

## YOU SHALL RECEIVE POWER

The work of the Holy Spirit was not limited to the New Testament dispensation. Throughout the whole of the Old Testament men were called and anointed by God to receive and present the prophetic word.

**“...knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.”** 2 Peter 1:20-21.

Some, like David and Samuel were anointed from birth to fulfil a ministry preordained by God. Samuel said, **“The Spirit of the Lord spoke by me, and His word was on my tongue.”** 2 Sam 23:2, and by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit David composed his many psalms.

The difference between the reception of the Holy Spirit in the New and Old Testaments is that in the Old Testament individual persons were called and anointed by God, whereas in the New Testament the whole Church may receive an anointing and empowerment of the Holy Spirit to enable all members to minister to one another.

### THE WORKING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

In His last discourse to His disciples recorded in Chapters 14 to 17 of John’s gospel, Jesus gave them a preview of the working of the coming Holy Spirit.

**“If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever — the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.”** John 14:15-18.

The Holy Spirit is commonly called ‘the Helper,’ because that is His main function – to help us in every part of our lives, not only in spiritual things, but when we turn to Him, He guides us and help us in all activities.

**“But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.”** John 14:26.

When we enquire of the Holy Spirit, He will teach us, making known to us the things we need to know, and bring to remembrance the relevant words of the Lord to allow us to see our circumstances as He sees them.

**“But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me.”** John 15:26-26.

Here the Holy Spirit is called the spirit of truth, for it is by Him that we can discern spiritual truth, and understand the deeper meaning of the Scriptures.

From beginning to end, the bible is a revelation of Jesus Christ. Much is shrouded by symbolism and figurative language, but those seeking to know the Lord can be assured that the Holy Spirit will testify to them of Jesus Christ.

**“And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they do not believe in Me; of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.**

**Of sin:** The Holy Spirit will convict the world of sin – the greatest sin being disbelief in the Lord Jesus Christ, because it leads to eternal damnation.

**Of righteousness:** The resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ proved His deity as the Son of God, who came to bring righteousness to all those who believe in him.

**Of judgment:** The Holy Spirit convicts the whole world that there will be an unescapable judgment of all mankind, leading to either heaven or hell.

**“I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you.”** John 16:7-15.

The Holy Spirit will only give what has been given to Him by the Lord. He will be a spirit of prophecy to us individually, and collectively, revealing things to come to us when the time is right. His whole ministry glorifies the Lord, and if we are told or shown something said to be of the Spirit, and it does not bear fruit, then it is not a true word from the Spirit.

## **JESUS WAS SETTING FORTH A PATTERN FOR HIS DISCIPLES TO LIVE BY**

When Jesus outlined the nature and ministry of the Holy Spirit, He was setting forth a pattern for us to live by -- a pattern that revealed how He lived whilst on earth in union with God the Father through the Holy Spirit dwelling within Him.

By the Holy Spirit God gave Him the words He should speak.

**“For I have not spoken on My own authority; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak.”** John 12:49-50

The works that He did, He did by using the authority of His Father’s name as He was guided by the Spirit.

**“The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works.”** John 14:10.

Whilst here on the earth, Jesus was guided by the Holy Spirit in the will of the Father, in what He should do, and what He should speak. We are to do likewise, following His example, living in union with the Lord, as He guides us and works through us by the Holy Spirit.

## **YOU SHALL RECEIVE POWER**

Having taught the disciples about the Holy Spirit, Jesus instructed them to assemble together at Jerusalem, and wait for the promised infilling of the Holy Spirit.

**“And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, "which," He said, "you have heard from Me for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now... But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” Acts 1:4-8.**

**“When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” Acts 2:1-4.**

## **THE REGENERATION OF OUR SPIRITS AT SALVATION AND THE EMPOWERING OF THE SPIRIT FOR SERVICE**

The Scriptures describe two manifestations of the Spirit that are available for each believer. When a person states his belief in the Lord Jesus Christ and receives salvation, his spirit is regenerated and enlivened, enabling him to receive and understand spiritual truth. Before salvation the natural man cannot discern spiritual things of God.

**“But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.”<sup>11</sup> Cor 2:14-15.**

After salvation, when his spirit is regenerated, a person is not only able to discern spiritual truth, but able to experience the power of the Spirit to meet the needs that bless his growth in the Lord.

The Book of Acts describe how early Christians received a further infilling of the Spirit, this time equipping them to be able to minister to others in the body of Christ. The Eighth Chapter of the Book of Acts clearly demonstrate the two different infillings of the Spirit. Philip the evangelist went down to Samaria and preached the gospel truth of salvation.

**“And the multitudes with one accord heeded the things spoken by Philip, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. For unclean spirits, crying with a loud voice, came out of many who were possessed; and many who were paralysed and lame were healed. And there was great joy in that city.” Acts 8:6-8.**

The Samaritans had received the gospel truth and were saved and baptised, but as yet had not received the further infilling of the Spirit.

**“Now when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them, who, when they had come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit. For as yet He had fallen upon none of them. They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.” Acts 8:14-17.**

The disciples of Christ experienced the same two infillings. After Jesus had been crucified and resurrected, having procured salvation for mankind, He reappeared to His disciples.

**“So Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you." And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit.” John 21:21-22.**

Now that their salvation had been procured, Jesus imparted the first infilling on them, but then later told them to wait in Jerusalem for the further empowering of the Spirit at Pentecost.

The main difference between the initial empowerment of the Spirit at salvation, and the further infilling of the Spirit as at Pentecost, is that the first is an empowerment to enable the personal growth of the believer. The second infilling of the Spirit, accompanied by gifts of the Spirit, is to equip the believer to minister to others in the body of Christ.

## **GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT**

The infilling of the Spirit for ministry to others is usually accompanied by receiving gifts of the Spirit, allotted to each believer as He wills.

**“There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all.”**

Here we are told that the Spirit allocates the gifts, the Lord, ministries, and God the Father, activities like revivals.

**“But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.” 1 Cor 12:4-11.**

Note that all of these gifts are miraculous, not coming from our natural capacities, but directly from the Spirit to meet the need of a troubled believer needing a ministry like healing, or deliverance from demon spirits, or a word of wisdom or knowledge for counselling. A spiritual gift is not operative all the time, but is activated by the Lord as He initiates and directs a ministry.

## MINISTRIES ARE FROM THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

Spiritual gifts are dispensed to individuals by the Holy Spirit, but ministries are formed by Jesus Christ in selected members of the body, and gifted to the whole Church.

**“And He Himself [Jesus Christ] gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ...”** Eph 4:11-13.

Jesus knows the heart of every member of His body, and selects and calls certain members to be formed by Himself in the power of the Holy Spirit to be apostles, or prophets, or evangelists, or pastors and teachers. When He sets them in His Church they undertake the task of equipping members of the body for ministries, and bring each one into the fullness of Jesus Christ.

Christ setting ministries in the Church provided a pattern for all future churches, but unfortunately it was cast aside when the Church became worldly, and it was deemed to be more convenient to train ministers in seminaries to undertake the whole ministry of their allotted Church.

## HUMILITY AN ABSOLUTE NECESSITY IN MINISTRY OF THE GIFTS

Jesus told His disciples, **“I am the vine, you are the branches... He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.”** John 15:5.

When we are completely dependent on the Lord, He can empower and use us to produce lasting fruit. Unfortunately when pride and fleshly zeal get in the way, the Lord must step aside, and the fruit that is produced has the rottenness of carnal flesh that produces more harm than good.

## WITHOUT LOVE WE ARE NOTHING AND CAN DO NOTHING

Love for those to whom we are ministering is not optional – it is an absolute necessity. Love releases faith from the Lord into our hearts, and engenders faith in the hearts of those to whom we minister.

**“For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through love.”** Gal 5:6.

The apostle Paul stressed the importance of love in his ministry.

**“though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.”** 1 Cor 13:2-3