

The Holy Spirit Pt. 2

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[0:00] All right, well, let's now move into our time in the Word. This morning's message is kind of a part two to last Sunday's message.

Last Sunday, we came to the part of the conversation between Jesus and his disciples where Jesus tells them about the Holy Spirit. Jesus assured his disciples that they would not be alone when he's gone because he's going to ask the Father and the Father is going to send.

He's going to give the Holy Spirit to be with them. And we noticed several significant details about how the Spirit would come. First of all, we heard that the Spirit would come to be with them and even better, he would be coming to live in them.

Second, we saw that it wouldn't be like the Old Testament days when the Spirit seemed to kind of come and then go, like with Samson and King Saul. Jesus says this time his coming would be permanent.

He would be with them forever. Third, we talked about how the Spirit would come in a way that the world just wouldn't understand or accept or see.

[1:17] And finally, we talked about what the Spirit would do for them. We talked about how he would be another counselor or shepherd or guide to the disciples, just as Jesus has been to them.

And he would teach them all things, everything that they needed to know from God. And he would remind them specifically of everything that Jesus had already said to them.

And I left us all kind of hanging there at the end. That's what Jesus promised to the disciples, these men in the room, the apostles. But what about the rest of us believers?

Can we expect the same thing? Does the Spirit of God come to live in us and work in us in the same way as he did for them? That's our question for this morning.

What should we here this morning expect when it comes to the Holy Spirit? What's our relationship to him as believers who live almost 2,000 years later?

[2:18] And the reason we need a whole other message on this is because we wonder, don't we? Some of us just assume, maybe, that all of us believers get the Holy Spirit and he lives in us exactly the same as the disciples back then.

We maybe just assume that these words are for the disciples and they're for all of us too. But maybe some of us, others of us, aren't so sure about that.

Maybe we look at our life or we think over our experiences and our feelings and we wonder if maybe we've somehow not received the Spirit or we've received something different, perhaps something less than the disciples received.

So this morning we're going to be looking at a number of different passages for an answer to this question of what we, what all believers in general can expect when it comes to the Holy Spirit.

We're going to go back a little bit towards the beginning of the story of Jesus to the days of John the Baptizer. The Baptizer, you'll remember, proclaimed that there was one coming after him and that one was Jesus, of course.

[3:31] And what did he tell the crowds about Jesus? In Mark 1, verse 8, he said, I baptize you with water, but he, that one coming after me, will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.

Now who did John tell this to? According to Mark, John told this to people from all over the Judean countryside. He told it to all the people from Jerusalem who went out to see John.

So right from the get-go, the Holy Spirit was promised not only to a few, but to many, to all who came to repent and to believe, to confess their sins and to put their trust in this chosen one that was coming after.

And then God's chosen one came, Jesus of Nazareth. And what did Jesus teach? In Luke chapter 11, we read what Jesus taught his disciples, as well as all the crowds that were listening in.

He taught them and said, Ask, and it will be given to you. Seek, and you will find. Knock, and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives.

[4 : 50] The one who seeks, finds. And to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. Which of your fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead?

Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in Heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him?

Jesus seems pretty clearly here to suggest that the Holy Spirit is a gift that God is eager to give. He's happy to give him to all of his children, to all who ask the Father.

Well, eventually the day came. The day when Jesus asked the Father, and the Father sent the Holy Spirit down. We usually refer to this day as the day of Pentecost, because that was the name of the Jewish festival that was being celebrated when it happened.

Luke tells us all about this in the book of Acts. I'm not going to read the whole thing, but in Acts chapters 1 and 2, we read about how the 11 apostles were all gathered in Jerusalem.

[6 : 06] Not only them, but also a number of women were with them, and some of Jesus' brothers. In fact, there was even more than that there.

Luke tells us that in those days they had a gathering of believers, and it was about a group numbering about 120 people. And Luke tells us how they decided to replace Judas, the one who had betrayed Jesus, with Matthias.

And then, when the day of Pentecost came, Luke tells us that they, that same large group of believers, they were all together in one place, when suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting.

They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues or languages as the Spirit enabled them.

So God pours out His Holy Spirit upon the believers there in the room. He comes to them, the Spirit. And we might have assumed that this just happened to the 12 apostles, but if we're kind of reading the whole flow of what Luke is telling us here, we notice that, no, it was all of them.

[7 : 37] It was the whole group of believers. As Peter will go on to explain, God has just now poured out His Spirit fulfilling the prophecy made by Joel long ago on both men and women.

And they're prophesying just as He promised long ago. So the Spirit was given not just to the 12 apostles, but to all of them gathered there that day who believed in Jesus.

Well, we might wonder, maybe the Spirit was just for the whole lot of them back then. How can I know that the Holy Spirit is for me here today too?

Well, Luke tells us that Peter stood up that day and he began to proclaim Jesus to the crowds that began to gather. And what did Peter tell them?

We'll pick up Peter's message partway through it in verse 36 of chapter 2. This is what Peter was saying on the day of Pentecost, right after the Spirit came down. He said, Therefore, let all Israel be assured of this.

[8 : 48] God has made this Jesus whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah, Messiah. When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, Brothers, what shall we do?

Peter replied, Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, for all whom the Lord our God will call.

Do you hear that? The promise is for you, said Peter. And in the original language, it's actually you plural. It's for all y'all in the crowd.

Well, what promise is Peter talking about? That's for all of them. the promise that if they repent and believe and are baptized, they will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

[10 : 02] And Peter makes it so clear. I love this. He says, the promise of the Spirit, it's not just for you that I'm speaking to here today. It's also for your children. It's for those who will come after you.

And it's not just for them. It's not just for all of us here in the land of Israel. It's for all who are far off. Them too. Whoever believes, whoever repents and turns to Jesus.

The Holy Spirit is for them as well. All whom the Lord our God will call. Do you hear this? The Holy Spirit is not just a gift given to the apostles, to the select few.

He's not just a gift given to that big large group of 120 back then. Or the big crowd of 3,000 people that will put their trust in the Lord that day when Peter preached.

He's for their children. It's for the generations of people that will come after them. And He's not just for the people there in that land back then. But for all whom the Lord our God will call.

[11 : 10] Even in the distant lands, places far away. And so the gift of the Holy Spirit we come to see is for everyone who believes in Jesus.

And this is exactly how the story goes. As we continue on through the book of Acts, we see that the good news of Jesus spreads all over the Mediterranean world.

And wherever the good news of Jesus goes, God gives some very visible signs that His Spirit has come upon the new believers in that place. Even the Gentile, the non-Jew believers, receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

And the apostles back in Jerusalem, they recognize that. They acknowledge that. And so by the time we get to all the letters that were written much later in the New Testament to the churches all over the Mediterranean world, it couldn't be clearer that the gift of the Holy Spirit is for every believer in Jesus.

Paul speaks about the Spirit in the lives of believers in his letter to the church at Rome as if it's just a plain fact that, yes, if you belong to Christ, you have the Spirit.

[12 : 29] They go hand in hand. Romans chapter 8 is a wonderful chapter describing all the good things that come to us because of God's Spirit who lives in us.

And then in his letter to the church at Corinth, he acknowledges, yes, you guys have the Spirit living in you. They had all kinds of spiritual gifts that were proof and evidence of that.

We might think of the churches in the region of Galatia, largely Gentile churches. Paul says, yes, you too received the Spirit. How?

By believing what you heard about Jesus. Probably one of the clearest statements comes in Paul's letter to the church at Ephesus. This was a church in Asia Minor made up of both Jews and Gentiles.

And this is what Paul said to them in Ephesians chapter 1 verse 13 and 14. He said, you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation.

[13 : 36] When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal. And what was that seal? The promised Holy Spirit who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession.

So there can be no doubt from the Bible that this gift of the Holy Spirit is for all who truly believe in Jesus. He doesn't just come to be with and live in the apostles.

He comes to be with and live in all who repent and believe in Jesus' name. So that's God's answer to the first part of the question.

Does the Holy Spirit come to live in all of us who believe? And the answer is yes. In all of us who believe. He comes to be with us. He comes to live in us forever. But now we come to the second part of the question.

Does the Holy Spirit work in us in the same way that Jesus promised he would work in the apostles? And we have to ask this question because some of us are reading along in the book of Acts and maybe we're thinking man I don't see a lot of what happened there happening in my life.

[14 : 56] Like where are the miracles? Where's the God will give you the words to say in every situation part of the promise? Where's the voice of the Holy Spirit speaking intelligible words to the apostles?

Where's that in my life? Because if I'm honest I'm still trying to sort out whether it's the Holy Spirit speaking to me or just my own head is what some of us are maybe thinking.

So we have to ask this question does the Spirit of God work in every believer in the same way that Jesus promised to the apostles?

And the answer is both yes and no. Yes there are things that every believer can expect the Holy Spirit to do in them but there are things that not every believer can expect the Spirit of God to do in them.

Let's look to 1 Corinthians chapter 12 verse 4 this is Paul writing to the church at Corinth he says there are different kinds of gifts but the same Spirit distributes them there are different kinds of

service but the same Lord there are different kinds of working but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good to one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit to another faith by the same Spirit to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit to another miraculous powers to another prophecy to another distinguishing between spirits to another speaking in different kinds of tongues or languages and still another the interpretation of tongues or languages all these are the work of one and the same

[17 : 17] Spirit and he distributes them to each one as he determines just as a body the one has many parts but all its many parts form one body so it is with Christ for we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body whether Jews or Gentiles slave or free and we were all given the one Spirit to drink even so the body is not made up of one part but of many and I'm going to skip down a little bit to verse 27 now you are the body of Christ says Paul and each one of you is a part of it and God has placed in the church first of all apostles second prophets third teachers then miracles then gifts of healing of helping of guidance and of different kinds of tongues are all apostles are all prophets are all teachers do all work miracles do all have gifts of healing do all speak in tongues or languages do all interpret what is

Paul saying here he's telling us that every one of us shares in the same Spirit of God we all have the Holy Spirit all of us who believe in Jesus have the Holy Spirit but the Spirit gifts us in different ways he works in us and through us in different ways which means that my experience of the Christian life it might have some differences than yours now I can't possibly delve into all the questions that will come up inevitably as we look at a passage like this about miracles and the gift of healing and prophets and whether we should expect to see more of that today but the overarching point of Paul is the same every believer has the Holy Spirit but the Holy Spirit doesn't work in every believer in exactly the same way and this is where I hope that we get some clarity are all apostles no it's a rhetorical question think about what that implies it means it means that whether or not your experience is the same as

Peter's experience is not the mark of whether you are a true believer it's not the measure of whether you have the Spirit of God in you Peter was called by Jesus Christ for a special role a unique role to be an apostle and with that special calling and role came a special working of the Holy Spirit in him so that he could do that job he was called to be a spokesperson of Jesus Christ to speak authoritatively what he heard the Spirit speaking to him to others so that what he said what he taught what he wrote it wasn't just Peter's words but it was the word of God flowing through him the word of Christ and that's why we must do what Peter commands in his letters and if we don't it's as though we're disobeying

God we're sinning against God we believe that because we recognize that Peter had that special authority that special role given to him by Jesus but that's different than what the rest of us who are not apostles experience we too have the spirit of God in us but in each one of us he is at work in a different way the spirit spoke through men like Peter and Paul apostles he spoke the word of God for all of our benefit but maybe the spirit doesn't speak to all of us in that same way instead maybe through you he loves the broken hearted and the suffering people in the world maybe that's how God has woven your story maybe that's the special gifting of God in you a heart of compassion and creative inspiration from the spirit about how to meet the needs of those who are suffering or less fortunate that's just one example of maybe a different kind of gifting or working of the spirit but there's many the sense

I get at least as I read 1st Corinthians chapter 12 is that there's all kinds of different ways in which the spirit might work in us many more than are even listed here I think sometimes we've maybe done a bit of a disservice to the church when we come up with these spiritual gift tests but we only include the gifts that are listed here and maybe one or two other passages in the Bible but let's just look at what Paul said he said there are different kinds of gifts there are different kinds of service there are different kinds of working but the same spirit of God at work in and through all of them so we might consider this list given in verse 28 and 30 we might consider it kind of an abbreviated list of possible gifts to illustrate just the variety that there is and how not all of us have the same one so we need to be careful that we don't just assume that everything

[23 : 34] Jesus says to the apostles in the room this night in John 14 to 16 is exactly how the spirit of God will work in us there will be a kind of teaching and speaking from the spirit to the apostles for the church that's unique to their role and we're going to see that come out a little more as we get

further into this so that's the no part of the answer no the spirit does not work in all of us the same as he did in the apostles but let's now for a few minutes consider the yes part of the answer there are many things that God's spirit works in all of us who believe and it's kind of the same for all of us regardless of what our role is in the body of Christ so we're going to go through quite a few passages really quickly here to see this Romans chapter 5 verse 5 hope does not put us to shame because

God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us how does it happen that we come to know and feel the love of God for us in the depths of our souls Paul says the spirit of God is responsible for that it's not just something that he does for Paul or Peter it's something he does for all of us even all those people in the church in Rome Romans chapter 8 verse 13 talks about how it's the spirit who gives us power and enables us to kill sin in our lives and instead live rightly in obedience to God Paul says a similar sort of thing in his letter to Timothy 2nd Timothy 1 verse 7 for the spirit God gave us does not make us timid but gives us power love and self discipline he enables us all believers to live in obedience to

God to do what's right Romans chapter 8 verse 15 Paul tells the Christians in the Roman church that it's it's through God's spirit that we are adopted brought into the family of God and become true children of God we become heirs of this wonderful inheritance that God will someday give to all his children the spirit does that for all who believe in Jesus Romans chapter 8 verse 26 Paul says here that the spirit of God intercedes for us through wordless groans Romans I love this passage when a believer who has the spirit of God is in need the spirit of God in that person is talking to the father on your behalf like praying for you and you can't even see it or hear it or know exactly what he's saying Paul says the spirit does that for us as in all of us who believe

Jew and Gentile Romans chapter 15 verse 13 may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him so that you may overflow with hope how by the power of the Holy Spirit God fills us with hope and he does it by his spirit that's something he does in all of us 1st Corinthians sorry Romans 15 verse 16 here Paul talks about how the Holy Spirit makes us holy he sanctifies us he works in us so that increasingly we live holy lives we think holy thoughts we speak holy words 1st Corinthians chapter 6 verse 11 not only does the spirit of God make us holy but he washes us of the guilt and stain of past sins that thing that Jesus did on the cross the spirit is the one who takes that and applies it to us and puts the covering of

Jesus blood over us so that our sins are forgiven it's something he does for all of us who believe in him and one and God God the fruit of the spirit God produces the fruit of his spirit in us all kinds of good things that ultimately come from God love joy peace forbearance kindness gentleness self control this is something God's spirit works and does in all believers and finally the spirit of God does work in all of us to make us wise and to teach us the truth to guide us into the truth Paul prayed for all the members of the church at

[28 : 52] Ephesus that God would give them the spirit of wisdom and revelation why so that they may know God better so that they might fully appreciate the depth of God's love for them which means that the spirit does that kind of work in all of us not just the Ephesian believers in all of us it's through what he does in our hearts and minds that we can actually know the truth that we can become wise and experience the depths of his love for us Colossians 1 verse 9 Paul says for this reason since the day we heard about you we've not stopped praying for you we continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the spirit gives

God so how do we grow in our understanding of what God's will is Paul says the spirit living in us fills us with that knowledge he gives us wisdom he gives us understanding and the last one we'll look at 1 John chapter 2 verse 27 this is one of those ones that I almost hesitate to put up on the screen there just because it's loaded and there's ways that we can misinterpret this but this is what the word of God says this is the apostle John himself speaking he says as for you the anointing you received from him remains in you and you do not need anyone to teach you but as his anointing teaches you about all things and as that anointing is real not counterfeit just as it has taught you remain in him there's some ways we can misinterpret this one I don't think

John is saying for instance that we never have need of anybody to teach us especially since right now in this letter he's teaching them and there's other places in the scriptures where we're commanded to teach and to be taught in the church so I don't think that this means that we never need to be taught but he's probably saying quite strongly that it's not just him the apostle John who

has the spirit of truth but all of you believers everybody that he's writing to you have this same anointing the same spirit living in you and he is sufficient he is enough to help you learn and discover the truth that God wants you to know he's with you he's in you the context of all of this comes as there are people who are trying to influence the church and lead them astray teach them false things and so John says because you have the

Holy Spirit in you you don't need to worry about these guys over here you don't need these guys to teach you God and his spirit will help you sift your way through that and guide you into the truth now it doesn't mean that God will never use anyone to teach you of course and of course it doesn't mean that God will just speak every word that he wants you to know straight into your head we have the word of God written out for us for a reason but we can rest assured that so long as we remain in God's spirit as long as we continue to remain and abide in Jesus words his spirit remains in us and we need not fear that we will be hopelessly led astray or deceived so bad that we'll never recognize where we've gone wrong the spirit lives in us and he is the spirit of truth he helps us navigate through the complexities and difficulties of life and reminds us of the things that Jesus said the things that are true now I know that there are still lots of questions that we might have about the Holy Spirit and how he works in us like do we hear his voice speaking audibly in our minds that's a big question and again we're kind of out of time this morning I hope that we'll get to that in the weeks ahead as we as we as Jesus brings this subject back to our attention because he has a lot to say about the Holy Spirit in our lives so hopefully we'll get to that in weeks ahead but for today and for this morning I hope and I pray that is for you if you have repented if you believed in Jesus then you have the Spirit of God living in you whether we understand exactly what he's doing in there or how he's working or not this is the promise it's for you it's for your children it's for all who are far off for all whom the

[34 : 12] Lord our God will call and I also hope and pray that you are encouraged and a little more settled in your heart about this thing that no my experience of the Christian life and all the feelings that go with it it won't necessarily be the same as yours there are different workings of the Spirit in each one of us that's good that's the way God designed it just as Paul encouraged the believers at Corinth and finally I hope you're also encouraged that God's Spirit does so many wonderful things for all who believe in Jesus name regardless of the role that he's called you to regardless of what your gifts are in the body so I'm going to leave it at that this morning and hopefully we'll come back to this topic in weeks ahead let's pray Father in heaven we thank you for the gift of your spirit

Lord we confess and we admit that we often don't understand just what you are doing in us sometimes we have some moments of clarity sometimes we see glimmers that so much we thank you that you are there and deep down inside those of us who believe we know it we see the fruit that you produce in our lives and in the lives of each other and we just want to pray and ask that you would continue to do that work in us help us to surrender completely to you and to walk by your spirit we ask this for Amen.