

## The Holy Spirit & You - Spiritual Empowerment Part- 1

**Selwyn Hughes** “*Proper Priorities*,” April 15, “*How much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?*”

“In the passage before us today, Jesus spends some time sharing with His hearers that God is both a Father and a Friend. It is vitally important that we realize that God wants to give us the Holy Spirit, for if we are not absolutely sure of this, then our asking will be shot through with indecision and uncertainty.

“The great Archbishop Temple said, “We ask for the Holy Spirit, yet in the depth of our hearts we are not sure whether He wants to give it to us, and this one single doubt negates the object of the exercise.” So stop wishing to receive the Spirit in all His fullness and start expecting. You can be positive in asking because God is positive in giving.

“Bring the whole matter to a crisis. One great preacher said that “the soul grows by a series of crises.” Make it a matter of priority to spend some time in prayer to receive more of His Holy Spirit and become desperate over the issue. Treat it as if God dropped a letter into your mailbox this morning that said, “I would like to see you as soon as possible over a matter of a very important gift I want to give you.”

“If that happened, I wonder how you would handle your schedule over the next few days? Things you thought were top priority would become of secondary importance. When you decide to give God top priority in your plans, then, believe me, God will give you His top priority – the Holy Spirit.”

**Prayer** “Lord, I wonder, am I thirsty or desperate enough to make the matter of being filled with the Spirit my top

priority? Help me to face up to the challenge – now. For Jesus' sake. Amen.”

**Dr. Paul Walker, SFLB “Holy Spirit Gifts and Power”** speaks about the amazing time that we’re living in, beginning with the period which began with the Great Welch Revival of 1904-05: “Without a doubt, the Pentecostal revival of the early 1900s and the Charismatic renewal, which began in the late 1950s, constitute one of the most innovative and impacting spiritual renovations in history. When we think about this part of church history, we wonder: (1) Why has this happened? (2) What is this doing? (3) How can spiritual integrity be maintained in the midst of it?”

### **Why Has This Happened?**

“The first reason it has happened is that there has been an evident need for renewal of mission and purpose throughout the church and among its individual members.

“Second, in view of this need for renewal, there has been a definite movement on the part of sincere believers to recover the dynamic power of the Holy Spirit, which transformed and empowered the early Christians. Emerging from this movement has been an inbreaking of the Holy Spirit, accompanied by the gift of spiritual language (speaking in tongues), among believers across the body of Christ, demonstrating that the baptism in the Holy Spirit is not a denomination or a movement, but an experience that brings enduring of spiritual power for intensified service.

“Third, this inbreaking of the Holy Spirit has linked mainline Protestantism, the Charismatic renewal, and the traditional Pentecostal movement to the worship practices of the first century through what has appropriately been referred to as the Charismatic movement (derived from *charismata*, the Greek word

used, for example, in **1 Cor. 12:4, 30** for the **gifts** of the Holy Spirit).” [TPT v. 4 “*It is the same Holy Spirit who continues to distribute many different varieties of gifts.*” **Note (d)**: “The nine gifts distributed by the Holy Spirit listed here include: the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, the gift of faith, gifts of healing, miraculous powers, prophecy, discerning of spirits, speaking in different kinds of tongues, and interpretation of tongues”]; **vv. 29-30** “*Not everyone is an apostle or a prophet or a teacher. Not everyone performs miracles 30. or has gifts of healing or speaks in tongues or interprets tongues. 31. But you should all constantly boil over with passion in seeking the higher gifts. And now I will show you a superior way to live that is beyond comparison (or “a path corresponding to transcendence” [beyond comprehension]).*” That incomprehensible path of living is love (1 Cor. 13)! This study is not meant to emphasize gifts above all else for 1 Cor. 13 teaches otherwise.

### **When we think about this part of church history, “What Is This Doing?”**

“Renewal causes us to ask, “What really happens when the gifts go to church?”

There are at least three answers: Scripture is being fulfilled, the person of the Holy Spirit is at work, and accounts from the Book of Acts are being rediscovered and applied.”

#### **THE SCRIPTURE IS BEING FULFILLED**

“The Bible declares, “*Be filled with the Spirit* (Eph. 5:18). The Greek verb translated “*be filled*” is in the present tense, indicating that this blessing is one we may experience and enjoy now. The verb is a command (in the imperative mood) and it is in the passive voice. This means believers are expected to obey the statement, “*be filled*” (imperative), but at the same time it is clear that being filled with the Spirit is not something Christians achieve

through our own efforts, but is something done for us (passive) and to which we joyfully submit. Clarity on this point dis-misses the criticism or misunderstanding of those who may see this experience a something merely conjured up by human suggestion or excitement.”

### **“What really happens when the gifts go to church?”**

#### THE PERSON OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IS AT WORK

“The Bible reveals that the Person of the Holy Spirit has been the primary agent in the ministry of the Word throughout the centuries. The Scripture states that the triune Godhead operates coequally, coeternally, coexistently, as one unit. But we might view also this unity of activity in terms of the special function of each member of the Trinity: the executive is the Father, the architect is the Son, and the contractor is the Holy Spirit.

“Thus, the Scriptures (**NKJV**) show the Holy Spirit uniquely and distinctly at work in these roles: 1) *He is the Author of the Old Testament* (**2 Sam. 23:2; Isa. 59:21; Jer. 1:9; 2 Tim. 3:15-17; 2 Pet. 1:21**) and the New Testament (**John 14:25, 26; 1 Cor. 2:13; 1 Thess. 4:15; Rev. 1:10, 11; 2:7**). 2) *He is the Old Testament Anointer*. The Scriptures name no less than 16 Old Testament leaders in Israel who received this anointing: Joseph (**Gen. 41:38**); Moses (**Num. 11:17**); Joshua (**Num. 27:18**); Othniel (**Judg. 3:10**); Gideon (**Judg. 6:34**); Jephtah (**Judg. 11:29**); Samson (**Judg. 14:6, 19; 15:14, 15**); Saul (**1 Sam. 10:10; 11:6**), David (**1 Sam. 16:13**); Elijah (**1 Kin. 8:12;**

**2 Kin. 2:16**); Elisha (**2 Kin. 2:15**); Azariah (**2 Chr. 15:1**); Zechariah (**2 Chr. 24:20**); Ezekiel (**Ezek. 2:2**); Daniel (**Dan. 4:9; 5:11; 6:3**) Micah (**Mic. 3:8**).

“Thus, the Holy Spirit, the contractor, anointed the Old Testament prophets Isaiah and Joel to write – to prophesy of the

day when He would be outpoured and when His gifts would be exercised in the church, throughout the church age (**Joel 2:28-32; Acts 2:17-21**). In **Isaiah 28:11, 12**, God used Isaiah to tell Judah that He would teach them in a manner they did not like & that He would give them knowledge through the language of foreigners as a sign of their unbelief. Centuries later the apostle Paul expands the intent of this passage, referring it to the gift of spiritual language in the church as a manifestation of sign to unbelievers (**1 Cor. 14:20-22 TPT**: *“Beloved ones, don’t remain as immature children in your reasoning. As it relates to evil, be like newborns, but in your thinking be mature adults. 21. For it stands written in the law: I will bring My message to this people with strange tongues and foreign lips, yet even them they still will not listen to Me, says the Lord. 22. So then, tongues are not a sign for believers, but a miracle for unbelievers. Prophecy, on the other hand, is not for unbelievers, but a miracle sign for believers.”*

This sign could be in languages either known or unknown to human beings (compare 1 Cor. 14 with **Acts 2:1-11; 10:45, 46 NKJV**).

“In all these respects, we see the Holy Spirit as One who operates in the church as a definite personality – a Person given as a gift to the church to assure that the con-tinued ministry of the resurrected Christ is expressed and verified. The Holy Spirit, then, has all the characteristics of a person (**NKJV**):

1. He possesses the attributes of mind (**Rom. 8:27**), will (**1 Cor. 12:11**), and feeling (**Eph. 4:30**).
2. He engages in such activities as revealing (**2 Pet. 1:21**), teaching (**John 14:26**), witnessing (**Heb. 10:15**), interceding (**Rom. 8:26**), speaking (**Rev. 2:7**), commanding (**Acts 16:6, 7**), and testifying (**John 15:26**).

3. He has a relationship with human beings: He can be grieved (**Eph. 4:30**), lied to (Acts 5:3), and blasphemed (**Matt. 12:31, 32**).

4. The Holy Spirit possesses the divine attributes of the Godhead: He is eternal (**Heb. 9:14**), omnipresent (**Ps. 139:7-10**), omnipotent (**Luke 1:35**), and omniscient (**1 Cor. 2:10, 11**).

5. He is referred to by such names as the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ, the comforter, the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit of promise, the Spirit of truth, the Spirit of grace, the Spirit of life, the Spirit of adoption, and the Spirit of holiness.

6. He is illustrated with such symbols as fire (**Acts 2:1, 2 NKJV**), wind (**Acts 2:1, 2 NKJV**), water (**John 7:37-39**), a seal (**Eph. 1:13**), oil (**Acts 10:38**), and a dove (**John 1:32**).

“All this unfolds something of the vast realm of Spirit’s operation in the Old and New Testaments and in the contemporary church.”

#### ACCOUNTS FROM THE BOOK OF ACTS ARE BEING REDISCOVERED AND APPLIED

“The Book of Acts provides five accounts of people receiving the fullness of the Holy Spirit (**Acts 2:4; 8:14-25; 9:17-20; 10:44-48; 19:1-7 NKJV**). These accounts include five factors:

1. All who were present experienced an overwhelming inbreaking of God’s presence.

2. The disciples who were full experienced and demonstrated an evident transformation in their lives and witness.

3. Their experiences became the impetus for the growth of the church, as *“daily in the temple, and in every house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ”* (Acts 5:42).

4. The immediate evidence in three of the five accounts was the gift of spiritual language. *“For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God”* (**Acts 10:46 NKJV**).

5. The ultimate purpose of this experience was empowered witnessing (**Acts 1:8**) and a deeper dimension of Christian commitment for the achievement of happiness (**Eph. 5:19**), and fruitfulness (**Gal. 5:22, 23**).

“Together, these facts demonstrate what some present-day believers experience through the Holy Spirit at work in the church. Often, the elements of this renewal are misunderstood or misapplied for lack of a biblical understanding of the gift of spiritual language and the function of the other gifts of the Spirit. While theologians and others involved in the renewal community may differ on some points, a common bond of unity in the Spirit-filled renewal is the practice of spiritual language in prayer and worship, together with an acceptance and welcoming of the operation of the Holy Spirit’s gifts in their midst. To fully understand this, it is necessary to see the Pentecostal/Charismatic view as they have learned to implement the Book of Acts’ manifestation of the Holy Spirit’s power-workings, applying the disciplines taught in 1 Corinthians 12-14.”

**“How Can Spiritual Integrity Be Maintained in the Midst of It?”** is next.