

**Date** : 10<sup>th</sup> May 2026  
**Theme** : The work of the Holy Spirit in our sanctification and service.  
**Topic** : Getting to know the Holy Spirit  
**Passage** : Acts 1  
**Key Verse** : *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.” Acts 1:8 niv*

## **Introduction**

We get to know a person by observing his actions, purpose and responses to the behaviour of others. Defining him in a simple sentence can never adequately profile his personality. Sometimes we wonder if we ever fully understand the people closest to us and we struggle to make sense of their actions.

Yet, because the quality of our life and productivity depend on how well we know people, it is important to work out effectively our relationships with them.

This is the same in our relationship with the Holy Spirit. Our entire life outcome depends entirely on our relationship with the Holy Spirit — whom the Lord had promised as His gift to us. What can we learn from the Holy Spirit's actions as revealed to us by Dr. Luke in the book of Acts?

Acts provides 2 dimensions. One being the physical dimension of what was happening in the physical world. But behind the physical encounters, persecutions and travels mentioned, the Holy Spirit was the spiritual reality driving it all toward God's intended purpose.

### **1. What was the Lord's last instruction to His disciples?**

Dr. Luke emphasized that Jesus' resurrection was a fact supported by convincing proofs; one of which being that He spent His last 40 days meeting with a total of 500 people. What were His instructions to them? What questions did He address?

- Meeting place: Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem.  
Time: End of May, summer time.

God gathered those, who were willing and obedient, prior to the conception of a great work to launch a new era, signaling the transition from the old covenant to the new age of the Spirit.

Scenario:

The 120 disciples, with the apostles, were spending their final day and hour with the Lord. Jesus spoke His last words and blessed His disciples before He was lifted up, and a cloud took Him out of their sight.

- His final instructions:  
To focus on building His Kingdom instead of Israel's restoration, in reply to His disciples. He commissioned them as His witnesses to the world.
- His last command was to wait.  
*...wait for the promise of the Father... Acts 1:4*

They were not to rush out to be witnesses. They must receive the power first.

- (i) What promise must we wait for?

Waiting upon the Holy Spirit is also necessary today when we want to be filled.

While our Lord Jesus may not have explicitly quoted it, He very likely had in mind *Joel 2:28* that the Holy Spirit, would be poured on all flesh. That means not just the Jews or the anointed few, but to all including non-Jews.

The Lord had earlier taught His disciples that He would send the Holy Spirit to teach them all things.

This gift, released though faith in Christ, is the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

- (ii) What did the disciples do while waiting?

They spent the time in prayer *Acts 1:14* during the 10 days of waiting.

Waiting requires faith, faith in His promise.

It was with one accord —they were unified in prayer to fulfil their calling.

Did this group of 120 even realise they were given the privilege of being the founding members of the church for the Kingdom of God? That they would be laying the foundation from a few thousand in the first century to billions of adherents worldwide? That this dedicated “core” of 120 disciples and Apostles were trained to manage the coming harvest — 3000 added on the day of Pentecost?

Prayer was not a one-time event but the engine of the early church. Every major work of God required prayer and throughout the book of Acts, prayer was the spiritual atmosphere where new churches were nurtured and launched.

To understand the gift and baptism of the Holy Spirit, we will need to unpack 3 things:

1. Who is the Holy Spirit?
2. How does the Holy Spirit help us?
3. What is the baptism of the Holy Spirit?

This is, the process of being filled with the Holy Spirit.

## 1. Who is the Holy Spirit?

The Holy Spirit is God; co-equal with God the Father and God the Son. *Acts 1:4*

He was sent by the Lord Jesus on the day of Pentecost, as scheduled in God’s time table.

- To replace Jesus on earth.  
The Lord said it was better that He left and for the Holy Spirit to come. The advantage being that His presence could be with everyone of us. As man, the Lord could only be at one place at one time. The Lord said He would not leave us as orphans as the Holy Spirit would care for us.
- The Holy Spirit’s goal is to build the Kingdom of God alongside us as our Helper, Teacher, and Guide so that we will not be working alone. How the Holy Spirit had helped the early church would be the same for the church today.
- We address God the Holy Spirit **Lord** and treat Him with reverence and honour as we accord to God the Father and God the Son.

## 2. How does the Holy Spirit help us?

a. He enlightens us.

He gives spiritual understanding in spiritual things. As spiritual truths are couched in spiritual language, He will guide us in spiritual truths and show us things to come. The Holy Spirit is also called the Spirit of revelation in that He reveals truths which are hard to understand. Without Him, there is no way we can grasp the Word of God.

b. He empowers us to witness for Jesus.

The Lord's departing promise and assignment to His disciples before He rose into the clouds was *...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...*  
*Acts 1:8*

He is the Helper. He helps us get our job done.

He helps us fulfil, not take over, our duties.

The word **power** is *dunamis* like dynamism, dynamite, explosive power.

- The early church demonstrated this power in their witness for life-change and impact in terms of the number of people who believed in Jesus as Lord and Saviour.
  - When severe persecution came and unleashed retaliation from the kingdom of darkness, the believers were bold as lions and were unstoppable in preaching the good news.
  - When demonic forces manifested, the disciples would cast them out.
  - When the sick were brought, they were healed by the power of the Holy Spirit.
- Miracles were a frequent feature of the early church's ministry to authenticate the Apostles' message that Jesus was the risen Messiah. Peter's shadow *Acts 5:15-16* or Paul's anointing of handkerchiefs *Acts 19:11-12* were extraordinary, unusual miracles, when God extended the apostolic ministry beyond the physical presence of the apostles.

c. He enables us to move in the realm of the supernatural.

Spiritual gifts are supernatural abilities given by the Holy Spirit to believers in Jesus Christ to build up the church and bring glory to God. These gifts of grace, enumerated in 1 Corinthians 12, are manifestations of the Holy Spirit. They cannot be earned but given by God when asked.

The purpose of these gifts is to bless the body of Christ and demonstrate to the world the presence of God.

Spiritual gifts are distributed to each individual according to God's will upon the baptism of the Holy Spirit. We cannot exercise the gifts without the presence of the Holy Spirit.

1 Corinthians 12 lists these gifts as — Wisdom, Knowledge, Prophecy, Healing, Tongues etc.

### 3. The Baptism of the Holy Spirit.

The Lord compares this experience as a parallel to water baptism in *Acts 1:5 For John baptised with water, but in a few days you will be baptised with the Holy Spirit.* Just as water baptism takes place when a believer is immersed in water, baptism of the Holy Spirit is like being immersed in the Holy Spirit, and thereby filled with the Holy Spirit.

- When we repent from sin and receive Jesus as Saviour and Lord and we enter into a blood and book covenant, the Holy Spirit indwells our hearts. Following water baptism, the Holy Spirit baptises us into the body of Christ, uniting us with fellow believers, and acts as a seal of our salvation.

The baptism of the Holy Spirit is Jesus baptising us into the Holy Spirit, a spiritual in-filling that imparts divine power for witnessing and ministry.

Water baptism is a one-time public declaration of faith and obedience to Jesus' command. Spirit baptism can occur usually as a separate, subsequent experience.

Filling with the Holy Spirit is what all believers can experience. This happens when we seek deeper intimacy and greater boldness, like the early disciples gathered in *Acts 4:31*, after the initial day of Pentecost in *Acts 2:4*.

#### Steps to receiving the Holy Spirit.

#### My Application

- i) Repent and be baptized. *Acts 2:37-38*

Repent, to be forgiven of my sin.

Be baptised, a physical act demonstrating your separation from the gods of your past; now choosing a new allegiance to Jesus.

- ii) Ask in faith.

How much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him. *Luke 11:13*

- iii) Thirst or Desire.

God never forces His gifts on us.

Some Christians say ...*God can give it to me if He wants to.*

God is already eager to give the Holy Spirit.

The question is whether we value His gift.

- iv) Actively receive the Holy Spirit.

We do so by offering our bodies to be instruments of righteousness.

○ Start each day by choosing to obey God rather than resisting or grieving the Spirit.

○ Maintain a lifestyle of worship, prayer and time in God's Word, creating an atmosphere where the Holy Spirit dwells.

○ Receive the Holy Spirit through the laying on of hands by Spirit-filled believers, like your leaders.