

Lesson  
5

## The Holy Spirit Gives You Power

You say, “Can we have this power equally with the early disciples?” I say: “Yes.” I say yes because *I am as unworthy and as needy as they were*. I do not think we have any better preachers today than the preachers in the New Testament. *And they needed this power*.

Do not waste time discussing whether or not we can have this Baptism today. *We are of no use without it*. Christianity without the Holy Ghost in it is a shell, a beautiful form, but lifeless, *dead*. Only God, the Holy Ghost, can produce the spark that quickens—the flame that kindles.

If I need this power so badly, *is it likely that God will withhold it* if I meet the conditions? The Bible is full of promise and exhortation to us to approach God with a full confidence of faith to receive this promise. There is not one paragraph that suggests that God will withhold.

Our Savior goes on record that He bought this gift for us. *It is an integral part of the full gospel*. It is meant to be. There is no other inference in the New Testament.



“The gift is . . . for you to use now!” (Ward, 1966, pp. 10, 12).

### **In this lesson you will study . . .**

Power for Many Purposes  
The Promise of Power  
The Promise Fulfilled at Pentecost  
The Normal Experience after Conversion  
Signs of the Holy Spirit’s Power

### **This lesson will help you . . .**

- Explain the purpose for the power, which the Holy Spirit gives you.
- State what the Bible says about the Baptism in the Holy Spirit.
- Name the signs of the Holy Spirit that show His presence in the lives of believers.

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## POWER FOR MANY PURPOSES

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**Objective 1.** *Identify the results that come when the power of the Holy Spirit is used in the right way.*

### Learn How to Use Power

Think of how many ways electricity is used: With it people light their cities, cook, heat their homes, run their factories, and operate all kinds of machinery. Because people have learned how to use electric power they can do what used to seem impossible—even go to the moon.

The Holy Spirit wants to fill your life with a power greater than electricity—power to do what is impossible without it—but you must learn to use it. Used in the right way this power will bring glory to God and blessing to your life. Power of any kind used in the wrong way will always bring trouble.

Three mistakes to avoid:

**1** *Some people use the Holy Spirit's power as a toy to be played with.* This was the problem of the Corinthian church. They so enjoyed talking in other tongues by the Spirit's power that they were just having a good time in their services. There was a lot of disorder. Outsiders thought they were crazy. Paul let them know that all things should be done decently and in order. They should learn to channel the power of the Holy Spirit so that souls would be saved, not turned away from Christ.

**2** *Some people call attention to themselves instead of giving glory to God.* If the Holy Spirit gives a man faith for healing the sick, it is not so that he can shout: "Look at me, everybody! Miracles! I have lots of power!" Or if God uses someone to give messages in prophecy, it is not so that he or she can say: "Everyone had better listen to me! I am a prophet! Come to me if you want to know what to do." Such pride brings many problems.

**3** *Some people just don't use the power that the Holy Spirit has for them.* This is the most common mistake of all. Some have seen the misuse or imitations of the Spirit's power and are afraid of anything supernatural. The Thessalonian church had this problem. Paul told them to test the spirits to see if they were of God and not to accept any false prophecies or imitations of God's work. But they were not to throw away the real thing along with the imitations.

**1 Thessalonians 5:19-22.** Do not restrain the Holy Spirit; do not despise inspired messages. Put all things to the test; keep what is good and avoid every kind of evil.

Being filled with the Holy Spirit is like having your house wired for electricity. It's not wired so you can sit in the dark and say: "I've got electricity at last!" Turn the light on! Use the power! In the Book of Acts you have God's pattern for the right use of the power of the Holy Spirit.

### This Is the Pattern for You

The power of the Holy Spirit in the early Christians made their lives clean and good in a civilization noted for its crime and corruption. An inner joy and peace made them sing and praise God when they were beaten and thrown into jail for Christ's sake. Full of God's love, they forgave and prayed for those who tortured them. This is power used rightly!

They had a powerful message and gave it powerful personal conviction. They knew what they were talking about. Anyone without Christ was lost, but Jesus would save those who believed on Him. They spoke with wisdom, logic, and courage beyond their own abilities—power that convinced their hearers of the truth and convinced them of sin.

They had a powerful faith. They knew that God was with them and would work through them as He had promised. So in Jesus' name they commanded paralytics to walk and they did. They prayed

and things happened. Sick people were healed. Prison doors opened. Multitudes of sinners turned to God.

This power in the early Christians made them witnesses, just as Jesus had said. They had the boldness and urgent desire to tell all their neighbors about Jesus. They had a mission to fulfill. Courage, love, a great vision, and total commitment to Christ drove them on from town to town and country to country. They were determined to give the good news of salvation to every man, woman, and child in their world.

This is the pattern of power in the early church. Their power then was the power of the Holy Spirit who filled them and worked through them. What they did was the natural outflow of Spirit-filled lives. The Bible tells you their experience in detail because it is the pattern for Christians today.



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**For You To Do**

- 1 Draw a circle around each of the results of the Spirit's power in the early Christians.

fear          faith          message          worry  
courage      popularity      healings  
vision      money      conversions      love

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**THE PROMISE OF POWER**

**Objective 2.** *Identify the description of the Holy Spirit given in the Bible.*

John the Baptist promised that Jesus would baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire. This was a general promise made to all those who were being converted and baptized by him in water.

**Matthew 3:11.** "I baptize you with water to show that you have repented; but the one who will come after me will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire."

Jesus had a great work for Christians to do all down through the ages. He knew they could never do it in their own strength. So He told His followers to wait until they received the power of the Holy Spirit and then they would be His witnesses. Jesus' command and promise were for all His followers.

**Luke 24:49.** "And I myself will send upon you what my Father has promised. But you must wait in the city until the power from above comes down upon you."

**Acts 1:4,5, 8.** "Wait for the gift I told you about, the gift my Father promised. John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit . . . When the Holy Spirit comes upon you, you will be filled with power, and you will be witnesses for me in Jerusalem, in all of Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."



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**For You To Do**

- 2 Read Acts 1:1-14. Memorize verses 4,5, and 8.
- 3 Luke 24:49, the Holy Spirit is described as a

- a) blessing requested by the disciples.
- b) reward for holy living.
- c) gift promised by the Father.
- d) sin reserved for special leaders.

4 Why do you think that the Bible calls the Baptism of the Holy Spirit a “gift”?

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## THE PROMISE FULFILLED AT PENTECOST

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**Objective 3.** *Name the book that shows how the Holy Spirit worked through the first Christians.*

What did Jesus’ followers do to receive the promised Holy Spirit? For 10 days 120 of them waited—praying and expecting something to happen. And it did! On the Day of Pentecost they received what we would call the Pentecostal experience or the Baptism in the Holy Spirit.

**Acts 1:14.** They gathered frequently to pray as a group.

**Acts 2:1-5, 7, 8, 11, 13.** When the day of Pentecost came, all the believers were gathered together in one place. Suddenly there was a noise from the sky, which sounded like a strong wind blowing, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then they saw what looked like tongues of fire, which spread out and touched each person there. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to talk in other languages, as the Spirit enabled them to speak.

There were Jews living in Jerusalem, religious men who had come from every country in the world. In amazement and wonder they exclaimed, “These people who are talking like this are Galileans! How is it, then, that all of us hear them speaking in our own native languages . . . about the great things that God has done!” But others made fun of the believers, saying, “These people are drunk!”

Before this, Peter had been afraid of ridicule. What a change after he received the power of the Holy Spirit! He stood up and preached a powerful message. He explained that what they saw was the fulfillment of God’s promise. God had poured out His Spirit.

**Acts 2:14-17, 41.** Then Peter stood up with the other eleven apostles and in a loud voice began to speak to the crowd: . . . “These people are not drunk, as you suppose . . . Instead, this is what the prophet Joel spoke about: ‘This is what I will do in the last days, God says: I will pour out my Spirit on everyone. Your sons and daughters will proclaim my message.’ . . . Many of them believed his message and were baptized, and about three thousand people were added to the group that day.



From then on Acts is the record of how the Holy Spirit worked through the Christians: He helped them witness, spread the gospel, and win souls to Christ.



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**For You To Do**

- 5 Which book shows how the Holy Spirit worked through the first Christians?
- 6 Read Acts chapter 2.

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**THE NORMAL EXPERIENCE AFTER CONVERSION**

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**Objective 4.** *Recognize the normal pattern the Bible gives for receiving the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.*

The apostles expected all believers to be filled with the Holy Spirit after their conversion. Peter made that plain.

**Acts 2:38,39.** Peter said to them, “Each one of you must turn away from his sins and be baptized in the name Jesus Christ, so that your sins will be forgiven; and you will receive God’s gift, the Holy Spirit. For God’s promise was made to you and your children, and all who are far away—all whom the Lord our God calls to himself.”

If new converts did not receive the Baptism of the Holy Spirit right away from their conversion, someone went to pray for them so that they would receive it.

**Acts 8:14-17.** The apostles in Jerusalem heard that the people of Samaria had received the word of God, so they sent Peter and John to them. When they arrived, they prayed for the believers that they might receive the Holy Spirit. For the Holy Spirit had not yet come down on any of them.... Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

After Saul was converted, the Lord sent Ananias to pray for him.

**Acts 9:17.** “He sent me so that you might see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit.”

Cornelius and his family heard the gospel, believed, and were saved as they accepted the truth. Before Peter finished preaching they were filled with the Holy Spirit. The experience of the believers in Ephesus was different. Like many Christians today, they had not even heard that God wanted to fill them with the Holy Spirit. Paul asked them:

**Acts 19:2, 6.** “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you became believers?” “We have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit,” they answered. Paul placed his hands on them, and the Holy Spirit came upon them.

Judging from the pattern in the early church, God wants to fill all of His children with the Holy Spirit and power. Who received then? Rich and poor. Men, women, and children. Illiterate and well educated. Religious leaders and persons recently delivered from deep sin. Persons of many nations. Peter said in the house of Cornelius, a Roman soldier:

**Acts 10:34,47.** “I now realize that it is true that God treats everyone on the same basis . . . These people have received the Holy Spirit, just as we also did.”



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**For You To Do**

- 7 Based on the description in the Bible, the Baptism in the Holy Spirit is
- a) the normal experience after conversion.
  - b) for those who have been Christians a long time.
  - c) mainly for educated men and church leaders.
  - d) God's gift to all His children.
  - e) necessary before a person is baptized in water.

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**SIGNS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT'S POWER**

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**Objective 5.** *Name several signs and results of the Holy Spirit's power.*

**Speaking in Other Languages**

When the Holy Spirit came at Pentecost, He gave several signs of His power. People heard a sound as of a strong wind. They saw tongues of fire. And they spoke in languages they had never learned. In Acts you find that one of these signs—speaking in tongues—was repeated when others received the Holy Spirit. This was how Cornelius and his family had received the Holy Spirit. The same sign was repeated at Ephesus. Compare the experiences.

**Acts 2:4.** They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to talk in other languages, as the Spirit enabled them to speak.

**Acts 10:44-47.** While Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit came down on all those who were listening to his message. The Jewish believers who had come from Joppa with Peter were amazed that God had poured out his gift of the Holy Spirit on the Gentiles also. For they heard them speaking in strange tongues and praising God's greatness. Peter spoke up: "These people have received the Holy Spirit, just as we also did."



**Acts 19:6.** Paul placed his hands on them, and the Holy Spirit came upon them; they spoke in strange tongues and also proclaimed God's message.

Speaking in other languages by the power of the Holy Spirit is the supernatural sign that God has chosen to show that the Holy Spirit has filled a person. Both Jesus and Paul referred to speaking in tongues as a miracle or proof.

**Mark 16:17.** “Believers will be given the power to perform miracles . . . they will speak in strange tongues.”

**1 Corinthians 14:22.** The gift of speaking in strange tongues is proof for unbelievers.

Christians throughout the world are continually experiencing this wonderful gift of the Holy Spirit.

Usually the language is not known to anyone present. However, many times the Spirit has spoken through a person in a language unknown to the speaker but understood by someone in the audience, just as at Pentecost.

**Others Signs of Power**

You have read about many other signs of power that follow, as we keep filled with the Holy Spirit: the clean life, love of God, courage, and complete dedication to Christ. Signs of power are seen in powerful faith, powerful prayer, powerful witnessing, and powerful preaching. The results—conversions, healings, Baptisms in the Holy Spirit, and church growth—follow.

The Bible records Paul’s prayer for the believers in Ephesus. You can claim this prayer for yourself.

**Ephesians 3:16.** I ask God from the wealth of His glory to give you power through his Spirit to be strong in your inner selves.

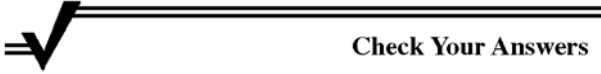
As God makes you strong through His Spirit, you will be able to refuse evil, endure suffering, serve, and witness for your Lord.



**For You To Do**

**8** You have studied several signs of the Holy Spirit’s power. How many can you name? Write them in the space following.

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## Check Your Answers

**5** The Book of Acts.

**1** You should have circled the following words: faith, message, courage, healings, vision, conversions, and love.

**7** Two completions are correct:

- a) the normal experience after conversion.
- d) God's gift to all His children.

**3** c) gift promised by the Father.

**8** I hope you were able to name at least three, such as speaking in other languages, dedication to God, conversions, and healings.

**4** Your answer. I would say the Holy Spirit is called a gift to help us know that we do not have to do anything to earn the Holy Spirit. God has already promised to send Him. Our part is to receive!