

LESSON

2 Churches Submit to the Holy Spirit

In the springtime, tree branches burst with new life in light and vivid colors. Buds sprout and blossom into various shades of white, pink, and yellow. Bright flowers of blue, red, yellow and orange hues suddenly appear and decorate gardens. Of springtime King Solomon wrote:

The winter is past; the rains are over and gone.
Flowers appear on the earth; the season of
singing has come, the cooing of doves is heard
in our land. The fig tree forms its early fruit;
the blossoming vines spread their fragrance.
(Song of Songs 2:11–13)

The work of the Holy Spirit in churches is like springtime beauty! As congregations of people submit to His working He revives them with new life and radiance. Unconverted people become reborn spiritually.

The Plan

- A. The Holy Spirit and the Believer
- B. The Spirit's Anointing
- C. Spiritual Gifts for the Church

The Goals

- 1. Distinguish between the indwelling and baptism in the Holy Spirit.
- 2. Describe the anointing of the Holy Spirit.
- 3. Explain how the gifts of the Holy Spirit edify the church.

A. THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE BELIEVER

Goal 1. Distinguish between the indwelling and baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Frederic Burke, missionary to South Africa, testified of being baptized in the Holy Spirit:

“I was a young man in Bible school. God was pouring out His Spirit upon the students. I, too, began to seek God. I wanted to be filled with the Holy Spirit. One night as I waited quietly before Him, the Holy Spirit seemed to lead me into the garden where Jesus was praying, then to the judgment hall, and then to Calvary. I wept before God as I seemed to share the sufferings of my Savior.

“Then the Holy Spirit came upon me, breathing deeply into me until my whole being seemed filled with His power. I began to speak, first with a stammering tongue, then in a clear language. My soul was filled with the glory of God. Jesus, the great Baptizer, had come and baptized me with the Spirit. My soul was filled with His goodness.

“What a difference this Baptism made in my life. I had been timid and unable to speak in public; now I suddenly had boldness. As I stood before a large congregation the words just flowed out. I heard myself giving forth the Word of God in power—yet it was not I, but the Spirit of God speaking through me.

“While I was still in school, God called me to Africa and later made a way for me to go. Through the 60 years that He has allowed me to minister, the anointing of the Holy Spirit has been with me.”

A testimony like Frederic Burke’s caused Mary to start thinking more about the Holy Spirit. One evening on their way to the church service she asks, “Isn’t the Holy Spirit within me now that I’m saved?”

“Yes, dear, it was the Holy Spirit’s work to lead you to Christ and now He is within you,” replies Timothy.

“Then why do people talk about receiving the Holy Spirit if we already have Him?”

“Because—oh, here is Allen. I think he can explain it better than I can.”

Their friend Allen listens to their questions and then says, “Yes Mary, as a believer you do have the Holy Spirit living in you. Galatians 4:6 says, ‘Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts.’ First Corinthians 3:16 also says that God’s Spirit lives in us because we are children of God.”

Allen continues to explain. “When you hear people talk about receiving the Holy Spirit after conversion, they mean receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit. When you are converted the Holy Spirit comes to live within your heart. And when believers receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit, He comes upon them, filling them to overflowing. It is like an outpouring of God’s Spirit upon us.

“Let’s look up some Scriptures. Acts 2:17 says, ‘In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people.’ Peter explains that the outpouring of the Holy Spirit was a fulfillment of a prophecy given in Joel 2:28. Peter said,

God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact. Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear. (Acts 2:32–33)

“I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.” (Luke 24:49)

“What happens when a person receives this outpouring of the Holy Spirit?” questions Mary.

“Wonderful things happen,” replies Allen. “As you worship the Lord and surrender to Him, the Holy Spirit comes on you. Then He speaks through you in words you have never learned. The Holy Spirit uses your voice to glorify the Lord. Acts shows the early believers’ experience of being filled with the Holy Spirit.”

“All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: . . . ‘In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy. I will show wonders in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke. The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord. And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.’” (Acts 2:4, 17–21)

Hearing this Mary asks, “How could I receive? I would like the Holy Spirit to come on me!”

Allen smiled. “This experience is for you, Mary. Open your heart to the Lord and start praising Him. As you worship Him, yield yourself and accept His gift to you. It is the Lord Jesus himself who will fill you to overflowing with His Holy Spirit. Today God is pouring out His Spirit upon millions of believers all around the world. And no one needs to be left out of this blessing.”

Application

- 1** Circle the letter in front of each true statement.
 - a)** On the Day of Pentecost Peter told the crowd that the Holy Spirit was only for the 120 believers.
 - b)** We cannot baptize each other in the Holy Spirit.
 - c)** The Holy Spirit uses our voices to glorify God.
 - d)** God still pours out His Holy Spirit, but only on a few special people.
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B. THE SPIRIT’S ANOINTING

Goal 2. Describe the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

The Spirit’s anointing is an important aspect of His ministry. To anoint means to put oil on someone or on something as part of a ceremony. This was done in Old Testament times when persons or objects were set apart for service to God.

The prophet Samuel poured olive oil on David’s head when he set him apart to be king over Israel. “So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on the Spirit of the Lord came upon David in power” (1 Samuel 16:13). When Moses dedicated the tent in the desert, he anointed it and the altar with sacred oil (Exodus 40:9–11). Aaron, the first high priest, was also anointed (Psalm 133:2).

Oil is a symbol of the Holy Spirit. The word *anointing* is used to describe the special touch of the Spirit's power that enables people to do something for God—something beyond themselves.

Under the anointing of the Holy Spirit, David composed songs, which we call psalms. He was also a prophet and foretold the resurrection of Jesus the Messiah from the dead. This same anointing, or the Spirit's power, came upon Peter when he preached to the crowds on the Day of Pentecost.

When the early church chose seven deacons for the work of handling the finances and business of the church, they chose men who were “full of the Spirit and wisdom” (Acts 6:3). The Spirit's anointing was considered essential for their daily work. Such were the high spiritual standards of the early church. How necessary, therefore, is the anointing of the Holy Spirit on every activity and ministry of the churches in our day! Our praying, preaching, teaching, evangelizing, counseling, singing, or playing instruments all should be anointed by the Holy Spirit to the glory of God. Only then can Jesus Christ be uplifted and people be built up in their faith.

Application

2 For the descriptions on the left write the number which represents the person or concept described (right column).

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|--|-------------|
| ... a Symbol of the Holy Spirit | 1) Peter |
| ... b Means “set apart” | 2) David |
| ... c First high priest | 3) Oil |
| ... d Church helpers | 4) Deacons |
| ... e Composed many songs | 5) Anointed |
| ... f Preached at Pentecost | 6) Aaron |
| ... g Anointed the tent and altar | 7) Wine |
| | 8) Paul |
| | 9) Moses |
| | 10) Filled |



C. SPIRITUAL GIFTS FOR THE CHURCH

Goal 3. Explain how the gifts of the Holy Spirit edify the church.

The Sunday evening congregation has been singing, praying, and praising. It becomes quiet. Then a member of the congregation speaks in a strong, clear voice. His message exalts Jesus the Savior and encourages the people to believe and obey Him. His words ring with authority and bring comfort and hope. The pastor encourages the people to respond to the moving of the Holy Spirit. A new wave of praise goes up to the Lord.

“What is happening?” gasps Mary.

“It’s a message in prophecy,” Timothy whispers. “We will find out more about it later.”

The people are now in a hushed, receptive attitude to hear the Word of God as it is preached, especially since it relates to the utterance given through the church member by the Holy Spirit.

After the sermon the pastor invites people with special needs to come forward for prayer. Some of the church leaders gather around and lay their hands on each one with a need. The people are encouraged to pray and believe together for God’s answer to these requests. The sound of prayer is like rushing waters.

What happened in the earlier part of the service was a manifestation of one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit—an utterance in prophecy. Timothy and Mary later studied about this in 1 Corinthians 14. Verse three tells that the one who proclaims God’s message (the one who prophesies) speaks to people and gives them help, encouragement, and comfort.

When the Holy Spirit moves among a group of Spirit-filled believers, love and power flow from within them. The flow of this power comes through believers by means of the gifts of the

Holy Spirit. Miraculous things take place—people are healed and delivered from sinful habits. The church begins to grow.

The gifts of the Spirit must be manifested according to the guidelines in 1 Corinthians 14. Christ should receive the glory, and believers should be built up spiritually. God wants our coming together to give life; our meetings should not be disorderly but harmonious and peaceful.

Nine gifts of the Holy Spirit are listed in 1 Corinthians 12:8–10. Each is unique and supernatural—above or beyond our natural talent or ability. Though we may not fully understand all the workings of the Spirit, we do need to be open to receive whatever the Lord has for us.

Briefly, these supernatural gifts are defined as follows. The word of wisdom is special wisdom for a special need—a bit of God’s wisdom spoken at the proper time. Through the word of knowledge the Holy Spirit causes believers to say things that they in no way could know through their own abilities. The gift of faith is a supernatural ability to believe, especially for a certain need.

The gifts of healing flow out from the Spirit, through the believer, and to the people in need of healing. Through the gift of working of miracles the person through whom the Spirit is moving has supernatural power to do things that would otherwise be impossible. Prophecy is speaking in one’s own language in the power of the Holy Spirit, either telling forth (as in preaching) or foretelling.

Through the discerning of spirits the Holy Spirit enables a person to look beyond what is seen and know what spirit is manifesting itself (God’s Spirit, a human spirit, or an evil spirit). The gift of tongues is the ability given to believers to speak a language they have never learned. It may be an earthly language, or the language of angels. The interpretation of tongues is giving the meaning of what is said in another language. We must remember again that the ability and direction come only through the power of the Holy Spirit. Paul

affirms, “There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit” (1 Corinthians 12:4).

Churches should make room for these spiritual gifts as taught in God’s Word. These gifts will enable them to extend the gracious ministry of Christ and the early church to today’s needy world. Jesus promised that we would do even greater things than He did (John 14:12). This is possible when we submit to the Holy Spirit whom Jesus has sent in His place—to flow into, and upon, and out through His church.

Application

Circle the letter in front of the correct completions.

- 3** The gifts of the Holy Spirit are given to
- a)** help us grow spiritually.
 - b)** make other people notice us.
 - c)** make our churches different.
- 4** When gifts of the Spirit are in operation
- a)** they take the place of God’s Word.
 - b)** we feel uncomfortable and confused.
 - c)** they work in harmony with God’s Word.
- 5** If we do not understand all about the gifts of the Spirit we should
- a)** disregard them.
 - b)** accept only what we really do understand.
 - c)** be open to the Lord anyway because we can always trust Him to do right.
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Check Your Answers

- 3 a)** help us grow spiritually.
- 1** Statements **b)** and **c)** are true.
- 4 c)** they work in harmony with God's Word.
- 2 a** 3) Oil
b 5) Anointed
c 6) Aaron
d 4) Deacons
e 2) David
f 1) Peter
g 9) Moses
- 5 c)** be open to the Lord anyway because we can always trust Him to do right.