

# The work of the Holy Spirit

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God is 'three in one': Father, Son (Jesus Christ), and Holy Spirit. He made us *in His own image* Genesis 1:27, so we are also 'three in one'. We are spirit, soul and body.

When we accept Jesus as our Saviour the Holy Spirit comes and lives within us. See John 3:3-8. He then leads us; guides us; empowers us, and can powerfully work through us. He works in every part of our lives - spirit, soul, and body – changing us to be more like Jesus, and using us to build the Kingdom of God.

So let's explore the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives!

*May God Himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The One who calls you is faithful and He will do it.* 1 Thessalonians 5:23,24.

## Who is the Holy Spirit and what is He like?

In John 14:15-31 and John 16:5-16 Jesus tells His disciples all about the Holy Spirit. He says that He will send the Holy Spirit after His resurrection and describes how the Holy Spirit will work in their lives (and ours!).

- 14:15 The work of the Holy Spirit is vitally linked to our love for the Lord and our obedience to His will. If we love Him and are doing His will the Holy Spirit is free to do His work in and through us.
- 14:16 Jesus will ask the Father to send the Holy Spirit. Acts 1:1-8 describes how this would happen. The disciples were to wait for the gift of the Holy Spirit and be baptized (immersed) in the Holy Spirit. This would give them power to share the Gospel among all nations. *But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses ....to the ends of the earth.* Acts 1:8. The Holy Spirit fell on the disciples on the day of Pentecost a few weeks later. *All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.* Acts 2:4. This was the beginning of the Christian Church and the empowered disciples spread throughout the known world bringing people to Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit.
- 14:16 The Holy Spirit will be with us forever. The word Jesus uses here for the Holy Spirit is *paraclete*, meaning *comforter, helper, advocate, standby, counsellor, strengthener*. We cannot have an effective Christian life without the Holy Spirit!
- 14:17 and 16:13 The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth. (Remember that Jesus said He was *the way, the truth and the life*. John 14:6.) The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Jesus so He is truth. The Holy Spirit will always speak truth into our lives. Sometimes this can get quite uncomfortable because He knows us through and through, and we can't hide anything from Him!
- 14:17 The world cannot accept, know or understand the Holy Spirit. See 1 Corinthians 2:6-16. It is very hard to explain to a non-Christian how the Holy Spirit works. Many in our culture are interested in and involved in spiritual things, and it is culturally acceptable to do so; but as soon as we talk about the Holy Spirit they can't understand if they are not open to the Lord.
- 14:17 The Holy Spirit *lives with you and will be in you*. The Holy Spirit lives in our spirits, and then works in and through us. He leads us so we do what God wants; empowers us so we have all of the resources we need to do what God wants; corrects us when we get off track,

strengthens us when we are weak; and is continually changing us so that we become more and more like Jesus. And He does all this from within us. *He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit, who lives in you.* Romans 8:11. That's why Jesus could say in John 14:19 *Because I live, you also will live.*

- 14:18-24 Jesus will reveal Himself to us, be with us and show His love to us by the Holy Spirit. This is dependant on our obedience. If we disobey Him it isn't long till we start to notice the lack of His presence with us.
- 14:24-26 The Holy Spirit will take Jesus' words, speak to us and teach us. When we understand what God wants us to do, and then act in obedience to it we are *led by the Spirit*. This is the way to real effectiveness in the Christian life.
- 14:27 The Holy Spirit will give us peace. Peace can only come from God; it can't be counterfeited for *God is not a God of disorder, but of peace.* 1 Corinthians 14:30. That's why we can be *led forth in peace.* Isaiah 55:12. And *the peace of God that passes all understanding will keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.* Philippians 4:7.
- 16:5-11 The Holy Spirit will *convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment.* v8. Because the Holy Spirit is holy He is always concerned with righteousness. He will always seek to bring about righteousness and holiness in our lives. When we sin the Holy Spirit works to reveal the sin, and guide us towards repentance and restitution, so we can remain in fellowship with God. (But He won't condemn us because of our sin. He will always provide the way for us to deal with the sin and be victorious over it. *There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, for the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set me free from the law of sin and death.* Romans 5:1).
- 16:13-15. The Holy Spirit will reveal God's will to us. He communicates whatever the Father wants us to do. (And that's when obedience becomes important!).
- 16:14,15 The Holy Spirit will always glorify Jesus. This is His ultimate role. He takes whatever the God has for us, communicates it to us, and when we act in obedience Jesus is glorified. And it's our obedience that pleases the Holy Spirit!



## The Holy Spirit lives in us and works through us

When we accept Jesus as our Saviour we are *born of the Spirit.* John 3:8. He comes and lives in us by His Holy Spirit. We become children of God; are born again, and are sealed by the Holy Spirit. *He anointed us, set His seal of ownership on us, and put His Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.* 2 Corinthians 1:21,22.

The Holy Spirit then begins to work in our lives to make us like Jesus. *Whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.* 2 Corinthians 3:18.

The Holy Spirit works in our lives in a number of ways:

- **The Holy Spirit speaks into our hearts**

The spoken word of God is called a rhema. When we receive a rhema we sense the Holy Spirit is saying something to us, deep in our spirit. This is often associated with a lift in our spirit or tingling: an 'anointing'. Along with the anointing there is a sense in our mind of what God is saying to us (which comes as a revelation).

*The word (rhema) is near you. It is in your mouth and in your heart.* Romans 10:18.

*But the Counsellor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.* John 14:26

- Words from the Lord will always come with love because *God has poured His love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit whom He has given us.* Romans 5:5
- They will always honour Jesus. *The Spirit of truth . He will testify about me.* John 15:26
- They will always focus on truth. *But you have an anointing from the Holy One and all of you know the truth* 1 John 2:20
- They are felt in our spirit and come with a sense of understanding. 1 Corinthians 2:10-16
- They are real. *As for you the anointing you received from Him remains in you and you do not need anyone to teach you. But as His anointing is real, not counterfeit, just as it has taught you, remain in Him.* 1 John 2: 27

So when we hear a *rhema* we 'just know' that God is speaking. *He (the Holy Spirit) will bring glory to me (Jesus) by taking what is mine and making it known to you.* John 16:14

When this happens we need to hear and obey!

- **The Holy Spirit reveals the Word of God from the Bible**

When we choose to get into the Bible the Holy Spirit has the opportunity to speak to us (via a *rhema*) from God's word. This can be mind and life changing (if we believe and obey what God says!). *Rhemas* from the Bible can become the main way that God speaks to us.



*The unfolding of your words gives light.* Psalm 119:130

- **The Holy Spirit activates our conscience**

The Holy Spirit sets off the alarm bells in our conscience to protect us from trouble.

*The lamp of the Lord searches the spirit of a man; it searches out his inmost being.* Proverbs 20:27

That's why we need to keep a clear conscience 1 Peter 3:16. If we give in to sin our conscience gets de-sensitised and we gradually drift away from the Lord. The Holy Spirit, though, will work in our hearts to re-sensitise the conscience. *How much more will the blood of Christ ... cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God* Hebrews 9:14

When the Holy Spirit speaks and/or activates our conscience it's wise to obey immediately! That way we will stay in that '*good, acceptable and perfect will of God*'. Romans 12:2

We can choose to obey/disobey/ignore the Holy Spirit as He works on our conscience. Much better is to pro-actively open ourselves to God and ask Him to search out any cultural or philosophical garbage we may be carrying and replace it with genuine Christian life. (It's a bit risky doing this, because He will!).

*Search me O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me and lead me in the way everlasting.* Psalm 139:23,24

*Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit to sustain me.* Psalm 51:10-12

- **The Holy Spirit produces fruits**

As we surrender more and more of our life to the Lord, He becomes more and more in control, and we become more and more like Him. We start to reflect this in all aspects of our lives. We start to demonstrate the fruits of having the Holy Spirit living and working in us: the fruits of the Spirit!



See Galatians 5:13-25.

- When we are controlled and led by the Holy Spirit we will know wonderful freedom because He will set us free from legalism. We won't be bound by our own hang-ups or by trying to meet other peoples' expectations. We will be free to do what God wants us to do. To love, to serve others, to have victory over our old sinful nature, to be free of the things that once controlled us and kept us from experiencing the Kingdom of God.....
- We will have love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control flowing out of our heart. These fruits show that the Holy Spirit is reigning in our lives. We are like Him! Like Jesus! And the fruits of the Holy Spirit then overflow from us to others.

### Sometimes the fruits of the Holy Spirit can minister to people.

When you radiate the fruits of the Spirit they can minister to other people and bring much blessing. Wherever you go you can be a blessing! *Surely goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.* Psalm 23:6

eg. When you are with someone your love, peace, patience, gentleness etc. can minister to them.

eg. **John**. The central theme of his writings was **love**. *For God so loved the world ....* John 3:16. *Let us love one another for love comes from God.* 1 John 4:7. John radiated the fruit of love.

eg. **Paul**. Received much **comfort** from God through his extensive troubles and persecution. This developed **longsuffering**. As a result Paul was able to **encourage** others.

*Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God. For just as the sufferings of Christ flow over into our lives, so also through Christ our comfort overflows. If we are distressed, it is for your comfort and salvation; if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which produces in you patient endurance of the same sufferings we suffer.* 2 Corinthians 1:3-6

eg. **The parable of the trees**. See Judges 9:8-15

After being mightily used of God Gideon fell away and led the people of Israel into evil (Judges 8:27). In the confusion after his death and the appointment of Abimelech as King, Jothan the prophet gave a parable:

The fruit of the olive tree produces oil giving light and honour; the fruit of the fig tree gives goodness and sweetness; the fruit of the vine cheers and brings joy, but the fruit of the thorn bush just devours, burning others and being burnt itself.

People are very sensitive about this. If we radiate the fruits of the Holy Spirit they will be open to receive ministry from us. "What you are is speaking so loudly I can't hear what you're saying". "Actions may speak louder than words, but what we are speaks even more loudly!"

- **The Holy Spirit leads us.**

The only way to live victoriously and fruitfully in life is to be set free from bondage to our old sinful nature and be led by the Holy Spirit. Romans Chapter 8 tells us how!

Martin Luther called Romans 8 the masterpiece of the New Testament! It is indeed one of the most important chapters in the whole Bible so let's explore it in some detail.

We will learn how we can be led by the Holy Spirit!

## Romans 8

In Romans 8 Paul explains that in Christ we are righteous in Christ. We are free from the power of our old nature which used to keep us in bondage to sin and death. He encourages us to live in this righteousness; controlled by the Holy Spirit; alive to God; free; righteous! We are to move from the condemnation of living in the flesh (Chapter 7) to the victory and freedom of living in righteousness, led by the Holy Spirit. (Chapter 8). We can't do this by ourselves, though; it can only happen in the power of the Holy Spirit.

### Romans 8:1-17. Being controlled by the Spirit

Paul contrasts the 'carnal' Christian, led by their old sinful nature, and the 'spiritual' Christian, who is led by the Holy Spirit:

Carnal Christian	Spiritual Christian
v1 Under condemnation.	Free; not under any condemnation.
v1,4 Walking in the flesh (old sinful nature).	Walking in the Spirit.
v2 Sinful so under condemnation of death.	Free from sin and its power.
v4 Condemned by the Law as unrighteous.	The righteousness required by the Law is fulfilled.
v5,6 Mind set on the things what the flesh desires, leading to spiritual darkness.	Mind set on doing what the Spirit desires, leading to life and peace.
v7,8 Hostile to God; cannot submit to God's law.	Pleasing God.
v9-13 Indwelt by the Holy Spirit and righteous in God's sight (due to justification).  Living according to the sinful nature so under sin's power and body dead through sinful actions.  Spiritually dead.	Indwelt by the Holy Spirit and righteous in God's sight (due to justification). Spirit alive to God. Directed and controlled by the Holy Spirit.  Body made alive because sin is continually being put to death by the power of the Holy Spirit.  Lives in righteousness, free from sin's power.

On what basis can we move from the bondage of our old nature to the freedom of being led by the Spirit? Only on the basis of righteousness that comes from the atonement made by Jesus at the Cross. God sent His Son, Jesus, to be a sin offering. He *became sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.* 2 Corinthians 5:21. He did this by *sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful humanity to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in human flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit.* 8:3,4

Consequently we have an obligation - not to live according to our old sinful nature - but to put to death the deeds of the flesh and to be led by the Holy Spirit. That's how we can be God's children, pleasing Him in all we do. And if we are His children we are also His heirs, and co-heirs with Christ! (but this may involve suffering, as it did with Jesus). How wonderful that the Holy Spirit who lives within us does all this!

### Romans 8:18-27. Having hope of future glory

The sufferings and problems we go through as we learn to be led by the Holy Spirit and live in righteousness are nothing compared to the glory that is to be revealed in us. There is no easy way into God's best! We desperately want to see God's glory in our lives, but what about the rest of creation? It has chosen to reject God and is now in bondage from that choice. It so much needs God's glory to be revealed so it too can be set free.

Bringing others into freedom will come about through us: God's children!! The whole creation is groaning as it awaits liberation and so are we as we await our full inheritance as God's children. But we do have hope and the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness, indeed, He is continually interceding for us. *The Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will.* 8:27

#### **Glory doxa**

The light, splendour and brightness of God's presence. *Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord rises upon you.* Isaiah 60:1

This is our great Christian hope: that the presence of the Lord will be revealed in us by His Holy Spirit.

### **Romans 8:28-39. Victorious Christian living**

*We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose.* 8:28

God is always working for our good as we grow into the righteousness we have in Christ. For those who love God and who are called according to His purposes ie. His elect, this is just part of a series of events in our lives through which God is leading us:

- He **foreknew** us. *prognosis* Because God is all knowing (omniscient) He knew in advance what free-will decisions we would make when confronted with the claims of Christ.
- He **predestined** us to be conformed to the likeness of His Son. *proorizo* On the basis of knowing how we would choose, God determined that we would be saved and be included 'in Christ'. Predestination is always based on foreknowledge, otherwise free will is removed and we would be little more than robots. The purpose of our predestination was for us to be conformed to the image of Jesus (which we are 'in Christ').
- He **called** us. *kaleo* God revealed Himself to us and we became aware of His claims on our lives. This is done by the Holy Spirit when He calls us to respond to Christ so we can be saved and enter into a relationship with Him.
- He **justified** us. *dikaioo* When we put our faith in Christ God declared us to be righteous in His sight, in Christ.
- He **glorified** us. *doxazo* God revealed Himself to us so we were enlightened by His presence. When His glory comes into our lives we can but respond with honour and praise.

Notice how each of these aspects of salvation is initiated by God! He is the *author and finisher of our faith*. Hebrews 12:2. How wonderful that He chose us to be included in Christ; that He has saved us, and that He has included us in the working out of His great purposes!

Paul then asks: *What, then, shall we say in response to this?* 8:31 His answer is a wonderful series of statements recognising all that God has done for us in Christ:

- We know God is for us. *If God is for us who can be against us?* 8:31
- God will provide for us. *If He gave us His Son how will He not also, along with Him, graciously give us all things?* 8:32
- No-one can condemn us. After all we have been chosen by God and justified so are righteous in His sight. *Who will bring any charge against those who God has chosen?* 8:33
- Jesus is interceding for us. *Christ Jesus .... is interceding for us.* 8:34
- Nothing can separate us from God's love. Not trouble, hardship, persecution, famine, nakedness, danger or the sword! *No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.* 8:37

*For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.* 8:38,39.

Wow! Romans 8 has described the possibility of being led by the Holy Spirit so that we live in righteousness, and do what God wants us to do. But there's more! The Holy Spirit also empowers us, and gives us everything we need to live like this! So let's now explore the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

- **The Holy Spirit fills and empowers us**

The first time that the Holy Spirit filled and empowered Christians was on the Day of Pentecost, a few weeks after Jesus' resurrection. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost was momentous! It signalled the beginning of the Church and of the spread of the Gospel to all nations. The Church started in the power of the Holy Spirit, and it still needs the power of the Holy Spirit to be effective today!

Notice that Jesus here calls the outpouring of the Holy Spirit being *baptized with the Holy Spirit*. (This is equivalent to *baptized in the Holy Spirit* as the Greek word *en* can mean *with* or *in*).

Jesus had already predicted that the Holy Spirit was to be poured out in this way; indeed He had told the disciples to wait for it.

*On one occasion, while He was eating with them, He gave them this command: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit." Acts 1:4,5*

The purpose of this outpouring was so that the disciples would receive the power of the Holy Spirit and be God's witnesses throughout the world.

*But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." Acts 1:8.*

And that's exactly what happened! The Holy Spirit fell on the early Christians in power:

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

A crowd gathered and Peter explained that the outpouring of the Holy Spirit was in fulfilment of Joel's prophecy:

*'In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy. I will show wonders in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke. The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord. And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.'* Acts 2:17-21.

Peter said that *God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact. Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear. Acts 2:32,33*, and that they needed to repent and receive Jesus. Then they too could receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. *Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off - for all whom the Lord our God will call." Acts 2:38,39.*

On a number of other occasions in the Book of Acts the Holy Spirit fell on the new believers in similar ways to the Day of Pentecost, filling them and empowering them.

These occasions are:

- Samaria. Acts 8:15-20.
- Paul. Acts 9:17,18.
- Cornelius' household. Acts 10:44-48, and 11:15-17.
- Ephesus. Acts 19:2-6.



So what can we learn from this about being filled and empowered by the Holy Spirit?

- We can be filled with the Holy Spirit. The Greek word for filled in Acts 2:4, 9:17 and 13:9 is *pletho*. It means *had an experience of being filled with*. In each case the Holy Spirit came upon the believers; filled them, and endued them with power. Miraculous things happened! eg. the new believers spoke in tongues or prophesied. The power of the Holy Spirit was so evident that, on one occasion Simon the magician wanted to buy the power to lay hands on people so they would receive the Holy Spirit! Acts 8:18-24.
- The initial experience of being filled with the Holy Spirit is called the baptism with (or in) the Holy Spirit. John the Baptist said that Jesus was the One who would baptise with the Holy Spirit. *"I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."* Mark 1:8. The outpouring on the Day of Pentecost was referred to as 'baptism with the Holy Spirit' Acts 1:5 and also 'receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit'. Acts 2:38,
- The 'baptism in the Holy Spirit' or the 'gift of the Holy Spirit' is for all Christians. *And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off - for all whom the Lord our God will call.* Acts 2:38,39.
- When the early Christians received the 'baptism in Holy Spirit' or 'the gift of the Holy Spirit' there were some common aspects. They had believed in the Lord Jesus Christ and were saved; they were seeking to be filled with the Holy Spirit; the Holy Spirit fell on them; and there was some supernatural experience demonstrating that the Holy Spirit had indeed filled them. The supernatural experiences included speaking in tongues and prophesying. Laying on of the hands of other believers may or may not have been involved. Perhaps the most significant common element was that there was an infilling by the Holy Spirit that resulted in an overflow of love, joy and power. Jesus described this as follows: *"If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him." By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.* John 7:37-39. Today Jesus has been glorified and the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit is available for all Christians.
- The important initial Christian experiences were being saved; being water baptised, and being baptised in the Holy Spirit. There are elements of each of these experiences in the four accounts given in Acts where the Holy Spirit was poured out. e.g. In Ephesus where there were some disciples who had been water baptised by John the Baptist. Paul asked them *"Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" They answered, "No, we have not even heard there is a Holy Spirit"*. Paul then baptised them into the name of the Lord Jesus. *When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied.* Acts 19:2-6. The order of events isn't always "saved – baptised – baptised in the Holy Spirit", but it seems the early Church felt that each of the initial experiences were vital for getting established in the Christian life. Compare that to today where some of these experiences are 'optional'!
- Jesus said that the reason why the Holy Spirit was to be poured was *You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.* Acts 1:8. After the early disciples received the Holy Spirit they did have power and they were witnesses for Christ. Initially they evangelised in Israel, but soon spread the Gospel throughout the known world. That same Gospel has come to us today by the power of the Holy Spirit, and it is our responsibility to share it with our generation *He said to*

#### Receiving the Baptism in the Holy Spirit

- Focus on Jesus, for He is the One who baptises in the Holy Spirit. Mark 1:8.
- Be thirsty for the Holy Spirit.
- Ask Jesus to fill you with the Holy Spirit. Luke 11:13.
- Drink in of the Lord Jesus. Believe that He will fill you with the Holy Spirit. Let His streams of living water wash over you and fill you. John 7:37-39.
- As you sense a welling up within you, allow this to be expressed from deep in your heart, out of your mouth. Allow your spirit to express your praise and worship through speaking in tongues and prophecy.

Remember that the baptism in the Holy Spirit is just the first time of being filled with the Holy Spirit. Keep coming back to Jesus to be re-filled, so that you are empowered by the Spirit, and led by the Spirit in all aspects of your life.

them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well." After the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, he was taken up into heaven and he sat at the right hand of God. Then the disciples went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and confirmed his word by the signs that accompanied it. Mark 16:15-20.

- When the disciples were *filled* with the Holy Spirit in Acts 2:4, 9:17 and 13:9 the Greek word for filled is *pletho*. It means *had an experience of being filled*. i.e. a on-off experience. This doesn't necessarily mean that they were 'spirit-filled' for the rest of their lives! There are occasions in the New Testament where Christians are described as *full* of the Holy Spirit. The Greek word here is *pleres* and means *full, and continually full*. This word is applied to Jesus after His temptation Luke 4:1; Steven as he was facing martyrdom, Acts 6:5, 7:55; and Barnabas, Acts 11:24.
- In Ephesians 5:17,18 We are told to be *filled with the Holy Spirit*. The Greek word here is *pleroo*. It means *to be filled and maintained full*. The disciples are described by this word in Acts 13:52.
- So, as Christians today we need to have an initial experience of being filled with the Holy Spirit (the Baptism in the Holy Spirit), and then live our lives being continually re-filled and maintained full of the Holy Spirit.

#### **A word about speaking in tongues**

Speaking in tongues was common when the early Christians received the Baptism in the Holy Spirit, and it still is today! So what is speaking in tongues, and what is its value?

The Greek word for tongues is *glossa* which means a *tongue* or *language*. On the day of Pentecost when the disciples first spoke in tongues the crowd was bewildered because *each one heard their own language being spoken*. Utterly amazed, they asked: "Aren't all these who are speaking Galileans? Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language?" Acts 2:6-8. This shows that tongues are actual languages.

Speaking in tongues is thus "the supernatural gift of speaking in another language without its having been learnt". (Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words).

Paul explains about speaking in tongues in 1 Corinthians 14:1-25.

- We are to *eagerly desire the spiritual gifts* (including tongues), *especially the gift of prophecy*. V1
- When we speak in tongues we *speak to God*, not to other people, because we are uttering *mysteries in* (or with) *the spirit*. V2
- When we speak in tongues we *edify* ourselves, and that is why Paul would like *every one of you to speak in tongues*. V4,5
- Because tongues are unknown languages they are not helpful for building up others in the Church, unless they are interpreted into the language everyone knows. (This is the gift of interpretation of tongues. 1 Corinthians 12:10). V5-13
- When we speak in tongues our spirit prays, but our mind is unfruitful. That's why we should pray (and sing) in tongues (so that our spirit is worshipping the Lord), and in English,(so that in praying with our minds we are understanding what we are praying). V13-17 So speaking in tongues is praying with our spirits. This is explained in Romans 8:26-27: *In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. 27 And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God*. So when you pray in tongues your spirit prays. You are able to express your deepest feelings, without 'censorship' or interference from your mind. In praying with your spirit you are also exercising your spirit, so you become more spiritually aware. This is really helpful when you are seeking to discern God's will e.g. when praying for someone. That's why speaking in tongues is so valuable.
- Paul thanks God that he speaks in tongues *more than all of you* V18, but in Church would rather *speak five intelligible words to instruct others than ten thousand words in a tongue*. V19

- In the Old Testament it was prophesied *"With other tongues and through the lips of foreigners I will speak to this people, but even then they will not listen to me, says the Lord."* V20,21 (Isaiah 28:11,12). So, tongues can be a sign for unbelievers.
- When the Church comes together everything must be done for edification, so if someone prays in a tongue it should be interpreted so everyone can understand. V23-32. *For God is not a God of disorder but of peace.* V33.
- *Therefore, my brothers and sisters, be eager to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues. But everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way.* V39,40.

Personal speaking in tongues (where our spirit prays) is different from the 'gift of tongues' where the Holy Spirit gives a special message in tongues for a particular purpose at a particular time. See 1 Corinthians 12:10. The gift of tongues needs to be interpreted so that it has meaning for those who hear it. The gifts of the Holy Spirit (including the gifts of tongues and interpretation of tongues) are the work of the Holy Spirit *who gives them to each one, just as He determines.* 1 Corinthians 12:11.

And that leads us to the next way that the Holy Spirit works in our lives....

- **The Holy Spirit gives gifts so that we can minister effectively**

The Holy Spirit gives gifts to us so that we can serve the Lord, and do His will powerfully and effectively. 1 Corinthians 12 and 13 tell us all about spiritual gifts. The Greek word for gift here is *charisma* which means a *gift given by grace*. God in His grace gives us gifts, by the Holy Spirit, so we can minister effectively.

- There are different kinds of gifts, different ways of serving with them, and different ways they work, but it is the same Spirit who gives the spiritual gifts. *There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work.* 12:4,5. Notice that the spiritual gifts are for everyone!
- *To each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.* 12:7. So the gifts of the Holy Spirit are given to every Christian, but they are then to be used for the good of others, not selfishly. We are given gifts so we can give them to others!
- The gifts are given: one gift *to one*,.... a different gift *to another* ... 12:8-10. The gifts are given to different Christians at different times for different purposes, to meet specific needs. And the distribution of the gifts is all decided by the giver: the Holy Spirit. *All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines.* 12:11.
- All Christians have received the Holy Spirit when we were saved. At this time we were baptised by the Holy Spirit into the Body of Christ. 12:12,13. (This is quite different to the Baptism in the Holy Spirit, where we were baptised by Jesus in the Holy Spirit). Baptism into Christ means we are part of the Body of Christ, the Church, and we should take our part as members of that Body.
- We all have different parts to play in the Body of Christ, and no member is more or less important than any other member. *God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body.* 12:18-20. The Body of Christ will only be healthy and effective when each member plays their part, and exercises their gifts and ministries. *Now you are the Body of Christ, and each part is a member of it.* 12:27.
- God has appointed people with special ministries within the Body of Christ: apostles, prophets, teachers, workers of miracles, those with gifts of healing, those speaking in tongues, etc. Everybody doesn't have the same giftings, but we are all to eagerly desire the greater gifts. 12:30.

- The gifts are to be exercised in love, otherwise they are pretty much useless. *Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.* 13:4-7.
- The gifts are imperfect (because they are exercised through imperfect people). When Jesus returns i.e. *when perfection comes* 13:10) the gifts will no longer be needed and will disappear. *Now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.* 13:12.
- The best way is the way of love! *And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.* 13:13.

## **The gifts of the Holy Spirit** 1 Corinthians 12:7-11

### **1. The Word of Wisdom**

A supernatural impartation of wisdom so you know what to do in a particular situation. e.g. 1 Kings 3:16-18 where Solomon was given wisdom to know who was the right mother of a baby.

### **2. The Word of Knowledge**

A supernatural impartation of information about a person or situation needed for ministry in the situation. e.g. Acts 5:1-11. The deception by Ananias and Saphira was revealed to the Church leaders. John 4:16-18. Jesus knew that the woman at the well had 5 husbands.

### **3. The Gift of Faith**

A supernatural impartation of faith so you can speak the Word of God into a situation. *"Have faith in God" (or "Have the faith of God"), Jesus answered. "I tell you the truth, if anyone says to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him. Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.* Mark 11:22-24. *Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word (rhema) of Christ.* Romans 10:17. When you receive a gift of faith you hear God's word for a situation and speak that word to the situation. What ever God's word is must happen! e.g. Acts 3:6-8. Peter said to the crippled man "Rise up and walk".

### **4. Gifts of Healing**

A supernatural impartation of healing so illness is cured immediately or quickly. e.g. Jesus' healing of the woman with the flow of blood. Matthew 9:20-22. People being healed by touching the hem of Jesus garment Matthew 14:36, or Paul's handkerchief Acts 19:11,12. Prayer by elders James 5:15.

### **5. Working of Miracles**

A supernatural impartation enabling actions which defy the 'laws of nature'. e.g. Peter walking on the water. Matthew 14:22-32. Peter raising Tabitha from the dead. Acts 9:40

### **6. Prophecy**

A supernatural impartation so you can speak God's word. We are to *eagerly desire* to prophesy. 1 Corinthians 14:1. *He who prophesies speaks to men for their strengthening, encouragement and comfort.* 1 Corinthians 14:3. So prophecy is not so much about foretelling the future as it is about speaking God's word into peoples' lives and situations. e.g. Peter speaking God's word to Simon. Acts 8:20-24; the setting apart of Barnabas and Paul. Acts 13:1-3.

### **7. Distinguishing between spirits**

The supernatural ability to distinguish whether a spirit is of God or not. e.g. Paul and Silas identified that a slave girl had a spirit of divination. Acts 16:16-18. This gift is very important in the deliverance ministry when people are set free from demonic spirits.

## 8. Speaking in Tongues

The supernatural ability to speak a message from God in a language that has not been learnt. When a message in tongues is given it should be interpreted so that everyone understands its meaning. *When you come together, everyone has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. All of these must be done for the strengthening of the church. If anyone speaks in a tongue, two -or at the most three -should speak, one at a time, and someone must interpret. If there is no interpreter, the speaker should keep quiet in the church and speak to himself and God.* 1 Corinthians 14:26-28. (This applies to the gift of tongues given during a church meeting, not to individual speaking in tongues which is for personal edification. (1 Corinthians 14:4).

## 9. Interpretation of Tongues

The supernatural ability to interpret a message in tongues into the language understood by the people. Note that this gift is an *interpretation* of the tongue, not a translation, so it may differ in length from the original message in tongues.

When you receive one of these gifts you are likely to feel an anointing from the Holy Spirit, and a sensing in your spirit of what to say or do. Be obedient so that the gift given to you by the Holy Spirit is shared and can bless others.

Jesus was anointed by the Holy Spirit at His baptism. *As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased." Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil.* Matthew 3:16-4:1. Jesus operated in the power of the Holy Spirit in His ministry, and so can you!

Spiritual gifts are also mentioned at Romans 12:3-8

- Be realistic in your assessment of your own importance. *Don't think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgement, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you.* 12:3.
- Recognise that different members of the Body of Christ have different gifts, so everyone doesn't have the same functions. Together we all form one Body, and each member belongs to all of the others.
- We are to share our gifts generously in accordance with the grace given to us, and in proportion to our faith.

The gifts listed here are: *prophesying, serving, teaching, encouraging, contributing to the needs of others, giving, leadership, and showing mercy.*

Gifts are also mentioned in Ephesians 4:7-16. The Greek word used here for *gift* is different to that used in other places. It is *doma*: the gift of a person (rather than charisma – a gift of the Holy Spirit, given by God's grace). That means that *apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers* are not spiritual gifts; they are people given as gifts to a Church *to prepare God's people for service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.* Ephesians 4:12,13.

This is also shown in 1 Corinthians 12:27-31 where a list of ministries is given (not spiritual gifts). These ministries are people God has appointed in the Church: *apostles, prophets, teachers, workers of miracles, those having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with gifts of administration, and those speaking in different kinds of tongues.* 1 Corinthians 12:28-28. Individuals don't have all of these ministries; rather the ministries are given to different people so all can benefit.

You can carry out an on-line assessment of your spiritual gifts at <http://www.churchgrowth.org/analysis/intro.php> It will produce a most helpful report on your giftings and possible ministry areas, plus notes on how you can develop in your ministry, and areas to watch out for.

The final way that the Holy Spirit works in our lives, (and most importantly, because it encompasses all of the other ways)....

- **The Holy Spirit glorifies Jesus**

In everything He does the Holy Spirit will glorify Jesus.

Jesus said *He will bring glory to Me by taking from what is Mine and making it known to you.* John 16:14.

We have looked at many ways that the Holy Spirit works in our lives:

- The Holy Spirit speaks into our hearts
- The Holy Spirit reveals the Word of God from the Bible
- The Holy Spirit activates our conscience
- The Holy Spirit produces fruits
- The Holy Spirit leads us
- The Holy Spirit fills and empowers us
- The Holy Spirit gives gifts so that we can minister effectively.

You can be sure that in all of these every action of the Holy Spirit will result in glory to Jesus.

1 John 4:1-3 encourages us to test spirits to see whether they are from God:

*Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world.*

**Ultimately, the work of the Holy Spirit is to bring glory to the Lord Jesus Christ!**

## Discussion questions

What is the relationship of the Holy Spirit to the Father, and to the Lord Jesus? How does this show itself in how God reveals Himself to you, and in how you relate to Him?

What characteristics and actions of the Holy Spirit does Jesus describe in John 14-17? How does the Holy Spirit demonstrate these characteristics and actions in your life?

*“Ultimately, the work of the Holy Spirit is to bring glory to the Lord Jesus Christ.”* How has the Holy Spirit done this in your life? How can you allow the Holy Spirit to have more control over your life so that Jesus is even more glorified?

The work of the Holy Spirit is feared, quenched, or hardly mentioned in some Churches, and over-emphasised or even abused, in others, Why do you think this is so? How can Churches be open to the Holy Spirit, and yet remain balanced so that everything is done *in a fitting and orderly way*? (1 Corinthians 14:40).

What is the relationship between the Baptism in the Holy Spirit; being filled with the Holy Spirit; being empowered by the Holy Spirit, and exercising of spiritual gifts?

The exercising of spiritual gifts seems to bring controversy in many Churches. It did in the Corinthian Church and it still does in many Churches today. Why do you think this is so? What can we do to ensure all Churches focus on the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19,20 and Mark 16:15-18) and share the Gospel in the power of the Holy Spirit?

Are you experiencing the power of the Holy Spirit at work in your life? (See Acts 1:8). If so how can you know even more power of this in your life? If not, what are you doing to quench the Holy Spirit, and what do you need to do about it? (See Ephesians 4:30 and 5:18).