

GROWING in Gifts II

Pastor Jim Critcher

Intimacy with the Holy Spirit is one of the most honoring acts of love that God gives us.

Acts 1:3 - 5

After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. 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."

The New International Version. (2011). (Ac 1:3–5). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

Wait

How many times do we need to wait for the authority, the approval, and word of God before we take the next step?

Do we live our lives moving rather than waiting?

Jesus' command to the apostles and disciples was to wait, not move.

During Christmas, some families would reserve "the big gift" for after all of the socks, underwear, and prerequisite gifts. As if the prerequisite gifts were pointing up to the Big Gift, or rather, the gift giver.

Pastor Jim then shares his experience getting filled with the Holy Spirit. He did not manifest any of the spiritual gifts but his life manifested a change because of the presence of the Spirit in his life.

Belief and Practice

It's only where your belief and your practice meet where our true worship is. It's where it all comes together, and it's only there is where we see see orthopathy — our emotions getting aligned in the right way.

Our participation with the Holy Spirit is not optional. Everything in Pauline writing is about how we do life empowered by the Holy Ghost. It is unavoidable. God and the Holy Spirit are one. If we do not have the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives, we do not have God's empowerment.

Jesus' sacrifice was prerequisite to being indwelt by the Spirit. Part of the reason Jesus died was so that you can be filled with his Spirit. Rejecting his Spirit is in part rejecting his sacrifice.

We were not designed to be careless or casual with participation with the Spirit.

First Mentions

The first mention of any theme in scripture is the foundation for all subsequent themes and mentions. The first mention of the Holy Spirit is in the context of forming all chaos in the universe into a realm that life can inhabit.

And God's Spirit is still as powerful today as he was in the beginning separating the chaos waters and forming the land.

Receiving Power

We can only inherit when we have been granted a status as sons and daughters. And we get that status by the Holy Spirit. We cannot inherit without the power of the Spirit.

Moses told God, "if your presence does not go with us, we don't want what you have promised." What will distinguish the Israelites without God's presence?

Similarly, what will distinguish the Church without God's Spirit?

Without the Spirit, we're a nice group of people who don't cuss as much as anyone else.

The manifestation of the small 'g' gifts that manifest the presence of the large 'G' gifts that is the Spirit of God himself.

We can be nice enough to greet people, we can put on a nice show, we can make a nice website, and all we're doing is competing with everybody else. But if we're not building a place where people can inherit God's promise and experience God's presence, we're losing.

Hallmarks of the Spirit

What are the stamps or hallmarks that indicate the quality of the item, such as in jewelry — 18K gold or a mark indicating sterling silver.

Is the hallmark of the Holy Spirit on Jesus' church right now? Is it imprinted and embedded in our lives and corporate lives?

This is not a question for this church, but THE questions for THE church.

|"God called. He wants his church back."

How do we know that God is really coming for his church? What hallmarks can we look for?

1. **Designed by God**

This is what the Lord says: “When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will come to you and fulfill my good promise to bring you back to this place. For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you,” declares the Lord, “and will bring you back from captivity. I will gather you from all the nations and places where I have banished you,” declares the Lord, “and will bring you back to the place from which I carried you into exile

The New International Version. (2011). (Je 29:10–14). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

2. **Built by God & for God with us as the living stones**

Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God’s people and also members of his household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

The New International Version. (2011). (Eph 2:19–22). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

3. **Wholly owned by God**

The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

The New International Version. (2011). (Ro 8:16–17). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal,

the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory.

The New International Version. (2011). (Eph 1:13–14). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

Divine unity is one of the primary hallmarks of the Holy Spirit. Speaking the truth in love, we grow up into him who is the head and the Christ, joined together in him. Unity is only possible as the Spirit works. Unity is impossible aside from the Spirit.

4. Formed by God

The spirit forms the church

For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many.

The New International Version. (2011). (1 Co 12:13–14). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

See also Acts 2:10-48

5. Mission & Commissioned by the Holy Spirit

It's not some board or group of elders deciding the church's mission, but the Spirit. The Spirit directs the spiritual gifts. He gives gifts to men and women, and gifts of men and women.

We witnessed Pastor Danielle and Pastor Jovy ordained this morning. This wasn't just a good idea. This was Spirit led, two women as gifts that God has given to our church, to his church.

Pastor Jim shared a story of man who turned to Satan for something the church should manifest. This man, seeking to protect his family from an abusive father turned to the Satanic church to find the power that originates from God.

How many churches started with the power of the Spirit only to go to seminary and get too smart for the Holy Spirit?

Even if we think we are Charismatic or Pentecostal, it doesn't matter who we think we are, we are still subject to the same failings of man.

Current Infilling of the Holy Spirit

In Acts 19, we see a story of a man who gets baptized with the Spirit right after getting water baptized. Where in history did that gap grow? Why is there such a gap between water baptism and Spirit baptism?

If we don't have that infilling of the Spirit, we don't have an inheritance, or empowerment, or unity, or a mission, or a place into his family.

You can now repent for being casual, flippant, or straight out rejection and ask him to fill you again, baptize you again.