

## LESSON 7

### THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

The purpose of the baptism in the Holy Spirit is to empower believers for service. God has works he has planned for you to do, and you require the Holy Spirit's enablement to perform them. These works are the very same that Jesus did when he walked upon the earth.

The Bible says that *"... God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and ... he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with them."*[1] And Jesus said *"I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing."*[2]

When you are baptised in the Holy Spirit, you will receive power just as Jesus did. This will enable you to do the good works of God and to destroy the evil works of the devil.

#### **The difference between being born of the Spirit and being baptised in the Spirit**

The Bible reveals to us that in becoming a Christian there are two distinct experiences with the Spirit of God. In the first experience a person is born-again. God supernaturally breathes into them his life and their spirit is made alive. His Spirit is united with their spirit, so that their body is described as a *"temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have received from God..."*[3] In the second experience, God pours out his Spirit with power upon them enabling them to undertake the special tasks he wants to do through them.

### The life of Jesus

Jesus' own life demonstrates this fact. A young virgin whose name was Mary, who was to be his earthly mother, received in her womb the baby Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit. It was a supernatural creative act of God. (It was necessary that Jesus not be the son of an earthly father, because then he would be born in sin and incapable of being the perfect sacrifice nor the "last Adam" to found a new race of people which is the church. And so the Son of God himself came to the earth from heaven via Mary and appeared in the flesh.) Therefore, Jesus was 'born of the Spirit':

*"...God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favoured! The Lord is with you."*

*Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favour with God. You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end."*

*"How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?"*

*The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God."*

Luke 1:26-36

The second person of the Godhead, Jesus the Son, first appeared as a little baby born in a small town called Bethlehem. The husband of Mary, Joseph, became Jesus' adopted earthly father, and raised Jesus like his own. As Joseph was a carpenter, Jesus would have learned the trade and helped Joseph in his craft. As far as the people were concerned in the town where they eventually resided, Nazareth, he appeared to be like any normal child. It was not until he was around thirty years old that everything changed. And the event that marked the beginning of his public ministry of preaching and teaching, and healing sick people and performing miracles, (whereby he was confirmed to the world that he was the promised Messiah and the Son of God) was the moment when he was baptised in the Holy Spirit. This happened immediately after he was (water) baptised by John the Baptist in the river Jordan:

*“Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. But John tried to deter him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?”*

*Jesus replied, “Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfil all righteousness.” Then John consented.*

*As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw **the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him**. And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.”*

Matthew 3:13-17

In the Apostle John's account of this event – he was one of Jesus' disciples, John the Baptist was not a disciple of Jesus but the special

prophet who heralded the appearance of Jesus, the Son of God and Messiah – he wrote:

*“Then John [the Baptist] gave this testimony: **“I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him.** I would not have known him, except that the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, **‘The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is he who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.’** I have seen and I testify that this is the Son of God.”*

John 1:32-34

So now the third person of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit, also comes in a special way from heaven and rests and remains upon Jesus. This is what it means to be baptised in the Holy Spirit; when the Holy Spirit comes and remains upon a person with power. Immediately after this event Jesus was *“led by the Spirit”* into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil and then he returned amongst the people *“full of the Holy Spirit”* and began to do miraculous things by the *“power of the Spirit”*. [4] Although Jesus himself was God, he lived as a man and he performed miracles not by his own power, but by the power of the Holy Spirit. Jesus showed us how God the Father wanted his children to live, revealing and demonstrating his wisdom, his power and his love.

### **The teaching of Jesus**

Jesus taught that there would be two experiences of the Holy Spirit, using the symbol of water. (There are a number of symbols the Bible uses for the Spirit of God including water, fire, breath, wind and oil.) Once, when he encountered a woman outside a town in Samaria he described what it means to be born-again, likening it to a well of living water:

*“So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob’s well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about the sixth hour. When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, “Will you give me a drink?” (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.)*

*The Samaritan woman said to him, “You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?” (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.)*

*Jesus answered her, “If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water.”*

*“Sir,” the woman said, “you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his flocks and herds?”*

*Jesus answered, “Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become **in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.**”*

John 4:4-14

Jesus is pointing the woman to her need to be born again. When a person is born again, they could then draw from the well of living water from within them, that is the Holy Spirit, and be spiritually satisfied, full and complete. The symbol used is as a gentle spring of

water, representing a continual supply of water as it gently flows up to the surface of the earth.

On another occasion, sometime later, Jesus taught about the baptism in the Holy Spirit using again the symbol of water but describing it like mighty rivers gushing out from a person:

*“On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, **streams of living water will flow from within him.**” **By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.**”*

John 7:37-39

The symbolism here is of mighty rivers pouring out from a person into the world affecting change through the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit. This work of the Spirit is not for the person themselves, as in the earlier case, but to benefit others. A person baptised in the Holy Spirit is a conduit for the power of God, as the Holy Spirit works supernaturally through them.

### **Jesus' disciples**

The distinction between the two works of the Spirit is also clearly defined for us in the case of Jesus' disciples.

After Jesus died and rose again, it was now possible for people to be born again. The barrier that the sin nature presented stopping God uniting himself with a person was now removed. A person who believed on Jesus could now be made righteous and God could come and live inside them. Jesus performed an extraordinary act

with his own disciples, at the very moment that they were born again:

*“On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!” After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.*

*Again Jesus said, “Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.” And with that **he breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit.”***

John 20:19-23

What Jesus did physically was demonstrating what was happening spiritually and has deep significance. In the Garden of Eden, God breathed into Adam and he became a living spirit. Here, Jesus is making his disciples again like Adam was created at the very beginning, and more. This was the moment that his disciples were born again. Their spirits were made alive as Adam had been, and also the Holy Spirit came into them and united himself with their own spirits.

Soon after, however, Jesus gave them special instructions regarding the baptism of the Holy Spirit:

*“On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: “Do not leave Jerusalem, **but wait for the gift my Father promised**, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days **you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.**”*

*So when they met together, they asked him, “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?”*

*He said to them: “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. **But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.**”*

*After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.”*

Acts 1:3-9

The baptism of the Spirit was an experience that they were yet to receive. It happened exactly ten days later (on a special day of celebration in the Jewish calendar called Pentecost) and the Bible records this extraordinary event:

*“When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. 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 as the Spirit enabled them.***

*Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard them speaking in his own language. Utterly amazed, they asked: “Are not all these men who are speaking Galileans? Then how is it that each of us hears them in his own native language? Parthians, Medes*



*and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs — we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!” Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, “What does this mean?”*

*Some, however, made fun of them and said, “They have had too much wine.”*

*Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: “Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. These men are not drunk, as you suppose. It’s only nine in the morning! No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:*

***“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 2:1-21

Here the Holy Spirit is represented in the fire and the sound of a violent wind. And the very first thing that happened as the Holy

Spirit came upon the group of born-again believers, is that he enabled them to speak by their spirits (not their minds) in languages they had not learned; although other people from many different foreign countries could understand them declaring the wonders of God. But note carefully, that they were *not* preaching to them the need for repentance and belief in Jesus. Only after this extraordinary outpouring of the Holy Spirit with these accompanying signs does Peter preach to the crowd, *in their common language*, explaining what they had all just witnessed and revealing Jesus as the Messiah calling the people to repent and turn to the Lord:

*“Men of Israel, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. This man was handed over to you by God’s set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him ...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...Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.”*

*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."*

Acts 2:22-39

Therefore, the baptism in the Holy Spirit is a gift to be received by everyone, young and old, who believe in Jesus and receive him as their Lord and Saviour.

### **How do we know when a person is baptised in the Holy Spirit?**

The Bible goes on in the book of Acts to give four more accounts when the Holy Spirit comes upon people:

#### **(2) Paul** Acts 9: 1-19

*"Then Ananias ... Placing his hands on Saul ... said, "Brother Saul, the Lord ... has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit." Immediately, something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he could see again."*

#### **(3) Cornelius' household** Acts 10: 1-24, 44-48

*"While Peter was still speaking ... the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message. The ... believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles. For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God."*

#### **(4) THE EPHESIANS** Acts 19: 1-7

*"When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied."*

**(5) The Samaritans** Acts 8: 5-19

*“Then Peter and John placed their hands upon them, and they received the Holy Spirit. When Simon saw that the Spirit was given at the laying on of the apostles hands...”*

From these passages we can see that although a variety of things happened when people were baptised in the Holy Spirit, *one* gift appears to be most common – speaking in tongues (see Table below). It occurred on three of the five occasions and the remaining two occasions do not rule out speaking in tongues. In the case of Paul, in his letter to the Corinthian church he wrote *“I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you.”* and *“I would like every one of you to speak in tongues ...”*.<sup>[5]</sup> And in the case of the Samaritans, Simon the sorcerer *“saw”* something happen when the apostles laid their hands on the believers. It is quite possible he witnessed the new believers speaking with tongues as they were filled with the Spirit.

	Fire	Sound of wind	Tongues	Healing	Praise	Prophecy
<b>1 Day of Pentecost</b>	X	X	X			
<b>2 Paul</b>			<b>1Corinthians 14: 5, 18</b>	X		
<b>3 Cornelius' household</b>			X		X	
<b>4 Ephesians</b>			X			X
<b>5 Samaritans</b>			Simon saw?			

Therefore, we know a person has been baptized in the Holy Spirit when they speak in tongues. Subsequently, there will be the evidence of the other gifts of the Holy Spirit that are given, as the occasion and need arises, by his direction.

The experience at Cornelius' house is particularly instructive for us. Cornelius was a Roman centurion and a devout man who believed in God. An angel appeared to Cornelius telling him to seek out Peter. And God revealed to Peter via a dream that he was to go to Cornelius. (Up until this time only Jews had come to faith in Jesus Christ and, therefore, only Jews had been saved and baptized in the Holy Spirit. Cornelius was not a Jew.) When Peter arrived at Cornelius' home, he preached to the group of family, friends and servants that Cornelius had gathered together. While Peter was still preaching to them, suddenly they all began to speak in tongues. When Peter observed the group of people speaking in tongues he understood that they had received the Holy Spirit and, therefore, they must have been born-again as he was speaking to them.[6] And he ordered that they should immediately be baptized in water, confirming their belief in Christ:

*“Then Peter said, “Can anyone keep these people from being baptized with water? They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have.” So he ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked Peter to stay with them for a few days.”*

Acts 10:46-48

Soon afterwards, Peter was called to give account of his actions to the Jewish Christians back in Jerusalem. They were not sure that salvation through Jesus was to be offered to people who were not Jews, like Cornelius and his household (all non-Jewish nations are called Gentile nations). Peter explained:

*“As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit came on them as he had come on us at the beginning. Then I remembered what the Lord had said: ‘John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’ So if God gave them the same gift as he gave us, who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I to think that I could oppose God?”*

*When they heard this, they had no further objections and praised God, saying, “So then, God has granted even the Gentiles repentance unto life.”*

Acts 11:15-18

Therefore, the Bible shows us that the visible sign of the moment a person is baptized in the Holy Spirit is the evidence of speaking in tongues.

### **What is speaking in tongues?**

Speaking in tongues is praying in a language which is unknown to the speaker. The person is simply speaking by the power of the Holy Spirit. They do not go into a trance or lose control of their own tongue, nor are they in an emotional state. It is the Spirit of God enabling their spirit to communicate supernaturally. 1 Corinthians 14: 14 says

*“For if I pray in a tongue, **my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful.**“*

We do not understand what we are saying when we pray in tongues. The Bible tells us the language may be of men or of angels (1Corinthians 13: 1). At times, therefore, the language may be understood intelligibly by some listeners, just as happened on the day of Pentecost. There are examples of English speaking

missionaries working in foreign countries, hearing natives praying in tongues in perfect English!

There are two lines of communication when using this spiritual gift:

(1) What is often described as our 'personal prayer language' is when our spirits praise and worship God, and the Holy Spirit intercedes for others through us. This line of communication is from our spirit to God. On the day of Pentecost, visitors from many different lands to Jerusalem heard the 'Galilean' believers who had just been baptised in the Holy Spirit, "*declaring the wonders of God in (their) own tongues!*" (Acts 2: 5-12) (Most of Jesus' disciples were from the region of Galilee and had a distinct accent. They were generally poor and unschooled and therefore could not have possibly learned the languages that they were speaking. The visitors were "*amazed and perplexed*", at hearing them speak many different languages.)

When we prayer in tongues, we are therefore mostly declaring the wonders of God from the depths of our spirit. Also, Romans 8: 26-27 says "*... the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express ... the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will.*" Sometimes when we are praying 'in the spirit', i.e. in tongues, the Holy Spirit will move us to pray for our own needs or someone else's needs. The person praying is often made aware that they are interceding by a deep sense of urgency, and they could remain praying for some time until they sense, by the Holy Spirit, that a breakthrough has been accomplished.

(2) The second line of communication is from God to us. This gift normally functions in the church or when ministering to someone, and is always accompanied by *“the gift of interpretation”*. (See later ‘The nine-fold gifts of the Spirit’.) In these circumstances, God wants us to understand what he is saying, so it is necessary to interpret the message into the intelligible language of the listeners. This interpretation is also supernatural; the Holy Spirit supernaturally enables a person present (not necessarily the person who gave the message in tongues), to repeat the message in the language of those present. 1 Corinthians 14: 26-40 gives instructions on a ‘typical’ church meeting, and regarding tongues it says that *“two – or at the most three – should speak (in tongues), one at a time, and someone must interpret.”* A message in tongues in the church is a sign to any unbelievers that are present, of the presence and work of God in the lives of believers.

### **How do you speak in tongues?**

First, you must understand that it is the Spirit of God who gives you the words to say. You must speak them, but he is faithful to give them to you. Just as your mind directs the formation of words when you want to speak, the Holy Spirit will also give your spirit the words to say. You must be the one to speak the words. These words do not first enter your mind. Your spirit speaks bypassing your mind, as the Holy Spirit directs. That is why it says in 1Corinthians 14:14 *“For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful.”* In other words, I don’t understand what I am saying because my mind is not controlling my speech. It is a supernatural experience demonstrating my union with the Spirit if God!



### **Should all Christians be baptised in the Holy Spirit?**

In the Bible, there are two direct promises and one indirect promise that cover *all* believers:

- (1) *“...Repent and be baptised .... 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.” [7]*
  
- (2) *“Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? Or if he asks for an egg, will you give him a scorpion? ... how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!” [8]*
  
- (3) *“Whoever believes and is baptised will be saved .... And these signs will accompany those who believe ... they will speak with new tongues...” [9]*

These verses show that in order to receive the gift of the baptism in the Holy Spirit you must be a believer, and that you should want to be baptised in the Holy Spirit, asking and receiving as you would a gift.

### **The nine-fold gifts of the Holy Spirit**

1 Corinthians 12:7-11 lists the different supernatural abilities that accompany the baptism with the Holy Spirit:

*“Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the 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, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines.”*

When a person is baptised in the Holy Spirit, the door is opened for them to be instruments of the power of God. God desires to supernaturally intervene in the world in the manner in which Jesus did i.e. *“doing good and healing all who were oppressed of the devil”*. Jesus said to his disciples *“you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you”*.<sup>[10]</sup> The same works that Jesus did through the power of the Holy Spirit, may be also performed by us, as the Holy Spirit empowers and directs us. The Holy Spirit always delights in releasing his power in works which bring God’s authority and goodness to bear in this world, and that overthrow the evil works of the devil. These works of supernatural power are those listed in 1 Corinthians 12: 1-11:

- ***a word or message of wisdom***
  - *not wisdom in general, but rather a particular insight for a particular set of circumstances*
- ***a word or message of knowledge***
  - *not knowledge which is learned, but rather a particular piece of information supernaturally given*
- ***faith***
  - *not faith which is given to all and which can grow, but a special faith to deal with a specific situation*
- ***gifts of healing***
  - *not a doctor’s acquired ability, but a supernatural impartation that overpowers a particular sickness*

- ***miraculous powers***
  - *the intervention of the supernatural in the natural realm, whereby the physical laws are momentarily suspended*
- ***prophecy***
  - *a message from God either forth-telling his will in a particular situation or fore-telling a future event he wants to disclose*
- ***the discernment of spirits***
  - *especially the identification of demon spirits and their activities in a particular person or set of circumstances*
- ***the ability to speak in different kinds of tongues,***
  - *the communication of a prophetic message from God to the church in a language unknown to the speaker and, generally, to the audience*
- ***and the interpretation of tongues***
  - *the interpretation of a message given in tongues, spoken in the common language of the audience*

The baptism in the Holy Spirit is the entrance to the operation of these spiritual gifts.

The Old Testament also contains examples of persons through whom supernatural works were performed by the power of the Holy Spirit. God does not change and his plan and purposes remain the same. The opportunity, however, is far greater under the terms of the New Covenant. The promise referred to by Peter, on the very first day the Holy Spirit was poured out upon believers, was from the prophet Joel:

*“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.”*

Acts 2:17-18

Under the Old Covenant it was only the priests, prophets and kings who received the power of the Holy Spirit to accomplish the work God assigned to them – often demonstrated by their being anointed with oil. Remember that no-one in Old Testament times was born-again, because Jesus had not yet paid the price for sin through his death and, therefore, the way for the new birth had not yet been opened. So, no-one experienced God living inside them and being united with them. Nevertheless, the Holy Spirit came upon certain people in power, as is the case in the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Under the New Covenant, God promised that everyone would be anointed with the Holy Spirit, and receive his power.

The function of these gifts is dependent upon our faith and desire. We have to reach out in faith and desire that the gifts would be manifest through us. 1Corinthians 14:2 states *“eagerly desire spiritual gifts, especially the gift of prophecy”*. 1Thessalonians 5:19-20 shows what happens if we don’t desire them: *“Do not put out the Spirit’s fire; do not treat prophecies with contempt.”* We can either fan into flame the Holy Spirit’s work amongst us, or we can quench his activity.

(Note the emphasis on prophecy. 1Thessalonians 5:21 goes on to say *“Test everything.”* Moreover, the passage in 1Corinthians dealing with the operation of the gifts in the church says that we are to judge prophecies. Regarding forth-telling prophecy, any direct and immediate communication from God will not violate his written Word. The Holy Spirit will never say anything to us that is

contrary to sound biblical doctrine. If it is not of God we simply reject it. If it is from God we treasure it. Regarding fore-telling prophecy, if the prediction comes to pass then we know it was of God; if not, we know a false prophet has spoken and we are to shun them.)

We can also fan into flame the work of the Holy Spirit by regularly praying in tongues, i.e. in the Spirit, in our private prayer times. In this regard, Ephesians 6:18 exhorts us *“pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests”* and similarly Jude 20 *“...build yourselves up in your most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit”*. Jesus stated in John 4:23-24 *“...the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.”*

**Here are some things to remember:**

- A person is born of the Spirit when they repent and receive Christ.[11]
- The baptism in the Holy Spirit is a subsequent experience to salvation.[12]
- A person may be water baptised and saved but not yet be baptised in the Holy Spirit.[13]
- Some believers may receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit before they are baptised in water.[14]
- Jesus himself is the baptiser in the Holy Spirit.[15]
- The gift of the Holy Spirit is a promise for all who ask.[16]
- Any believer may receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.[17]
- The Holy Spirit gives power to perform miracles and to witness.[18]
- The Holy Spirit helps us to pray.[19]

- Speaking in tongues is the one experience that is common to the New Testament examples of believers receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit.[20]
- When you pray in tongues, you speak to God and at the same time build up your inner person.[21]

**Here are some steps to help you receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit:**

*“Which of you 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!**”*

Luke 11:11-13

**Remove all barriers.** Involvement in the occult, harboured sin, unbelief, unforgiveness, wrong teaching, or pride may block you from receiving. We don't have to attain a certain level of spiritual maturity before we are baptised in the Holy Spirit, however we have to have a clean, a willing, a believing, and an open heart. The problem is not with God, who freely gives to all who ask. Blockages in us can hinder our faith *to receive*, therefore, it is important to remove them. Be sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit in this regard and deal with any issue he reveals to you. The general pattern in the Bible is to be baptised in the Holy Spirit very soon after being saved. We need this gift in order to live the Christian life.

**Request.** Jesus said that all we have to do is ask and we will receive. Tell the Lord that you want to be baptised in the Holy Spirit and that you want to speak in tongues and be an instrument

of his power. Here is a prayer you could say *“Heavenly Father, I realise I need your power to help me do the things you want me to do. I now ask you Jesus to baptise me with the Holy Spirit. Holy Spirit fill me and help me as I now begin to speak in tongues by faith.”*

**Receive.** Reach out and take hold of this gift that God freely gives to all those who believe in him. By faith, simply receive this gift, as you would any other gift.

**Release.** By faith, stop praying in English (or your native language) and begin speaking in tongues. We receive by faith and we act upon the promise of God. As you submit yourself to God’s Spirit, you will experience something wonderful. You will never be the same once you enter this new dimension of the reality of God; who is in you and who has this very moment come upon you in power, and is now speaking supernaturally through you!

### **Being led by the Holy Spirit**

Whilst the baptism in the Holy Spirit releases the power of God upon your life, it is vitally important to keep in mind that the Holy Spirit is in you to lead you into the life that is righteous and pleasing to God. Balanced against the nine-fold *gifts* of the Spirit is the nine-fold *fruit* of the Spirit:

*“So I say, **live by the Spirit**, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law.*

*The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.*

***But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.***

Galatians 5:16-26

As a Christian, we don't live like the world anymore, according to the sinful nature. We are to reckon it dead, rendered powerless in our lives. Instead, we are surrendered to the will of God and the life he wants for us. As we are led by his Spirit, a transformation occurs and his character is revealed in us, through the nine-fold fruit of the Spirit. The fruit we produce is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

If you conducted a survey of people and asked them what they wanted most in life, invariably you find it was *love* (they would likely say "a partner who loved me, a soul-mate"), *joy* (they would say "to be happy"), and *peace* (they would say "no more stress or worry"). Deep down we all want what only God himself can provide us with. You have what everybody wants because God is in you and freely gives you the desires of your heart because you have delighted yourself in him.[22]



### The fruit of the Spirit

- **Love** – real love, the God kind of love, ‘agape’ love, selfless love. The love that is always looking out for others. Jesus always had time for others. He gave himself to others in acts of service. He poured his life into his disciples.

Here are the characteristics of this kind of love (from 1 Corinthians 13):

- Love is patient and kind.
  - Love is not jealous or boastful or proud or rude.
  - Love does not demand its own way.
  - Love is not irritable, and it keeps no record when it has been wronged.
  - Love hates sin.
  - Love values and rejoices in the truth.
  - Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through all circumstances.
- **Joy** – joy is different from happiness. Happiness depends upon happenings. Joy persists through all circumstances. Nehemiah 8:10 says *“the joy of the LORD is your strength.”* Our joy is a supernatural joy. It gives us strength to endure all things, knowing God is watching over us as a loving father. We can have an attitude of gratitude though all circumstance, knowing that God is with us and helps us through all circumstances: *“Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”*[23]
  - **Peace** – peace is the opposite of stress, worry and anxiety. Have you noticed how many people around you are stressed out? They are worried and burdened down with many

problems. The highest selling prescription drugs for women in Australia are now anti-depressants. They carry their burdens alone but we have someone we can give our burdens to: 1 Peter 5:7 says *“Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.”* and Psalm 55:22 *“Cast your cares on the LORD and he will sustain you; he will never let the righteous fall.”* Again, this kind of peace is a supernatural peace. In John 14:27 Jesus promises you *“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.”*

- **Patience** – patience is a wonderful thing. It causes you to be relaxed and not agitated nor uptight. It enables you to bear up under adverse circumstances trusting *“that in all things God works for the good of those who love him”*. [24] Patience allows you to be courteous to others and to let them go ahead of you.
- **Kindness** – kind people are nice to be around. They are gracious and wanting to do kind things for others. Kindness sees what others need and goes out of its way to provide it.
- **Goodness** – a good person is someone who does good things. A bad person is someone who does bad things. The world celebrates wickedness – ‘sex, drugs and rock’n’roll’. We don’t run with the world. God defines what is good and it is evident in our godly lives.
- **Faithfulness** – faithful people always keep their word and never give up. The Holy Spirit teaches us to be faithful to

others. Faithful people don't cheat on others. Faithful people turn up to work on time, and leave on time.

- **Gentleness** – gentleness is not weakness. Gentleness is strength under control. A gentle person is not easily angered. They are not rude, overbearing or demanding. A gentle person does not explode under pressure. When we get 'squeezed' gentleness should ooze out.
- **Self-control** – people who exhibit self-control are not addicts to things that cause them harm. Self-control causes us to live disciplined lives that produce healthy outcomes for our minds and our bodies. Self-control says no to temptation when it comes.

The key in all these things is to “keep in step with the Spirit” (Galatians 5:25). We follow after the Holy Spirit every moment of every day. We are personally led by the Holy Spirit as we watch for him and listen to his voice. As we are led by him the fruit of the Spirit is manifest in our lives. This fruit reflects the very character and nature of God himself. In this way, we are revealed as the very sons and daughters of God.

### **Methods by which the Holy Spirit communicates with us**

To be led by the Spirit we need to be able to discern his voice. Communication can of course be verbal and non-verbal. There are a variety of ways that God can and does communicate with us. These include:

- The Bible
- Creation
- Circumstances
- Other people (prophecy)

- Dreams and visions
- Audible voice
- Silence (use Biblical wisdom you already know, or obey a command he has already given)
- Gifts of the Spirit
- Spiritual desire
- Speaks to us in our 'inner' person

The last method is vital to understand if a new Christian wants to learn to be continually led by the Spirit. A believer who genuinely has a heart for God wants desperately to hear him speak to them, directly and personally. How you 'hear' God in this way, is in your inner person. God is Spirit, and he normally communicates to you through your spirit. He impresses his words, his thoughts and his ideas directly in your spirit.

It is not an audible driving voice, but a gentle authoritative 'knowing'. It is not a process of logic but of divine inspiration. This is *revelation knowledge*. It is not knowledge that you receive from your five senses. It is God's Spirit communicating to your own spirit. You don't hear the audible voice of God with your physical ears, rather you 'hear' the spiritual voice of God with your spirit. And just as information that you receive from your five senses is received and processed by your mind, information from the Holy Spirit that is impressed upon your spirit is also received and processed by your mind. This is how you are led by the Spirit as God communicates Spirit to spirit.

In order to discern the voice of God our own spirit must be submitted to the Spirit of God. Our own self must not be on the throne of our lives. Within ourselves, we must consciously and deliberately place God as the focus of our being. If we have a

personal strong desire about a matter, we can be in danger of mishearing God. We have to lay that aside. We cannot let our own mind, will and emotions dictate our lives independent of God.

The voice of God's Spirit is a spiritual voice, therefore, it sounds like the voice of your own spirit. This is why, to begin with, it is sometimes difficult to distinguish his voice. For example, you don't recognize the voice of a stranger, but you instantly recognize the voice of your own mother and father, or very close friend. This is also true of the Holy Spirit. As you spend time with him, talking with and listening to him, you will learn to distinguish his voice. (Note: Satan's temptations come as a spiritual communication in the same way. He and his demons are fallen angels and they dwell in the spirit realm. He is to be resisted and his words rejected.)

To start off, set aside a specific time to spend time communicating with God. It is helpful to escape distractions by going to a place where you can be on your own and not be disturbed. (Jesus did just this. He would regularly get away from others, normally very early in the morning before dawn, to spend time in prayer.<sup>[25]</sup>)

You may also find it helpful to begin by asking the Holy Spirit some question(s). Expect by faith that he will answer you and trust that what he says to you has come from him. Of course, the Holy Spirit will never tell you something that is inconsistent with the Bible. You must always test what you hear against the authority of the written Word of God. The Spirit and the Word are always in agreement. Very often the Holy Spirit will use verses from the Bible when he communicates with you.

The highest pursuit in the world is the Spirit-filled and Spirit-led life. The incomparable destiny that God desires for you his child is

bound up in your willingness to desire him and pursue a relationship with him above everything else:

***“This is what the LORD says: “Let not the wise man boast of his wisdom or the strong man boast of his strength or the rich man boast of his riches, but let him who boasts boast about this: that he understands and knows me....””***

Jeremiah 9:23-24

May this be your boast!

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### Lesson 7 Footnotes

[1] Acts 10:38

[2] John 14:12

[3] 1Corinthians 6:19

[4] Luke 4: 1, Luke 4:1, Matthew 4: 1, Luke 4: 14

[5] 1Corinthians 14: 18, 5

[6] 1Peter 1:23-25

[7] Acts 2:38-39

[8] Luke 11: 11-13

[9] Mark 16: 16-17

[10] Acts 1:8

[11] Romans 8: 9

[12] John 20:22, Acts 1: 4, 5, 8

[13] Acts 8:14-16

[14] Acts 10:46-48

[15] Luke 3: 16

[16] Luke 11:11-13

[17] Joel 2:28-29

[18] Acts 1:8

[19] Romans 8:26

[20] Acts 2:1-21, 9:1-19, 10:1-24, 44-48, 19:1-7, 8:5-19

[21] 1Corinthians 14: 2, 4

[22] Psalm 37:4

[23] 1Thessalonians 5:16-18

[24] Romans 8:28

[25] Luke 5:16, Mark 1:35