



“Ye shall receive power...”

*Baptism in the
Holy Spirit*

“I was overcome with love for [Jesus]. I knew at that moment that I would go anywhere anytime and say anything for Him. I was ruined for this world by His intense love and mercy in calling me to Himself.”

H. BAKER, THERE IS ALWAYS ENOUGH

→ **THE NEW CREATION LIFE:**
*the unfathomable power
of the love and grace of Christ
surpasses all other joy and desire
radically changing our life
making us holy – set apart to desire & pursue His will
alone*



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1. Summary

- Christ commissioned us with an impossible task, to preach the gospel and make disciples of every nation. And there is only one power by which we can be effective in this task, that power provided by the Lord Jesus for the task: being baptised in the Holy Spirit.
- Being Baptised in the Spirit is the single most empowering and wonderful thing that can happen to a human being in their earthly life. You will know whether you have been Baptised with the Spirit at any point in your life if you:
 - a) are empowered to hunger and thirst for righteousness, and to become more and more righteous and holy in your life, with God's help
 - b) enjoy nothing more than intimacy with God,
 - c) want to and have faith that you can powerfully do God's work, with the power of the Holy Spirit, including spiritual works such as healing and deliverance
- Various scriptures teach us that God will NOT refuse His children being filled with the Holy Spirit. But equally that there are conditions to be met.
 1. Repent (turn from sins - literally change your mind about sin) [Acts 2:28-29]
 2. Be baptized in the name of Jesus - come under His Lordship, literally, make His will your will, and live to obey Him [Acts 2:28-29]
 3. Thirst for righteousness - desire earnestly to be more righteous yourself, and to serve the church and the world with more power [Jn 7:37]
 4. Come to Jesus - to receive His provision, the promised living waters [Jn 7:37]
 5. Ask for the Outpoured Holy Spirit [Luke 11: 1-13]
 6. Persist in asking until you receive [Luke 11: 1-13]
- So, if you have not been filled with the Spirit at any point in our life, the only thing to do is rejoice that the Lord has provided all things for you, meet the conditions (always through Jesus), and then be filled and bring glory to God with your new power to serve Him!

2. Key thematic scriptures

- Our calling: Mat 28:18-20
- Our equipping: John 1:12-13; Acts 1:8;
- How to receive: Acts 2:38-39; John 7:37; Luke 11:1-13

3. Power from on High

3.1. *Our Calling*

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Lord has called us all to a MIGHTY task, a mighty calling, to BE HIS BODIES, and spread the gospel of the Kingdom to the four corners of world. <p><i>Mat 28:18-20 And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. (19) Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, (20) teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."</i></p>	Mat 28:18-20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are not saved by Christ to live lives of ease or comfort or survival, but lives of power, of effectiveness in waging war against the dominion of darkness and all their wicked hosts, to be bright radiant shining lights bringing the life and light of Christ into every dark corner of this world. We are mighty as children of God, and our calling is to work mighty works for the glory of God <p><i>Mat 16:18-19 And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. (19) I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."</i></p> <p><i>2Co 10:4-6 For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. (5) We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ, (6) being ready to punish every disobedience, when your obedience is complete.</i></p> <p><i>Eph 6:10-13 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. (11) Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. (12) For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. (13) Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm.</i></p>	<p>Mat 16:18-19</p> <p>2Co 10:4-6</p> <p>Eph 6:10-13</p>

3.2. *Our Equipping*

<p>The Lord did not leave us ill-equipped for our life – unable to be effective in bringing the gospel to the corners of the earth. No, He promises to clothe us with power from on High, with which we may BE effective witnesses for the Kingdom</p>	Acts 1:8;
<p>We learn from the book of Acts that being baptised in the Holy Spirit is how the Lord planned for us to be endued with power from on High – AFTER WE BECOME CONVERTED to Christ, as a separate experience, and as a single incident, quite different from that of being converted in the first place</p>	Acts 8:8-19
<p>This is the only power by which we can put to death the flesh (our responsibility: “if by the Spirit YOU put to death the deeds of the flesh”), and live as SONS OF GOD</p>	Rom 8:1-13

3.3. *What is the baptism in the Holy Spirit?*

The bible describes the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the following ways:

And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking in tongues and prophesying. (Ac 19:6)

While Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word. And the believers from among the circumcised who had come with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out even on the Gentiles. For they were hearing them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter declared, (Ac 10:44–46)

Those who experience the outpouring of the Holy Spirit describe it in the following ways:

“I will never accurately put into words what happened that day. It was as if the floodgate of heaven opened up and poured through me. The chains that bound my mind fell like shackles and I felt like God filled every part of my mind and soul. It was as if scriptures previously unknown raced through me and I felt as though they were now a part of me... Everything that haunted me now seemed like a trophy of God’s grace... After I was baptized with the Holy Spirit, my life and ministry was transformed. God opened the door and gave my ministry power”

It is a single experience by which one is flooded with the Holy Spirit, you feel you are in heaven so flooded are you with the power and love of the living God, joy is indescribable. It gives you a taste of the power of the love of God in a way that is FAR beyond anything you had ever imagined or experienced, and so far beyond what most Christians will ever experience. It leaves you with a mighty power to be a son of God – to desire what God desires, and to powerfully do God’s will, being used by the Holy Spirit in many practical and supernatural ways). The fruit of this experience is described by Heidi Baker:

“I was overcome with love for [Jesus]. I knew at that moment that I would go anywhere anytime and say anything for Him. I was ruined for this world by His intense love and mercy in calling me to Himself.”

Those who are baptised in the Spirit say that without being baptised in the Holy Spirit, we cannot come even close to being powerful and fruitful servants of God; we have little power for holiness; little power for ministry; little power for joy; little power to overcome the wicked one. We have the Holy Spirit helping us but we largely do things in our own strength. The provision of God for all these things is in being filled with His Holy Spirit; without receiving His provision by faith, we will certainly not be effective Christians because we will rarely experience what it is to do things in God’s strength.



4. Is being Baptised in the Holy Spirit a biblical doctrine?

4.1. *What theologians teach*

Firstly, the question is not WHETHER there is a baptism in the Holy Spirit:

Act 1:5 for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

1Co 12:13 For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body--Jews or Greeks, slaves or free--and all were made to drink of one Spirit.

That from scripture is a certainty. The question is WHAT it is and WHEN it occurs.

Essentially there are three mainstream Christian views on the Baptism in the Holy Spirit

- 1) Firstly, some (e.g. Derek Prince, Ken Hagin) believe the Baptism in the Holy Spirit is the fulfilment of Acts 1:8 in the lives of individual believers. They believe that Pentecost was the beginning of a Pentecost era in which God has provided each believer with the provision of a Pentecost experience, received by faith. They believe each and every believer would each individually be baptised in the Holy Spirit, as an event separate from salvation, at the time in which they individually fulfilled the conditions. At that time they come into the fullness of God's power and love. After this, not before, they would be empowered to do all things in God's strength, not their own. They believe it is single, powerful and supernatural experience, separate from and following the conversion experience by any period of time: minutes, months or years, as long as it takes the individual to fulfil the conditions. It is received by asking, in accordance with Luke 11:5-13.
- 2) Others (e.g. John MacArthur, the Baptist church, and many learned and godly teachers), disagree with the doctrine of Baptism in the Holy Spirit described above. They believe scripture teaches that the Baptism in the Holy Spirit occurs automatically upon conversion for all believers. They believe Pentecost was a single event in time, ushering in a new era, but not signalling the beginning of a pattern by which believers *individually* have access to a baptism in the Spirit as an event which occurs separate to and after conversion. They believe the whole church was baptised in the power of the Spirit on Pentecost. They believe that no further baptism experience takes place after the conversion experience. They believe the only reason it happened afterwards for the apostles (Acts 2) was because they were converted before Pentecost.
- 3) Others (e.g. John Piper) are open to a separate event of receiving the outpoured Spirit, but will not call it Baptism in the Holy Spirit, since they believe the baptism in the Holy Spirit takes place upon conversion. Nonetheless, they remain open to the idea of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit (often called by them the infilling of the Spirit), under a different name and doctrine.

4.2. *How we can know what scripture really says – a note on methodology*



So which is correct? Now firstly I must say that there are very godly men on all sides of this argument. Also, I agree that the teaching in scripture is not simple to interpret on this (while i believe it is 100% clear, i believe it takes some study to arrive at this clear understanding). But I also believe scripture strongly indicates that this Baptism is a doorway for all believers of all times, which happens separately from conversion. How, if there are multiple possible doctrinal explanations on this topic which could fit with scripture, is it possible to come to a clear understanding of what scripture is saying?

Well obviously we must begin scrutinising the pertinent scriptures. In addition, we must examine the epistles of the Holy Spirit written over the history of the church - written in the lives of the great Saints throughout the ages. The Holy Spirit speaks primarily through scripture, but not only. He speaks also by His works in our lives and in the world.

2Co 3:3 And you show that **you are an epistle from Christ** delivered by us, **written not with ink but with the Spirit** of the living God, not on tablets of stone but **on tablets of human hearts.**

Therefore, if we can discern the testimony of the Holy Spirit in the true epistles of the Holy Spirit, and use those epistles to help us interpret the Word of God, the scriptures, and if they seem to say the same thing we interpret the scriptures as saying, we can feel confident that we have the correct interpretation. In other words, if the epistles of the Holy Spirit (the lives of the great saints) support our interpretation of scripture, then our interpretation of scripture is correct.

To be specific:

- If there is a testimony of the Holy Spirit that there is a baptism of the Holy Spirit as a separate experience from conversion, then we must interpret scripture as saying that the Baptism in the Holy Spirit is indeed an experience and event separate from salvation.
- If there is no testimony of the Holy Spirit to this end, then we must believe the other view: we must interpret scripture as saying that salvation is the time at which we are baptised into the Holy Spirit , and that there is no separate event.

But how can we discern this testimony / epistle of the Holy Spirit in regard to this very crucial doctrine? I believe the biblical way is by the testimony of the giants of the faith who are dead. "You will know them by their fruits". Therefore, if we can examine their fruits until the end of their lives and their fruits have demonstrated they are truly children of God, under the power of the Spirit of God, not false prophets under the influence of some other spirit, then we can accept their testimony.

4.3. What the bible teaches us

*(source: Ministering The Baptism In The Holy Spirit
By Don W. Basham)*

"I thought I received the Holy Spirit when I became a Christian", is the objection is frequently voiced. Since it is a spiritual law that **we receive from God in terms of our asking (Matt. 7:78)**

(Matt. 7:78)

(Luke 3:16)



<p>It must be obvious that if people don't know there is an empowering of God beyond conversion, they won't ask for it. Therefore, the initial task in helping people to receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit is to make it clear to them from the word of God that there <i>is</i> such an experience, and that those who have received Jesus Christ as Savior (John 3:16) may also encounter him as the one who baptized in the Holy Spirit (Luke 3:16).</p>	
<p>Now, concerning the work of the Holy Spirit in the believers life at the point of conversion: Of course the Holy Spirit is operative in conversion since Paul says "No one can say Jesus Christ is Lord except by the Holy Spirit." (1st Cor. 12:3).</p> <p>The Holy Spirit is present in conversion to introduce the unbeliever to Jesus Christ as Savior. But we are not talking about the <i>introductory</i> ministry of the Holy Spirit to the unbeliever—we're speaking of the subsequent <i>empowering</i> ministry of the Holy Spirit for the believers. We are speaking of that experience which Jesus promised when he told his disciples (who already knew him as Savior) "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you" (Acts 1:8).</p>	<p>1 Cor. 12:3</p> <p>Acts 1:8</p>
<p>But the scriptures draw a very clear distinction between the two experiences, especially in the book of Acts.</p> <p>Are you aware that the book of Acts is the only book in the entire Bible which contains the record of the life and activities of the first Christians? The only narrative we have of life in the early church? The Gospels are stories of the life of Jesus—the epistles are teaching letters, dealing with problems and difficulties in the Christian life, interpreting and explaining the provisions and promises of God to members of the Body of Christ. But only the book of Acts records the actual life and experience of the church of the New Testament age. So that is the book to which we must look to understand the baptism in the Spirit, and how it relates to the life of the church.</p> <p>And when we examine the book of Acts, we find five passages which describe the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in what we've come to call the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Here's the list of those five passages with a brief description of each incident: the questions are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) do these incidents describe a baptism in the Spirit AT the point of conversion, or after it? 2) Is it often an almost unnoticeable event, gentle, unimposing, a gentle transition more than a mighty explosion, or is it in fact a mighty explosion the Lord's power in us, so powerful it is noticeable even to outsiders? 	
<p>Acts 2:1-21</p> <p>The Day of Pentecost. The Holy Spirit was poured out on the 120 gathered in the upper room and they all began to speak in other tongues.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) <i>The event was mighty and powerful, hundreds of people observed the strange phenomenon.</i> 2) <i>It clearly happened long after conversion. However it is true that this was a unique event, since Jesus COULD only pour out the Holy Spirit after He had ascended to His Father's side. So as clear as this example is, let us treat this as non-conclusive in regard to timing.</i> 	<p>Acts 2:1-21</p>
<p>Acts 8:5-19, esp 15-16</p> <p>The Samaritan revival under the preaching of Philip. Miracles and signs and wonders accompany Philip's preaching. Peter and John come down from Jerusalem to minister the baptism in the Holy Spirit to the new converts "for as yet he had fallen on none of them."</p>	<p>Acts 8:9-19, esp 15-16</p>



<p>1) <i>The Baptism event was mighty and powerful; even a sorcerer regarded as very powerful wanted “this power”, it was so powerful</i></p> <p>2) <i>It clearly happened after conversion. “that they might receive the Holy Spirit, for he had not yet fallen on any of them, but they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus”</i></p>	
<p>Acts 9:1-11</p> <p>The conversion and subsequent healing and baptism in the Holy Spirit of Saul who became Paul. Converted on the road to Damascus, he is healed of his blindness and filled with the Holy Spirit when Ananias comes and prays for him.</p> <p>1) <i>Paul’s experience was certainly powerful and observable, but it was also unique in its purpose, so we should not draw too many conclusions from this, as far as patterns are concerned.</i></p> <p>2) <i>Whether it happened after or upon conversion could be argued both ways. Some would argue he was converted when Ananias preached to him. I believe Paul was converted which Jesus announced Himself from heaven 3 days earlier, or certainly in the 3 days he had to meditate on the experience with nothing else to do, and he therefore experienced the Baptism after conversion. But this point is not conclusive from scripture. So let us not draw conclusions in regard to a pattern from this example. But it does lend itself toward a post-conversion baptism.</i></p>	<p>Acts 9:1-11</p>
<p>Acts 10:34-46</p> <p>Peter preaches to the household of Cornelius. The people receive forgiveness of sins in the name of Jesus, are converted, and immediately the Holy Spirit falls, and they begin to speak in tongues and magnify God.</p> <p>1) <i>This experience was certainly powerful and observable. Bystanders noticed the effect clearly and glorified God</i></p> <p>2) <i>Whether it happened after or upon conversion could again be argued both ways. On the one hand, it was as Peter preached the gospel that they received the Spirit. On the other hand, Peter states at the beginning of his sermon that he is telling them what they already know, and we can imply that they had already been converted. Again this point is not conclusive from scripture. So let us not draw conclusions in regard to a pattern from this example.</i></p>	<p>Acts 10:34-46</p>
<p>Acts 19:1-6</p> <p>Paul finds twelve disciples at Ephesus who know Jesus as Savior but have not received the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. He prays for them and they receive and begin to speak in tongues and prophesy.</p> <p>1) <i>This is the most clear example of all. The experience was certainly powerful and observable. Bystanders noticed the effect</i></p> <p>2) <i>More importantly, whether it happened after or upon conversion could not be more clear. This is definitely a case of believers receiving the baptism AFTER conversion. The Word says “There he found some disciples”. These were not awaiting conversion, they were already disciples – committed to daily learning The Way. Secondly, Paul says to them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?”. The moment they believed is the moment they were saved, born again believers. In other words, knowing they were already born again believers, knowing they had the Holy Spirit, Paul asked whether they had received the Holy Spirit.</i></p>	<p>Acts 19:1-6</p>
<p>From an examination of all five accounts we see the same truth emerging—that conversion is one experience and the <u>baptism in the Holy Spirit is a second, subsequent experience</u>. Furthermore, it is a powerful experience, not something that is gentle, unnoticed, but something even noticeable to outsiders.</p>	
<p>Lastly, let us also mention that the book of Luke gives us a clear leading. In Luke 11:1-13 the Lord teaches about the Father giving HIS CHILDREN the Holy Spirit, WHEN THEY ASK. In other words, he speaks about receiving the Spirit AFTER we become children of God (which we only become after we are born again – John 1:12-13), and ONLY BY ASKING.</p>	<p>Luke 11: 1-13</p> <p>John 1:12-13</p>



So from this, I humbly suggest scripture clearly teaches us that baptism in the Holy Spirit is a mighty, powerful, unmissable event, which happens after conversion, as a separate experience and event from conversion. The good news is, if you are a saved and born again believer, walking without the power of God, His power is available to you, and it is HIS PURPOSE that He be able to use you, through you being equipped by this power.

4.4. What the epistles of the Holy Spirit teach us

As I mentioned earlier let us examine some of the epistles of the Holy Spirit in this regard. Eddie Snipes has documented these testimonies on our behalf.

Eddie Snipes

I grew up without any knowledge of being filled with the Holy Spirit. I was taught that I was filled at the moment of salvation and I assumed that this was true. I did not recognize that Jesus gave His disciples the Holy Spirit and then promised that they would later be baptized by the Holy Spirit. I also did not understand Jesus' words of Luke 11:13 "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!" In error I believed that this passage meant salvation. I accepted Christ as my Savior around the age of thirteen and saw an immediate change in my life. I was going down the wrong path and getting involved with the wrong friends but that changed as soon as I received Christ. I still had many things wrong in my life, but there was a dramatic change. However, my life had no power. I thought this was all I should expect.

A couple of decades later, I had tried to keep the faith, but in frustration I all but gave up. I quit attending church and lost all hope of living a 'good Christian life'. I assumed that just had to accept my faults. I allowed my 'flesh' to direct my life until one day realized that I hated what I had become. I did not have control of any area of my life. When I finally realized that my own ways had let me down, what I once thought was meaningful suddenly seemed worthless. I began to seek God like never before. I didn't plan it, but for the next three days, I spent time in prayer and seeking for an answer from God. I was determined not to quit until God answered. I was clueless and didn't even know what to pray for or even what I wanted, but I continued to pray anyway. I spent the first two days sorting through the trash in my life and begging God to take control and change me. I knew that my control had brought me nothing but despair. I prayed, and prayed and prayed. It seemed like I was making no progress, but this hunger in my soul kept driving me to go back to pray for an answer. I didn't know how, but I was certain that God was the only real hope.

On the third day, God did answer. I will never accurately put into words what happened that day. It was as if the floodgate of heaven opened up and poured through me. The chains that bound my mind fell like shackles and I felt like God filled every part of my mind and soul. It was as if scriptures previously unknown raced through me and I felt as though they were now a part of me. When I went home, I got a concordance and looked up the scriptures that I suddenly understood. I felt like I needed confirmation that all I experienced was truly of God. If it were truly of God, it would be in His word. I found every passage almost verbatim in the Bible even though I did not remember studying these in the past. During this encounter with God, the entire world disappeared, time stood still and all I could see and experience was the power of God. I walked away a free man.



Everything that haunted me now seemed like a trophy of God's grace. For months my mind raced and I sought ways to communicate the truth of God's word. I immediately prayed, "I know this is not for me alone. Show me how to serve You. Just open the door and I will preach Jesus." I was called to preach at thirteen and I tried and failed many times. After I was baptized with the Holy Spirit, my life and ministry was transformed. God opened the door and gave my ministry power. I led one person to Christ before this day and now I can't count the number of lives God has touched through the ministries He has given me. I could not articulate a meaningful sermon before that day. Now I see a mental picture of scripture and everything I preach or write has the focus of fitting into that picture of God's complete revelation in the Bible. Everything about me changed that day.

After my experience, I found that this is not entirely unique. Thomas Aquinas, Martin Luther, George Whitefield, John Wesley, Jonathan Edwards, John Flavel, Charles Simeon, Andrew Murray, D. L. Moody, R. A. Torrey, H. A. Gordon, Stephen Olford, Billy Graham and many other prominent men of the past have testified to similar experiences. I don't even come close to measuring up to any of these men. The point I hope to make from this is that every Christian has the open door. There is nothing special about these men. God transformed ordinary men into extraordinary icons of faith. The lack of power in the church today isn't because God's power is diminished, but because we no longer seek God with all our heart. Jeremiah 29:13 says, "And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart." Keep this passage in mind as I share a few of these men's testimonies about being baptized with the Holy Spirit.

D. L. Moody - Another one of the most powerful evangelists and ministers of the 19th Century, said by many to be the greatest man of the 19th century (in terms of Christ-likeness and zealous, fruitful service to God)

D.L. Moody was a successful minister but by his own admission later, he lacked the power in his ministry. One day two women came up to him after a service. They said,

"We have been praying for you."

"Why don't you pray for the people?" he asked.

"Because you need the power of the Spirit," they said.

"I need the power! Why," said Mr. Moody, in relating the incident years after, "I thought I had power. I had the largest congregations in Chicago, and there were many conversions."

Moody also said that in a sense, he was satisfied. He was in a comfort zone. But these two praying women rocked the boat. They told him that they were praying for an anointing by the Holy Spirit for D.L. to have a special service to God. He could not get this off his mind and he said, "There came a great hunger in my soul. I did not know what it was and I began to cry out to God as never before. I felt I did not want to live if I could not have this power for service".

After the great fire of Chicago, DL was working to raise money to rebuild a tabernacle. He said his heart was not into it because he kept crying out to God to fill him. He withdrew and prayed during a visit to New York to raise money and he cried that God would fill him with His Spirit. DL describes it this way:

"Well, one day, in the city of New York -- oh, what a day! -- I cannot describe it, I seldom refer to it; it is almost too sacred an experience to name. Paul had an experience of which he never spoke for fourteen years. I can only say that God revealed Himself to me, and I had such an experience of His love that I had to ask Him to stay His hand. I went to preaching again. The sermons were not



different; I did not present any new truths, and yet hundreds were converted. I would not now be placed back where I was before that blessed experience if you should give me all the world -- it would be as the small dust of the balance."

R. A. Torrey

R. A. Torrey gives his testimony:

The address of this afternoon, and the addresses of the days immediately to follow, are the outcome of an experience, and that experience was the outcome of a study of the Word of God. After I had been a Christian for some years, and after I had been in the ministry for some years, my attention was strongly attracted to certain phrases found in the Gospels and in the Acts of the Apostles, and in the Epistles, such as "baptized with the Holy Spirit," "filled with the Spirit," "the Holy Spirit fell upon them," "the gift of the Holy Spirit," "endued with power from on high," and other closely allied phrases. As I studied these various phrases in their context, it became clear to me that they all stood for essentially the same experience; and it also became clear to me that God has provided for each child of His in this present dispensation that they should be thus "baptized with the Spirit," or, "filled with the Spirit."

As I studied the subject still further, I became convinced that they described an experience which I did not myself possess, and I went to work to secure for myself the experience thus described. I sought earnestly that I might "be baptized with the Holy Spirit." I went at it very ignorantly. I have often wondered if anyone ever went at it any more ignorantly than I did. But while I was ignorant, I was thoroughly sincere and in earnest, and God met me, as He always meets the sincere and earnest soul, no matter how ignorant he may be; and God gave me what I sought, I was "baptized with the Holy Spirit." And the result was a transformed Christian life and a transformed ministry. (I have added the bold for emphasis).

Charles G. Finney – Another one of the most powerful evangelists and ministers of the 19th Century

I was powerfully converted on the morning of the month of October, 1822. In the evening of the same day I received overwhelming baptisms of the Holy Ghost, that went through me, as it seemed to me, body and soul. I immediately found myself endued with such power from on high that a few words dropped here and there to individuals were the means of their immediate conversion. My words seemed to fasten like barbed arrows in the souls of men. They cut like a sword. They broke the heart like a hammer. Multitudes can attest to this. Oftentimes a word dropped without my remembering it would fasten conviction, and often result in almost immediate conversion. Sometimes I would find myself, in a great measure, empty of this power. I would go and visit, and find that I made no saving impression. I would exhort and pray, with the same result. I would then set apart a day for private fasting and prayer, fearing that this power had departed from me, and would inquire anxiously after the reason of this apparent emptiness. After humbling myself, and crying out for help, the power would return upon me with all its freshness. This has been the experience of my life.

Stephen Olford

Stephen Olford gives a similar testimony as he checked into a motel and committed to stay and pray until he was baptized by the Holy Spirit so God could empower him for service. God answered and gave him a powerful ministry reaching the world through radio during the golden radio years and he continues his ministry by teaching ministers. Billy Graham said that Stephen Olford had a



powerful influence over his life. Stephen prayed with Billy until he was baptized and then God exploded Billy Graham's evangelistic ministry.

[Ed]

I have included some of the testimonies of some of the greatest theologians and evangelists in history. Why have we missed this important truth about the gospel? This truth is overshadowed by counterfeits and sensationalism which directs us away from the true power God desires for every believer. Also notice that none of these men reported speaking in tongues. It is a misguided belief that tongues is a required sign as proof of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. By their testimonies and writings, none of these men ever spoke in tongues, yet when they were baptized by the Holy Spirit, it transformed their lives and empowered them for God's service. The baptism of the Holy Spirit immediately shifted their focus from their ministry to God's purpose. The purpose of speaking in tongues is not important to this study. What is important is that God's power is like God's grace. He offers it equally to all. "

So from this testimony of the Holy Spirit, I humbly suggest the Holy Spirit also teaches us that in fact the Baptism in the Holy Spirit, by whatever name, is in fact an event separate from salvation, which occurs after salvation, available to all, but only some receive, not others.

So why do some receive, and not all?

5. How can you receive the Outpoured Spirit?

Being completely filled with the Holy Spirit for the first time is both the easiest and the hardest thing that you can ever do

5.1. *The easiest thing: only 3 steps*

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 scriptures teach us about receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit / the Outpoured Spirit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Acts 2:38-39 - Luke 11:1-13 - John 7:37 	
<p>Acts 2:38-39</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When the crowd asked what they needed to do to receive the spirit, Peter answered, that they should meet 2 conditions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o <u>Repent (turn from their sins)</u> – literally change their minds o <u>Be baptized</u> in (<i>baptizo</i>- immersed in) the name of Jesus – be immersed in Christ’s character, title, and authority. I.e. come under His Lordship. By meeting these conditions, they would receive forgiveness AND the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. 	Acts 2:38-39
<p>Luke 11:1-13</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Luke, Jesus teaches us about additional conditions: (<i>Luke 11:9-13 9"So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. 10For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.</i>) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o <u>Have the right motives</u> – the man asking asked because he needed to serve a friend in need, and had nothing to give. He asked to be blessed that he might be a blessing. o <u>Ask</u> o <u>Persist</u> (he did not receive except that he persisted) 	Luke 11:9-13
<p>John 7:37</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finally, in John, Jesus teaches us 3 more conditions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Thirst o Come to Jesus o Drink 	John 7:37
<p>So when we add all this together, we might loosely say that if you want to receive the outpoured Spirit, you should make sure you are fulfil the following conditions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Repent (turn from sins - literally change your mind about sin) [Acts 2:28-29] 2. Be baptized in the name of Jesus - come under His Lordship, literally, make His will your will, and live to obey Him [Acts 2:28-29] 3. Thirst for righteousness - desire earnestly to be more righteous yourself, and to serve the church and the world with more power [Jn 7:37] 4. Come to Jesus - to receive His provision, the promised living waters [Jn 7:37] 5. Ask for the Outpoured Holy Spirit [Luke 11: 1-13] 6. Persist in asking until you receive [Luke 11: 1-13] 	
<p>CAUTION: Do not depend on your own holiness to receive this gift from God. Do not allow satan to deceive you into thinking that you are not worthy of this git because you are unholy. You certainly are unholy until you fulfil conditions 1 and 2. Thereafter, it is Christ’s holiness that counts, because “as He is, so are we in this world” 1 John 4:17. Therefore, do not rely on your holiness. You are Holy through Christ, if indeed you are IN Christ (have fulfilled conditions 1 and 2). “If anyone be in Christ, He is a new creation... the old has gone, behold the new has come” 1 Cor 5:17,21. If satan begins to deceive you by telling you how unworthy you are, ust thank God that through Jesus you are a child of God, and Holy, in Him. And then continue asking. LOOK TO JESUS AND THE BLOOD OF THE CROSS, and know that you are a new creation in Christ, called to this.</p>	

5.2. *The hardest thing: true repentance and true motives*



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Holy Spirit comes only after TRUE salvation 	John 14:15-21
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Firstly, we must realise that NOT everyone can receive the Holy Spirit. Jesus teaches that those who love Him, and who have His commandments and obey them are the ones who receive His Holy Spirit 	John 14:15-21
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When the crowd asked what they needed to do to receive the spirit, Peter answered, that they should <u>turn from their sins</u> and be baptized in the name of Jesus (as a sign of entry into the Christian faith). In this they would receive forgiveness AND the gift of the Holy Spirit. Note that He does not say "apologise for your sins". Apology and repentance are different things. You must commit 100% in your heart to LEAVE EGYPT, to turn away from your former sins. That is true repentance 	Acts 2:38-39
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> While it is all by God's grace that we are baptised in the Spirit, there are 3 key aspects of OUR Responsibility: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - yielding our ENTIRE life to God (Rom 12:1; Gal 2:20) - depending entirely on God's power to live the Christian life (Rom 8:13; Gal 2:20; Gal 3:2-3) - Obey the Lord's commands (1 John 2:6) 	Rom 12:1; Gal 2:20 Rom 8:13; Gal 2:20; Gal 3:2-3 1 John 2:6)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Holy Spirit does not come to make YOUR LIFE BETTER. He comes to give you a NEW LIFE. If you are not willing to ENTER the new life (of holiness, intimacy with God, and power), you will not receive the Holy Spirit 	2 Cor. 5:17.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> That is why the Spirit of God within us is the guarantee of our salvation and inheritance 	Rom 8:23 Eph 1:14 2 Cor 1:22 & 5:5

5.3. Persevere

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not all are immediately filled with the Spirit; sometimes true repentance and truly asking Christ to give you a new life is a time-consuming process. As long as it takes to truly repent and truly open your heart to Jesus is as long as it will take 	Rev 3:20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Lord rewards those who diligently seek Him 	Hebrews 11:6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> God will not deny us if we ask Him for the Holy Spirit. Always ask for more and more of it 	Luke 11:11-13
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you have sinned against the Lord and His Spirit has left you, you are in good company: David too was in the same place and after 2 years He hungered for God and was desperate for God's Presence. Pray Psalm 51 earnestly, meditate on it; repent deeply; ask God to HELP you repent... 	Psalm 51
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ... and He will return to you, when you return to Him with your WHOLE heart and with a desire to obey His commandments 	Deut 30:1-4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is no coincidence then that many of the people I know who have received baptism in the Holy Spirit have only done so AFTER repentance and then making serious commitments to stopping major sins in their life, like promiscuity, drunkenness, conforming to the patterns of this world (this is probably the largest hindrance to Christians who have served the Lord their whole life), etc 	

Appendix 1: God's eternal plan: Baptism into the Holy Spirit

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Even 500 – 750 years before Jesus, at least 4 major prophets prophesied about the centrality of The Holy Spirit to God's promise: it was always part of God's plan. <i>Esp:</i> <i>"I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you. I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and careful to keep my laws" (Eze 36:26-27).</i> 	<p>Joel 2:28-29 Isaiah 32:14-18 Isaiah 44:3 Jer 31:33 Ezek 36:26-27 Ezek 37:14 Ezek 39:29 Ezek 47</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • And before Jesus arrived, John the Baptist taught of baptism in the Holy Spirit as a fundamental part of Jesus' ministry "I baptize you with water. <i>But one more powerful than I will come, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire" (Luke 3:16.)</i> 	<p>Luke 3:16</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Then while Jesus was alive, He told the jews at the feast of Tabernacles that He was the fulfillment of these prophecies: that anyone who believes in Him will receive the Holy Spirit (Thousands of Jews would come Jerusalem to celebrate, looking back at the time when Moses brought water from a rock. They thanked God for giving them water in the year past and asked God to do the same in the year to come. And they looked forward to the time when Living water would flow from the Temple, as prophesied in Ezekiel 47, flowing deeper and deeper bringing life, fruitfulness and healing wherever it went. Ezek 47 was read at the feast, and the Priest would go to the Pool of Siloam and fill a golden pitcher with water. He would then pour the water into the ground next to the altar in anticipation of the river of water that would flow from the Temple. On the last day of the feast, Jesus stood up and said: <i>"If anyone thirsts let him come to me and drink. He who believes in me, as the scripture has said, Out of his heart shall flow living waters"</i> (John 7:38). He was saying that the promises of Ezekiel were being fulfilled in his midst, not in a place, but in a person. It is out of the innermost being of Jesus that the true living water would flow, and from that (because we are called the body of Christ) that living water will flow from every Christian ("Whosoever believes in me") 	<p>John 7:37-39 Ezek 47</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus referred to the Holy Spirit as the gift the Father had promised. • Though He told His disciples the Holy Spirit would not be poured out until AFTER He returned to His Father (after ascending to heaven) <p>After His resurrection, He gave them the inbreathed Spirit Joh 20:21-23 Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you." (22) And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. (23) If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld."</p>	<p>John 14:12-31; Luke 24:29 Joh 20:21-23</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • But then He told them LATER, in Acts, about the OUTPOURED SPIRIT 	<p>Acts 1:8-10</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus teaches that it is through the coming of the Holy Spirit after He has sent Him from His father's side that they will receive power and that their joy will be complete 	<p>John 16:16-24</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At pentecost, God began to pour out His Spirit over all true believers/ converts so that they had supernatural holiness, intimacy with Him, and power , and Peter confirmed that this was the Promise of God 	<p>Acts 2 (esp 33)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Holy Spirit is our source of power to walk in faith as sons of God, overcoming the world, walking in victory 	<p>Acts 1:8;</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baptism is the way that our hearts are changed so that we are reborn, becoming children of God, and desiring to do God's will 	<p>Ezek 36:25-31 John 7:37-39</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baptism with water is not enough; without being baptized in the Spirit as well we have no power to walk as Christians. Therefore we should expect that before we have been baptised in the Holy Spirit we will not desire what God desires, not do what God desires, and also have n power for ministry 	<p>Luke 24:29</p>



THE HOLY SPIRIT IS THE BLUE PILL THAT WILL CHANGE OUR SPIRITS, CHANGE OUR DESIRES, AND GIVE US THE POWER TO LIVE THE LIVES WE WANT TO LIVE ANYWAY – the one that will give us the greatest pleasure, regardless of what it looks like on the outside, and lead to eternity in God’s Presence, in heaven, in perfect and growing bliss

Appendix II: The experience of receiving the Outpoured Spirit

The experience of being filled with the Holy Spirit is not uniform, but diverse in timing and experience

Different timings	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For some, it was a separate process to being baptised in the name of Jesus 	Acts 8:4-17
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For others, it happens before being baptised in the name of Jesus Christ 	Acts 10:44-48
Different experiences	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Greek word baptizo has amongst its meanings the notion of being overwhelmed, or immersed; this is what should happen when we are baptized in the Spirit. We should be overwhelmed and plunged into the presence of God. This is the great blessing and important part of the experience (as opposed to specific outward experiences, such as “being slayed in the Spirit”, being “caught up to heaven”, etc). 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> But it is crucial to note that the experience differ completely from person to person. For some it is incredibly spiritually powerful, for some gentle 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At <u>pentecost</u>, there was a dramatically physical manifestation of God’s Spirit, within people and in the environment around them 	Acts 2:1-13
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For <u>The Samaritans</u>, no major manifestations are described (tongues, physical signs), yet the impact on bystanders could not have been more profound. A powerful magician was willing to sell everything to receive this power 	Acts 8:9-19
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For <u>Paul</u>, one of the most remarkable conversions in the bible, His life change was the most powerful evidence of the filling of the Spirit. When Stephen the first Christian Martyr was stoned, it was Paul who had given permission (8:1), he was going from house to house dragging people of the Prison (v.3). And then we find him at the start of Ch.9 “still breathing murderous threats against the Lord’s disciples”. However, within the space of a few verse we read that Paul was preaching boldly in the synagogues that “Jesus is the Son of God” (v.20). What had happened here? Well in Ch.9 we read that he had encountered Jesus on the Damascus road, and in v.17 we read that he was filled with the Holy Spirit. This has happened so many times throughout history that people who were very anti Christian suddenly experience a turn around and become some of the faith’s strongest advocates. 	Acts 9:17-19
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> My personal experience was gentle outwardly, though inwardly it was profound and the single greatest experience I have enjoyed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I was baptised in the Spirit quite spontaneously, on a normal working day, driving to work, with nobody else in the car with me!!! I began to feel God’s Presence poured out over me, and filling me, overwhelming me quite spontaneously I felt a powerful and pure and all consuming and heavenly sense of love, joy, peace, in my soul – i felt i was in heaven before the throne of God, bathed in the light of His Presence I felt freedom from some sort of mighty spiritual burden I didn’t even know was there before. I just felt released from chains i never ever imagined were there, i felt a new spiritual freedom and lightness. I just couldn’t help praising God – I felt such a sense of love for Him I would do ANYTHING for Him, I just wanted to know God and serve God. I hungered to seek and to serve God – this is the main fruit of baptism in the Spirit – truly being willing to pay a great price to seek and serve the Living God 	
However, some aspects of the experience are very common	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Almost always there is a release into spontaneous, Spirit-filled PRAISE of God; Sometimes (though certainly not universally) there is a receipt of a NEW heavenly LANGUAGE (the gift of tongues) 	Acts 10:46



It is not the specific experience of being filled with the Spirit that is important (though, especially the first time, it should be one of the most profound blessings experienced in this life, since it is the experience of being filled with the very Presence of our Almighty God). It is the FACT of being filled (i.e. it must happen, but it need not happen in a particular way).

Appendix III: Have you received the Outpoured Spirit?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We cannot <u>choose</u> our Christian experience. We cannot have intimacy with God and spiritual power, but skip the sanctification part. In John 14:12-21 Jesus <u>explicitly binds all these things into the same package</u>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - belief in Christ; - miraculous power; - holiness; - filling with the Spirit; - life; - intimacy with God; - Having God's love inside us; 	<p>John 14: 12-21</p>
<p>You will know whether you have been filled with the Spirit at any point in your life if you:</p> <p>a) hunger and thirst and are zealous for God's will / righteousness, and actually WANT to become more and more righteous and holy in your life, by God's power. <i>I.e.</i>,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do you say with your words and deeds "Dear Father in heaven, Hallowed by YOUR Name, YOUR Kingdom come, YOUR will be done, IN MY LIFE"? - Do you pay a price (sacrifice significant time, money, and worldly pleasures and comforts) to see God's will done through your life? - Do you actively pursue increased holiness by rooting out that which does not please God, growing in Christ likeness by actively pursuing God's sanctification in your life? <p>b) Enjoy nothing more than intimacy with God. <i>i.e.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do you pay a significant price to spend time seeking God, and to ensure you remain holy and cleansed of all sin? <p>c) Are eager to and have faith that you can powerfully do God's work, with the power of the Holy Spirit, including spiritual works such as healing and deliverance <i>i.e.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - do you actively seek out opportunities and structure your life around building the Kingdom by God's power, according to His will, knowing He will use you, He will guide you, and He will empower you? 	<p>a) Rom 6:15-23 b) John 4:21; Romans 5:5; Rom 15:30; Col 1:8 John 8:31-32 John 15:11 Rom 14:17 1 Thes 1:6 c) Rom 8:15; 2 Tim 1:6-7</p>

Some notes on being filled with the Spirit:

- It is possible to be baptised into the Spirit, and to be emptied of the Spirit over a period of time due to life decisions of disobedience to God (Gal 5 & 6)
- Many people also have several experiences of being filled with the Spirit, separate to their initial baptism in the Spirit, and regardless of how filled they are with the Spirit at the time (full can be made fuller! Like a balloon!) (e.g. Peter, in Acts 4:8)

Appendix IV: Prayer & supplication for the receiving of the Spirit

Being filled

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PRAYER STEP 1: Truly repent, including making commitments to yourself and God to stop those things which you know to be against the will of God 	Acts 2:38-39
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PRAYER STEP 2: ASK Jesus Christ into your heart: ask for a NEW LIFE, the reborn life that Jesus promises, and completely renounce your old life. Ask Jesus to baptise you into His name and to fill you with His Spirit, and to free you from your old life and give you new life so that you can know Him, love Him, and obey His commandments 	Acts 2:38-39
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PRAYER STEP 3: If Jesus does not fill your heart with His Spirit, ask Him to show you the obstacles in your life: what unrepented sin exists? What are you holding onto in your heart - what will you not let go of? Write it down and pray for freedom from these things 	James 4:1-10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PRAYER STEP 4: Ask Jesus to be with you powerfully these next few weeks, protecting you from spiritual attacks and especially guiding you into deeper intimacy with Him 	

Prepare for battle

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finally, prepare for spiritual battle: 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When we get serious with God the enemy gets serious with us (Eph 6:10 - 20). This is spiritual warfare and the devil will try to discourage us 	Eph 6:10 - 20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remember that we have the victory through the death and resurrection of Christ - He has overcome satan and the world, and nothing can now overcome us. So do not fear the devil but be aware that he is around 	1 Pet 5:8-11
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resist the devil and he will flee from you. (James 4:7) 	James 4:7

Appendix V: Nature of the Holy Spirit, by Edwin Palmer

I. The Holy Spirit Is a Person

One of the distinguishing marks of a Christian is his belief in the Holy Spirit as a Person. From the early days of the church to present-day Modernism, there have been those who have denied the personality of the Spirit in one form or another. Many so-called Christian preachers and theologians refer to the Spirit as an “it,” and not as a “he.” They consider him to be an impersonal influence or power or energy, and not the third Person of the Trinity. Such a view would rob us of some of the great blessings of our salvation. Furthermore, it is not Biblical.

In several ways the Bible reveals to us that the Spirit is a Person. First of all, it attributes to him a mind, will, and emotions, which are exclusively characteristics of a person. Impersonal objects do not have these qualities, but the Spirit of God does. Paul presupposes that the Spirit has a mind when he writes that “the Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. 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” (I Cor. 2:10, 11). Here Paul ascribes to the Holy Spirit knowledge, which an influence or a power does not have, but a person does. The Bible also pictures the Spirit as possessing the personal quality of a will. We read that when Paul, Silas, and Timothy wanted to go to Bithynia, “the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to” (Acts 16:7). And in I Corinthians 12:11 Paul tells us that the Spirit gives many gifts to Christians, “just as he determines.” As far as emotions are concerned, Ephesians 4:30 assumes that the Spirit can have grief, for it commands us, “Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God.”

A second way in which the Bible reveals that the Spirit is a Person is by placing him in juxtaposition with other persons. For instance, we know that the Father and Son are Persons, and so when Jesus speaks of baptizing disciples “in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matt. 28:19), he indicates thereby that the Holy Spirit is a Person, too, just as the Father and the Son are. James, in authorizing certain instructions to the early church, wrote, “It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us not to burden you with anything beyond the following requirements” (Acts 15:28). He very clearly considers the Holy Spirit a Person capable of the same thoughts and ideas as he and the apostles had.

Furthermore, it would be a meaningless redundancy to say that Jesus returned from the wilderness “in the power of the Spirit” (Luke 4:14) if the Spirit were simply an impersonal power. Read the phrase again, substituting the word *power* for *Spirit*.

How thankful we must be that the Spirit is a Person! For it is just because he is a Person that he can convict us of sin and thereby lead us to God, dwell within us and give us power over sin, inspire the Bible and illuminate our minds so that we can understand it, guide us so that we know what the will of God is for us, lead us in prayer, and call ministers, elders, and deacons as office-bearers of the church.

Just because the Holy Spirit is a Person we may also react unfavorably toward him. We may resist, grieve, despise, and blaspheme him. This is displeasing to him, and it will surely work harm for ourselves. May we never deny the personality of the Spirit, but believe in him and experience the blessings that can come to us because of this fact.

II. The Holy Spirit Is a Divine Person

Some have believed that the Holy Spirit is a Person, but they have considered him to be a created personality, and not God himself. They have realized that the Spirit is not an impersonal “it,” but they have considered him to be inferior to the Father. The Bible, however, attributes to the Holy Spirit not only personal characteristics, but also divine qualities. These divine attributes mark the Holy Spirit as being God.



According to the Scriptures, the Spirit of God is omnipotent, for he has his role in creation (Gen. 1:2), in providence (Ps. 104:30), in the supernatural conception of Jesus (Luke 1:35), in regeneration, and in the equipping of each Christian with spiritual gifts.

He is also omniscient, as Isaiah intimates when he asks: “Who has directed the Spirit of the LORD, or being his counselor has taught him? With whom did he take counsel, and who instructed him and taught him in the path of justice, and taught him knowledge, and showed him the way of understanding?” (40:13, 14). Paul would have us believe the same thing when he writes that “the Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God” (I Cor. 2:10).

Furthermore, the Holy Spirit may be characterized as being omnipresent. The psalmist eloquently asks: “Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence?” (Ps. 139:7). He says that he can never escape the Spirit’s presence, not even if he ascends to heaven, or descends to Sheol, or flees to the seas, or hides in the blackness of the night. The Spirit is everywhere. In the New Testament we read that the Spirit dwells in believers, and the great number of Christians does not hinder him from being present in each one.

Hebrews 9:14 tells us that Christ “through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God” thus ascribing to the Holy Spirit the divine quality of eternity.

Another proof of the deity of the Spirit is to be found, in the fact that both the Old and New Testaments at times interchange the phrase “the Spirit said” and the phrase “the LORD said.”

Lastly, the mere coupling of the name of the Holy Spirit with the names of the Father and the Son, as in the great commission (Matt. 28:19) or in the apostolic benediction (II Cor. 13:14), shows that the Spirit is put on the same level as, the other two Persons and, therefore, is considered to be divine. It would be most incongruous to couple the name of a created being with that of the Godhead in such tightly knit expressions.

The fact of the deity of the Holy Spirit is important for us. If he were not God, he could not perform his beautiful work in creation, nor his authoritative work in inspiration, nor his illuminating work in men’s minds. Neither could he have overcome our depravity to regenerate, indwell, and sanctify us. We may well be grateful that he is not a finite being but a divine Person.

III. The Holy Spirit Is a Divine Person Distinct from the Father and the Son

In the history of the church there have been those who have believed in the personality of the Holy Spirit and in his deity, but who have so stressed the unity of the Trinity that they have denied that there were three distinct Persons in the Godhead. There were those in the third’ century who pictured God as appearing in creation as the Father, later on in history as the Son, and finally making his appearance as the Holy Spirit. According to their views there were not simultaneously three Persons in the Godhead. But the one Godhead was called the Father at one time, the Son at another, and the Spirit at a third time. Or the Father first changed into the Son, and later into the Holy Spirit.

These theories, too, are a departure from the revelation of Scripture. Certain Biblical texts are clear in pointing out that there are three distinct Persons and not merely different manifestations of the same God. When Jesus was baptized, for example, the voice of the Father sounded from heaven, saying, “You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well-pleased.” At the same time, the Spirit descended on Jesus in the form of a dove. The simultaneous appearance of these three Persons makes it impossible to interpret the Godhead simply as a unity. The same may be said of Jesus’ statement, “I will ask *the Father*, and he will give you *another Counselor*” (John 14:16). Similarly, Acts 2:33 draws a clear distinction among three Persons of the Godhead: “Exalted to the right hand of God, *he* [i.e., Christ] has received from *the Father* the promised *Holy Spirit*.”

It is a definite blessing to have a God that is not just one Person but three. It makes a rich Trinity. For not only is there a Father who loves us and cares for us, but also a Christ who obtained our salvation and intercedes for us and a Holy Spirit who dwells within us and applies salvation to our lives.

IV. The Holy Spirit Proceeds from the Father and the Son



There is among the three Persons of the Trinity a definite relationship and order. Because the three Persons are equally God, it must not be thought that they are all the same. Each one has distinctive properties and relationships to the others. Between the first and the second Persons, for example, there is the relationship of Father and Son. From all eternity the Father begot the Son. The Holy Spirit did not beget the Son, only the Father did.

In a similar fashion, there is an unchangeable relationship between the Holy Spirit and the other Persons of the Godhead: the Holy Spirit eternally proceeds from the Father and the Son. It is difficult to describe what is meant by the procession of the Spirit of God; we can do little more than repeat the words of Scripture, since the Scriptures do not explain this term. But it is remarkable that the Bible does not say that the Holy Spirit was begotten by the Father, as was Christ, nor that he was begotten by Christ. If that were true, then, as the Church Fathers intimated, the Spirit would have been either a brother to Christ or a grandson to the Father. But the Bible carefully avoids the term *begotten* in relation to the Holy Spirit. As the Athanasian Creed correctly puts it, he was “neither made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding.” This word *proceed* is used by Jesus in John 15:26, where he says, “When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, he will testify about me.”

The name of the Spirit also gives another hint as to this intra-trinitarian relationship. For as the name *Father* shows his relationship to the Son, and the name *Son* describes his relationship to the Father, so also the name *Spirit* points to the relationship of the Spirit to the other two Persons: it is one in which he is *spirated* or breathed, for that is the very meaning of the name *Spirit*.

It must be remembered, however, that although the Spirit proceeds from or is spirated by the Father and the Son, he is still full God. His procession does not mean that he is inferior to the Father or the Son, any more than the generation of the Son means that he is not on an equality with the Father. The secret lies in the fact that the Spirit was *eternally* spirated, just as the Son was *eternally* begotten. There never was a time when the Spirit was not being spirated. He was eternally coexistent with the Father and the Son. To say that he proceeded from or was breathed out by the Father and the Son does not imply that he is less God, but it only indicates the relation that he eternally sustains to the other two Persons of the Trinity.

It should also be noted that the Spirit proceeds from both the Father and the Son, and not only from the Father. That he proceeds from the Father is obvious from John 15:26, but it is not so clear that he also proceeds from the Son. Yet this may be deduced from those passages that tell us that Jesus sends out the Spirit into the world and breathes him onto the disciples (John 15:16; 16:7; 20:22). For the temporal spiration implies an eternal spiration. It reflects a certain authority that the Son has even in the intra-trinitarian relationships. Moreover, the Spirit is not only called the “Spirit of the Father,” but also the “Spirit of the Son” (Gal. 4:6), the “Spirit of Christ” (Rom. 8:9), and the “Spirit of Jesus Christ” (Phil. 1:19).

This relationship of the Spirit to the other two Persons explains why the Holy Spirit is considered the third Person of the Trinity and not the first or second. The Father is first because he begets the Son. The Son is the second Person because he is begotten. The Holy Spirit is third because he proceeds from both the Father and the Son.

It is remarkable that this same order of the Trinity is revealed in history, so that it is not until after the first two Persons have appeared in the foreground in succession that the Holy Spirit comes into prominence. From the time of creation to the time of Christ, it was the Father who was more prominent in the world. He was the one who received the chief glory in creation and with whom Israel in the Old Testament dealt chiefly. When Christ came, the Father did not appear as conspicuously, the Holy Spirit had not yet appeared in his fullness, and Christ played a more prominent role. After the incarnation, however, Christ ascended into heaven, and the third Person of the Trinity appeared on the scene more than the others. Thus because the three Persons have a definite order in the Trinity, that order reveals itself in history, so that each Person appears in history in the same order as he is found in the Trinity itself.

It may also be observed that it was exactly because the Holy Spirit is breathed out by the Father and the Son in the Trinity that it was the Holy Spirit, and not the Father or the Son, who was breathed out on the church at Pentecost. This corresponds to the fact that because the second Person of the Trinity is a Son in the Trinity, he should be the incarnate Son on earth. Similarly, because the first Person of the Trinity is the Father in the Trinity, he is also the Father of believers.



These then are some of the aspects of the relationship of the Holy Spirit to the other two Persons of the Trinity. Although we do not understand very much about this relationship, we should not ignore what the Spirit has revealed but, on the contrary, should rejoice that he has guided his church into a definition of himself and his relationship to the other two Persons, however limited the definition may be. For all of his revelation has a purpose and is not to be disregarded.

As far as the practical results of the doctrine of the spiration of the Spirit of God are concerned, they have been far-reaching. In the year 1054 Christendom was split into the Roman Catholic Church and the Eastern Orthodox Church. Although there were many underlying factors, a stone of stumbling was that the Eastern Christians believed that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father alone, whereas the Western churches confessed with the Council of Toledo (589) that the Spirit proceeds from the Father “and the Son” (*filioque*; that is, *and from the son*, the term that symbolized the difference). As a result of these differences, the East separated from the West and today the Eastern church has a membership of over 160 million. Thus this doctrine does have enormous practical effects, and if it had not been formulated by the Church Fathers fifteen hundred years ago, it could be a burning issue today, affecting our church lives. Therefore, we must be grateful for the knowledge that the Holy Spirit has given us on this matter.

Moreover, as Abraham Kuyper has incisively pointed out, a denial of the *filioque* leads to an unhealthy mysticism. It tends to isolate the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives from the work of Jesus. Redemption by Christ is put in the background, while the sanctifying work of the Spirit is brought to the fore. The emphasis is more and more on the work of the Spirit in our lives, which tends to lead to an independence from Christ, the church, and the Bible. Sanctification can loom larger than justification, the subjective communion with the Spirit larger than the objective church life, and illumination by the Spirit larger than the Word. Kuyper believes that this has actually been the case to some extent in the Eastern church, as a result of the denial that the Spirit proceeds from the Son as well as from the Father.

Thus we see that the lengthy theological deliberations that take place at church councils and synods do at times have a great influence. Their decisions seep down from the top to the rank and file, even though the debates do run the risk of being charged with quibbling. We must be grateful for the precious revelation that the Holy Spirit has given of his place in the Trinity, but we should not be satisfied with mere intellectual knowledge. Rather, building upon that, we must strive to know experientially the Spirit and his workings.

Author

Edwin H. Palmer is an astute theologian and scholar as well as a master teacher and pastor. Since 1968 he had been directly involved in the preparation of the New International Version of the Holy Bible, serving as Executive Secretary, which was completed in 1979. Mr. Palmer was called hom to be with His Savior and God in 1980. We are indebted for his service to the church and God's glory.