

# *Life Stream*



*The  
Holy  
Spirit  
in  
God's  
People*

*J a m e s   D .   C r a i g*

# *Lifestream*

## *The Holy Spirit in God's People*

by  
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# C O N T E N T S

<i>Introduction .....</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>How to Use This Book .....</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Leader Guide .....</i>	<i>5</i>
 <i>The Nature of the Holy Spirit</i>	
1 Deity .....	6
2 Personhood .....	8
3 Symbols and Titles .....	10
 <i>The Work of the Holy Spirit</i>	
4 Creation and Revelation .....	12
5 Demonstration and Conviction .....	14
6 Indwelling and Regeneration .....	16
7 Sanctification .....	18
8 Gifts .....	20
9 Guidance .....	22
 <i>The Fullness of the Holy Spirit</i>	
10 Baptism with the Spirit .....	24
11 Initial Evidence .....	26
12 Receiving the Baptism .....	28
13 Walking in the Spirit .....	30
<i>Answer Key .....</i>	<i>5, 32</i>

## INTRODUCTION

While teaching a Sunday School class one morning, I asked a simple question: What is the Great Commission? To my astonishment, no one offered to answer. Finally, a Bible college graduate tentatively quoted Matthew 28:19,20. The rest of the class did not know what the Great Commission was. The Church today suffers from a lack of basic Bible knowledge. So many Christians are quick to talk about their experiences but fall silent when the conversation turns to sound doctrine. And yet the Word of God exhorts us to pay close attention to sound teaching. Paul instructed Timothy to, "retain the standard of sound words which you have heard from me," and to be "constantly nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound doctrine which you have been following" (2 Timothy 1:13; 1 Timothy 4:6).

This study is offered to address in a small way this lack of scriptural knowledge. The bible has a great deal to say about the Holy Spirit in both the Old and New Testaments. He participated in creation; He inspired God's Word, He shows us our need of Christ; He regenerates, indwells and seals us when we come to Christ; He comforts us, strengthens us, teaches us, guides us, and empowers us as we live for Christ. Scarcely any aspect of the doctrine of salvation can be discussed without reference to the work of the Holy Spirit.

This book has three sections. It begins by looking at the nature of the Holy Spirit, His deity, His personhood and the things we can learn about His personality through the

symbols and titles Scripture applies to the Spirit. The second section examines the work of the Holy Spirit in the world, in the unbeliever and in the Christian. So much more could have been written in this area. I trust this section provides at least an overview of the extensive ministries of the Spirit. The third section discusses the Baptism with the Holy Spirit from the Classical Pentecostal position. It is not offered to refute those who hold other views, but simply as a scriptural rationale for the convictions it represents.

I conclude by thanking the people who have made this book possible. My instructors at Eastern Pentecostal Bible College introduced me to the exhilarating world of Christian doctrine. They laid the foundation of my knowledge of God's Word. Doctor Don Hill of Lay Leadership International and Reverend Keith Parks have both been a great encouragement to my ministry as a teacher and writer. Tim Mischuk provided invaluable assistance in the production of the book acting as my guide into the world of the Macintosh computer used to write and lay out the manuscript. Many other friends have provided that priceless commodity, encouragement throughout the course of the project. I also thank my parents for their kindness and help in all of my writing endeavours. And I thank my wife, Juanita and my children for being willing to live with a hyperactive husband and father. But most of all, I want to thank the Holy Spirit who has been such a faithful Helper and Teacher in my attempt to convey the truths of God's Word concerning His gracious Person and work.

## HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Learning is hard work. It requires something of us. We must interact with the material to be learned, but also with other learners if what we study is to be retained. Most of all, learning requires that we change. New knowledge challenges us, motivates us and shows us where we need to be compared with where we are now. This is particularly true when we study God's Word which was given not only to instruct us, but to correct us (2 Timothy 3:16,17).

This is a workbook. It asks questions as you read along. You find the answers in your own Bible. The process of reading and evaluating a question, reading a passage in the Bible, finding the answer in that passage and writing it in your own words provides excellent reinforcement. When these questions are discussed in a small group, the amount you will retain from each lesson will increase dramatically.

I recommend that you answer the questions as you encounter them in the text since, in most cases, they are linked to what you are reading at that moment. Model

answers are provided on pages 5 and 32 so you can check your work. I also suggest you mark important verses in your own Bible so you can find them easily in the future.

Each lesson has "Additional References" provided for further research on various aspects of the material. They are tied by footnote numbers to the relevant passages in the text.

There is also a key verse on each lesson for memorization. Write the verse on a 3 x 5 card and carry it with you each week as you study the lesson. This memory work will probably provide the greatest long-term benefits of the course if you commit yourself to it.

Finally, if possible, study this book with others in a small group. Try to meet at least once per week. Do the reading and answer the questions at home before you come to the group. Discuss the material and your answers to the questions when you meet. Pray together as well. If you do not have a class or small group to join, start one. See the next section for information on how to lead a small group.

## LEADER GUIDE

This study is designed for use in a small group setting. It can form the basis of a discussion Bible study using the questions embedded in the text. It is preferable, however, that each student read the notes before each lesson is discussed since the questions are not intended by themselves to cover the lesson theme adequately.

The key to a successful small group is participation. Your role as leader is to stimulate and motivate the discussion, not to do all the talking. Quiet group members should be encouraged by directing a specific question to them. More talkative ones may need to be approached privately to ask them to allow others more time to speak.

Here are three simple rules for good discussion you can share with the group: (1) Keep it brief; (2) Stay on topic; and (3) Wait your turn. Ask for their co-operation in practising these three simple guidelines.

Spending time in prayer is a vital part of any Christian group. Allow various ones to share current needs before you pray, but do not permit one person to describe their problems at length. Ask them for one specific need the group can pray for. Show the group how to pray conversa-

tionally with each person contributing short prayers in turn about the various needs that were expressed. People can pray more than once but should keep it brief and leave room for others to pray.

Your small group should meet weekly if possible. If you are studying *Lifestream* in Sunday School with a large class, begin with a 20-minute general teaching or discussion time on the text of the lesson. Then break into groups of four or five to discuss the questions and to share and pray together for the rest of the time.

The model answers provided below will enable people studying on their own to check their work. They should not be read out in the class or small group. Find out what your students have learned. If they have not done the questions, have them open their Bibles and answer them directly in the class or group. Encourage them to make the effort to answer the questions. They will learn much more this way.

For more information on leading a small group, see *All About Cells* available from Harvest 2000 Publications, 31630 Railroad Canyon Rd., Suite 5, Canyon Lake, California, 92380.

## ANSWER KEY

## Lesson 1

1. Heb.9—He is eternal.  
Ps. 139—He is everywhere.  
1 Jn. 5—He is truth.  
Ro. 1—He is holy.
2. To blaspheme means to speak disrespectfully about God. Therefore, if the Holy Spirit can be blasphemed, He must be God.
3. Jn. 16—He convicts people.  
Ro. 8—He speaks to us and shows us we are God's children.  
Eph. 1—He seals us until the day of full redemption.  
Eph. 2—He gives us access to the Father.
4. Only God should be worshipped, thus, if the Holy Spirit is to be worshipped, He must be God.

## Lesson 2

1. Persons are conscious of themselves. They can think and communicate. They can also experience emotion and make choices.
2. The Spirit can know and think because He can search the depths of God and know God's thoughts.
3. The Holy Spirit can choose how He will distribute spiritual gifts. He can also set Himself against our sinful nature and lead us both of which require the ability to choose.
4. The Spirit tells us about Christ. He sends out missionaries. He predicts the future and He appoints spiritual leaders.

## Lesson 3

1. Neh. 9—Thy Good Spirit.  
Mt. 10—The Spirit of your Father.

Eph. 1—The Holy Spirit of Promise.  
Heb. 9—The Eternal Spirit.

2. The Holy Spirit convinces us that we have indeed been adopted into God's family. He is also the one who communicates God's grace to us, the free gift of salvation that we could never earn or deserve.
3. 1 Kg.18—Fire demonstrates God's presence and power.  
Isa. 4—Fire purifies.  
Ps. 78—Fire guides us at night.  
Ps. 105—Fire provides illumination.
4. Ex. 27—It was burned in lamps to provide light.  
Ex. 40:9—It was used to dedicate the Tabernacle furniture.  
Ex. 40:13—It was used to set apart people to serve as priests.  
1 Sam. 10—It was used to set apart kings in their royal office.

## Lesson 4

1. Jesus had to be sinless so that He could die as a sacrifice to pay the penalty for our sins, not His own.
2. Dan.7—Dreams.  
Eze.1—Visions  
Jer.1—A boiling pot as an object lesson.  
Jer.18—An everyday event: the local potter making a clay pot.
3. They were foolish because they prophesied by their own inspiration. The Holy Spirit had not shown them what to say.
4. They believed the Holy Spirit spoke God's Word through David and Isaiah.

(Continued on page 32)

## The Deity of the Holy Spirit

The Bible reveals to us that God is a Trinity: One God who exists in three persons; not three Gods, not one person, but one God in three persons. We know this because it is clear from Scripture there are three divine persons, but only one God: "Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord is one!" (Deuteronomy 6:4). We cannot understand how this could be the case, but then, it is not unusual for creatures to be incapable of understanding their Creator.

The Bible indicates clearly that the Holy Spirit is God. One day, the Apostle Peter was dealing with a couple who were trying to deceive the Jerusalem church. Peter said to the man,

*"Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit,...you have not lied to men, but to God" (Acts 5:3,4).*

In addition to this clear statement, there are three other reasons why we believe in the deity of the Holy Spirit. First, the names given in Scripture to the Holy Spirit and His associations with the other two persons of the Trinity as an equal prove His deity. Second, many texts show that the Holy Spirit possesses the attributes or characteristics of God. And third, the Holy Spirit performs divine works: He does things that only God can do.

The Holy Spirit is called, "the Spirit of the Lord" and also, "the Spirit of God" many times in Scripture (Isaiah 11:2; Numbers 24:2). He is called "the Lord, the Spirit" in 2 Corinthians 3:18. He also bears the title, "the Spirit of Christ" (1 Peter 1:11). These titles imply the deity of the Holy Spirit. If the spirit of something represents its very life or essence, how could God's "Spirit" be any less divine than God Himself? And how can God's Word have the audacity to call the Holy Spirit, "Lord" (i.e., sovereign, ruler of all things), if He is not God? If the Lord our God is one as Deuteronomy 6:4 proclaims, then the Lord who is the Spirit must be God.

### 1. What divine characteristics of the Holy Spirit are given in the following verses?

Heb. 9:14 \_\_\_\_\_

Ps. 139:7-10 \_\_\_\_\_

### MEMORABLE VERSE

Acts 5:3a, 4b

Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit,...you have not lied to men, but to God."

1 Jn. 5:7 \_\_\_\_\_

Ro. 1:4 \_\_\_\_\_

The Holy Spirit is named as an equal alongside the Father and the Son in the baptismal formula given by Jesus in Matthew 28:19,

*Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.*

The same type of association can be found in the apostolic blessing of 2 Corinthians 13:14:

*The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.*

These words would surely border on blasphemy unless the Holy Spirit is as much God as the Father and the Son.

We know that the Holy Spirit possesses the divine characteristic of omnipotence, or being all-powerful, because the power of the Holy Spirit is equated in Scripture with the power of God,

*The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you (Luke 1:35).*

His power is also demonstrated in that miracles of deliverance and healing are performed through the Holy Spirit (Mt.12:28).<sup>1</sup>

Like God, the Holy Spirit is also omniscient: He knows all things. He is the only one who can search out even the deepest truths about God:

*For the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man, which is in him? Even so the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God (1 Cor. 2:10-11).<sup>2</sup>*

Anyone who is actually capable of searching out the "depths of God" would have to be God himself for only God is capable of knowing Himself fully.

### 2. What is the significance of the fact that the Holy Spirit can be blasphemed? What does this tell us about His nature (Mk. 3:29)?

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The Holy Spirit also has the divine attribute of holiness or complete absence of any taint of sin or moral evil in His character. This is indicated by His very name, the *Holy*

Spirit, and by the statement of Romans 1:4 which calls Him, "the Spirit of holiness." As well, one of the principal works of the Holy Spirit in the believer is that of sanctification or making us holy:

*But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you...for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth (2 Thessalonians 2:13).<sup>3</sup>*

The deity of the Spirit is also demonstrated by the divine works that are attributed to Him. These include, creation, inspiration, prophecy, and the impartation of spiritual and physical life.

The involvement of the Holy Spirit in creation is recorded in the second verse of the Bible:

*And the earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep; and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters (Genesis 1:2).<sup>4</sup>*

The work of the Spirit in revealing truth to God's messengers as they wrote the Bible is indicated by many verses such as Ezekiel 11:5,

*Then the Spirit of the Lord fell upon me, and He said to me, "Say, 'Thus says the Lord....'"*

This work of revelation included communicating to the prophets by means of visions (Ezekiel 11:24).

We observe in Acts 21:11 that the Holy Spirit can accurately predict the future. This work includes the hundreds of prophecies in the Old Testament inspired by the Holy Spirit that have been fulfilled including those relating to the death of Christ (1 Peter 1:10-11).

In the New Testament the Holy Spirit spoke through a prophet named Agabus and predicted a famine:

*Agabus stood up and began to indicate by the Spirit that there would certainly be a great famine all over the world. And this took place in the reign of Claudius (Acts 11:28).<sup>5</sup>*

The Holy Spirit is also able to give people both physical and spiritual life. Romans 8:11 says,

*But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He...will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you.*

Through the new birth, the Holy Spirit gives spiritual life to God's people:

*Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God (John 3:5).<sup>6</sup>*

The Bible tells us that in addition to these divine works of the Spirit, He was responsible for the virgin conception of Jesus Christ (Matthew 1:18-20).

He was also actively involved in Christ's bodily resur-

rection:

*(Jesus Christ) was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness (Ro. 1:4).*

### 3. What are some of the other divine works of the Holy Spirit spoken of in the following verses?

Jn. 16:7-11 \_\_\_\_\_

Ro. 8:16 \_\_\_\_\_

Eph. 1:13 \_\_\_\_\_

Eph. 2:18 \_\_\_\_\_

The ancient creeds of the Christian Church are for the most part, excellent statements of doctrine hammered out to help the Church combat various erroneous teachings. These early creeds contain clear statements of the deity of the Holy Spirit. The Nicene Creed states:

*I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and giver of life, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son, who, with the Father and Son together, is worshipped and glorified.*

### 4. The Nicene Creed says that the Holy Spirit is to be worshipped. What does this tell you about the Holy Spirit's nature in the light of a verse like Matthew 4:10?

The Westminster Confession declares,

*In the unity of the Godhead there be three persons of one substance, power, and eternity; God the Father; God the Son; and God the Holy Ghost."*

What an awesome thought to realize that "God the Holy Ghost" lives within the heart of every follower of Christ from the least to the greatest. The remaining lessons in this study will explore many of the personal characteristics and divine works of "the Lord, who is the Spirit" (2 Corinthians 3:18, NIV).

#### ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

1 Acts 10:38; Romans 15:18,19

2 John 14:26, 16:13

3 Romans 8:12,13; 1 Peter 1:2

4 Job 33:4; Psalms 104:30

5 Acts 20:22,23; 1 Timothy 4:1-3

6 Romans 8:2-4; Titus 3:5



## The Personhood of the Holy Spirit

What is the Holy Spirit really like? Many people are perhaps confused by the references in the King James Version (KJV) to the "Holy Ghost." In our day, the word ghost has a very negative connotation spiritually. This term certainly does not make the Holy Spirit seem like someone you would like to get to know, much less invite to live within your life. This is because the word "ghost" has changed meaning since the KJV was translated in 1611. At that time, the word was much closer to the German word, "geist" to which it is related. "Geist" is the German word for spirit.

Some have felt that the Holy Spirit is merely a symbol of the power of God or of the divine influence in the world. If this were the case, however, the Bible would not speak of the power of the Spirit separately from the Spirit Himself as it does in Luke 4:14 for example: "Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit."<sup>1</sup>

Perhaps it is because the Spirit does not have a body that some find it hard to conceive of Him as a person. And yet we are convinced that God the Father is a person although He does not have a physical body. We know as well that we do not cease to be persons when our bodies die as the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus demonstrates (Luke 16:19-31).<sup>2</sup>

The most important thing to remember about the Holy Spirit next to His deity, is that the Holy Spirit is a real person. The Bible is filled with evidence of the personhood of the Holy Spirit. Most of it is indirect evidence, that is, you will not find texts that plainly state this truth. Instead, we have to look at how the Bible speaks of the Holy Spirit. This evidence will be examined in three areas. First, the Holy Spirit possesses the qualities of personhood. Second, He performs activities that only a person could perform. And third, He is treated as a person by the Word of God. Let's begin looking at the first area by asking a question.

1. In your own words, describe what makes a person a person. Why is you neighbour a person but not his dog, for example?

### MEMORABLE VERSE

John 14:26

"But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you."

The Bible indicates that the Holy Spirit possesses three of the essential characteristics of personhood. These are: intellect or the ability to know and think; emotions, or the ability to feel; and will, or the ability to make decisions.

We know that the Holy Spirit possesses a mind because the Bible states this clearly: "He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is" (Romans 8:27a). As well, all of the functions of the Holy Spirit discussed below presuppose the ability to know and think. For example, Jesus said that the Holy Spirit would teach us all things:

*But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you (John 14:26).*

How can the Holy Spirit teach us all things unless He is capable of knowing all things?

We know that the Spirit has the personal capacity to experience emotions because the Scripture speaks of the love of the Spirit,

*Now I urge you, brethren, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in your prayers to God for me (Romans 15:30).*

2. Read 1 Corinthians 2:10, 11 and see what these verses imply about the Spirit's ability to know and think.

The Bible also makes it clear that the Holy Spirit can experience grief and jealousy (Ephesians 4:30; James 4:5).<sup>3</sup>

There are several passages that show the Holy Spirit has a will and can make decisions as well as give direction to others. Concerning Paul's second missionary journey, we read,

*And when they had come to Mysia, they were trying to go into Bithynia, and the Spirit of Jesus did not permit them (Acts 16:7).*

The personhood of the Holy Spirit is also demonstrated by the personal works He performs. The Bible tells us that the Holy Spirit can speak: "And the Spirit said to Philip, 'Go up and join this chariot'" (Acts 8:29).<sup>4</sup> The ability to speak is unique to persons. The Spirit is also able to guide us into the truth and to teach us about Christ. In fact, Jesus promised,

*But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come (John 16:13).*

The Spirit can and does pray for us (Romans 8:26,27). Only persons are capable of relating to God through prayer. The Holy Spirit leads us and gives direction to God's servants (Romans 8:14). He also has the ability to convict people of their sin and show them their need of Christ (John 16:8).

**3. How do the following verse show us that the Holy Spirit has a will of His own (1 Cor. 12:7-11; Gal. 5:17,18)?**

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The third line of evidence for the personhood of the Holy Spirit is quite broad. In at least four ways, the Bible treats the Holy Spirit as a person in most of its references to Him. First, the New Testament uses masculine personal pronouns (He, Him) to refer to the Spirit. This is particularly striking because the original Greek word for Spirit, *pneuma* is a neuter word and the rules of grammar would require neuter pronouns to be used with it (John 16:7,8).<sup>5</sup>

Second, the Holy Spirit is associated as an equal with other persons in an number of important passages. These include the Church's baptismal formula found in Matthew 28:19 and the so called Apostolic Blessing of 2 Corinthians 13:14:

*The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.*

The Spirit is also identified closely with the other two persons of the Trinity in the conferring of spiritual gifts on the Church and in the work of saving mankind (1 Corinthians 12:4-6; 1 Peter 1:2). He is identified with human persons in Acts 15:28 where the believers agree with the Holy Spirit regarding an important decision: "For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay upon you no greater burden than these essentials" (Acts 15:28).

**4. Briefly list some of the other works of the Holy Spirit which indicate He is a person.**

Jn. 15:26 \_\_\_\_\_

Acts 13:2-4 \_\_\_\_\_

Acts 20:23 \_\_\_\_\_

Acts 20:28 \_\_\_\_\_

The third way in which Scripture treats the Holy spirit as a person is the fact that He communicates things to us from the other two persons of the Trinity. He pours out the Father's love in our hearts, for example (Romans 5:5). And with reference to Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit has been sent to us by Christ to bring Christ's presence into our lives. The Holy Spirit is "another Helper" who comes to live in us. It is through the Spirit's indwelling presence that we have Christ in us as He promised: "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you" (John 14:18).<sup>6</sup> If Jesus could speak of the Spirit's coming to replace Him in a positive way as He does, surely the Holy Spirit must be at least as much as person as Jesus Himself is a person (John 16:7).

Finally, as the Bible indicates, we ourselves are able to relate to the Holy Spirit as a real person. We can obey Him, resist Him, or insult him:

*You men who are stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears are always resisting the Holy Spirit (Acts 7:51).<sup>7</sup>*

We are also able to enjoy fellowship with the Holy Spirit (Philippians 2:1).

As you can see, the Bible is full of evidence that the Holy Spirit is a real person. But what does this mean for us? It means that the Holy Spirit who lives within every Christian is someone we can build a relationship with. We can talk to Him, listen to Him, spend time with Him, and ask for His help. And because He lives in our spirits, we can enjoy His presence every moment of the day. We can have God Himself, the third person of the Holy Trinity as our constant companion and helper, just as Jesus promised,

*But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper shall not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you (John 16:7).*

**ADDITIONAL REFERENCES**

1 Luke 1:35; Acts 10:38

2 2 Corinthians 5:6-8

3 Isaiah 63:10

4 Acts 21:11

5 John 14:16,17; 15:26

6 1 John 3:24

7 Acts 11:12; Hebrews 10:29

## The Titles of the Holy Spirit

Titles are important. They tell us what positions individuals occupy and often, what functions they perform. For example, the Auditor General is the person who checks the government's record of expenditures each year; the Chief of Police is responsible for local law enforcement and so forth.

It is interesting to note that while the Bible gives a number of titles of the Holy Spirit, He is never designated by a formal name. This is not surprising when we realize that the Holy Spirit's role is to lift up the Lord Jesus rather than to draw attention to Himself.

We will examine six titles of the Holy Spirit. The first three point to His identity, the last three indicate His nature and His work.

**The Spirit** This is the most basic title given to the Holy Spirit. The words for spirit in Hebrew, Greek and Latin all mean breath or wind (John 3:5-8).<sup>1</sup> The Hebrew word is *rauch*, the Greek word is *pneuma*, and the Latin word is *spiritus*, from which our English word, spirit comes.

**The Holy Spirit** This is the most common New Testament title for the Spirit. It emphasizes His uniqueness over against the human spirit which has been tainted by sin and the demonic or unclean spirits that Paul calls "the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places" (Ephesians 6:12).<sup>2</sup>

**The Spirit of the Lord** This is the most common Old Testament title of the Holy Spirit. It stresses that the empowering spirit in operation in a given situation is indeed the Spirit of Jehovah, the God of Abraham, Issac and Jacob (1 Samuel 10:6). Related to this are titles like the Spirit of God and My Spirit (Genesis 1:2; Isaiah 42:1).

### 1. What other titles of the Holy Spirit can you find in the following verses?

Neh. 9:20 \_\_\_\_\_

Mt. 10:20 \_\_\_\_\_

Eph. 1:13 \_\_\_\_\_

Heb. 9:14 \_\_\_\_\_

### MEMORABLE VERSE

#### Ephesians 1:13,14

In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory.

**The Spirit of Christ** This title stresses the position of the Holy Spirit as a member of the Trinity. It indicates that He is the one who communicates to us the presence of the indwelling Christ by coming to live within us (Romans 8:9).<sup>3</sup> As a result, our bodies are called temples, or places where God dwells (1 Corinthians 6:19).

**The Spirit of Life** This title points to the role of the Holy Spirit in the work of imparting spiritual life to the believer at conversion. It also speaks of the ongoing life of victory over sin which enables us to overcome temptation. Paul wrote to the Romans,

*For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and death (Romans 8:2).*

**The Spirit of Holiness** Although this title is only used once in the New Testament, it emphasizes not only that the Holy Spirit is Himself holy, but also that He is the one who enables God's people to become holy (Romans 1:4). As Paul puts it, we are "saints (holy ones) by calling" (1 Corinthians 1:2). More will be said on this crucial work of the Holy Spirit in a subsequent lesson.

**The Spirit of Truth** Jesus gave this title to the Holy Spirit in His role as the Helper who would come to lead us into all truth by disclosing the things of Christ to us. This speaks of the Spirit's work as the one who illuminates God's truth to our minds so that we can understand it (John 16:13,14).<sup>4</sup>

**The Comforter or Helper** Jesus promised in John 14:16 to send "another Helper" who would be with us forever. The Greek word used for this title means someone called alongside to help us. It can refer to a lawyer who defends you in court, or one who pleads your case such as an intercessor. Jesus emphasized the teaching ministry of the Spirit in His role as our Helper (John 16:13,14).<sup>5</sup>

### 2. Explain in your own words the significance of the following titles of the Holy Spirit.

The Spirit of Adoption (Ro. 8:15) \_\_\_\_\_

The Spirit of Grace (Heb. 10:29; Eph. 2:8,9) \_\_\_\_\_

## The Symbols of the Holy Spirit

The word symbol refers to the use of a concrete object to represent an abstract quality in another person or thing.

Thus when we say that the Holy Spirit is wind or fire or oil, we mean there are aspects of His nature that are similar to one or more of the properties of these substances. The Holy Spirit is not the same as wind, or fire or oil, but He is like these things in one or more ways.

**Wind** Jesus used wind as a symbol of the Holy Spirit:

*The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is every one who is born of the Spirit (John 3:8).*

It suggests that the Holy Spirit is invisible, powerful, uncontrollable and that His workings are past human understanding. The presence and power of the Holy Spirit was indicated by the rushing mighty wind heard when He came upon the Church at the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:2).<sup>6</sup>

### 3. According to the following verses, what are some of the things that fire does?

1 Kg. 18:37-39 \_\_\_\_\_

Isa. 4:4; Mal. 3:3 \_\_\_\_\_

Ps. 78:14 \_\_\_\_\_

Ps. 105:39; Isa. 4:5 \_\_\_\_\_

**Fire** By its very nature, fire represents power, illumination, warmth, and that which purifies. God's presence and usually His acceptance and approval were demonstrated by fire in the Old Testament (Exodus 3:2; Leviticus 9:23,24).<sup>7</sup> John the Baptist promised that Jesus would baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire (Matthew 3:11).<sup>8</sup> In the same way, the Holy Spirit brings God's presence into our lives warmly convincing us of His acceptance and approval. He also illuminates our pathway and works to purify us of all dross or sin.

**Water** Water is essential to life in so many ways. It purifies, refreshes, sustains and makes growth and fruitfulness possible. Jesus said to the woman at the well,

*Whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life (John 4:14).*

The Holy Spirit is the flow of divine life, the *Lifestream* who flows both into but also out of believers. This suggests that the Spirit comes not only to bring the life of God to us, but to empower us to share it with others:

*He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, "From his*

*innermost being shall flow rivers of living water." But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified (John 7:38,39).<sup>9</sup>*

### 4. In what ways was oil used in the Bible?

Ex. 27:20 \_\_\_\_\_

Ex. 40:9,10 \_\_\_\_\_

Ex. 40:13-15 \_\_\_\_\_

1 Sam. 10:1 \_\_\_\_\_

**Oil** Oil was used for a number of purposes in the ancient world including fuelling lamps, healing and to set apart individuals for certain important offices such as kings and priests. In the same way, the Holy Spirit anoints God's servants to set them apart and empower them to do His work (Acts 1:8; 10:38). He also illuminates the Scriptures to our minds and enables us to understand the truth (John 16:13-15; 1 John 2:20,21,27).

There are a number of other symbols of the Holy Spirit such as wine, which speaks of the joy and boldness the Spirit gives believers (Ephesians 5:18); the seal of the Spirit which speaks of His presence as a sign of God's ownership and the guarantee of safe delivery (Ephesians 4:30); and the earnest of the Spirit which speaks of Him as a down payment and foretaste God has placed in our lives to assure us that one day, all of salvation's blessings will be ours (2 Corinthians 1:22).<sup>10</sup>

All of these symbols and titles help us to understand better who the Holy Spirit is and what He seeks to accomplish in our lives. As we study them, let us purpose to know more fully the indwelling Helper and Friend they portray.

### ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

- 11 Corinthians 2:10
- 2 Mark 3:28-30; Luke 4:33
- 3 1 Peter 1:11; Galatians 4:6
- 4 John 16:13,14
- 5 John 14:26
- 6 John 20:22; Genesis 2:7
- 7 Exodus 13:21,22; Isaiah 6:6,7
- 8 Acts 2:3
- 9 Isaiah 44:3-5; Ezekiel 36:25-27
- 10 Matthew 9:17; Ephesians 1:13,14

## The Holy Spirit in Creation

In this lesson we will examine the role of the Holy Spirit in the creation of the physical world and in the revelation of God's written Word. At first glance, it may seem unusual to put these two topics together. Both these areas, however, deal with the Holy Spirit's role as the One who executes the purposes of the Godhead at the level of the material world.

As a member of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit was fully involved in the work of creation. He is mentioned in this regard in the very second verse of the Bible,

*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. And the earth was formless and void, and the darkness was over the surface of the deep; and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters (Genesis 1:1-2).*

The Hebrew word translated "moving" is only found in one other place in the Bible, Deuteronomy 32:11 where it speaks of "an eagle that stirs up its nest, that *hovers* over its young." The idea seems to include a mother's loving protection and nurture.

The creation account does not emphasize the role of the Holy Spirit in particular because there are only hints of God's trinitarian nature in the Old Testament. This was due to the danger of encouraging polytheism, the belief in many gods that was so prevalent in Moses' day.

The Old Testament also reveals the Holy Spirit's role in creation as the giver of life or breath. Thus when God had created Adam, He "breathed into his nostrils the breath (or spirit, *rauch*) of life; and man became a living being" (Genesis 2:7). Therefore Job can say, "The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life (Job 33:4)."

The other Old Testament references to the work of the Holy Spirit in creation speak of His role as the sustainer and preserver of life and the one who adorns or beatifies the heavens (Job 34:14,15).<sup>1</sup>

In the New Testament the creative work of the Holy Spirit is not mentioned with one very important exception. Both Matthew and Luke emphasize the crucial role of the Holy Spirit in the virgin birth of Jesus Christ. Luke records this marvellous event in clear yet discrete terms:

### MEMORABLE VERSE

2 Peter 1:20,21

*"But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God."*

*And Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy offspring shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:34,35).<sup>2</sup>*

1. Why was it essential to the plan of salvation that Jesus be conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin (Lk. 1:35; Heb. 7:26-28; 9:13,14; 1 Pet. 1:18,19)?

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## The Holy Spirit's Work of Revelation

The term revelation, when used theologically refers specifically to the unveiling of truth about God that was previously unknown to man. The theological term which describes how this revealed truth was communicated to us through the Bible is inspiration. This word means "breathed into" and it refers to the process whereby God breathed His truth into the hearts and minds of the Bible writers, enabling them to record without error the things which He wanted to reveal to mankind. In this regard, 2 Timothy 3:16, 17 states:

*All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.*

The word, "inspired" in this passage actually means "God-breathed" and it simply indicates that the Scriptures are the very Word of God. Notice as well that because the Scriptures are God-breathed, they are authoritative, that is, they show us God's will. And because they show us God's will, they are profitable or useful to equip us to serve God. This is why Bible study is so important for the Christian.

The Holy Spirit in both the Old and New Testaments is the one responsible for revealing God's truth to men and women. There are many examples of revelations that were given to individuals to meet the needs of their time, but were not intended to be recorded as part of Holy Scripture. Abraham is an example of one who knew God's "commandments", "statutes" and "laws" according to Genesis 26:5 and yet these were not recorded to be passed down to us. No doubt these things were revealed to him by the Holy Spirit.

2. From the following passages, list some of the ways and means the Holy Spirit used besides direct speech to reveal the truth to the prophets.

Dan. 7:1 \_\_\_\_\_

Eze. 1:1 \_\_\_\_\_

Jer. 1:13, 14 \_\_\_\_\_

Jer. 18: 1-6 \_\_\_\_\_

The Holy Spirit also revealed God's truth to the Old Testament prophets. Concerning Ezekiel we read, "And as He spoke to me the Spirit entered me and set me on my feet; and I heard Him speaking to me" (Ezekiel 2:2). And Zechariah writes,

*And they made their hearts like flint so that they could not hear the law and the words which the Lord of Hosts had sent by His Spirit through the former prophets" (Zechariah 7:12).<sup>3</sup>*

There are many other references to this work of the Spirit in the Old Testament.

### 3. According to Ezekiel 13:1-3, why were the prophets of Israel foolish?

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The New Testament also gives ample testimony to the Holy Spirit's work of speaking God's Word through the Old Testament prophets. Jesus, in discussion with the Pharisees said,

*"What do you think about the Christ, whose son is He?" They said to Him, "The son of David." He said to them, "Then how does David in the Spirit call Him 'Lord,' " (Matthew 22:42-43).<sup>4</sup>*

Jesus is saying that David wrote under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

In an even stronger statement of the revelatory work of the Holy Spirit, the New Testament often quotes Old Testament passages and calls them God's Word even when God is not the direct speaker in the passage quoted (Acts 13:35).

### 4. How did Peter and Paul view the work of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament prophets like David and Isaiah (Acts 1:16, 28:25)?

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Concerning the New Testament, we read of the Holy Spirit revealing truth to the apostles and prophets (Ephesians 3:2-5). This was in fulfillment of the promise of Christ to His disciples in John 14:26.<sup>5</sup>

The Bible does not tell us a great deal about the way in which the Holy Spirit spoke through the writers of Scripture. Peter says that "no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God" (2 Peter 1:21). The word "moved" here literally means "carried along." We know by comparing their writings that the authors of Scripture have different styles of writing and levels of education.

This means that the Holy Spirit did not merely dictate His message to the writers, but somehow used their uniqueness to record God's message accurately and free from error. The Bible emphasizes that the words of Scripture are from God. Thus, the Bible is the Word of God communicated by means of the words of men (1 Corinthians 2:10-13).<sup>6</sup>

In all of His work of revelation, the goal of the Holy Spirit is to place the spotlight constantly on Jesus Christ. Jesus said,

*When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, He will bear witness of Me....He shall glorify Me; for He shall take of Mine, and shall disclose it to you (John 15:26, 16:14).*

As Paul puts it, the Holy Spirit is the one who enables us to recognize and submit to the lordship of Jesus Christ,

*Therefore I make known to you, that no one speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus is accursed"; and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:3).*

The work of the Holy Spirit in revelation guarantees for us the accuracy and authority of the Word of God which reveals for us the living Word of God, Jesus Christ.

#### ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

1 Job 26:13; Psalm 36:6; 104:29,30

2 Matthew 1:18

3 Nehemiah 9:30; Micah 3:8

4 Acts 4:25; 1 Peter 1:10,11

5 John 16:13; Matthew 10:19,20

6 1 Thessalonians 2:13

## Demonstration

These two functions of the Holy Spirit are joined together because they both describe His work in those who do not know Christ. The remaining lessons of this study will focus on the work of the Holy Spirit in believers.

The term demonstration is drawn from 1 Corinthians 2:4-5 where Paul writes,

*And my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith should not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God.*

It refers to the work of the Holy Spirit in performing miracles, signs and wonders in order to validate the divine origin and power of the gospel.

In general terms, a miracle is a supernatural act which goes contrary to normal expectations in a given situation and which manifests God's presence, concern and power. The Old Testament contains many examples of miracles which served to demonstrate to unbelievers that Jehovah is God and that Israel is His chosen people. The greatest of these was the deliverance from bondage in Egypt accomplished through the parting of the Red Sea (Exodus 15:1-19).

In the case of some of these miraculous effects, the Spirit of the Lord is mentioned as the direct agent of divine power. This includes the supernatural strength given to several of the Judges enabling them to deliver Israel from her enemies. The most colourful of these individuals was Samson (Judges 13:24,25).<sup>1</sup>

In the New Testament under the New Covenant, the Spirit's work of demonstration takes on a whole new focus. As mentioned in the previous lesson, the work of the Spirit is to lift up Jesus Christ (John 15:26, 16:14). During the ministry of Jesus, the Spirit did this through the miracles Jesus did in the power of the Spirit like casting out demons (Matthew 12:28). As the Book of Acts declares,

*You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and how He went about doing good, and healing all who were oppressed by the devil (Acts 10:38).*

## MEMORABLE VERSE

John 16:7,8

*"But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper shall not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you. And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin, and righteousness, and judgment."*

After His Ascension, Jesus poured out the Holy Spirit upon His Church to empower her to proclaim the Good News of His saving death and resurrection. This is why, after commissioning them to take the gospel around the world, He told the Apostles, "you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high" (Luke 24:49b).

The Holy Spirit would enable the Apostles to preach the gospel with accompanying signs and wonders to prove it was true (Hebrews 2:3,4). And this is exactly what they did (Acts 2:43).<sup>2</sup>

## 1. What do the following verses say about the place of signs and wonders in the work of preaching the gospel (Acts 14:3; Heb. 2:1-4)?

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The miracles performed by the Apostles validated and empowered their preaching, resulting in many conversions:

*And at the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were taking place among the people;...and all the more believers in the Lord, multitudes of men and women, were constantly added to their number (Acts 5:12,14).*

Paul emphasized the importance of the miraculous ministry of the Holy Spirit concerning the work of evangelism (Romans 15:18,19).

The term demonstration is appropriate because signs and wonders make evangelism more than words, they demonstrate the saving and healing power of the name of Jesus (1 Thessalonians 1:5).

## 2. Read these verses in Acts and describe briefly the results of the healings that occurred (Acts 3:1-4:4; 9:32-42).

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## Conviction

The term conviction refers to the work of the Holy Spirit in showing people their need of Christ and moving them towards repentance and faith in Him. The Scriptures state that spiritually we are darkened, blinded and dead (Romans 1:21).<sup>3</sup> This means that human beings are incapable of turning to God unassisted by His grace.



The problem we face can be expressed in modern computer jargon. We have no interface with God. An interface is a point of communication, a bridge that makes it possible for two individuals to speak to each other. In 1 Corinthians 2:11, Paul describes this problem:

*For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man's spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God (NIV).*

And because Jesus said in John 14:17 that unbelievers cannot receive the Holy Spirit, therefore, unbelievers lack any way of understanding God's truth concerning their need of faith in Christ. They cannot simply decide one day that it would be a good idea to accept Christ and miss Hell. This is why the convicting work of the Holy Spirit is absolutely essential to the Church's evangelistic ministry. It is doomed to failure unless we understand and co-operate with this vital ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus spelled out for us the details of the Spirit's work in conviction clearly in John 16:8-11:

*And He (the Holy Spirit), when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin, and righteousness, and judgment; concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me; and concerning righteousness, because I go the Father, and you no longer behold Me; and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged.*

Jesus explains that the Spirit will convict the world (i.e., unbelievers) of sin (not specific sins but of our innate sinfulness) because they do not believe in Him. Refusing to believe in Christ who has provided for our salvation is in reality the only sin that will send a person to Hell (John 3:18).<sup>4</sup> All others can be forgiven if we will accept Christ. That is why the Spirit concentrates on this central issue: our need to believe in Christ and His finished work on the cross.

The work of the cross is also in view in the second item, the convincing of unbelievers concerning righteousness because Jesus has ascended to the Father. Christ's resurrection and His Ascension prove that His sacrifice for our sins was accepted by the Father and we are now able to be justified by faith:

*He (who) was delivered up because of our transgressions, and was raised because of our justification (Romans 4:25).<sup>5</sup>*

The Holy Spirit is the one who must now show the world what true righteousness is because Jesus Christ is no longer on this earth. The Spirit helps people to see that they have no righteousness of their own with which to justify themselves before God, and therefore, they need to accept the forgiveness offered to them by grace through the gospel.

The third factor, the conviction of judgment because Satan has been judged, refers to the defeat of the enemy of

men's souls on the cross. Satan can no longer hold us captive because of our sins since Jesus has paid the price of sin and destroyed his power over mankind (Colossians 2:15).<sup>6</sup> The Holy Spirit convinces unbelievers that forgiveness is available for everyone who will believe on Christ.

### 3. What are some of the ways that we as individual believers and as local churches can co-operate with the Holy Spirit in the work of evangelism (1 Timothy 2:1-4)?

There is one more item to consider. In Matthew 12:30-32 Jesus spoke of one sin that could not be forgiven: blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. In this passage, the Pharisees were deliberately attributing the work of the Holy Spirit to Satan. This sin is unforgivable because the Holy Spirit is the only one who can overcome our spiritual blindness and convince us to receive salvation through Christ. If we knowingly reject His ministry, how can we accept Christ? And if we do not accept Christ, how can we be forgiven of anything (Acts 4:12)?<sup>7</sup>

This sin does not refer to things said against Christ or the Holy Spirit in ignorance such as Paul did before he became a Christian (1 Timothy 1:13). The one who blasphemes the Holy Spirit does not want to be forgiven. It refers to those who love evil and hate good, those who prefer darkness over light (John 3:19,20). If a person is fearful that they have committed this unpardonable sin, and they want to be forgiven, they can rest assured that they have not committed it.

If we desire to see our non-Christian friends and loved ones come to Christ, we must learn to co-operate through prayer with the Holy Spirit's ministries of demonstration and conviction.

#### ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

- 1 Judges 3:9,10; 6:34; 11:29
- 2 Acts 6:8; 8:5,6; 1 Corinthians 2:1-5
- 3 2 Corinthians 4:3,4; Ephesians 2:1,2
- 4 John 8:24; Acts 4:10-12
- 5 Hebrews 7:26,27; 10:11,12
- 6 Hebrews 2:14; 1 John 3:8b
- 7 1 Timothy 2:5



## The Indwelling of the Holy Spirit

Just before He went to the Cross, Jesus gave His disciples a wonderful promise. He said,

*And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that he may be with you forever; that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you, and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you (John 14:16-18).*

Jesus promised that by the Holy Spirit, His presence would come to dwell within us. The indwelling of the Spirit of God is so important because all of the other ministries of the Holy Spirit in the believer depend upon this fact: the Holy Spirit has come to live and abide in every true Christian.

The Bible makes it abundantly clear that you are not a Christian unless the Holy Spirit lives in you:

*However you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him (Romans 8:9).*

As a result, the Scripture says that our bodies have become the temples of the Holy Spirit. Paul writes to the Corinthians, "Do you not know that you are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?" (1 Corinthians 3:16).<sup>1</sup> Paul wrote to the Galatians that "God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba! Father!'" (Galatians 4:6).<sup>2</sup>

### 1. Read Ezekiel 36:25-27. Explain how the promises of these verses have been fulfilled under the New Covenant.

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#### MEMORABLE VERSE

Romans 8:9

**"However you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him."**

There are several important features concerning the indwelling of the Holy Spirit that we should note. First, the only condition for receiving the Spirit is faith in Christ for salvation. Paul wrote to the Galatians,

*"Does He (God) then, who provides you with the Spirit and works miracles among you, do it by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith" (Galatians 3:5)?*

The context makes it clear that the answer is the Galatians received the Holy Spirit because they heard the gospel and believed it. There is no other condition. Trying to clean up your life does not make you eligible to receive the Holy Spirit. The only thing that will cleanse you in God's sight is your faith in Jesus Christ.

This brings us to the second and third features. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit is both instantaneous and unconscious. It occurs instantaneously the moment we repent and receive Christ as Saviour. It is unconscious in that although we may experience some wonderful things emotionally when we are born again, none of these reactions are necessary to our salvation. We will, however, soon recognize the presence of the Holy Spirit in our hearts as He begins to bear witness to our salvation.

The fourth feature of the Spirit's indwelling is that it is permanent:

*And as for you, the anointing which you received from Him abides in you, and you have no need for anyone to teach you; but as His anointing teaches you about all things, and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you abide in Him (1 John 2:27).*

If we sin, we do not risk losing the Holy Spirit. Jesus said, "I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever" (John 14:16). We can, however, grieve the Holy Spirit by sinning. This diminishes our awareness of His presence and restricts His ability to work through us (Ephesians 4:30).

What are some of the consequences of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in our lives? First, the Spirit's presence enables us to understand the things of God (1 Corinthians 2:12). He gives us access to the Father in prayer (Ephesians 2:18). The Spirit assures us we are God's children by acting as a witness to our salvation (Romans 8:16).<sup>3</sup> The Holy Spirit also works mightily within us to strive against sin and to bring forth His fruit in our character (Galatians 5:17-23).<sup>4</sup> And finally, because the Holy Spirit lives within us like a source of living water, He can flow out of us as a *Lifestream* bringing God's life to others as Jesus promised in John 7:38.

### 2. What are some of the other things the presence of the Holy Spirit does for us?

Ro. 8:26

Ro. 14:17 \_\_\_\_\_

Ro. 15:13 \_\_\_\_\_

Eph. 3:16 \_\_\_\_\_

### The Holy Spirit and Regeneration

The work of regeneration is the first thing the Holy Spirit does when He comes to dwell within the believer:

*He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5).*

The word regeneration literally means "to be born again." It refers to the impartation of spiritual life the moment we repent and believe on Christ as our Saviour. In this way we become a "new creature" in Christ Jesus (2 Corinthians 5:17).<sup>5</sup> Regeneration is an instantaneous act of God which He does in response to our faith, as John's Gospel records,

*But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God (John 1:12,13).*

Regeneration is something only God can do since it requires nothing less than a spiritual resurrection from our condition of spiritual death:

*But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places, in Christ Jesus (Ephesians 2:4-6).*

### 3. What things can we now do because the Holy Spirit has given us spiritual life (Ro. 8:14; Gal. 5:16; Eph. 5:18)?

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The act of regeneration results in the creation of a new nature within us, the so called "new self" as Paul wrote to the Ephesians,

*And put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth (4:24).<sup>6</sup>*

And as a result of this, we become partakers of the divine nature (2 Peter 1:4).

The creation of this new self, does not destroy our old,

sinful nature with its desire to sin, but it gives to us a new capacity to serve righteousness:

*Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body...but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God (Romans 6:11-13).*

Thus, the Holy Spirit's work of regeneration makes it possible for us to live a new life that is pleasing to God, a life of righteousness. Such a life is clear proof that a person has been born again:

*"If you know that He (Jesus) is righteous, you know that every one also who practices righteousness is born of Him" (1 John 2:29). We are able to overcome the temptations of this world by faith (1 John 5:4).<sup>7</sup>*

It affects every area of our personalities including the intellect, the emotions and the will (1 Corinthians 2:14-16; Romans 5:5; Philippians 2:13).

### 4. How should being born again affect our attitudes toward others (1 Jn. 4:7; 5:1)?

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The new birth also makes us members of God's family and as a result, co-heirs with Jesus Christ:

*The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow-heirs with Christ (Romans 8:16,17a).*

In conclusion, we can not only concur, but rejoice at the words of Jesus when He said in John 6:63, "It is the Spirit who gives life" and with Paul who wrote,

*If the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He...will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you (Romans 8:11).*

### ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

- 1 1 Corinthians 6:19; Ephesians 2:19-22
- 2 Romans 5:5; 1 Corinthians 2:9,10
- 3 1 John 4:13-16, 5:7-11
- 4 Romans 8:12-14
- 5 John 10:27,28; 1 John 5:11,12
- 6 Galatians 6:15; Colossians 3:10,
- 7 1 John 3:9, 5:18

## The Spirit in Sanctification

The word sanctification refers to setting something apart for God's use and making it conform to His holy character. This work of the Holy Spirit receives more attention in the New Testament than any of His other ministries by far.

When we are saved, the Bible tells us we are justified. This means that the righteousness of Jesus Christ is credited to our account by God. We are free from condemnation (Romans 5:1).<sup>1</sup> God gives us this spiritual standing as a gift because we could never earn it (Romans 6:23).<sup>2</sup> It is the only way we could ever get to heaven. But God is also concerned with our moral character and conduct. He desires to transform these through the process known as sanctification. Peter writes that as a believer, you are,

*chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, that you may obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood (1 Peter 1:2).*

In Romans, Paul tells us that before the world was created, God predestined or decided in advance that every Christian would be "conformed to the image of His Son" (Romans 8:29).<sup>3</sup> In sanctification then, the Holy Spirit works to make us in reality what God has already declared us to be in our justification.

### 1. As we mature in the Lord, what are some of the things that we should add to our faith according to 2 Peter 1:5-7?

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The Spirit's work of sanctification has two aspects. There is an instantaneous, positional aspect and a continuous, progressive aspect. In its positional aspect, when we repent and receive Christ, the Holy Spirit separates us from sinful humanity and places us into the body of Christ (Colossians 1:13).

It is because of this that the Scripture sometimes speaks

#### MEMORABLE VERSE

##### 2 Thessalonians 2:13

"But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth."

of our sanctification as an accomplished fact (1 Corinthians 1:30).<sup>4</sup> Thus in the New Testament, believers are frequently called "saints" which means "holy ones." This term is used of all believers whether they are mature or not (2 Corinthians 1:1).

In its progressive aspect, sanctification is the life-long process whereby the Holy Spirit works within us to make us holy as God is holy (1 Peter 1:14-16). In this sense, to be sanctified by the Spirit means to mature as a Christian. Those verses which speak of our salvation as an ongoing process are referring to this progressive aspect of sanctification:

*For the word of the cross is to those who are perishing foolishness, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God (1 Corinthians 1:18).<sup>5</sup>*

Even though sanctification is first and foremost God's work in us, it is also a co-operative venture which requires faith and diligent effort on our part:

*Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord (Hebrews 12:14).<sup>6</sup>*

### 2. According to Colossians 3:5-9, what are some of the things we are to "put aside" in order to become like Christ?

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In his letter to the Philippians, Paul sets out the balance between our working and God's working in us by the Holy Spirit to bring about our sanctification:

*Work out your salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure (Philippians 2:12b,13).*

We must do our part and God must do His part. But without the working of the Holy Spirit in us, we could not grow.

This brings us to consider the two methods God uses to bring about our sanctification: the mortification of our sinful nature and the renewal of our minds. These occur simultaneously through a number of agents such as the Word of God, prayer, Christian fellowship and the difficult circumstances we face in life.

Mortification is discussed most extensively in Romans chapter 6. In this chapter, Paul argues that we should not continue to serve sin:

*Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body that you should obey its lusts, and do not go on presenting the*

*members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness (Romans 6:12,13).*

If we chose to continue to live lives full of sin, the final result will be spiritual death (Romans 6:16).

Thank God that we now have the power to follow the path of righteousness. This is possible because on the cross, Jesus put to death or rendered powerless the sinful nature of man. Those who identify with Christ are joined to Him at salvation when the Holy Spirit places them into the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:13). As a result of this spiritual union with Christ, our sinful nature is said to be put to death. Thus we are no longer obliged helplessly to follow its promptings to sin. Paul puts it like this,

*Our old self was crucified with Him, that our body of sin (our sinful nature) might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin; for he who has died is freed from sin (Romans 6:6,7).*

Our part is to reckon or consider ourselves by faith to be dead to sin and alive to God (Romans 6:11). This means to acknowledge consciously our new nature in Christ when we are faced with temptation, and with the help of the Holy Spirit, to mortify or put to death the deeds of the sinful nature (Romans 8:13).

God's second method of sanctification is through the renewal of our minds. This takes place as we allow the Holy Spirit to illuminate God's Word to us so that our values and beliefs fall into line with God's truth. These two processes must go hand in hand as Ephesians 4:22-24 indicates:

*In reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self...and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.<sup>7</sup>*

As Titus 3:5 states, this renewal of our minds is the work of the Holy Spirit:

*He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit.*

### 3. What are some of the character qualities we are called to put on as the Holy Spirit renews our minds (Colossians 3:12-17)?

Finally let's briefly consider the means the Holy Spirit uses to sanctify us. The Word of God is central to the work of sanctification. Jesus prayed, concerning our sanctification, "Sanctify them in Thy truth; Thy word is truth" (John

17:17).

God's Word sanctifies us or purifies us as we allow the Holy Spirit to use it like a mirror. This mirror shows us our impurities and displays for us the glorious purity of Jesus Christ whom we are called to imitate:

*But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit (2 Corinthians 3:18).<sup>8</sup>*

Prayer is also essential if we are to allow the Holy Spirit to sanctify us. This is when we present ourselves to the Lord and allow the Holy Spirit to examine us with His searchlight of conviction (Psalm 139:23,24).

Not only does the Holy Spirit show us our need of repentance for specific sins, but He also conveys God's loving forgiveness to us in prayer when we ask God to cleanse us afresh by the blood of Jesus (Romans 5:5; 1 John 1:5-10).

The Holy Spirit also uses Christian fellowship to make us like Christ. He speaks to other believers who can minister encouragement to us through teaching and corporate worship (Colossians 3:16). There is also the ministry of admonition, as the Spirit prompts other believers who have earned our trust to help us to see our blind spots where our walk with God is deficient (Proverbs 9:8).

Spiritual discipline is the last means of sanctification we will consider. God sometimes allows us to struggle, even to suffer to make us holy:

*He (God) disciplines us for our good, that we may share His holiness. All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness (Hebrews 12:10,11).*

In conclusion, we should note that the work of sanctification will not be completed in this life, but only when Christ returns for us (1 John 3:2,3). And thus, sanctification is to be an ongoing work in our lives until,

*Christ, who is your life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory (Colossians 3:4).*

#### ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

1 Romans 8:1; Titus 3:5-7

2 Galatians 2:16; Ephesians 2:8-9

3 Ephesians 4:11-15; Colossians 3:9-11

4 Acts 26:18; Hebrews 10:10-14

5 2 Corinthians 2:15; Philippians 1:6

6 Romans 8:12,13; 2 Corinthians 7:1

7 Romans 12:2; Colossians 3:10-11

8 Psalm 119:9; 25-38; James 1:22-25

## The Gifts of the Spirit

The New Testament has three primary lists of spiritual gifts (Romans 12, Ephesians 4, 1 Corinthians 12). The Holy Spirit is intimately involved in the bestowal and activation of all spiritual gifts in the lives of God's people. Only one of these lists, however, can be labelled, "the gifts of the Holy Spirit." This list is found in 1 Corinthians chapter 12. Observe the emphasis in this passage on the working of the Holy Spirit through these gifts:

*But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, and to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit, and to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, and to another the effecting of miracles, and to another prophecy, and to another the distinguishing of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, and to another the interpretation of tongues. But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills (1 Corinthians 12:7-11).*

These gifts are given freely and graciously. They have nothing to do with the concept of merit or worthiness on the part of those who receive these gifts or benefit from the ministry they provide. They are not related to our natural talents. They are "manifestations" of the presence and power of God's Spirit to edify or build up God's people distributed sovereignly by the Holy Spirit as He desires (1 Corinthians 12:11).

**1. What are the three purposes of the gift of prophecy according to 1 Corinthians 14:3? Explain each of these terms in your own words.**

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Every Christian can be used by the Holy Spirit in one or

### MEMORABLE VERSE

**1 Corinthians 12:7-11**

**For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, and to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit, and to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, and to another the effecting of miracles, and to another prophecy, and to another the distinguishing of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, and to another the interpretation of tongues.**

more of these gifts because they are given "to each one" (1 Corinthians 12:7). The gifts themselves are not dispensed permanently to individuals to use at their discretion. They remain resident within the Spirit of God who dwells within the believer. Thus, every gift is available to be manifested as the occasion demands. They are given to meet specific situations as they arise, each one tailored to the need of the moment by the flawless wisdom of the Spirit.

The gifts of the Holy Spirit are divine enablements given to continue the supernatural ministry of Jesus Christ in each of His followers. Unlike the fruit of the Spirit, which are inward qualities of character, these gifts are outward manifestations given to facilitate the work of ministry. The fruit of the Spirit can and must be cultivated by our conscious efforts. The gifts of the Spirit cannot be cultivated because each one comes complete in itself, ready to meet the need at hand.

We can, however, cultivate our own receptivity to be used by the Spirit in these gifts. Paul suggests this when he calls upon us to "desire earnestly spiritual gifts" (1 Corinthians 14:1). It is also true that through experience we can develop a greater sense of boldness in the exercise of the gifts. Now let's examine each of these gifts in more detail.

**The Word of Wisdom** This gift enables us to speak the right word at the right time. Wisdom is the ability to make the best use of the knowledge we possess to accomplish the goals we are pursuing. It has many possible applications including situations involving church administration (Acts 6:3),<sup>1</sup> in preaching and teaching (Acts 6:9,10), and when facing persecution (Luke 21:12-15). Jesus manifested this gift in His response to those who tried to trap Him concerning a woman caught in adultery (John 8:7).

**The Word of Knowledge** This is a small fragment of God's infinite knowledge given to help us in a particular situation. It does not make the recipient generally more knowledgeable and thus it is not a form of divinely augmented learning. Peter was given the information that Ananias and Sapphira were lying to the church by the operation of this gift (Acts 5:1-4).

**The Discerning of Spirits** This gift is sometimes confused with the ability to read people's minds or to discern their spiritual condition. It represents the ability given by the Holy Spirit in specific instances to determine the spiritual source of an event or an utterance. Things can result from the working of God's Spirit, the human spirit or a demonic spirit. This gift aids us in seeing through Satan's deceptions since he sometimes masquerades as an "angel of light" (2 Corinthians 11:14). Paul's ministry at Philippi provides an example of this gift in operation (Acts 16:16-18).

## 2. What do the following verses tell us must accompany the use of the gifts of the Holy Spirit?

1 Cor. 12:21-25 \_\_\_\_\_

1 Cor. 12:26 \_\_\_\_\_

1 Cor. 13:1-3 \_\_\_\_\_

1 Cor. 14:12 \_\_\_\_\_

*The Gift of Faith* This refers to something beyond the faith which saves us even though this saving faith is also called a gift (Ephesians 2:8). This gift is a special ability to trust God which enables ordinary believers to accomplish His mighty purposes. It is a faith that dares, a faith that expects great things from God. It goes far beyond our ability to trust in God that is developed through the normal process of spiritual growth. It sometimes includes the faith to persevere in serving God despite great suffering (Hebrews 11:35-38). Peter manifested this gift when He commanded the lame man at the Beautiful Gate of the Temple to rise up and walk in the name of Jesus (Acts 3:1-8).

*The Gifts of Healings* The double plural in this phrase suggests these gifts are actual healings given to cure sick individuals. They may or may not be channelled through another believer. This gift is not given to an individual so as to make him or her a "healer." We know that Paul, for example, performed "extraordinary miracles" of healing while at Ephesus and yet he had to leave a co-worker behind at Miletus because he was sick (Acts 19:11; 2 Timothy 4:20). This gift is closely related to the work of evangelism as Philip's ministry at Samaria demonstrates (Acts 8:6,7).

*The Workings of Miracles* This gift refers to the operation of God's power beyond the realm of physical healing. It includes miracles in nature that manifest God's glory (John 2:1-11; Luke 8:22-25). In the ministry of the early church we see Peter raising Dorcus from the dead and Paul bringing blindness upon the sorcerer Elymas who opposed the preaching of the gospel on Cyprus (Acts 9:32-42; 13:7-11). It is possible that the ministry of deliverance from demonic possession is accomplished through this gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 19:11,12).

*The Gift of Prophecy* This gift involves speaking forth God's will in a given situation to a particular group of His people. On rare occasions it can involve the foretelling of the future (Acts 11:28). Its primary purpose is to build up, challenge and encourage God's people. Such a prophetic word is always given in the language of its intended audience. It must conform to the teachings of God's Word and thus it cannot be a revelation of new truth (Deuteronomy 13:1-5).<sup>2</sup> This gift involves the co-operation of the Holy Spirit and the human spirit of the person through whom it is manifested. It is therefore subject to error and

must be judged against the standard of God's Word (1 Corinthians 14:29).<sup>3</sup>

## 3. What guidelines does Paul lay down in 1 Corinthians 14:29-33, 40 for the operation of the gift of prophecy in the Christian assembly?

*Various Kinds of Tongues* This gift refers to a communication from God in a language unknown to the speaker. The language could be a heavenly one or a human language unknown to the speaker. This "message in tongues" as it is often called must be interpreted or else it should not be given in a public setting. When interpreted it is equivalent to prophecy and thus is a word of edification, exhortation and comfort to those present (1 Corinthians 14:4,5). It must be consistent with God's Word. It can also serve as a sign to unbelievers but only in a negative sense, that is, it brings judgement by exposing them to the presence of God although they fail to recognize it because they do not understand what is said (1 Corinthians 14:21-23). This fact and a concern for the edification of the church is why Paul stresses that tongues should be interpreted in a public gathering of believers (1 Corinthians 14:27,28).<sup>4</sup> He also instructs that there should be no more than three such messages per service (1 Corinthians 14:27).

*The Interpretation of Tongues* This gift is intended to accompany the previous one so as to render the message in tongues meaningful to the congregation. It is not a translation of the tongues, but a giving of the sense of what God wants to say. It does not involve the linguistic gifts of the individual. It does, however, depend to a degree upon the co-operation of the individual through which it is manifested and thus it reflects that person's education, vocabulary, accent and so forth.

These wonderful supernatural ministry gifts are available only at the sovereign direction of the Holy Spirit. We can however, prepare ourselves to be used in them through earnest desire, prayer and a willingness like Peter to step out of the boat and walk on the water (Matthew 14:28-30).<sup>5</sup>

### ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

1 Acts 15:13-22

2 Isaiah 8:20

3 1 Thessalonians 5:20,21; 1 John 4:1

4 1 Corinthians 14:2-13; 15-19

5 1 Corinthians 14:1,12,13

## The Spirit's Guidance

God has promised to guide His people through the perplexities and trails of life. In Psalm 25:12 we read,

*Who is the man who fears the Lord? He will instruct him in the way he should choose.<sup>1</sup>*

In the New Testament we have the promise of Jesus in John 10:27, "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me." The Holy Spirit is God's agent in the fulfillment of these wonderful promises of guidance. He conveys the wisdom of God to us teaching us all things and unfolding to us the One "in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Colossians 2:3).<sup>2</sup>

### 1. Why do we need the Holy Spirit to guide us (Ps. 5:8; Prov. 1:20-33; Jer. 17:9)?

We find the most frequent mention of the guidance of the Holy Spirit in the Book of Acts. The Church's first missionaries were sent out because,

*while they (the church leaders at Antioch) were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them" (Acts 13:2).<sup>3</sup>*

The Holy Spirit gave specific guidance to Paul and his company during their three missionary journeys. On his second trip, the Holy Spirit specifically forbade Paul from preaching in the province of Asia and so he moved on to enter the next province of Bithynia (Acts 16:6). But there, the Spirit re-directed him once again away from Bithynia and then showed him a vision which sent him to Macedonia to proclaim the gospel (Acts 16:7-10).

There are many other examples in the Book of Acts of the Holy Spirit giving specific direction to those who were about the work of spreading the gospel. Let's now examine some of the issues related to how the Spirit guides us.

### MEMORABLE VERSE

#### Romans 8:14

For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!"

The first issue concerns the primary goal of the Holy Spirit's work in us. He is striving to make us like Jesus Christ. He desires above all else to lead us into a life of obedience to God's commandments. We must keep this priority at the top of our personal agenda. The Holy Spirit is much more concerned with what sort of people we are becoming than with the details of what city we live in, where we work or what church we attend, even though He is concerned with these as well. A key passage dealing with the leading of the Holy Spirit is Romans 8:14, "For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God."

This verse is set in a passage dealing with how we fulfill the righteous requirements of God's law by setting our minds on the things of the Spirit and putting to death the deeds of the sinful nature (Romans 8:1-14).<sup>4</sup> This is what concerns the Holy Spirit more than anything else, that we follow His leading into a life of righteousness before God.

The second issue relates to what criteria will and what criteria will not help us determine the leading of the Spirit. For example, just because you want very much to do something does mean it is the leading of the Holy Spirit. But neither does your desire to do that thing mean it could not possibly be what the Holy Spirit wants you to do.

This means that the Holy Spirit will sometimes lead us into unpleasant situations involving great testing or suffering. These problems do not necessarily mean we have missed God's direction. Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness where Satan tempted Him (Luke 4:1). Paul was led to preach the gospel at Philippi where he was unjustly beaten and imprisoned (Acts 16:22-30). Many missionaries have been led by the Holy Spirit to fields where they suffered for the gospel. The open door which offers a well-paid position with excellent benefits is, in and of itself, no guarantee that this is the direction of the Holy Spirit. Other factors have to be taken into consideration as we shall see.

### 2. What purpose could the Holy Spirit have in leading us into a difficult situation (Heb. 12:4-14, see also Deut. 8:2-6).

The next issue to consider is that of timing. Paul, on his second missionary journey, was forbidden by the Holy Spirit from preaching in Asia as we have seen (Acts 16:6). And yet on his third journey, he enjoyed a long and fruitful



ministry there in the city of Ephesus (Acts 19:1-20). It was all a question of timing. The Holy Spirit knew that preaching in Asia on the second journey would have been a waste of time. Things were not ready there yet. But a few years later as a result of Paul's ministry in Ephesus, "all who lived in Asia heard the Word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks" (Acts 19:10). Sometimes the Holy Spirit will say a permanent "no" to us. But at other times, His "no" is really a "not yet." We must remain sensitive to His voice in order to tell the difference.

The last issue concerns the degree to which the Holy Spirit is involved in our decisions. This depends upon the type of decision. Some decisions He leaves to our preferences like what to wear in the morning or what to eat for lunch. In other cases He seeks to influence our decisions but they are still ours to make. The first church council described in Acts chapter 15 summed up its deliberations by saying, "It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us" (Acts 15:28). It was a shared decision. And then there are some decisions that the Holy Spirit makes for us. While walking along the road from Jerusalem to Gaza, the Spirit said to Philip, "Go up and join this chariot" (Acts 8:29).

Let's examine briefly the methods the Holy Spirit uses to guide us. The most important of these is the Word of God which He inspired and which He illuminates to our minds (John 16:13).<sup>5</sup> This does not mean we are to use the Bible like a magic book or a horoscope. We are not to flip the Bible open and follow the direction given by the first words that meet our glance. We must study the Bible with the help of the Holy Spirit so that we can understand its message. Proper principles of literal interpretation must be applied, we must give careful attention to context and learn to compare scripture with scripture. We must also understand the broad principles of righteousness that can be applied to hundreds of specific situations and thus provide us with guidance that is biblical and sound. We must make the testimony of the Psalmist our own who wrote,

*From Thy precepts I get understanding; therefore I hate every false way. Thy word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path (Psalm 119:104,105).*

The Holy Spirit also guides us as we pray. He speaks to us with the still small voice acting like an umpire in our hearts filling us with peace as we contemplate the direction He would have us take (Psalm 32:8, Colossians 3:15). Sometimes, receiving direction requires that we wait upon the Lord until He chooses to speak to us (Psalm 27:11-14).<sup>6</sup>

**3. Share a personal example of how the Holy Spirit has guided you in an important decision. What means did He use to show you God's will?**

The Holy Spirit is also committed to guiding us through the spiritual leaders He has appointed them as overseers of God's flock (Acts 20:28). For this reason, the Scriptures call upon us to "Obey your leaders, and submit to them; for they keep watch over your souls" (Hebrews 13:17).

This channel of guidance through spiritual leadership should never become our only channel because the Holy Spirit lives within each Christian so that he or she can know God's personal direction.

On occasion, the Holy Spirit will use circumstances to guide us although this method is best used as a way of confirming what God has said to us by other means.

The gifts of the Holy Spirit do not seem to be intended to provide us with personal guidance. The only obvious example of this in the New Testament is Paul passing through the city of Tyre on his way to Jerusalem. The believers there "kept telling Paul through the Spirit (i.e., probably by prophetic words) not to set foot in Jerusalem" (Acts 21:4). We know that Paul felt very strongly he was to go to Jerusalem despite the fact the Holy Spirit had predicted that "bonds and afflictions" awaited him there (Acts 20:22,23). Paul felt free to ignore this direction given through spiritual gifts having already determined God's will in the matter.

Experience has demonstrated clearly that the practice of one believer telling another believer God's will by means of spiritual gifts can lead to great confusion and sometimes spiritual disaster. Therefore, this practice should be avoided.

It is exciting to realize that the Holy Spirit who lives within us desires to lead us into the perfect will of God. Our part is to offer Him a willing and teachable spirit so that He can fulfill the promise of Psalm 32:8,

*I will instruct you and teach you in the way which you should go; I will counsel you with My eye upon you.*

#### ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

- 1 Psalm 31:3, 48:14; Isaiah 48:17
- 2 John 16:13,14
- 3 Acts 10:19,20; 20:22,23
- 4 Galatians 5:16-18, 24,25
- 5 1 Corinthians 2:10-14
- 6 Psalm 37:4-9; Habakkuk 2:1



## The Baptism with the Spirit

John the Baptist was sent by God as the forerunner of the Messiah, Jesus Christ. He announced that God's kingdom was coming and people needed to prepare for themselves for it (Matthew 3:1-3). John baptized people in water as a sign of their repentance. But he also spoke of another, greater baptism that would be administered by one greater than he who was coming soon:

*As for me, I baptize you in water for repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, and I am not even fit to remove His sandals; He Himself will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire (Matthew 3:11).<sup>1</sup>*

The Bible contains over 7,000 promises but only this promise, that Jesus Christ would baptize people with the Holy Spirit is called, "the promise."<sup>2</sup> Jesus told His disciples,

*And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high (Luke 24:49).<sup>3</sup>*

Jesus spoke of this promise again in Acts 1:4,5 and said it would soon be fulfilled.<sup>4</sup> And when it was fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost, Peter informs us that this promised baptism with the Holy Spirit is available to everyone who will receive Christ:

*And Peter said to them, "Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and your children, and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God shall call to Himself" (Acts 2:38-39).*

The purpose of this baptism with the Holy Spirit is very clear. Jesus, after He had commissioned His disciples to preach the gospel to the whole world, explained how they would be able to accomplish such a monumental task:

*But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth (Acts 1:8).*

This explains why the disciples were told by Christ to

### MEMORABLE VERSE

Matthew 3:11

**As for me, I baptize you in water for repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, and I am not even fit to remove His sandals. He Himself will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.**

wait in Jerusalem (Luke 24:49). They needed power, power to proclaim the name of Jesus boldly and fearlessly to the ends of the earth. This power enabled the early Christians not only to preach boldly, but also to demonstrate the resurrection of Christ through signs and wonders and miracles (Hebrews 2:2-4).<sup>5</sup>

### 1. Why is it important that the preaching of the gospel be accomplished in the power of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 2:1-5)?

Let's look for a moment at the nature of this spiritual experience. The Bible uses a number of terms more or less synonymously to refer to the baptism with the Holy Spirit. It is called a baptism (Luke 3:16); a gift (Acts 2:38); a filling of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-4); a receiving of the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:17); and a coming upon people, among other things (Acts 19:6). These terms picture for us different aspects of our empowering relationship with the Holy Spirit just as the various terms the New Testament uses for the Church (a bride, a body, a building, and so forth) picture various aspects of our relationship to Jesus Christ.

The term baptize literally means to immerse one thing into another such as when Jesus dipped the morsel of bread into the wine and gave it to Judas (John 13:26). Figuratively, it means to introduce something into a new environment so as to alter its condition in some way. The baptism with the Holy Spirit can thus be understood as an immersion of the believer into a new all-encompassing relationship with the Holy Spirit where He becomes the comprehensive influence in our lives. It can be distinguished from water baptism because there, water is the element into which we are immersed and the person who baptizes us is the pastor doing the baptism. Here, Christ is the agent doing the baptizing and the Holy Spirit is the element into which we are baptized.

### 2. Why is it that the terms, "baptism with the Holy Spirit" and "filled with the Holy Spirit" seem to refer to the same experience (compare Acts 1:4-8 and 2:1-4)?

The phrase "filled with Holy Spirit" emphasizes the results of our immersion into the realm of the Holy Spirit. It does not speak of our receiving a greater quantity of the

Holy Spirit as if He were a liquid that you could pour into a vessel. The Holy Spirit is a person who cannot be divided up and received by instalments. Rather, other uses of this word "filled" in Scripture show that it means to be brought under the control of something. Thus, on one occasion, people were "filled with fear" meaning that their fear powerfully influenced all of their thoughts and actions (Luke 5:26). In this sense, to be filled with the Holy Spirit is to live fully under His gracious control, submitting ourselves moment by moment to His will. It is therefore probably more accurate to say that when we are filled with the Holy Spirit, we do not receive all of Him, but He receives all of us to lead and guide in His ways. This is what it means to walk in the Spirit day by day (Colossians 3:16).

What is the relationship between the indwelling of the Holy Spirit that occurs when we receive Jesus as Saviour and Lord and the baptism with the Holy Spirit? In the first, we receive the power to become the children of God, in the second, the power to do the work of God (John 1:12,13; Acts 1:8). The first is the new birth which makes us new creatures in Christ Jesus, the second is an anointing for service which causes a river of living water, a *Lifestream* to flow from our lives (2 Corinthians 5:17; John 7:38,39).

First Corinthians 12:13 speaks of a baptism by the Holy Spirit,

*For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.<sup>6</sup>*

Notice here, however, that the element into which we were baptized is clearly the Church, the body of Christ and the agent doing the baptizing is the Holy Spirit. This verse refers to what happens when we are born again and the Holy Spirit places us in the Church so that we become one of those who are "in Christ" (Romans 8:1). But with the baptism with the Holy Spirit, Jesus is the baptizer and the Holy Spirit is the element into which we are baptized (Matthew 3:11).

The pattern of the Book of Acts suggests that normally, people are first saved and indwelt by the Holy Spirit and then they are baptized with the Holy Spirit to empower them for ministry. In Acts 8:4-12 we read the people of Samaria saw the signs that Philip performed and were baptized in water which indicated that they had repented and received Christ in accordance with the gospel message Philip preached. When they repented, the Holy Spirit must have come to dwell within them because the Bible says that those who belong to Christ receive His Spirit at conversion (Romans 8:9). After this, Peter and John,

*came down and prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit. For He had not yet fallen upon any of*

*them; they had simply been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they began laying their hands on them, and they were receiving the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:15-17).*

### 3. In what order did these three events (salvation, water baptism, baptism with the Holy Spirit) occur in the life of Paul (Acts 9:1-19)?

The people of Samaria were saved and indwelt by the Holy Spirit, then they were baptized with the Holy Spirit. This basic pattern of receiving Christ, being baptized in water and then being baptized with the Holy Spirit also occurred at Ephesus (Acts 19:1-7).

In the case of Cornelius and his household, their salvation and baptism with the Holy Spirit seems to have been simultaneous (Acts 10:34-48). This phenomena has been repeated many times in this century as well.

### 4. What sorts of changes are evident in Peter, the one who had denied Christ, following his experience of the baptism with the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:14-16, 36-40; 4:1-13)?

There are many secondary benefits of receiving the baptism with the Holy Spirit such as a deeper prayer life, more meaningful worship, help in overcoming sin and a greater capacity to exercise the supernatural gifts of the Holy Spirit.<sup>7</sup> But Acts 4:31 sums up the central result of this experience:

*And when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak the word of God with boldness.<sup>8</sup>*

Jesus has commissioned His Church to take the gospel around the world (Matthew 28:19-20). And He has provided us the power to do so, if we are willing to receive it.

#### ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

1 Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33

2 Isaiah 44:3; Joel 2:28

3 Acts 2:33,39; Galatians 3:14

4 Acts 11:16

5 Acts 5:12-16; Romans 15:18, 19

6 Romans 6:3-5; Galatians 3:27

7 1 Corinthians 12:8-10

8 Acts 4:8,13

## The Initial Evidence

Why devote an entire lesson to the subject of the initial evidence of the baptism with the Holy Spirit? There are two main reasons. First, because the conviction that speaking in other tongues is the initial evidence of the baptism with the Holy Spirit has always been one of the most controversial aspects of Pentecostal teaching since the modern movement began just after the turn of the century. Second, if the baptism with the Holy Spirit is an essential part of New Testament Christianity, then the ability to determine if you have received this experience is very important.

Many have criticized Pentecostals for basing their theology upon experience. And it is true that theology should never be based upon our experiences but upon the Word of God. And this conviction that speaking in other tongues is the initial evidence of the baptism with the Holy Spirit is solidly based upon the standard for Christian experience that is set forth in the divinely inspired record given to us in the New Testament.

We believe that the Book of Acts was put in the New Testament to show us what the Church is supposed to be like. It presents us with a pattern, a model to follow. The early church was born of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. It was composed originally of the followers of Jesus, people who heard Him teach in person and saw Him alive following His resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:6). It was led by His chosen Apostles, men who had followed Jesus for three years and then were instructed by Him personally for forty days just prior to the Ascension (Acts 1:1-3). If this early church did not follow God's plan, then what church can hope to do so? This is why we look to the Book of Acts for the norms of church life and Christian experience.

And when we look at the Book of Acts, what do we see? Did the early Christians have any way of telling on the spot if a person had been baptized with the Holy Spirit just like they were on the Day of Pentecost or did they not? The answer is quite clear.

### 1. What convinced Peter and those with him that Cor-

#### MEMORABLE VERSE

Acts 10:44-46a

While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who were listening to the message. And all the circumcised believers who had come with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out upon the Gentiles also. For they were hearing them speaking with tongues and exalting God.

nelius and his household had received the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 10:44-46)?

There are five instances in the Book of Acts where people are baptized with the Holy Spirit. In three of the five, tongues are mentioned explicitly.<sup>1</sup> In the other two, tongues are implied.<sup>2</sup>

It is evident from the account of Peter's ministry at the household of Cornelius that it was hearing the Gentiles to whom he was preaching speaking in tongues that convinced Peter they had received the baptism with the Holy Spirit just as the 120 had on the Day of Pentecost. He was so convinced, that he took the extraordinary step of ordering that these Gentiles be baptized (Acts 10:47,48).

Peter was later called on the carpet back in Jerusalem by some of the Jewish believers who still thought the gospel was only for Jews and not Gentiles (Acts 11:1-12). Peter recounts how the Holy Spirit directed him to go and preach to this group of Gentiles in the home of Cornelius (vv. 12-17). In his account he points out how the Holy Spirit fell upon these Gentiles "as He did upon us at the beginning" (v. 15). He then recalls the promise of Christ that He would baptize people with the Holy Spirit (v. 16). There can be no question that Peter and the church leaders at Jerusalem were convinced Cornelius and those in his house had been baptized with the Holy Spirit. And Peter knew this to be the case the instant it occurred because he had heard them speaking in tongues (Acts 10:46).

One question that often arises is, why would God choose such an unusual phenomena as the initial evidence of the baptism with the Holy Spirit? There are a number of reasons.

First, the purpose of this baptism is power to witness for Christ (Acts 1:8). Since preaching the gospel is first and foremost a verbal activity employing the tongue, Spirit-controlled speech seems appropriate proof that we have been empowered to speak boldly for God. And since the key feature of being filled with the Holy Spirit is coming under His control, what better way to demonstrate the Spirit's control of the entire person that by allowing Him to rule its most unruly member, the tongue. As the Book of James puts it,

*We all stumble in many ways. If any one does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body as well....But no one can tame the tongue; it is a restless evil and full of deadly poison (James 3:2,8).*

If the Spirit has the use of our tongue, He has everything else as well.

**2. What happened in each of the following incidents when the Holy Spirit came upon people (Nu. 1:24,25; 1 Sam. 19:20-24; Lk. 1:67-79)?**

A review of the entire Word of God shows us that when the Holy Spirit comes upon people, prophetic ministry is frequently the result. And so Peter, when he boldly confronts the very tribunal that condemned Christ, is "filled with the Holy Spirit" as he speaks to them (Acts 4:8). When Paul is filled with the Holy Spirit, it is following his call by Christ to be, "a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel" (Acts 9:15,17).<sup>3</sup>

What actually happens when a person speaks in tongues? Do they lose control of themselves? Do they know what they are saying? The Bible provides direct answers to each of these questions.

On the Day of Pentecost we read, "they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance" (Acts 2:4). This means that the Holy Spirit was supplying the words for them to speak. He was placing the sounds within their minds and they were speaking them.

Experience shows it is up to us when we start and stop speaking in tongues. And this is confirmed by 1 Corinthians 14:32 which tells us, "the spirits of prophets are subject to prophets." In other words, the human spirit of the person speaking in tongues is in charge of the speaking, even though the Holy Spirit is supplying the language. This is why Paul could tell the Corinthian church that because God is not the author of confusion, they were to ensure that everything in their worship gatherings was done, "properly and in an orderly manner" (1 Corinthians 14:33,40).

Because the Holy Spirit is a perfect gentleman, He never forces us to do something. He urges us, He convicts us, He directs us, but He never imposes His will upon us. When a person speaks in tongues, they supply the faith and the will and the speech organs, and the Holy Spirit supplies the words. And because the language comes from the Holy Spirit, we do not understand what we are saying in tongues. As Paul puts it,

*For one who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but, to God; for no one understands, but in his spirit he speaks mysteries....For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful (1 Corinthians 14:2,14).*

**3. Read 1 Corinthians 14:1-15, 26-28. Is Paul's view of tongues positive or negative? Why? What good do tongues do according to Paul?**

On the Day of Pentecost, the bystanders of some fifteen nationalities actually heard the 120 speak in their various native languages (Acts 2:5-11). In other words, the 120 were speaking known languages that they had never learned. This has happened in some instances, but it is not normally the case. Some have suggested that tongues are a heavenly language such as Paul refers to in 1 Corinthians 13:1. On this point we cannot be certain.

**4. What is Paul trying to say about tongues and prophecy in 1 Corinthians 14:1-13? Is there any place for uninterpreted tongues (vv. 14,26-28)?**

In conclusion let's examine the value of speaking in other tongues. We must first of all distinguish between the personal devotional gift of tongues one receives as evidence of being baptized with the Holy Spirit and the public utterance of a message in tongues.

The latter serves to edify or encourage the church but only if it is interpreted as it must be (1 Corinthians 14:5, 12-13). This public use of tongues can also serve as a sign (1 Corinthians 14:22). Paul refers to this public use of the gift when he asks, "All do not speak in tongues, do they? expecting a negative reply (1 Corinthians 12:30). It is true that all are not used in the public ministry of tongues.

But Paul also tells the Corinthians, "I would like every one of you to speak in tongues" referring to the private use of the gift (1 Corinthians 14:5, NIV). Tongues build us up and provide a new way to pray in the Holy Spirit that is divinely directed, and therefore, divinely powerful. This is the praying in the Spirit that the Bible encourages us to do (1 Corinthians 14:15; Jude 20).<sup>4</sup> And since prayer is central to effective ministry, it only seems reasonable that a gift which accompanies a powerful anointing for ministry would include a supernatural enhancement to our prayer life.

Speaking in other tongues is not the most important aspect of the baptism with the Holy Spirit. But it does provide us with a clear answer to the question Paul asked twelve men one day at Ephesus, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" (Acts 19:2).

**ADDITIONAL REFERENCES**

- 1 Acts 2:1-4; 10:44-46; 19:1-7
- 2 Acts 8:4-24; 9:17; 1 Corinthians 14:15,18
- 3 Acts 13:9-11
- 4 Ephesians 6:18; Romans 8:26,27

## Receiving the Baptism

Every Christian needs to experience the baptism with the Holy Spirit. It is the gateway into a life of powerful and effective ministry. If we are going to do the work that Christ has called us to do, we must receive the power He has provided for us to accomplish that work (Acts 1:8).

Every Christian is called to be like Jesus Christ (Luke 6:40). And just as He was anointed by the Holy Spirit at the time He began His ministry, we need to be anointed as well (Luke 3:21,22).<sup>1</sup> Acts 10:38 tells us,

*You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and how He went about doing good, and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.*

As the second part of this verse points out, Christ's ministry was a ministry of power. This is to be the case with our ministry as well. As Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "the kingdom of God does not consist in words, but in power" (1 Corinthians 4:20).<sup>2</sup> We are engaged in a spiritual warfare and we need weapons that are "divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses" (2 Corinthians 10:3-5).

### 1. What was the outreach ministry of the New Testament church like (Acts 4:31, 5:12-16)? How does the outreach of your church compare?

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God has promised to baptize every one of His children with the Holy Spirit. In Luke 11:11-13, Jesus said,

*Now suppose one of you fathers is asked by his son for a fish; he will not give him a snake instead of a fish, will he? Or if he is asked for an egg, he will not give him a scorpion, will he? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?*

Peter, on the Day of Pentecost, points out that this promise is available to anyone who responds to the call of

### MEMORABLE VERSE

Acts 2:1,4

And when the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place... And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance.

salvation (Acts 2:38,39).

How then do we go about receiving this promised gift? Let's look at how people received it in the Word of God. In the Book of Acts there are at least five instances when people were baptized with the Holy Spirit. They involve large groups (Samaria, Acts 8), small groups (Ephesus, Acts 19) and one person (Paul, Acts 9). In three cases, hands were laid upon those who received the gift. In three cases as well, there was prayer involved. In one case, the Holy Spirit fell upon people who were listening to the gospel being preached. In another case, a person was healed of blindness and then filled with the Spirit.

These facts suggest that there are a variety of conditions under which people can receive the baptism with the Holy Spirit. Experience has shown that people can receive sitting in a pew, standing at an altar, kneeling beside their beds, coming up from being baptized in water or even driving an automobile. Evidently, God is not that concerned with the position of our body. But He is concerned with the posture of our hearts.

As we study the Scriptures, we discover certain principles that help us to prepare our hearts to receive the baptism with the Holy Spirit. First, we observe that this gift is for those who repent and receive Christ as Saviour and Lord. Those in the Upper Room on the Day of Pentecost were already Christ's disciples when they were filled with the Holy Spirit. The same was true of those at Samaria and Ephesus (Acts 8,19). In the case of Paul and the household of Cornelius, the new birth and the baptism with the Holy Spirit were virtually simultaneous (Acts 9,10).

Second, we must be willing to dedicate our lives to God afresh. Since being filled with the Holy Spirit means being controlled by the Holy Spirit, we cannot enter into such an experience while harbouring sin in our lives or holding something of ourselves back from God. Acts 5:32 speaks of the Holy Spirit "whom God has given to those who obey Him."

### 2. What are some of the things that grieve the Holy Spirit and could thus prevent us from receiving the baptism with the Holy Spirit unless we put them aside according to Ephesians 4:25-32?

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Desire or spiritual thirst is the third thing we need to prepare our hearts to receive the baptism with the Holy Spirit. Jesus said, "If any man is thirsty, let him come to Me

and drink" speaking of the Holy Spirit that "those who believed in Him were to receive" (John 7:37,39).<sup>3</sup> This spiritual thirst is also exemplified in a person like Cornelius who actually sent for someone to bring him the message of life (Acts 10:1-33).<sup>4</sup>

The fourth thing needed to receive anything from God is simple faith since,

*Without faith it is impossible to please Him (God), for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him (Hebrews 11:6).*

Jesus said,

*"Therefore I say to you, all things for which you pray and ask, believe that you have received them, and they shall be granted you (Mark 11:24)."*<sup>5</sup>

The Bible also teaches that our motives must be right when we ask God for something (James 4:3).

### 3. What applicable insights concerning prayer to receive the baptism with the Holy Spirit can you find in 1 John 3:21,22?

Let's look for a moment at some of the stumbling blocks that sometimes hold people back from being baptized with the Holy Spirit. Some people ask God to baptize them with the Holy Spirit and nothing happens. They then conclude, "Oh well, I guess I'm not worthy enough." That statement is both completely true and completely irrelevant. Of course you are not worthy. No one is worthy of any of God's blessings. That is why Christ had to die to purchase them for us. And because of His death, Paul could write, "For as many as be the promises of God, in Him (Jesus) they are yes" (2 Corinthians 1:20).<sup>6</sup> As Peter puts it,

*Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, in order that by them you might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust (2 Peter 1:2-4).*

"Everything pertaining to life and godliness" is already ours in Jesus Christ. And that includes the baptism with the Holy Spirit

Another thing that can prevent people from receiving this gift is the attitude, "Well God, I'm ready whenever you are." This person fails to see that we must ask for this blessing from God the same way we asked God to save us

(Romans 10:13,14). James tells us, "You do not have because you do not ask" (James 4:2). Jesus said, "How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?" (Luke 11:13).

A third problem sometimes encountered relates to speaking in tongues. Some people ask to be filled and then wait for God to take control of their tongue and make them speak in a strange language involuntarily. God does not speak in tongues, people do. On the Day of Pentecost, "they...began to speak with other tongues" as the Spirit provided the language (Acts 2:4).<sup>7</sup> God will place the syllables in our minds as we begin to speak in faith, but we initiate the speaking, we choose to speak in tongues (1 Corinthians 14:32).

The last issue that can cause problems is the question of emotion. For many people, being filled with the Holy Spirit is a very emotional experience. But the emotions are simply a by-product. They are not a necessary part of the experience. And with individuals who are relatively unemotional in their personalities, trying to stir up their feelings when seeking the baptism with the Holy Spirit can be a distraction. The key thing is to focus upon Jesus Christ and let our emotions take care of themselves.

Now we are down to the wire. What does a person actually do to be baptized with the Holy Spirit? Here are some guidelines.

*Pray* and re-dedicate your life completely to God. Repent of any known sins and be prepared to make restitution if this is appropriate.

*Ask* God to give you the gift of the Holy Spirit.

*Believe* that God loves you as His child and He wants you to have this wonderful gift even more than you do. Trust Him to honour His Word.

*Receive* the promise that John the Baptist proclaimed: "He Himself (Jesus) will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire" (Matthew 3:11). In faith, begin to praise God in a new language as the Holy Spirit supplies the syllables in your mind.

The only question left is, What are you waiting for? God is ready to baptize you with the Holy Spirit. Open your heart and receive it today.

#### ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

1 Luke 4:14-18

2 1 Corinthians 2:1-5

3 Luke 1:53; Isaiah 44:3, 55:1

4 Jeremiah 29:13

5 James 1:6,7

6 1 Corinthians 1:30

7 1 Corinthians 14:2, 13-15

## Walking in Fullness

As you have seen from this study, our relationship with the Holy Spirit is a comprehensive one. He convicts us, regenerates us, dwells in us, guides us, sanctifies us, empowers us, seals us and gives us spiritual gifts. In this lesson, we will examine the ongoing relationship we are called to enjoy with God as we walk in the Holy Spirit.

In Galatians 5:25, Paul writes, "If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit." He is saying, if the Spirit has brought God's life into our hearts, then let us live each day in tune with the life-giving Spirit who lives within us.

Walking in the Spirit is an essential part of the Christian life. God has saved us not to leave us as we are, but to make us like His Son. This means there is an internal spiritual battle to be won on a daily basis. This conflict is between what the New Testament calls our "flesh" or our inbred sinful nature that constantly leads us towards sin and the Holy Spirit who has come to lead us into the way of righteousness. Paul writes,

*\* But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please (Galatians 5:16,17).<sup>1</sup>*

He then goes on to list some of the things that people do when the sinful nature has control of their lives.

### 1. What are the "deeds of the flesh" according to Galatians 5:19-21?

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### MEMORABLE VERSE

#### Ephesians 5:18-21

So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ

Paul points out that those who continue to practice the deeds of the flesh will have no place in God's kingdom (Galatians 5:21).<sup>2</sup> This is why it is so important we learn to walk in the Holy Spirit. Only by allowing Him to lead us into God's ways can we hope to avoid fulfilling the deadly desires of our sinful nature (Galatians 5:16).

There is also a positive result of walking in the Holy Spirit. He is able to cultivate and bring forth His fruit in our lives. These are the beautiful qualities of Christ-like character that are produced in us as we follow His leadings.

### 2. List the fruit of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22,23). Try to think of an example of each of these qualities from the life of Jesus.

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As you look over the list of the fruit of the Holy Spirit you have just made, you probably said to yourself, "That's a tall order!" And so it is. But God always provides us with the resources to fulfill what He requires of us. In Romans chapter 8 we read,

*For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit (Romans 8:2-4).*

We are all sinners by nature. We could never fulfill the moral requirements of God's law because, of itself the law has no power to enable to keep its directives. Instead, God has sent His Spirit into our hearts to enable us to live holy lives having put to death our sinful nature on the cross with Christ (see Lesson 7 for an explanation of our death to sin through identification with Christ). And we are able to live as God's law directs as we walk in the Holy Spirit.

The secret to making this operative in our lives lies between our ears. It all depends on what we set our minds upon, as Paul goes on to explain,

*For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace (Romans 8:5-6).<sup>3</sup>*

If we concentrate upon "the things of the flesh," that is, not simply upon the things of our earthly life, but rather, the



desires of our sinful nature like lust, greed, anger, selfishness and so forth, we will end up doing these things. If, however, we concentrate upon "the things of the Spirit," such as anything that is in line with the fruit of the Spirit, we will experience "life and peace." This process of dwelling upon the things of the Spirit includes allowing the Spirit to "put to death" anything in our lives that displeases God,

*So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh—for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live (Romans 8:12,13).<sup>4</sup>*

This is what it means to be led by the Spirit of God. And with our submission to this leading there comes a wonderful assurance of our adoption into God's family that took place when we were saved and an intimacy with God the Father (Romans 8:14-16).

**3. All Christians sin. We all fail to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit into the way of righteousness at times. What should we do when we sin (1 John 1:5-10).**

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Having come this far, you might still be tempted to ask, "But how do I actually do it? How do I keep my mind focused on the things of the Spirit? Let's look at one more passage in God's Word. Paul wrote to the Ephesians,

*So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ (5:18-21).*

The key phrase here is in verse 18, "Be filled with the Spirit." The verb in the original is a continuous passive imperative. The imperative makes it a command. The passive voice means that the Holy Spirit is the one who does the filling or controlling and we simply submit ourselves to Him. And the continuous force of the verb means that we should allow the Holy Spirit to fill or control us, day-by-day, moment-by-moment. This sounds a lot like walking in the Spirit, does it not?

This passage in Ephesians shows us how to keep on being filled with the Spirit. Verse 19 tells us to build an altar of praise in our hearts by singing to ourselves and to one another "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs." Hebrews

13:15 issues a similar call to worship: "Through Him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name."<sup>5</sup>

Our passage in Ephesians mentions thanksgiving as well. It echoes the sentiments of 1 Thessalonians 5:18 which says, "in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."<sup>6</sup> Nor is the Word of God neglected. We are told to make melody in our hearts with "psalms." The Psalms are beautiful songs of praise inspired by the Holy Spirit. As we sing the Word of God in our hearts each day, it will keep us from sin (Psalm 119:9,11).<sup>7</sup>

**4. Read Psalm 119 and write down some of the things God's Word can do for us (see verses 28,50,66,98-100,105,165, for example).**

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The last thing our passage mentions is that we should, "be subject to one another in the fear of Christ: (v. 21). We cannot walk in the fullness of the Holy Spirit if we have a proud or arrogant attitude. We must be willing to put the needs of others first, to submit ourselves to authority and to display that fruit of the Holy Spirit known as meekness or gentleness (Matthew 5:5; Philippians 2:3,4; 1 Peter 2:13-15).

The songwriter has said,  
*There is a river  
 That flows from deep within  
 There is a fountain  
 That frees the soul from sin.  
 Come to this water  
 There is a vast supply.  
 There is a river  
 That never shall run dry*

This is the *Lifestream*, the Holy Spirit of God who lives within each of His children, as Jesus Christ said,

He who believes in Me,... "From his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water" (John 7:38).

**ADDITIONAL REFERENCES**

- 1 Romans 7:14-23
- 2 Ephesians 5:5; Revelation 22:14,15
- 3 Galatians 6:8
- 4 Romans 6:11-14; Colossians 3:5-8
- 5 Psalm 34:1, 61:8, 71:8
- 6 Psalm 30:11,12; Colossians 4:2
- 7 Psalm 119:54; 149:15



**A N S W E R   K E Y**

(continued from page 5)

**Lesson 5**

1. Signs and wonders bear witness to and confirm the truth of the gospel.
2. In both cases, many people believed in the Lord.
3. Corporate prayer for people to be saved is one way.

**Lesson 6**

1. God has cleansed us from sin by the blood of Jesus and put His Spirit within our hearts.
2. Ro. 8—The Holy Spirit helps us to pray.  
Ro. 14—He gives us joy and peace.  
Ro. 15—He gives us hope.  
Eph. 3—He gives us inner strength.
3. We can walk in the Spirit, be led by the Spirit and be filled with the Spirit.
4. We will love others, especially our fellow Christians.

**Lesson 7**

1. We should add moral excellence or virtue, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness and Christian love.
2. We are to put aside immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, greed, anger, wrath, malice, slander, abusive speech and lying.
3. We are called to put on compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience, forgiveness, love and thanksgiving.

**Lesson 8**

1. Prophecy serves to edify by strengthening and building up, to exhort by encouraging and appealing to us to follow Christ more closely and to comfort by reminding us of God's love and faithfulness.
2. 1 Cor. 12:21—Mutual respect and care for one another.  
1 Cor. 12:26—A willingness to empathize with one another.  
1 Cor. 13—Love.  
1 Cor. 14—A concern to edify the church.
3. There should be only two or three prophecies and each one must be judged. Those prophesying never lose control of themselves (v. 32) so there is no excuse for confusion. Everything should be orderly.

**Lesson 9**

1. We need guidance because of those who are against us and because of the deceitfulness of our own hearts. And in our waywardness, we will suffer if we do not seek the wisdom of God.
2. In difficult situations, God can test our hearts, He can deal with our disobedience and teach us to rely on Him alone.

3. This question has a personal answer from your experience.

**Lesson 10**

1. It is important so that people's faith will be in God's power and not men's persuasive words.
2. In Acts chapter 1, Jesus says the disciples will soon be baptized with the Holy Spirit. When it happens, chapter 2 says they were all "filled with the Holy Spirit."
3. Paul seems to have committed his life to Christ, been filled with the Spirit at that moment or soon thereafter and then been baptized in water.
4. Peter went from being a coward to a fearless preacher of the gospel, even when he faced the Jewish council that had condemned Christ.

**Lesson 11**

1. They heard them speaking in tongues.
2. When the Holy Spirit came upon people, they prophesied.
3. Paul's view of tongues is positive. He uses them frequently himself. They build us up and enable us to pray in the Spirit.
4. He is saying that when the church meets, the goal is to edify one another and tongues alone do not edify unless they are interpreted. When they are interpreted, they are as good as prophecy. There is a place for uninterpreted tongues as a means of private communication between the believer and God.

**Lesson 12**

1. It was characterized by bold preaching by all the believers and very many people were healed, saved and added to the church.
2. We must lay aside lying, sinful anger, theft, unwholesome speech, bitterness, wrath, clamor, slander and malice.
3. We can pray with confidence if we are living to please God in all things.

**Lesson 13**

1. The deeds of the flesh are immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, angry outbursts, disputes, dissensions, factions, envy, drunkenness and carousings.
2. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.
3. We must acknowledge our sin and confess it to God, asking His forgiveness.
4. God's Word can strengthen us, comfort us, teach us, make us wise, guide us and give us great peace.

# *Lifestream*

## *The Holy Spirit in God's People*

### **The Need**

The Holy Spirit used to be called the forgotten member of the Trinity. That's not true any longer. With the Pentecostal Revival at the turn of this century and the Charismatic Renewal that swept the world in the last two decades, believers of all denominations have become much more aware of the Holy Spirit. They have experienced His power in their lives. But what about the doctrine of the Holy Spirit? What about the extensive teaching of the Word of God on the Person and work of the Holy Spirit? Misunderstanding and confusion can result if God's people seek the Spirit's power but are ignorant of His nature and His ways. *Lifestream* is a study in the Word of God intended to fill this need.

#### **The Author**

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### **The Purpose**

*Lifestream* has been written with three key purposes in mind:

- ☐ To teach the basic truths about the Person of the Holy Spirit.
- ☐ To give Christians a deeper understanding of the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives.
- ☐ To inform believers concerning the Baptism with the Holy Spirit and encourage them to walk each day in His empowering fullness.

### **The Possibilities**

*Lifestream* is designed for use in a number of learning situations:

- ☐ Home fellowship groups
- ☐ Small discipleship groups
- ☐ Adult, young adult, or High School Sunday school classes
- ☐ Study guide for discussions in mid-week Bible studies
- ☐ Home study guide for use in parallel with a series of sermons on the Holy Spirit
- ☐ Personal Bible study

*Lifestream* is more than a book to read. It is a book you can work through. This study is a must for new believers and mature Christians alike. A Leader Guide is included in each book.