

A primer on the person and work of the

HOLY SPIRIT



by **Winfield Bevins**

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"This is a great study on the Holy Spirit! It's a resource I'm excited to get in the hands of Resurgence readers."

-Dr. Justin S. Holcomb

Academic Dean, Resurgence Training Center
Adjunct Professor, Reformed Theological Seminary

"Winfield's Pocket Guide is a helpful introduction to the Person and work of the Holy Spirit. His generous use of Scripture, clear instruction, and concluding prayers make this ebook a unique blend of theology and devotion, a blend that invites the reader to *know* the Spirit. Great for new believers or Christians who are unfamiliar with the Spirit."

-Jonathan Dodson

Lead Pastor, Austin City Life, TX
Author, Gospel Centered Discipleship

“Pray daily for a great outpouring of the Spirit on the Church and on the world. This is the grand need of the day—it is the thing that we need far more than money, machinery, and men. The "company of preachers" in Christendom is far greater than it was in the days of Paul; but the actual spiritual work done in the earth, in proportion to the means used, is undoubtedly far less. We need more of the presence of the Holy Spirit—more in the pulpit, and more in the congregation—more in the pastoral visit, and more in the school. Where He is, there will be life, health, growth, and fruitfulness. Where He is not—all will be dead, tame, formal, sleepy, and cold. Then let everyone who desires to see an increase of pure and undefiled religion, pray daily for more of the presence of the Holy Spirit in every branch of the visible Church of Christ.”

-J.C. Ryle

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Introduction

Many churches are empty, dry, and void of spiritual life because they have lost touch with the dynamic presence and power of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit played an important role in the life and ministry of the early church. It is impossible to understand the explosive growth of the New Testament church without understanding the important role of the Holy Spirit in the church.

For much of church history the third Person of the Trinity has been virtually overlooked. However, today many people are hungry to experience the Holy Spirit in their life. God has given us the marvelous gift of His Holy Spirit.

The Spirit plays an important role in personal salvation, church formation, and the general spread of the gospel. Without Him, it is impossible for individuals or the church to experience revival. The doctrine of the Holy Spirit has a distinct contribution to make in the contemporary church.

Purpose of this Book

The purpose of this study is to offer an introduction to the person and work of the Holy Spirit. As we seek to learn more about the Holy Spirit we must ask ourselves several important questions. Is the Holy Spirit divine? Is the Spirit a person? What does the Holy Spirit want to do in my

life? Are the gifts of the Spirit still in operation today? This study will help us answer these questions.

Every Christian can benefit from studying the Holy Spirit. Learning more about the Holy Spirit will enable you to experience Him in a deeper way in your life. Individuals and church groups can utilize this study to gain a better knowledge of the person and work of the Holy Spirit.

This book is made up of six lessons that introduce the person and work of the Holy Spirit. The following lessons will discuss the Holy Spirit more in depth: 1. The Person of the Holy Spirit; 2. The Work of the Holy Spirit; 3. The Fruit of the Holy Spirit; 4. The Gifts of the Holy Spirit; 5. The Holy Spirit and Revival; 6. The Holy Spirit and You.

Outline of Each Lesson

This study is designed to take you through a six-week series on discovering the Holy Spirit. Each lesson will discuss different aspects of the person and work of the Holy Spirit. As you study each lesson about the Holy Spirit, apply it to your daily life. To get the most from this study, each lesson contains:

- 1. A Lesson on the Holy Spirit.** Each lesson begins with a discussion about the Holy Spirit. As you read through the lesson ask the Holy Spirit to reveal Himself to you in a new way.
- 2. Reflection Questions.** Each lesson contains questions that are designed to help you reflect and be able to discuss the Holy Spirit. Use these questions for both personal reflection and group discussion.

3. **Concluding Prayer.** Each lesson has a concluding prayer to help guide you as you seek to learn more about the Spirit and experience Him in your daily life.

Suggestions for Group Study

Each lesson can be used for either personal study or a small group Bible study. Use the following points as a guide for group study and devotion.

1. Pray before each session
2. Read and discuss each lesson
3. Participate in group discussion
4. Expect God to teach you through the lessons

Lesson 1

Meet the Holy Spirit

“A firm and certain knowledge of God’s benevolence towards us, founded upon the truth of the freely given promise in Christ, both revealed to our minds and sealed upon our hearts through the Holy Spirit.”

-John Calvin

Who is the Holy Spirit? Christians have asked this question throughout the ages. There have been many different opinions as to the personal nature of the Holy Spirit. Some have wondered if the Spirit was a created being, while others believed that the Spirit was an energy force. We can learn a lot from the Bible’s descriptive title *the Holy Spirit*.

- **The**, is an article that stresses the particularity and uniqueness of the Spirit. There are many spirits but there is only one Holy Spirit.
- **Holy**, stresses the sacredness and purity of the Spirit. Holy also stresses the majesty and glory of God.

- **Spirit**, implies immateriality, no flesh, or material substance.

1. The Divine Nature of the Holy Spirit

Most religions and cults deny the deity and existence of the Holy Spirit. Sadly, even many Christians believe that the Spirit is not fully divine. The writers of the Bible clearly emphasized the deity of the Holy Spirit. The Bible also shows that there is a unique relationship between the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit. This interrelationship is often called the *Trinity*, which refers to three distinct divine Personalities, each wholly God, yet one essence.

The doctrine of the Trinity has been defended by the Christian church for nearly two thousand years. One of the earliest doctrinal statements of the Christian faith called the Nicene Creed (325) beautifully describes the divinity of the Holy Spirit, “I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of Life; who proceeds from the Father and the Son; who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified; who spoke by the prophets.” It cannot be overestimated that the Holy Spirit is divine. There are several divine attributes ascribed to the Holy Spirit.

Divine Attributes Ascribed to the Spirit

- a. Omnipresent- The Holy Spirit is everywhere at all times (Psalms 139:7-10).
- b. Omnipotent- The Holy Spirit is all-powerful (Luke 1:35).
- c. Omniscient- The Holy Spirit has all knowledge (1 Corinthians 2:10-11).

- d. Eternal- The Holy Spirit has no beginning and no end (Hebrews 9:14).
- e. Holy- The Holy Spirit is wholly pure, perfect, and sacred.

2. The Personal Nature of the Holy Spirit

Many Christians also find it hard to understand the personal aspect of the Holy Spirit. Too often we think of Him in a symbolic and impersonal manner. What we will find, however, is that the Holy Spirit is also a person. Jesus has many times referred to the personal nature of the Holy Spirit. Jesus called the Holy Spirit the “Paraclete,” which means one called alongside. It is one who is an advocate, comforter, or counselor. The word Paraclete implies a distinct personality. The Bible ascribes Him personal characteristics such as a will (Acts 13:1, 1 Cor 12:11), mind (1 Cor. 2:10-11, Romans 8:27), and emotions (Eph 4:30).

Personal Treatment of the Holy Spirit

- a. The Holy Spirit can be lied to (Acts 5:3).
- b. The Holy Spirit can be grieved (Eph. 4:30).
- c. The Holy Spirit can be quenched (1 Thess. 5:19).
- d. The Holy Spirit can be resisted (Acts 7:51).
- e. The Holy Spirit can be blasphemed (Matt. 12:31-32, Mark 3:28-29, Luke 12:10).

3. The Names and Titles of the Holy Spirit

The Bible uses many different names, titles, and symbols to paint a portrait of the Holy Spirit, each representing what He does and who He is. For example, The Bible uses symbols such as Fire, Wind, Water, Wine, and a Dove. The Biblical

names and titles of the Holy Spirit can be divided into three categories: Who the Holy Spirit is, what the Holy Spirit is, what the Holy Spirit does.

1. Who The Holy Spirit Is

- a. Spirit of Christ (1 Peter 1:11)
- b. Spirit of God (Genesis 1:2, Job 33:4, Romans 8:11)
- c. Spirit of Glory (1 Peter 4:14)
- d. Spirit of the Lord (Isaiah 61:1)
- e. Spirit of the Father (Matthew 10:20)
- f. Spirit of the Son (Galatians 4:6)
- g. Power of the Highest (Luke 1:35)

2. What The Holy Spirit Is

- a. Spirit of Holiness (Romans 1:4)
- b. Spirit of Knowledge (Isaiah 11:2)
- c. Spirit of Life (Romans 8:2, Revelation 11:11)
- d. Spirit of Might (Isaiah 11:2)
- e. Eternal Spirit (Hebrews 9:14)
- f. Spirit of Truth (John 14:17; 15:26)

3. What the Holy Spirit Does

- a. Spirit of Grace (Zechariah 12:10)
- b. Spirit of Judgment (Isaiah 4:4)
- c. Spirit of Adoption (Romans 8:15)
- d. Spirit of Prophecy (Romans 8:15)
- e. Spirit of Counsel (Isaiah 11:2, John 14:15-18)
- f. Spirit of Revelation (Ephesians 1:17)

Questions for Reflection

1. Describe how the Holy Spirit is divine. How can we know that He is not just an energy source? Does the Bible give us clues?
2. List the divine attributes of the Holy Spirit. How do these confirm that He is God?
3. Why is what Jesus said about the Spirit (John 14:16, 26) so important for understanding the personal nature of the Holy Spirit?
4. What are some of the ways that the Bible gives personal treatment to the Holy Spirit?
5. Discuss some of the names and titles of the Spirit. What do they tell you about who the Holy Spirit is? In what ways do they give you insight into His nature?

Concluding Prayer

Come Holy Spirit! Come and reveal yourself today. I want to know you more than I have ever known you before. Change my life as I seek to learn more about you. Teach me more about you through this study. Reveal yourself to me through your names and titles. In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit I pray. Amen.

Lesson 2

The Work of the Holy Spirit

"I believe that by my own reason or strength I cannot believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to him, but the Holy Spirit has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me with his gifts, and sanctified and preserved me in the true faith." -Martin Luther

God works in various ways to bring people into salvation in Jesus Christ. It all begins when God calls us by His Holy Spirit. This is commonly referred to as the effectual call. The effectual call is when the Holy Spirit calls a person by awakening their heart, mind, and soul to their personal need of salvation.

The Spirit works as a guide at this point to lead us to a relationship with Jesus Christ. The Westminster Confession describes it in the following way, "This effectual call is of God's free and special grace alone, not from anything at all foreseen in man, who is altogether passive therein,

until, being quickened and renewed by the Holy Spirit, he is thereby enabled to answer this call, and to embrace the grace offered and conveyed in it.” It is only then that a person can truly accept and respond to the grace of God through faith.

Justification

Justification is a judicial act, where God remits a person’s sins and declares them to be in a position of righteousness before God. It is what God does for us. It is by the merits of Christ that we receive justification, which is the forgiveness of sins. Justification by faith is a foundational Christian teaching, especially in the Protestant tradition.¹

The Spirit is the agent that effects justification in the life of the believer. The Spirit applies Christ’s work of reconciliation to us in order to transform our hostility toward God into fellowship with Him. As the Father sent His Son to die for us, the Spirit applies the fruit of his death to our lives in justification.

Regeneration

The word regeneration literally means ‘rebirth.’ Regeneration is a spiritual transformation where the Holy Spirit takes us from death unto life. In the words of the Apostle Paul, “if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things have passed away; behold all things are become new,” (2 Cor.5:17).

A glorious change takes place in the believers’ hearts when they receive Christ into their life by faith. This great change entails an exchange of the things of the world for the things of God. It is a total transformation, in which the new believer is

literally made a new creature. The Spirit of God is the agent of regeneration that works to bring about this change in a persons heart. The heart and soul of a person is the place where the Holy Spirit brings about a real change in the believer.

Sanctification

Sanctification is a process of being restored to the image of God, which begins at the new birth and gradually takes place over the lifetime of a believer. It is a real change in the heart, mind, and soul of the believer. Sanctification is a process of Christian growth where the Holy Spirit gradually transforms the hearts and minds of Christians.

John Owen believed that sanctification was a work of the Holy Spirit. He said, “Sanctification is an immediate work of the Spirit of God on the souls of believers.”² The goal of the Holy Spirit in sanctification is to make us like Christ. We are enabled to mortify the deeds of the flesh by the Spirit (Rom. 8:11). Sanctification is what God works in us by His Spirit.

The General Work of the Spirit

In addition to the Holy Spirit’s work in salvation there are numerous ways that the Holy Spirit works in our lives. He enables believers to live the Christian life. He intercedes for us (Rom. 8:26-27). He illumines and guides believers into all truth (John 16:13-14). The Holy Spirit enables Christians to fight sin (Rom. 8:5-6). The Spirit sanctifies us (1 Peter 1:2). He gives us Christian assurance to know that we are children of God (Rom 8:15-16). Begin to reflect on everything that the Spirit has done and is doing in your life.

Questions for Reflection

1. How does the Holy Spirit bring about salvation in a person's life?
2. Does every person have the opportunity to receive salvation? How is the Holy Spirit involved in making that possible? Explain.
3. Explain the difference between regeneration and sanctification, and then show how the Holy Spirit works in each.
4. What is the major purpose of the Holy Spirit in a person's life?
5. Discuss the general work of the Spirit.
6. Reflecting back on your salvation experience, in what ways can you recognize that the Holy Spirit was at work in your life?

Concluding Prayer

Blessed Holy Spirit, I thank you for applying the saving work of Jesus Christ in my life. I want to experience your fullness more and more. Sanctify my heart, mind, and soul. Wash me from all of my sin and fill me full of your sweet presence. In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Lesson 3

The Fruit of the Spirit

“The Christian life, the fruit of the Spirit, is a constant reckoning of the flesh as dead and a constant relying on the present Spirit of Christ to produce love, joy, and peace within.” –John Piper

In Galatians, Paul gives a list of nine virtues called the fruit of the Spirit. There are nine ethical qualities which the Holy Spirit imparts to believers. They are the hallmark of a sanctified and Spirit-filled life. Paul employs fruit of the Spirit to show the difference between a person who is under the flesh and a person who is walking by the Spirit.

J. I. Packer reminds us that, “Holiness is the fruit of the Spirit, displayed as the Christian walks by the Spirit”³ (Gal 5:16,22,25). Therefore, the fruit of the Spirit is in stark contrast to the ‘works of the flesh.’ As a farmer prepares for a harvest of fruit, the Spirit cultivates the fruit of the Spirit in the life of believers. As you read through the following list

of Spiritual fruits ask the Holy Spirit to develop fruit in your life.

1. Love

The first and most important fruit of the Spirit is love. Love is the virtue of brotherly and sacrificial love. It is a love that seeks the good of others. Paul's order of placement, as well as his other use of the word tells us that it is the greatest of the fruits (1 Cor.13; Eph.5:2; Col.3:14). Other New Testament writers such as John and Peter emphasize love as one of the greatest features of the kingdom of God.

Love is a spiritual anchor of truth in relationship with God and neighbor. This love is a distinctly Christian love, which finds its source from God alone. Because of this kind of love God sent His only Son to die for us. The Holy Spirit is hard at work to reproduce this kind of love in each one of us. We are to show this kind of selfless love to one another and to the world.

2. Joy

The second fruit of the Spirit is joy. The word joy appears 60 times in the New Testament. Joy corresponds to happiness, but it is independent of outward circumstances and is to be found within every believer's life. Joy is a deep gladness that comes from a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

As Christians, everything that we do should be done with joy in our hearts. The Bible tells us that we are to serve the Lord with joy and gladness. God desires for His children to know the joy of the Lord. The Bible says that the joy of the Lord is our

strength. Let the Holy Spirit fill you with joy today as you serve Him.

3. Peace

Peace is the third fruit of the Spirit. Peace refers to a tranquility of mind, body, and soul. It is a spiritual well being that only God can give a person. Nations might be able to produce a world of peace, but God is the only one who can offer total peace. Jesus said, “The peace I give is not as the peace that the world may give.” God’s peace will never pass away. In fact Paul calls it the peace which surpasses all understanding. This doesn’t mean that you will never have another problem, but that God will give you peace in the midst of the storm. Let the peace of God fill your heart and soul through the power of the Spirit.

4. Long Suffering

Long suffering is the fourth fruit of the Spirit. The Greek word is commonly translated “patience” but the King James Version renders a more accurate translation of the word ‘long-suffering.’ The verb means to place or arrange under for a long time. Christians should be able to hold strong in the midst of trials and difficulty.

We need to be steadfast and endure. This means the quality of putting up with others, waiting through the difficult times, even when we are severely tried, confused, or weak. It is like being a spiritual rubber band. When we are being stretched we will not break if we have long suffering. The Holy Spirit will supernaturally give you patience to hold on under difficult situations and circumstances.

5. Kindness

The fifth fruit of the Spirit is sympathetic kindness. It is God's virtuous gift to be able to respond to the special needs of others who are hurting or in need. It is a quality of God's kindness that is found in the New Testament only in Paul's correspondence.

Those who have experienced the kindness of God's salvation in Christ are to cloth themselves with the same kindness. In a world full of anger, selfishness, and contention, the Lord wants us to cultivate the fruit of kindness in our lives. Let the Lord use you to show kindness to others.

6. Goodness

The sixth fruit of the Spirit is goodness. Goodness is the generosity that overflows from kindness. Although goodness and kindness are similar, goodness is a more active term, which is often directed toward others in a benevolent way. It is the action of helping others in need. We are to take action and become agents of God's goodness in the world. When we see a need we must meet it. When we see a hurt we must heal it. The virtue of goodness reminds us that we become the hands and feet of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit desires to use us as vehicles through which the goodness of God may flow.

7. Faithfulness

This is one of the most common words in the New Testament. It is used in a variety of ways to mean faith, but considering the ethical context of Galatians the word is accurately translated faithfulness. It refers to being a person that others can rely upon. You cannot have faith in God

without being faithful. The two are one in the same. The Spirit of the Lord wants to make us responsible persons in every area of our lives. Can God trust you to be faithful?

8. Gentleness

The eighth fruit of the Spirit is gentleness. It literally means to be mild or tame. The word is often used to refer to an animal, such as a bridled horse. In the personal sense it refers more to controlled strength than it does weakness. It is closely associated to humility. It is the virtue that is needed when confronted by opposition. Peter tells us that gentleness is necessary to have a genuine witness (1 Peter 3:15-16). Without gentleness we cannot be a true Christian witness.

9. Self Control

The final ethical virtue of the Spirit is self-control or temperance. It is victory of the desires of the flesh. It is the virtue of a person who masters their passions and desires. It is opposite to the desires of the flesh. It means victory over the flesh. Self control is closely associated to purity of mind, heart, and conduct. It is the ability to crucify the flesh and walk in the Spirit. It is relying on the power of the Spirit to overcome the desires of the flesh. We need more self-control in our daily lives.

Questions for Reflection

1. In what ways do the fruit of the Spirit differ from the works of the flesh?
2. What is the first and most important fruit of the Spirit? Why?
3. What particular fruit would you ask the Spirit to cultivate more in your daily life?
4. Are there any fruits of the Spirit that you can see more than others in your life?
5. Explain the subtle difference between goodness and kindness.

Concluding Prayer

Lord I pray that you would cultivate the fruit of the Spirit in my life. I want to be an instrument of your glory and your grace. Let others see your fruit in me. I know that I am not perfect, but help me receive the grace to become more like you. Cut back any area of my life that is not pleasing in your sight. Holy Spirit I ask for you to help me bear your fruit today. In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Lesson 4

Spiritual Gifts

“The question of gifts is entirely within the sovereignty of the Spirit and that because of that we should always be open, in mind and in heart, to anything that the Spirit of God may choose to do in his sovereignty.”

-Martin Lloyd Jones

Since the beginning of time the Holy Spirit has given gifts to men and women in order to accomplish the plans and purposes of God. So what are spiritual gifts? Spiritual gifts are literally called *charisma* which means “grace gifts” in the Bible. Grace is a gift supernaturally given by the Spirit. Wayne Grudem defines a spiritual gift as, “any ability that is empowered by the Holy Spirit and used in any ministry of the church.”⁴

It is important to say that spiritual gifts are not a natural ability, hobbies or interests, or even a profession. Just because someone has a gift at playing basketball or golf doesn't mean that it was supernaturally given by the Lord. However, we can and should use our talents and abilities for the glory of God and the sake of the gospel.

The Bible teaches that gifts of the Spirit are available to all believers (1 Cor. 12:7, 11). Christians may have one or more of the gifts (2 Timothy 4:1-5). The main purpose of the gifts is to build up the body of Christ (Eph. 4:7-13) and to glorify God (1 Peter 4:10-11). Spiritual gifts are also given by the Holy Spirit to individual believers to empower and enable them to serve others (1 Cor. 12:4-21, Eph. 4-7-13, Romans 12:6-8).

Different Views of the Gifts

What about the gifts today? There are several different views concerning the gifts of the Spirit and how they continue to operate. It is important to note that godly men and women can and do disagree over this issue. Cessationists believe that the sign gifts (tongues, prophecy, and healing) ceased with the time of the Apostles while Charismatics believe all the gifts of the Spirit are in continual operation and that believers can claim possession of spiritual gifts.

There is growing number of evangelicals who are neither cessationist nor Charismatic. These evangelicals would consider themselves “open but cautious” as it relates to the spiritual gifts⁵. Martin Lloyd Jones sums up this view by saying, “We disagree with those who say that these things were confined to the apostolic period; we disagree equally with those who say that all these things should always be manifest in the church. We say that it is a matter for the sovereignty of the Spirit.”⁶ Whether you are a cessationist, Charismatic, or somewhere in between, a fresh contemplation on the gifts of the Spirit will prepare your heart for the Spirit’s work in your life.

Principles for Using the Gifts

The purpose of this lesson is not to argue for or against the continuation of certain gifts. We may disagree on which gifts are for today, but we should all agree that the Spirit still gives gifts to God's people for service. Regardless of your personal views, I would like to offer the following principles for seeking to understand the gifts and work of the Holy Spirit in your own life and church.

1. The Sovereign Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the One who gives the gifts as He wills. The gifts are not the result of human effort, but they are completely the work of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is sovereign and may give any gifts He wants at any time He wills (1 Cor. 12:11). John Owen reminds us, "He works sovereignly. The Holy Spirit distributes to everyone as He wills. He gives one gift to one person and another to another person. So the saints are kept in constant dependence on him and his sovereignty."⁷ Affirming God's sovereignty over the gifts keep us humble and dependent upon Him.

2. Gifts Do Not Prove Spirituality

Church history is littered with men who had spiritual gifting but lacked moral and theological integrity. It is important to note that spiritual gifts do not prove an authentic spiritual experience or maturity (1 Corinthians 12:7, 11, 13; Ephesians 4:7–8). The Corinthian Church had manifestations of the Spirit, but they lacked spiritual maturity and holiness.

3. Exercising Gifts in the Church

Paul dedicated 1 Corinthians 12, 13, and 14 to address the correct exercise of the Spiritual gifts in the local church. The gifts are to be exercised under the leadership of the church and according to biblical principles (Rom. 12:3-8; 1 Cor. 12,14). The gifts of the Spirit should be orderly and not disruptive. Likewise, the gifts of the Spirit should edify the body of Christ and not cause division.

4. It's all about Jesus

The Bible tells us that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Christ (1 Peter 1:11). John says the Spirit of truth will glorify Jesus (John 16:13). The Holy Spirit never draws attention to Himself, but always seeks to glorify Jesus. Likewise, the gifts of the Spirit will always glorify Jesus our Lord, Savior, and King. If we are not careful, spiritual gifts can become about us and not about Him. It is all about Jesus.

5. Discerning the Gifts

In addition, we should not “believe every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God” (1 John 4:1). Many Christians have an uncritical acceptance of unbiblical practices in the name of the Holy Spirit. Just because we believe in the continuation of the gifts of the Spirit does not mean that we should accept everything. It is important for us to test the spiritual gifts by the Word and to know that God is sovereign in the bestowing of spiritual gifts.

6. Openness

Are we open to the work of the Holy Spirit in our life or our church? We need to be both open

and discerning. Many people are either open and not discerning or discerning and not open. Perhaps the reason the Holy Spirit doesn't do more in our churches is because we don't expect or even want Him to. I want to conclude this chapter with a call for us to invite the Spirit to have His way in our lives, our homes, and our churches. Martin Lloyd Jones said, "We should always be open, in mind and in heart, to anything that the Spirit of God may choose to do in his sovereignty."⁸

Puritan theologian John Owens offers us a balanced word about the Holy Spirit's gifts from the 1600's.

"It is the loss of those spiritual gifts which hath introduced among many an utter neglect of these duties, so as that they are scarce heard of among the generality of them that are called Christians. But, blessed be God, we have large and full experience of the continuance of this dispensation of the Spirit, in the eminent abilities of a multitude of private Christians. Some, I confess, they [gifts] have been abused: some have presumed on them beyond the line and measure which they have received; some have been puffed up with them; some have used them disorderly in churches and to their hurt; some have boasted of what they have not received;—all which miscarriages also befell the primitive churches. And I had rather have the order, rule, spirit, and practice of those churches that were planted by the apostles, with all their troubles and disadvantages, than the carnal peace of others in their open degeneracy from all those things."⁹

Questions for Reflection

1. Explain the differences between the gifts of the Spirit and the fruit of the Spirit.
2. Are the gifts of the Spirit still for today? Explain why or why not.
3. Which of the gifts do you think that the Lord desires to give most?
4. What spiritual gifts have you seen in operation in your life or the church? Share a story or testimony of your experience.
5. Which one of these gifts do you think is most important today?

Concluding Prayer

Lord I pray that you would use me as a vessel of honor. I am willing to be used in any of the spiritual gifts that you want to give me. Give me the gifts that I need to accomplish your will. Demonstrate your glory through me today. Thank you that you still give gifts to men and women who seek your face. Touch me Holy Ghost and let me be used in the gifts. In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Lesson 5

The Holy Spirit and Revival

“When the Holy Spirit is poured out in a day of power the result is bound to affect whole communities and even nations. Conviction of sin, an anxiety to possess the Word of God, and dependence upon those truths which glorify God in man's salvation, are inevitable consequences.” –Ian Murray

As we scan the pages of church history, we see that the Holy Spirit has always been present in the church through revival. In fact, the Spirit has been in continuous operation since the time of the Old and New Testaments. Many great Christian leaders experienced revival in their lives and ministries. Although some people believe that the work of the Holy Spirit ceased with the time of the Apostles, church history tells a different story. In this lesson we will take a look at some of the great Christian leaders and revival movements to see how the Holy Spirit has moved in the church through revival.

What is Revival?

What is revival? There are many definitions of revival. Some people think it is where an evangelist preaches a protracted set of meetings in a church that only last several days or even weeks. Others may think revival is style of worship or preaching. Revival is not something we do, but what God does in and through us. Stephen Olford says that revival is that “strange and sovereign work of God in which He visits His own people, restoring, reanimating and releasing them into the fullness of His blessing.”¹⁰

There is both personal and corporate revival. Personal Revival happens when the Holy Spirit renews the hearts and minds of individuals. The Spirit renews and revives us when we pray and seek His face. Corporate revival is when the Holy Spirit brings renewal to a church or movement. Alvin Reid and Malcolm McDowell say, “The end results in a church revival are that Jesus is Lord, the Holy Spirit is unleashed, and the Father is glorified, the church is edified, and the lost are evangelized.”¹¹

Patrick and the Irish

One of the great revival movements happened under the influence of Patrick in Ireland. His life is surrounded by mystery, superstition, and myth. He is best known as the man who drove the snakes out of Ireland and used the shamrock to explain the trinity. He was a humble missionary who was personally responsible for baptizing over 100,000 people, driving paganism from the shores of Ireland, and starting a revival movement in Ireland that helped preserve Christianity during the Middle Ages. It is important for us to see the great

influence that he made upon Christianity and the world.

Many of the myths that surround Patrick come from his spiritual clashes with the pagans who opposed him. According to a legend, King Loiguire set an ambush to kill Patrick, but when he came near, all the king could see was a deer. Patrick challenged the power of the druid's black magic because he believed that God's power was greater. He believed that signs and wonders verified God's superiority over the spells of the pagans. He was a bold preacher who was not afraid of magic, demons, or the devil. The story that he drove the snakes out of Ireland is symbolic of the fact that he helped transform pagan Ireland into a Christian country.

He established many churches throughout Ireland. Like the Apostle Paul, Patrick would disciple new converts to become pastors to the local churches. Patrick was instrumental in the conversion of thousands, ordaining hundreds of clergy, and establishing many churches and monasteries.

Because of Patrick's ministry, Christianity spread like wild fire through Ireland and into other parts of the British Isles. The churches and monasteries that he was responsible for establishing became some of the most influential missionary centers in all of Europe. Missionaries went out from Ireland to spread the gospel throughout the world. St. Columba (597) established the famous monastery on the Isle of Iona. It was the Irish monasteries that helped preserve the Christian faith during the dark ages.¹²

Reformation

The Reformation was a Spirit inspired movement that swept across Europe. Ian Murray describes the Reformation as, “the greatest revival since Pentecost — a spring-time of new life for the Church on such a scale that the instances recorded in the apostolic era of three thousand being converted on one day, and of a 'great multitude of the priests becoming 'obedient to the faith', no longer sounded incredible.”¹³ The Reformation began in 1517, under the influence of Martin Luther.

The Reformation began as an attempt to reform the abuses and excesses of the Catholic Church. Many of the Reformers were troubled by what they saw as false doctrines within the Catholic Church, particularly involving the teaching and sale of indulgences. Another major contention was the corruption within the Church's hierarchy and leadership. On October 31, 1517, Luther nailed his 95 Thesis to the door of the All Saints' Church.

The 95 Thesis was criticized the Church and the Pope. The most controversial points centered on the practice of selling indulgences and the Church's policy on purgatory. Other reformers, such as Ulrich Zwingli, soon followed beliefs and practices under attack by Protestant reformers that included purgatory, devotion to Mary, the intercession of and devotion to the saints, most of the sacraments, the mandatory celibacy requirement of its clergy, and the authority of the Pope.

Martin Luther, John Calvin, and others proclaimed the doctrine of “justification by grace through faith alone.” Justification is where God declares a person righteous. The reformers also emphasized the inspiration and illumination of

Scriptures. Their commitment to the Lordship of Jesus Christ and the authority of Scripture was the foundation of the Reformation movement.

Not only were they theological giants, but they were responsible for planting thousands of churches across Europe. John Calvin trained and sent numerous missionaries into France who were responsible for planting over 2150 Reformed churches! Reformed Protestants eventually grew to over two million people in France alone.

Puritans

The English Puritans were a 16th and 17th century movement that sought to purify the Church of England in worship and doctrine. They were the outgrowth of the Reformation and heavily influenced the later development of Christianity in North America. The Puritans were Calvinistic and emphasized the necessity of spiritual conversation. The Puritans placed a special emphasis on the transforming work of the Holy Spirit in salvation which strongly influenced modern Evangelicalism.

Puritan theologians wrote extensive works on the person and work of the Holy Spirit. Perhaps the best of all was Puritan pastor and theologian John Owen (1616-1683) who wrote a work called *The Holy Spirit: His Gifts and His Power*. Owen said,

“The Holy Spirit, revealing Himself as the Comforter, ought to be especially honored, and when he is not, he is especially sinned against...Let us then, value highly all the comforting works of the Holy Spirit, seeing they are evidences to us of his love and power”¹⁴

Great Awakening

Around 1726, the Great Awakening began in North America as the result of the preaching of theologian Jonathon Edwards and other important Christian leaders. Edwards preached the famous sermon entitled *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*, which sparked a revival in Boston. During this great revival, people experienced unusual work of the Holy Spirit in their lives. Both young and old were moved to dedicate their lives completely to God under Edwards preaching and ministry. Edwards later wrote an account of the revival saying, “The Spirit of God began extraordinarily to set in, and wonderfully to work amongst us.”

In the mid 1700’s George Whitefield began a successful ministry tour in America. Whitefield’s common method was field preaching in the open air to the common people. Whitefield blazed throughout North America and the British Isles preaching to countless thousands of people. Whitefield recorded several accounts of people who were powerfully touched by the Spirit during these revivals.

In 1738 John Wesley experienced a “heart-warming” conversion. This event marked the beginning of Wesley’s evangelistic ministry. John Wesley witnessed an extraordinary outpouring of the Holy Spirit throughout his ministry. During his lifetime he traveled more than 250,000 miles, preached over 40,560 sermons, organized hundreds of Bible societies, and built several schools. He so impacted Methodism that at the time of his death nearly 43,265 members and 198 ministers had been attracted to the movement.¹⁵ He believed that God was restoring the work of the Spirit in the church through the great awakening.

Revival Today

There is a growing number of people in North America who are radically unchurched. Alvin Reid defines the radically unchurched as, “people who have no clear personal understanding of the message of the gospel, and who have had little or no contact with a Bible teaching, Christ honoring church.”¹⁶

There are 120 million unchurched people in the United States making it the largest mission field in the Western hemisphere and the fifth largest mission field on earth.¹⁷ Non-believers can be divided into two groups of people; nominally churched, which make up 30% of U.S. population and the radically unchurched, which makes up 40% of the U.S. population.¹⁸

Regardless of the previous statistics, there is a fresh renewal of the Holy Spirit that is sweeping across the church. The Spirit’s renewing power is taking place in churches, denominations, and networks across the country and around the world. The Spirit is anointing a generation of pastors, church planters, and missionaries who are taking the gospel to the radically unchurched.

This renewal of the Spirit is both theological and experiential. A robust theology of the Holy Spirit will give us a fresh hunger for His presence and power in our life. The Lord is calling the church back to a deeper and fuller understanding of the person and work of the Holy Spirit.

Questions for Reflection

1. How does history testify that the Holy Spirit is still for the church today?
2. How did the work of the Spirit differ in the Reformation from Great Awakening? Explain your answer.
3. Who were some of the major Christian leaders who experienced the Holy Spirit in their lives? How did they respond to the Holy Spirit?
4. What do you think is the most interesting era of church history? Please explain why?

Concluding Prayer

Holy Spirit I want to know you more. I want to know and experience you like many of the great men and women of God have. Create in me a stronger desire to experience you in my life. Raise up a new generation of world changers who will do extraordinary things for your kingdom. In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Lesson 6

The Holy Spirit and You

“The Christian’s life in all its aspects-intellectual and ethical, devotional and relational, upsurging in worship and outgoing in witness, is supernatural; only the Spirit can sustain it.” - J.I. Packer

As we have seen, the Spirit has been moving in the lives of individuals since the world began. Great men and women of the faith have done extraordinary things when they were anointed by the power of the Holy Ghost. This leads us to the question, is the Holy Spirit still active today? Does He still anoint people who seek Him? The answer is yes!

The Holy Spirit wants to bring you into a deeper more intimate relationship with Christ. He wants to use you more than you’ll ever know. You can experience His fullness in your everyday life. Surrender your heart and your life to Him today. As we conclude, our final lesson will examine several

ways that you can receive the Spirit to your everyday life.

1. He Will Guide You

Jesus said, “When He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth” (John 16:13). The Holy Spirit wants to give us wisdom, guidance, and direction in everything that we do. The Spirit becomes our guide, leading us in the way that we should go. You should never make a major decision in your life without asking for Him to lead you. I am confident that it is God’s deepest desire that we seek Him in every area of our lives. The Spirit will lead you into the place that you should be. Are you facing an important life changing decision? Do you need to make a major financial investment? Don’t be afraid to ask the Lord to show you what the best decision is. He will speak if we will ask for His help.

How do we know when He is speaking to us? There are several ways that we can hear the voice of God. The Spirit speaks through the Word of God. He uses the Bible to reveal His will. He also speaks through our circumstances. Be aware of what God is trying to tell you in your everyday life. Sometimes it’s through the ordinary. Sometimes He speaks through a still small voice in prayer. If we will be quiet long enough to listen, he will speak. The Spirit might use somebody else to speak to you. It is not uncommon for the Lord to speak through somebody when you least expect it. Finally, God speaks through dreams, visions, and other gifts of the Spirit.

2. He Will Help Your Prayer Life

The Holy Spirit assists our prayer life. Many Christians find it difficult to pray for any extended period of time. We don't know exactly what to pray for or how to pray. We must begin to understand that He helps us when we pray. The Bible says that He helps us with our weakness and intercedes for us according to the will of God (Romans 8:26-27). No longer do we have the excuse that we don't know what to pray because He helps us to pray according to God's will. There is no one better to teach us how to pray than the Holy Spirit because He knows what to pray for.

The Holy Spirit actually frees us to pray. Where He is there is liberty because He is the great Liberator. The Spirit also provides the weapons that we need to combat spiritual warfare (Eph 6:18). If we are going to win our spiritual battles we must have the Holy Spirit on our side. He is the weapon that we need to defeat the enemy. Lastly, He builds us up when we pray (Jude 20). Praying in the Holy Ghost will lift your heart and soul to heaven and give you the strength that you need to go on.

3. He Will Help You Read the Bible

The Holy Spirit is the Author of Scripture; therefore the Word of God is inseparable from the Spirit of God. The Scriptures introduce the reader to the Holy Spirit and the Spirit applies the truths of the Word to the hearts of the reader. Scripture must be interpreted in the immediate context of personal prayer. Prayer is the medium that brings individuals into contact with the same Spirit who inspired the writers of the Bible. To hear what the Spirit of the Lord is saying through the Word you must encounter God through prayer. Prayer is the means

that we must use to understand the Word of God. Without the assistance of the Holy Spirit in prayer, our Bible study will be in vain. Let us ask for the Spirit to speak to us through the Word.

4. Power to be a Witness

Sharing our faith is the duty of every believer. This is commonly called evangelism. The word *evangelism* comes from the Greek word *evangelion*, which means gospel or good news. We are all called to share the good news of Jesus' love and forgiveness with the world. It is not as important how we share our faith but if we share our faith. There are many different ways that Christians can share their faith with others.

Modern day evangelism has become weak and powerless. The problem is that many Christians simply rely on the latest evangelism strategy or gimmick instead of seeking the power of the Holy Spirit. The result is a man centered approach to evangelism and ministry. We need the Holy Spirit's power in our lives to be effective witnesses for Christ.¹⁹

Sharing our faith with others begins with prayer. Pray that God will give you the right opportunity and words to say to others. You would be surprised how many opportunities there are to share your faith. The Holy Spirit will open the hearts and the doors to share our faith when the time is right. Many times people never share their faith because of fear, but the Bible says that, "God has not given us a spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind," (2 Timothy 1:7). The Holy Spirit will help you move past all of your fears and share your faith with boldness.

God has given us the gift of the Holy Spirit to empower us to be witnesses for Jesus Christ. We can receive power to be witnesses for Jesus Christ because of the Holy Spirit. Jesus promises that we, “shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me,” (Acts 1:8). He has promised the power all we have to do is ask for it. Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones said, “It is always right to seek the fullness of the Spirit—we are exhorted to do so.”²⁰

We are told in Luke 24:49 that we should tarry until we are endued with power from on high. Maybe we need to wait on God a little bit. Sometimes we get in too much of a hurry to receive what He has for us. The Bible promises over and over that if we seek God He will be found. The same is true if we seek His Spirit.

Don't be ashamed to ask for the Holy Spirit to give you power to be a witness because it's a Bible promise. In Acts the church prayed, “grant to your servants that with all boldness they may speak your word” and then it says that when they finished praying “they were filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness,” (Acts 4:29-31). Ask the Lord for boldness, open your heart, and let the Holy Spirit give you power to be a witness today.

Questions for Reflection

1. What are some ways that the Holy Spirit wants to move in your life today?
2. Explain how the Holy Spirit can guide you in your everyday life.
3. How can you hear the voice of God?
4. In what ways does the Holy Spirit assist our prayer life? Can we really pray without Him?
5. How does the Holy Spirit empower us to be a witness? How can we receive His power in our life? Is it promised to all believers?

Concluding Prayer

Holy Spirit I need you. I realize that I cannot make it without you in my life. Guide me in the way that I should go. Order my steps in your Word. Come and assist my prayer life. Empower me to be a witness for Jesus Christ. Help me share the message of faith in the power of your Spirit. Give me a holy boldness to speak your words. In the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

End Notes

¹ Bruce Demarest, *The Cross and Salvation*. Wheaton: Crossway Books, 1997. 346.

² John Owen, *Communion with God*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust. 1991. 188.

³ J.I. Packer, *Keep in Step with the Spirit*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books. 1984. 97.

⁴ Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. 1994. 1016.

⁵ See Wayne Grudem's *Are Miracles for Today?* Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. 1996. Evangelical preachers and theologians such as J.I. Packer, Wayne Grudem, John Piper, Sam Storms, and D.A. Carson would be considered in this camp.

⁶ Martin Lloyd Jones, *The Sovereign Spirit*. Wheaton, IL: Harold Shaw Publishers. 1985. 121.

⁷ John Owen, *Communion with God*. 97.

⁸ Martin Lloyd Jones, *The Sovereign Spirit*.

⁹ John Owen, *The Duties of Pastors and People Distinguished*, 1643. IV:518.

¹⁰ Stephen Olford, *Heart Cry for Revival*. Westwood, NJ: Revell, 1962. 17.

¹¹ Malcom McDow and Alvin Reid, *Firefall: How God has Shaped History Through Revivals*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1997. 9.

¹² See Thomas Cahill, *How the Irish Saved Civilization*.

¹³ Ian Murray, "The Puritan and Revival Christianity." *Banner of Truth Magazine*, No. 72, September 1969.

¹⁴ John Owen, *Communion with God*, 206.

¹⁵ Malcom McDow and Alvin Reid, *Firefall*. 194.

¹⁶ Alvin Reid, *Radically Unchurched: Who They are & How to Reach Them*, Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2002. 21.

¹⁷ George Hunter, "The Rationale for a Culturally Relevant Worship Service," *Journal of the American Society of Church Growth, Worship and Growth*. 7 (1996): 131).

¹⁸ Reid, *Radically Unchurched*. 22.

¹⁹ For a more detailed discussion on the Holy Spirit and evangelism see Alvin Reid's new *Evangelism Handbook*. Nashville, B&H Books, 2009.

²⁰ Martin Lloyd Jones, *The Sovereign Spirit*. 48.