14:16-26), Jesus' own emissary with His executive power<sup>2</sup> (John 14:26, 15:26, 16:7); a Teacher and Reminder of the life of Christ (John 14:25-26, 1 John 2:20, 27), a Witness (John 15:26-27), a revealer of the Truth (John 16:12-15), and one who convicts the world of sin.

Names for the Spirit include:

- Greek: *parakletos* (John 14:16, 26, 15:26, 16:17): someone called along side to help, an advocate/lawyer who will plead in one's behalf. One called in to stand by and give aid.
- Latin: *fortis*: brave, one who fills with courage and strength. Other English words include: comforter, helper, counselor, advocate, friend, encourager, comforting counselor, consoler, a befriender, intercessor, strengthener, and standby.

## **Sovereign Power and Grace**

God moves sovereignty to fulfill His plans through the Person of the Holy Spirit. Sometimes, even without anyone witnessing to them, people are convicted of right and wrong, the assurance of heaven, and other spiritual truths. The Holy Spirit rolls out God's will through the ages.

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<sup>1</sup> Another = Greek: *allos*, meaning a different in person but not in kind.

<sup>2</sup> Gentile, The Glorious Disturbance, p. 63.

But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment (John 16:7, 8).

We believe that, while He may be experienced by the unsaved, He cannot abide within the hearts of non-believers. (Romans 8:9, Jude 19)

God often uses people to confirm the moving of God in others. Divine encounters, for example, are times of wonderful spiritual nexus, where the sovereign power of the Lord working in one person is met with the Spirit of God in another person.

## **Jesus the Baptizer**

Jesus is the one who baptizes us in the Holy Spirit.

I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire (Matthew 3:11).

God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact. Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear (Acts 2:32, 33).

I would not have known him, except that the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, "The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is he who will baptize with the Holy Spirit (I John 1:33).

The person who is baptized in the Spirit will manifest the presence of God in a number of ways.

*phaneroosis* = manifestations (1 Corinthians 12.7)

*pneumatoon* = lit. spirituals (1 Corinthians 14.12)

*charismata* = gifts (Romans 12.6)

*doreas* = person-gifts or gifted persons (Ephesians 4.7)

## **The Blessing of the Holy Spirit**

The Spirit is a free gift (Acts 2:38, 11:17, Romans 5:5), a permanent friend who will never leave us (John 14:16), the Anointer and Empowerer for all ministry done in His Name (2 Corinthians 1:21-22, 1 John 2:20, 27).

The blessing of the Spirit in a believer's life is endless. It includes purity, worship and prayer (John 4:24, Jude 20), assurance we are adopted by God, (Romans 8:16), empowered for service (Romans 7:6), assisted in our growth and maturity in Christ (2 Peter 3:18, 1 Corinthians 2:12, Galatians 3:3). "Gifts" (1 Corinthians 12:7–11), and "fruit" (Galatians 6:22-26) are hallmarks of His blessing. In addition, the Spirit assists us in prayer (Romans 8:26), gives us spiritual strength (Ephesians 3:16, Colossians 1:11), guidance (Romans 8:14), and hope (Galatians 5:5).

Is there more? You bet there is!

The Spirit delivers us from sin (Galatians 5:17, Romans 8:2) and from Satan (Ephesians 6:17-18). He gives revelatory understanding to the Word (1 Corinthians 2:9-13) and enables us to preach with Power (1 Corinthians 2:3-4, 1 Thessalonians 1:5). He produces righteous character (Romans 14:17, Galatians 5:22-23). He gives us courage (2 Timothy 1:7). And He makes us more like Jesus (2 Corinthians 3:17-18).

### **Assurance of a Glorious Foretaste**

The Spirit is also a deposit – a glorious foreshadowing of heaven – a confirmation of our eternal home.

Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and

put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come (2 Corinthians 1:21, 22).

He assures us of our salvation in Jesus Christ,<sup>3</sup> assures us we are children of God,<sup>4</sup> and affirms the finality and all sufficiency of Christ's atonement for us.<sup>5</sup>

## **How to Receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit**

Prepare your heart through self examination.

When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:37, 38).

*Ask.*

Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? Or if he asks for an egg, will give him

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<sup>3</sup> Billy Graham, The Holy Spirit, p.78

<sup>4</sup> Galatians 4:6,7

<sup>5</sup> Hebrews 10:15-17



a scorpion? If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him (Luke 11:11-13) !

### **Two Prayer Models:**

*Holy Spirit, come and move in power in my life like a strong and driving wind. Give me new power for living my life and working in your kingdom. Set me free from sin, sickness, disease and the power of evil. Holy Spirit, you flow as a river from the Father's throne. Pour out upon me as a fountain, fill me with Your power, wash me in Your Mercy, and make me new. In Jesus' Name, Amen.*

Now wait for Him to do that. The gift of peace was the first indication that the disciples were filled with the Spirit. (John 20:21-23) When you sense His peace lean into Him more-so, soaking Him deeper into every cavity of your heart.

*Lord Jesus, I affirm that You are my Savior and my Lord. I acknowledge that You are the only way to the Father and that You have entered my heart, given me new birth, and that You pledge to forgive my sins every time I confess them.*

*What's more, You are also the Baptizer in the Holy Spirit. In preparation for asking You to fill me with the Holy Spirit: I confess my sins and ask You to forgive me.*

[Wait on the Lord. See what sins he surfaces. It may surprise you.]

*I repent of and renounce any involvement I have had in spiritual activities that are not of You (astrology, transcendental meditation, shakras, palm reading, divination, tarot cards, occult religions/practices, new age spirituality, auras, healing by means other than those sanctioned by Scripture, etc.). I renounce them!*

*I ask to be empowered by the Holy Spirit. Fill me with the Holy Spirit. In Jesus' Name, Amen.*

## **Assurances from Scripture**

Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good things to your children, how much more will you Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him (Luke 11.11-13)!

But wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit (Acts 1.4-5).

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1.8).

All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them (Acts 2.4).

## For further Reading:

Holy Vulnerability, Mike Flynn, Fresh Wind Ministries. *Mike's book is practical and provides one with the posture of living in the Holy Spirit.*

The Holy Spirit and You, Dennis and Rita Bennett, Logos Publishing. *A classic in the field. Episcopal priest Dennis testifies of his experience in the power of the Holy Spirit.*

Acts of the Holy Spirit, C. Peter Wagner, Regal Publishing. *A wonderful and sometimes stretching commentary of the book of Acts.*

The Glorious Disturbance, Ernest B. Gentile. *A how and why of understanding and receiving the baptism of the Spirit.*

Inner Healing through Healing of Memories, Betty Tapscott, Tapscott Ministries. *A powerful and practical book on appropriating the Spirit's healing into our past.*

The Wonderful Spirit-Filled Life, Charles Stanley, Nelson Publishers. *From a Baptist perspective. An easy, illuminating read.*

Power Evangelism, John Wimber, Harper and Row. *The Spirit's involvement in sharing the faith. A classic.*

Not all authors come from the same perspective – a good thing. Enjoy!