

Bezael Enlite

Receive The Holy Spirit

How to live continually by the power of God



PASTOR BANKIE

Dr. Bankole Olusina, fondly called **Pastor Bankie**, is a teacher of the Word of God. He teaches from the platform of Kingdom-Word Ministries. The emphasis of his teachings is the separation of the church from the world by the obedience to the truths of God. He is happily married to the wife of his youth and partner in ministry, Ufuoma.

Bezalel Enlite

The Lord is good, and in His goodness He has prepared everything that His children need for victory and success in life. When He sent us out into life, which is a war zone, He prepared the equipment of His own power for us to use. He comes with us in the person of the Holy Spirit. He fills us with His power so that we will move as He would move if He were in our situation. So, He says to wait and get equipped in this manner before we venture into anything, including witnessing for Him.

These facts and that instruction to wait is what this book is about. You need to be filled with the Holy Spirit of God to be able to fulfil everything the Father ordained for you. Remember, it is not by your own power or strength, but by the Spirit of God. That power is available if you, the believer in Christ, actually want it.



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THE



HOLY SPIRIT





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How to live continually by the power of God

Bankole Olusina

Bezael Enlite

RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT

(How to live continually by the power of God)

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*After reading this book, you will be filled with the Spirit of God, you will be filled again, and you will walk with the power of God and experience the various manifestations of the Holy Spirit in your everyday life and ministry.
In the name of Jesus.*



INTRODUCTION

Not By Power

Then he said to me, "This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel saying, 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' says the Lord of hosts. 'What are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you will become a plain..." Zech 4:6-7

This quote from the book of Zechariah is a well-known one and the context is as follows.

The returned Jewish exiles from Babylon to Jerusalem were saddled with rebuilding the temple of God in the midst of much opposition and difficulty. Zerubbabel was governor of Jerusalem at that time. At this time, Zechariah, a priest and

prophet of Israel, received messages from the Lord through visions. In one of the messages, the Lord explained to Zechariah that the challenges before him would not be surmounted by his own *might* or *power* but by His *Spirit*, that is, the Spirit of God. Now, let me briefly examine the meaning of these words.

Even though closely related, there are some significant differences between the meaning of the words 'might' and 'power'. The former describes human resources such as the might of an army, wealth, or a person's inherent ability, such as from a high level of education. *Power*, on the other hand, is the word that describes personal determination and resolve. God says victory in His purpose will not be by any of these two things available to any human, but by God's own determination and the supply of His resources. This is the meaning of "by the Spirit of the Lord."

What this means to us as children of God, who are aiming to do His will on the earth, who wish to fulfil our destiny and who are determined to walk in righteousness, is that we must learn not to

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depend on ourselves, that is on our might or our power, but we must learn to depend on His Spirit.

No matter how things might be, by His Spirit we have the ability to face and overcome difficult situations. Just like David, we say,

*In your strength I can crush an army;
with my God I can scale any wall.* Psa 18:29 NLT

*He trains my hands for battle,
So that my arms can bend a bow of bronze.* Psa 18:34

By the Spirit of God, we can do all the things we need to do. We can be productive. We can minister and see results. Life may be hard, but by the resources of God and by His faithfulness, we will definitely come out victorious. We can endure poverty; we can endure prosperity. Opposition cannot overcome the child of God.

By His Spirit, even though an army encamps against us, in spite of it we will not be afraid.

Many times, we have wondered at how Daniel was able to keep his faith, even though there was the

threat of being thrown into the lions' den, and how it happened that Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah were not afraid of the threats of the king, but rather stood firm in their faith, refusing to bow to a graven image. These men were being threatened with the fire of a superheated furnace. The reality is that this sort of determination was not their own, such comes only from God. The strength to stand was not theirs but it came by a supply of the Spirit of God. Ezekiel explains it very well with these words:

As He spoke to me the Spirit entered me and set me on my feet. Ezek 2:2

The power to stand comes from the entrance of the Spirit—the Spirit of God. It is not possible to stand and fulfil the will of God when the pressures of life come unless the Spirit of victory enters into you.

The Spirit of Grace

You cannot fulfil the assignment of God for your life unless you are filled with His Spirit. He will not give you a vision or mission and expect you do it in your own strength. It is not possible to face opposition and yet boldly declare the word of God

unless the Spirit enters into you. That was what Paul meant when he declared that *“I am what I am by the grace of God”*. He was operating by that same power of God, which is also called the Spirit of grace.*

This man Paul faced opposition and suffered many things in the hands of the Jews. He was imprisoned many times; he was stoned; five times he was given thirty-nine strokes of their whips; he faced dangers on the road and on the seas. Once, he floated on the sea for a whole day and a whole night. All of these happened as he pursued the ministry of God, which he accomplished quite successfully. No wonder he said his life was being poured out as a drink offering. Yet, when asked how he was able to do all these things, his answer was clear:

But by God’s grace I am what I am, and the grace that he gave me was not without effect. On the contrary, I have worked harder than any of the other apostles, although it was not really my own doing, but God’s grace working with me. 1 Cor 15:10 GNT

*Heb 10:29

Sometimes we see an instruction in the word of God, and we wonder how it could ever be kept. It is like, “how on earth does the Lord expect us to keep such a law in the midst of the things happening around?” Such a reaction was what the disciples had when the Lord Jesus told them the will of God concerning marriage; He said, “... *whoever divorces his wife, except for immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery.*” He essentially closed the escape door for them from a bad marriage. It was radical, and so the disciples decided that there was no hope. They saw that it was not possible to keep to that statute, so it would be better not to even go near marriage.

The disciples said to Him, “If the relationship of the man with his wife is like this, it is better not to marry. Matt 19:10

What I am pointing out is that it is not possible to do the will of God or obey the word of God unless there is a power beyond and above you, which enters into you to set you on your feet in obedience, using the words of Ezekiel quoted earlier. You cannot have true success without being full of that

Spirit from God. It is always by His Spirit, otherwise discouragement, failure and frustration will be at every corner.

The disciples were astounded. "Then who in the world can be saved?" they asked. Jesus looked at them intently and said, "Humanly speaking, it is impossible. But with God everything is possible." Matt 19:25-26 NLT

Yes, it takes God's ability, resources and determination to help us pull through in life. We cannot do it by ourselves. Many people fight with their own energy and power in trying to succeed in life, but it comes at a cost—the cost of their souls. That is not the way of the children of God. Therefore the Lord Jesus warned thus: *"Wait until you are infused with the power from on High."**

The key to victory is the entrance of the Spirit. It is having the power and might of God in you. So, this book is about how to receive that Spirit.

* See Luke 24:49

RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT



Chapter I

THE NEED FOR POWER

The “World” is not Empty Space

In trying to explain why we must have the power of the Spirit in our lives, let me explain something about this world we are in. We must understand that our struggle in this world is not against *chance*. Many people think they are struggling against chance or luck as they move and work in this life. They think darkness is just the absence of light, but nothing could be further from the truth.

The truth is that darkness is not just the absence of light but it describes a spiritual force that *thrives* in the absence of light. If darkness was just the absence of light, it would be neutral; it would not try to overcome or comprehend light, as John testified that it tries to do*. Being neutral, it would not fight against us but would instead leave us to

* John 1:5

succeed if we could. But it is not so; darkness actually exerts energy to oppose us.

Our struggle is not against emptiness or chance, but against a form of spiritual intelligence. There is a person out there, called *the prince of the power of the air*, who is determined, together with his minions, to hinder us in life and push us off the path of the will of God. The obstructions are not by chance; the resistance is not arbitrary, nor are the temptations. We are being deliberately tempted so we can fail. We are targeted in the specific areas of our weaknesses, and this further proves that it is not by chance but by the plotting of intelligent beings. We are up against a well-arranged structure of intelligent characters.

Satan, the master of that zone of darkness, is smarter than any man; experience alone should confer that advantage on him. You cannot outwit him. It is like trying to win in a game of chess against a grandmaster who has played and keenly watched the game daily for over 1000 years. You simply cannot win, no matter how naturally gifted or intelligent you are. When you hear that a

computer beat a master at the game of chess, please understand that it was not a machine that beat the person but that the computer was programmed to employ experience from thousands of hours of the best games, played by the best minds, all in a few minutes of decision making. The person playing against the computer is actually up against a masterful *player* with over 1000 years of cumulative top-tier experience. So it is with the prince of the power of the air—Satan. He is good at what he does, and you cannot outsmart him except you are empowered by the Spirit of God. Yes, the only way to overcome the world, and Satan who is the prince of the power of the air, is to be powered by the Spirit of God. Every child of God must understand this. That was why the Lord Jesus sounded the alarm then. He said, “*Without me you can do nothing.*”*

So, in trying to make us fail and make us unable to do anything, what Satan aims to do is to cut off the flow of the Spirit into our lives so that we will not be able to overcome him. He cannot do that just because he wants to—he doesn't have that power; his method is the use of temptations.

*John 15:5

What Temptations Are

Let me take a small side journey to emphasize an important fact about temptations. Falling for his temptations is the door through which this prince of the power of the air gets a hold of people. When we walk in sin, we step out of Christ and into the realm of darkness. In darkness, Satan holds sway. He has power there. He is a master there, and there he knows how to control anyone. For example, He will box a person into a corner so that he will be compelled to do more wrongs; Satan will then use all these sins in accusation against the person. That is where his power lies. He will through accusations obtain judgment against the person at the court of the righteous Judge of the whole earth.* Actually, he has been authorized by God to wield all kinds of power over anyone who lies in darkness. Over them he has the power of death.

Temptations are therefore to be resisted with the zeal of God. Sin is not to be seen as a social thing, so that if you can hide and not be caught by the brethren or the society, you have gotten away. No;

* Gen 18:25

the fact is that when you fall into temptation, you are giving Satan power over your life. Resisting temptation is one of the ways by which you abide in Christ.

We know that God's children do not make a practice of sinning, for God's Son holds them securely, and the evil one cannot touch them. We know that we are children of God and that the world around us is under the control of the evil one. 1 John 5:18-19 NLT

The major issue with temptation, as far as the enemy is concerned, is to shut off the flow of the Spirit. He has to get us out of that flow if he will be able to win over us. So, he tries to win us over into sin so that he can *win over* us. He doesn't have power over the one who has a flow of the Spirit into his life continually.

Once we have a flow of the Spirit, resisting temptation is also easy, because everything is by the power of the Spirit.

What I have tried to do so far is to show the importance of the Spirit of God in our lives. It is by

the flow of the Spirit that we walk with God, resist temptations and overcome all the challenges of life. It is not within us to do these things; they can only be done by the flow of divine life. As we go on in this book, we will see how we can continually receive that Spirit in our personal lives.



Chapter 2

THE FLOW OF THE SPIRIT

The Continuous Infilling

And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit. Eph 5:18

For the believer in Christ Jesus, being filled with the Spirit is not supposed to be a *once-and-that-is-all* experience, as many Christians who believe in being filled with the Spirit tend to think; rather, it is designed to be a continuous process. Not only can you be filled with the Spirit of God more than once, you are actually supposed to be filled *continually*. It is to be a constant process in the life of the child of God. We see this clearly illustrated in the life of the early Church.

Let us recall the time when Peter and his friends were threatened by the elders and rulers of Jerusalem, and warned not to preach any longer in the name of Jesus. We remember that they went to

their own company of believers to report what the elders and the rulers had done. Yes, they gathered and prayed, asking the Lord to give them boldness to speak the word of God, while He stretches out His hand to do miracles, healings, signs and wonders in the name of Jesus. In answer to their prayer, the place where they had gathered together was shaken, and the Bible says,

...they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God with boldness. Acts 4:31

Why I am relaying this story again here is to show that this was the same set of people, mostly, who just a short while before that, were in the upper room on the day of Pentecost. They were the ones who the Spirit settled upon, appearing like cloven tongues of fire, and who were filled with the Spirit and who began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. They were filled then, and they were here being filled again. So, we see that to be filled with the Spirit is not a once-and-that-is-all matter; it is rather to be a continuous process. That was why Paul wrote to them not to get *drunk with wine, but to be filled with the Spirit.*

Now, Paul wrote this in the Greek language, and those who know it explained that “be filled” is in the present imperative tense, with the connotation of a continuous replenishment. It is a *continuous* state of being filled. It is like me saying to my son as he goes to play football, “make sure you are well hydrated.” He wouldn't think I am telling him to drink water before the game starts only. Anyone would easily understand that he is to be *constantly* well hydrated by drinking water as often as necessary. In a similar manner, Paul was telling us to be constantly and *continually* filled with the Spirit. It is to be a regular thing.

In the following chapters, we will be examining different ways by which the child of God can and should be filled with the Spirit. As we go through the various ways, we will start with the ones that offer a more continuous experience, but of course all the methods are important and the Lord will almost certainly use all of them in our lives at one point or the other.

First Encounter Varies

We will come back to this later, but let me quickly state clearly that being filled with the Spirit is not the same as being born again. It is not so that every Christian is filled with the Spirit and that they got it when they became born again. We will see this from scriptures as we go on. It is a distinct experience from getting saved and being born again into the household of God.

The first encounter of being filled with the Holy Spirit is dramatic for a lot of people, but certainly it is not everyone that will have such a dramatic encounter. Many people will be filled in a gentle fashion but will realize the tangibleness of it as the signs begin to show in their lives.

Among many who had an initial dramatic encounter, there are many who often take it as a badge of honour, so to speak, as if a certificate of qualification was given them by it. "I received the Holy Spirit at *this meeting* in *such and such* a year, and so I know I have the Holy Spirit." That claim is actually misleading. The fact that you received the Holy Spirit five years ago does not at all mean you

are filled with the Spirit today. It is supposed to be an on-going process. Yesterday's experience counts little for today.

RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT



Chapter 3

THE SPIRIT RIDES ON THE WORD

Hearing with Faith

This is the only thing I want to find out from you: did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith? Gal 3:2

On the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came down and filled those who were waiting in the upper room (we shall see more about that later). Those present were all Jews. Now, the first day that the Holy Spirit fell on gentiles, it was not as on the day of Pentecost; the people were not waiting, nor were they praying or expecting anything special. They were not obeying an instruction to tarry somewhere until they are endued with power from on high. All that happened was that they were seated in a place, listening to a preacher preach, and their hearts were open to receive the word being released. That, of course, was in the home of Cornelius.

We remember Cornelius, and how an angel had appeared to him, telling him to send for Peter so that from Peter he would hear words by which he and his household would be saved.

Now Peter, on his part, had been prepared in a dramatic fashion by the Lord so that he would accept to go to the house of Cornelius. This was through the experience of that well-known trance in which he was told to *arise, kill and eat* those 'unclean animals' he saw. Prior to that experience, Peter, a devout Jew, would not have accepted to go to the house of a gentile. However, by the trance encounter, the Lord made it clear to him that he could not call the gentiles unclean anymore; this was because the Lord had made them clean. He testified as follows:

You know it is against our laws for a Jewish man to enter a Gentile home like this or to associate with you. But God has shown me that I should no longer think of anyone as impure or unclean. Acts 10:28 NLT

When he got to the house of Cornelius, he found a home in which many persons had gathered. After

the introductions and other preambles, Peter began to preach about Jesus Christ. Those gathered were paying close attention to the things he was saying. Bear in mind that paying attention to receive the word into their hearts is a sign of faith. We can therefore say they were receiving the word with faith.

Peter spoke of the life of Jesus, how He was baptized by John, anointed by the Holy Spirit, and how He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed of the devil. He talked about His death and His resurrection. He spoke of the encounters of the disciples with Him after the resurrection until the ascension. He also told of how the Father appointed Him, Jesus, as judge of the living and the dead.

Peter continued to speak, and the household of Cornelius continued to hear with faith, until there was an interruption. Without him making an 'altar call', or laying hands on anyone (which he had done earlier in Samaria*), and without him telling

* Acts 8:17

anyone to “*Receive it!*”, there was suddenly commotion in the room, causing Peter and his travel companions to marvel.

While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who were listening to the message. Acts 10:44

The people were each filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, just as Peter and the Jewish church had experienced on the day of Pentecost.

How did they receive the Spirit?

Using the words of Paul, it was by *hearing with faith*. That, to me, is the most important way to be filled with the Spirit. I say it is the most important way simply because it is something we can engage in on a daily basis.

The *number-one* way through which the Spirit fills us is as the word of God fills our hearts. As we pay attention to the word of God, we are actually not just taking in mere words or information but are

rather drinking of the Spirit of God. That was what the Lord Jesus told us about His words.

What gives life is God's Spirit; human power is of no use at all. The words I have spoken to you bring God's life-giving Spirit. John 6:63 GNT

What He was explaining is that when we hear words, it is not the physical sound that actually matters; what matters is the spirit they carry. The physical component of words such as the sound or the letters, when we read, constitute what He called flesh, and this does not produce the blessing.* The entrance of His words brings with it the life-giving Spirit of God.

The Spirit and the Word of Christ

We also see this fact if we examine the teachings of Paul in the letter to the Colossians and in that portion of the book of Ephesians which we referred to earlier. There we will discover Paul expressed '*the Spirit of God*' that we are to be filled with also as '*the word of Christ*'. If you lay the book of Colossians

* The GNT quoted here calls it human power, but the literal translation is *flesh*, as seen in other more literal versions.

side-by-side the book of Ephesians, you will observe that the two books are very similar. Paul wrote almost the same things in both books, in the same order and with the same messages. Now, in Ephesians Paul says...

... but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father. Eph 5:18-20

In Colossians he says...

Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. Col 3:16

It is clear therefore that, to Paul, being filled with *the word of Christ* is essentially the same thing as being filled *with the Spirit*. He was bringing the words of the Lord Jesus to bear here—He said, “*my words carry the life-giving Spirit of God.*”

So, it is easy to understand what happened in the household of Cornelius that day. As the word about Christ was coming to them, and as they were receiving those words with faith, the Spirit rode upon the words and filled everyone listening. The same thing is applicable to believers today. If you pay attention to the word of Christ, and you *believe-receive* it as it comes to you, you will be filled with the Spirit in the word. That is how Christ strengthens His people. He fills them with His word. No one can have the Spirit of God in his life if the word is not being infused into him every day.

Sometimes, we Christians talk about a Christian being Spirit-filled simply because someone laid hands on the person seven or so years ago and he spoke with tongues, when in reality the person is empty currently, not having maintained a constant infilling. See, that you had hands laid on you years ago does not mean you are full of the Holy Spirit today. Paul wrote to those who were already filled with the Spirit, that they should be filled still. It shows they are to be constantly filled. That initial one was the beginning, but it must be maintained. The easiest and most sustainable way to do this is

by regularly filling up with the word of Christ with the purpose of drinking in the Spirit within. It is the way of victory.

A Sense of Value

The word of God is not just about intellectual knowledge. It is the transmission medium for the Spirit of God. When God wants to empower you, He gives you His word. If you want strength from the Lord, you look for His word. A constant flow, by hearing (or reading) of the word is synonymous with a constant flow of the Spirit into your life, if indeed you hear the word with faith and with appreciation for what it carries.

The word of God is always full of the Spirit of God, which is the ability of God. The release of the power therein depends absolutely on the hearer.

For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also; but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard.

Heb 4:2

To hear the word with faith simply means to pay

attention to it, knowing that the words are for you to drink in, to accept and be changed by. You are not listening so as to criticize or analyse, or to fill in the quota for the day. You are listening or reading to receive from it.

Some people want to hear or study the word only when it is convenient. That is not hearing with faith.

Some want to hear the part that suits them. That is also not hearing with faith. Jesus said, “man shall not live by bread alone, but by *every word...*” You can't choose the one you want and leave the one you don't; that wouldn't be hearing with faith. Israel was willing to accept that the land was flowing with milk and honey but refused to accept they could take the land from the giants. That was not hearing with faith. The word therefore could not release to them the Spirit or power in it—the power that would have made them overcome the giants.

For that man ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord, being a double-minded man...
Jas 1:7-8

The one who is hearing with faith accepts every side of the word, even the bitter parts. They say like Job, "Shall we indeed accept good from the hand of the Lord and not adversity?"* To such a person, every part of the word is important. If it says there'll be blessing, they say amen. If the word says there will be persecution, that in this world they will have tribulation, they accept it too. They receive the strength to overcome, a thing which the word also promises.

Faith is to treat the word with respect.

For this reason we also constantly thank God that when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God... 1 Thes 2:13

What was the result of this great attitude of the Thessalonians to the word?

...you welcomed... as it truly is, the Word of God, which is effectually at work in you who believe [exercising its

* Job 2:10

superhuman power in those who adhere to and trust in and rely on it]. 1 Thes 2:13 AMP

There is a supernatural power to experience for those who will give the word the respect it deserves.

That power will give us the power to obey the Lord when the world tells us it is hard.

It will make us win when everyone thinks we should lose.

It will make us prosper in the midst of economic hardship.

It will make all grace abound towards us so that we will have all sufficiency in all things.

The power in the word will heal all our diseases. That power is for those who treat the word with respect. In fact, the Lord specifically warned us to be careful how we handle the word if we want it to bless us.

And He said to them, Be careful what you are hearing. The measure [of thought and study] you give [to the truth you hear] will be the measure [of virtue and knowledge] that comes back to you... Mark 4:24 AMP

Like I said earlier, some people want to hear or study the word only when it is convenient, but by that they show their lack of regard or esteem for the word. That is not hearing with faith. They will abandon the teaching of the word to go and watch a live game of football, and will reason to themselves that "I will get the recorded message." No, remember it is not the flesh that matters, so simply getting to hear the sound eventually is not the issue. It is that you didn't give it priority in your scale of preference. You have shown to the Lord that the word is not that vital to you. That is what will hinder the flow of the Spirit. You are judged by your attitude to the word of God.

Attention

As part of treating the word with a sense of value, something I have come to understand is that if the Spirit is to flow in through the word being preached, there cannot be any interruption. It is not enough that you are where the word is being preached; it is pertinent that you are careful how you listen.

If you want the word to convey a spirit into you,

you must avoid distractions. You can't afford to interrupt the flow to go and use the bathroom. That will end the flow for you and you will have to restart the build-up. There is indeed a build-up before a bursting forth. Many times, I see people sit where the word is coming forth, but they can't seem to sit still. They are sleepy. They get up to go and use the bathroom. They are talking with someone beside them on things unrelated to the word being preached. They are watching out for a message on their phone. The poor mother is distracted with watching the little children.

See, if you want to receive the Spirit in a message, you must deliberately remove all distractions and interruptions. Stand, if you need to do so, to ward off sleep. Drink coffee ahead if necessary. Use the bathroom before you go in. Do everything you need to do to ensure that there is no break in the flow. Try and sit in front in church, so as to prevent being disturbed. Make sure that once the word is flowing, no one and nothing can distract you. You should not make an appointment for someone to meet you during a church service or teaching meeting just because you believe it will only be

brief. They only want to collect something from you or give you something, you think. Yes, to the average mind, it is not bad, but you have by so doing caused a break in the flow of the Spirit for that service. It is actually worse in that you made an arrangement to be interrupted, instead of strategizing to avoid it. What you should rather do is to make necessary arrangements so that no one and nothing will break the flow of the Spirit.

See, you never can tell when the crescendo will be reached and the Spirit will be poured forth. You can't afford to miss that build-up and the breaking forth. Each time you leave, or are distracted, there is a pull-down and you will have to start again from a lower or even zero level. Let us remember that Elijah warned Elisha against being distracted if he was to receive the double portion of the Spirit of Elijah which he sought.

He said, "You have asked a hard thing. Nevertheless, if you see me when I am taken from you, it shall be so for you; but if not, it shall not be so." 2 Kgs 2:10

Elijah was about to be taken up, but no specific time

for this had been indicated. It was going to be sudden, without any warning. Elisha had to be on the alert if he would not miss it. If Elisha decides to go and drink water at a tap behind the rock, he might miss it. If he decides to take a call from his mother or his fiancé at that time, he would be putting receiving the anointing at risk. If he decides to go and *take a leak*, then he might come back and discover Elijah is gone, and he would have missed his inheritance. The man had to focus.

When the word is coming forth, you never can tell when there will be the release of the Spirit in that word. It is important you focus throughout. Get rid of all potential distractions. If you are listening to a recorded message, you may have to take your device and go to a quiet place. Stand up and gently pace around to ward off sleep. Put off your phone or leave behind any of such things that can distract. Lock yourself up somewhere if necessary. Tell yourself, "I will hear this word until the Spirit therein is poured forth into me." As often as we do this, so often will we receive the Spirit in every message.

Summary

In summary, the main way to get continually filled with the Spirit is to have the word enter you constantly. Drink it through the ear gate and through the eye gate. Regurgitate what you have learnt with your mouth in meditations and confessions. Let the word of God be pleasant to you, as it is written,

When I discovered your words, I devoured them.

They are my joy and my heart's delight. Jer 15:16 NLT

That is how to get constantly filled with the Spirit.



Chapter 4

THE AMBIENCE OF THE SPIRIT

Ambience Matters

You see, spiritual things are real, just like the things we study in Physics and Chemistry. Actually, the fabric of this universe is a force derived from spiritual matter; a force which manifests as photons and electromagnetic waves, and which can be best referred to simply as *light*. It is easy to understand therefore that just as physical and chemical forces are affected by the environment, so can spiritual forces be affected by the spiritual environment.

Let us see examples from the scriptures.

In the early days of his being chosen as the king in Israel, there was an incident in which Saul met a company of prophets who were under an anointing. What happened next was rather strange.

When they came to the hill there, behold, a group of prophets met him; and the Spirit of God came upon him

mightily, so that he prophesied among them. 1 Sam 10:10

This was so strange that it set tongues wagging, and a new saying developed among the people, “Is Saul also among the prophets?”

At a certain time many years after this, after Saul had been rejected by God as king and David anointed in secret by Samuel as his replacement, it happened that Saul sent men to go and capture David. David had gone to hide away with Samuel. Three times Saul sent soldiers to arrest David, and each time, as they entered into the arena where Samuel was ministering and the sons of the prophet were prophesying, the soldiers came under the influence, and also began to prophesy. Eventually, Saul decided to come himself, but the same thing happened to him.

But on the way to Naioth in Ramah the Spirit of God came even upon Saul, and he, too, began to prophesy all the way to Naioth! He tore off his clothes and lay naked on the ground all day and all night, prophesying in the presence of Samuel. 1 Sam 19:23-24 NLT

Certainly, what happened with Saul and his men was unusual, but those occurrences do show us that there is such a thing as an environmental anointing. There will be a zone in which the Spirit of God is in high concentration, and being in such a place can push a dose of the Spirit into you. This phenomenon also works in the contrary—a wrong spirit can be so strong in the air that it hinders the flow of the Spirit of God into a person.

A Hindrance to the Flow

In Mark chapter 8, there is an account of the healing of a blind man. The man came to Jesus so that he might be healed through the Lord's touch. It was in a small town or village called Bethsaida. The Lord helped the man by first leading him outside the village. It was only when they were out of the place that He ministered healing to him. After the man saw clearly, he instructed him not to go back into the place. The outcome if he had gone back in there is obvious—he would have lost his healing and gone back to being blind.

We have come to understand that the reason for all that was that the spiritual atmosphere in that

village was too toxic for the power of God to flow, a power which the Lord Jesus had in abundance. It was not about the availability of the power of God, or the willingness of the Lord Jesus to minister it; it was about a stifling atmosphere produced by the hearts of the people. It is similar to what happened in His hometown, where He could do no mighty work because of the unbelief of the people.*

What is the practical lesson for us?

The lesson is that we must be careful to hang around where the Spirit of God is heavy in the air, so that it can seep into us. The company you keep matters so much. If you hang around people who are full of the Spirit and full of faith, they generate an atmosphere of the Spirit around them, and some amount of the spirit of faith flows into you. Your company matters so much. That is why the word of God teaches us that our blessing is tied to where we seat, walk and stand.

How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked,

* Mark 6:5

*Nor stand in the path of sinners,
Nor sit in the seat of scoffers!
But his delight is in the law of the Lord,
And in His law he meditates day and night.
He will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water,
Which yields its fruit in its season
And its leaf does not wither;
And in whatever he does, he prospers. Psa 1:1-3*

Note that the blessing of the person is not tied to desire or the pursuit of the blessing. It is however tied to the delight in the word of God and avoiding the wrong ambience. We can easily see that love for the word of God made the person choose the company of the right persons. He must have been walking in the counsel of the godly, standing in the path of the righteous, and sitting in the seat of those who respect holy things. This causes the right spirit to enter into him, which in turn generates a spiritual aura that attracts the blessing.

The Wrong Ambience and the Wrong Spirit

This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. John 3:19

Sometimes people get into arguments about whether something is a sin or not, demanding to know where the scriptures command against it. But it is not everything one is supposed to avoid that has a direct commandment against it. Many times, understanding the principles of life lets you know simply that some things are not good, even though there is no law against them. This was why Paul said a thing may be even lawful, but that does not mean it is expedient.* The expediency of a thing is a crucial consideration, even though the thing may not be against any law. I say this because sometimes Christians need to be reminded that keeping close company with people that do not believe will undermine their faith. A spirit of unbelief often crawls in. Imagine that a Christian actually visits night clubs to ‘fellowship’ with unbelievers. That is how to drink of the spirit of immorality. That was not the kind of relationship with the world the Lord Jesus had or such that Paul did not forbid.** The Lord and Paul understood that we will relate with people who are outside the faith in our everyday activities, and even pay them social visits, but

* 1 Cor 6:12

**1 Cor 5: 9,10

making them our bosom friends, who we share close fellowship with regularly, is definitely not expedient.

If you want to be filled with the Spirit of God, then make it a habit to regularly visit places where the ambience is filled with the Spirit. For example, make sure you attend a Bible believing church or fellowship where the word of God is taught in truth, praise is sung from pure hearts and prayer is offered up jointly in faith. You cannot afford to go to a church where the pastor mostly talks common sense, business principles and politics. There are churches that have extremely skilled musicians on the instruments and the singers have the best voices, but these people are not even born again but are hired hands who are there only because of their fleshly skills. The praise they lead does not fill the air with the Holy Spirit. This is partly why churches now generate fake ambience with coloured lights and artificial smoke. The cloud that used to fill the temple was the Shekinah or glory of God; it was not man-made. These days we have man-made everything and we leave such services with the spirit of the age. The Spirit of God cannot even

manifest even if He wanted to because we have told Him, “We have it covered already.”

The Ambience of True Worship

Keep away from where the atmosphere is so artificial; they are filling you with the spirit of the age. What many Christians call good praise and worship is often nothing more than excellent display of the flesh. Yes, the voices are well-trained and the instrument players are the best in town, but they do not release the Spirit of God into the air. It is not right. True praise is not because of natural skill but because of the sincerity and purity of hearts, and the anointing of God. It is something that rises from the bowels of our spirits. I pray for the days when churches and fellowships will sing real hymns again. The advantage of hymns is that everyone participates, the rhythm is usually easy to follow, and the words are usually so deep and spiritual.

Many of the songs churches like to sing these days are not compatible with meditation of any sort. They are designed to excite the flesh. Sometimes the lyrics are excellent but the rhythm is too

incompatible with meditation. Some are so difficult to sing that we are forced to let the choir entertain us while we watch. These things don't charge the atmosphere with the Spirit of God.

I pray that people will take those old hymns with archaic English and update them with modern words, so that we all can understand them in today's language. The words were okay for the language of the time of the composers, but we often get caught up with thinking we have to retain *thou, thee, 'tis, 'ol, etc.* No, we can use modern English and yet hardly change the sentences. I thank God for modern hymn writers; there are so many of these modern hymns these days. They are so spiritual.

The Ambience of Faith

Apart from church services, the company we keep is so important, as we have seen already. Keep company with true believers who are filled with the Spirit. Note that if a person is full of the Spirit, it will be noticeable. Keep company with such persons. Find an excuse to talk with them when possible, and when you do, please focus on listening rather than talking. There was a time I sent a brother to see

a particular minister so as to deliver something to him on my behalf. When we spoke afterwards, he told me that he spent just 15 minutes with the minister and, according to him, “that man set my heart on fire.”

Another thing is that you also must be one who has the right ambience around you; you should create an ambience of faith and of the Spirit around you as much as possible. I have had encounters with people who drain your spirit when you talk with them. It is as if they are sapping strength from you as they speak. In some cases, you will not feel anything, but after keeping company with them, your faith is lower, you become more fearful, and you seem to mind the things of this world more than before. The reason is that your faith and the Spirit of God in you have been drained. And there are others who anytime you spend just a few minutes with them, even if they don't pray or lay hands on you, you feel more alive—fear level drops and heaven is more real to you; you seem to forget the things of this world. What has happened is that you got an infusion of the Spirit by that interaction.

To create an ambience of faith around yourself is both unconscious and deliberate. The unconscious part is that once you are full of the Spirit, the aura around you is automatically produced. So, just keep being filled with the Spirit yourself. The deliberate part is through the engagement of certain spiritual exercises, as the following portions of the scriptures show.

...be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord. Eph 5:18-19

These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. Deut 6:6-9

These verses show us how to generate the right spiritual atmosphere. It is generated by the words that come from our mouths. The word of God and

the praises of the Almighty must first be in our hearts, then we must allow them flow often from our mouths. The mouth is the generator. We are to speak of the person of Christ, the wonders of God, and of the praises and glory of His majesty. Make conversations about how awesome He is. Sing songs and hymns of the praises of God. In the time of Moses, there were no electronic music players, so I suppose what God wanted to achieve through the posting of words on doorposts and gates was to surround the people with the word, so they could imbibe it continually. The same thing is partly achieved these days through the speakers of our devices; we can have them play the word of God to us frequently. Note that He emphasized gates and doorposts. It seems to me therefore that we are to announce to even visitors the kind of atmosphere they are stepping into. In summary, the word of God, praises and thanksgiving must be flowing continually around us. That is how we generate the atmosphere full of the Spirit.

I noticed that most of those who drain you spiritually by their presence are grumblers. They see something wrong with everything, so to speak.

Others are spouts of filthiness, silly talk and coarse jesting. Paul said instead of these things, we are to engage in the giving of thanks. Learn to sing songs of thanksgiving, sing hymns, play messages and songs of praise in devices around you. Fill your air literally with the word of God and the Spirit of God will be present too; they go together.

RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT



Chapter 5

LAYING ON OF HANDS

Contact Transmits the Spirit

There are different ways to receive the Spirit, as we are seeing from the scriptures. Apart from the ones we have seen thus far, another way by which the Spirit is transmitted is through the laying on of hands.

Christians can be filled with the Spirit when hands are laid on them by other believers who are filled with the Spirit. We see examples of this throughout the scriptures. One of the earliest examples was the transmission of the Spirit from Moses to Joshua.

Now Joshua the son of Nun was filled with the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands on him. Deut 34:9

After God chose him, Joshua needed power to operate by, and that ability was transmitted into him through the laying on of the hands of Moses. It

is important we understand that laying on of hands is not just symbolic; the Spirit of God actually flows through that contact. The anointing of God is a tangible force, and it flows through certain contacts as God would permit. We see this in other Bible accounts, such as the case of Samaria's gospel story.

After Samaria received the word of God through the ministry of Philip, Peter and John went to minister to them so that they might receive the Holy Spirit. How did they do it?

Then they began laying their hands on them, and they were receiving the Holy Spirit. Acts 8:17

Peter and John had received the Holy Spirit through tarrying in Jerusalem and through prayer in the general assembly of the brethren, but when it was time to minister the Spirit to the new converts in Samaria, they laid hands on them. Laying on of hands works once those who are receiving have open hearts and have been instructed concerning what to expect. It is not just symbolic and certainly not simply a psychologic effect. When the Lord Jesus was touched by the woman with the issue of

blood, even though He did not know beforehand that she was going to do that, He felt the power leave Him. Peter and the rest of the crew thought He must have felt the pressure of someone's touch when He said, "Someone touched me." They, like many today, did not realize it is a flow of a spiritual 'electric' current. The Lord Jesus *felt* the flow of power without being engaged in the process. I assume it felt like a discharge of static, which we have all felt. It was not just a physical touch or a result of psychologic conditioning. It was only after the woman came forward with the testimony of her instant healing that Peter and the others got the point. Even though the contact may stimulate faith when one wishes to receive the Spirit, but it is much more than that; there is actually a flow through the contact.

More Examples

We see in the book of Acts that Paul received healing and the infilling of the Holy Spirit after Ananias laid hands on him. Also, when Paul was going to impart to Timothy the ability to function in that apostolic-pastoral office, that was the method which the Lord manifested through.

For this reason I remind you to kindle afresh the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. 2 Tim 1:6

Laying on of hands is an important method by which the Spirit is imparted into believers.

I noticed that those who received the Holy Spirit by the laying on of hands were prepared beforehand, mostly through instruction. Paul had a vision ahead of time that Ananias would come and lay hands on him. When he arrived, Ananias told him the mission he came for.

So Ananias departed and entered the house, and after laying his hands on him said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road by which you were coming, has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit. Acts 9:17

Paul taught the men at Ephesus about the Holy Spirit before baptising them in water and laying his hands on them to receive the Spirit.* For this reason, I believe that Peter and John must have

* Acts 19:5,6

instructed the new converts at Samaria about this gift of God before laying their hands on them.

A Foundational Doctrine

Therefore leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, of instruction about washings and laying on of hands... Heb 6:1-2

Laying on of hands is a foundational doctrine of Christianity. I believe this is because many blessings are transmitted through this method. It was the Lord Jesus' most frequently used method for ministering healing. That was how He also blessed children.* Parents are supposed to lay hands on their children to impart the blessing of God upon their lives. Note how Jacob prayed for Ephraim and Manasseh, his children through Joseph;** he placed his hands on them.

...Israel stretched out his right hand and laid it on the head of Ephraim... and his left hand on Manasseh's head... Gen 48:14

* Mark 10:16

** He adopted them as his own from their father Joseph. Gen 48:5

This same method is used to impart the anointing for function to people who are being commissioned into ministry. When Paul and Barnabas were separated unto a special assignment, the other three prophets and teachers who were there laid hands on them to impart grace into them.

Then, when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. Acts 13:3

Elders in the church should lay their hands on young believers so that they might receive the Holy Spirit. It is one of their duties.

Parents should lay their hands on their children before sending them out into a new adventure in life; for example, when they are leaving home to go to university. They need grace imparted into them through the laying on of hands. Lay hands on them as they are getting married. Perform these actions in faith, that is knowing it is commanded, required and effective for the transfer of the Spirit of grace. If indeed you are a parent full of the Spirit of God, then it is certainly not just a ceremony but a requirement for the tangible transfer of divine

ability. As we saw at the beginning of this book, they will not succeed by their power and might, but by the Spirit of God. They need that Spirit of God as a weapon to win in the opposing atmosphere they are going to face in these adventures of life.

Be Prepared to Receive

Children of God should not lightly esteem the laying on of hands. If you find someone full of a kind of spirit that you covet, and which is in line with the call of God for your life, or which is needed for obedience in a necessary area of life, please pray about having the person lay hands on you. Note that there should be adequate preparation before this. Moses didn't lay his hands on just anyone. Even though God appointed him to replace Moses, yet Joshua was prepared through following Moses for years to receive the Spirit when it was to be given through the laying on of hands. The quantum of the Spirit that can flow into you when hands are laid on you depends on the amount of preparation in your heart before the encounter. The woman with the issue of blood got that flow of the Spirit because she was prepared. The Lord Jesus said,

“Daughter, your faith has made you well.”* The preparation was her faith. She had her faith developed and that created a pull in her, allowing a tangible flow of the Spirit.

The Role of Prophecy

One thing that often accompanies the laying on of hands is prophecy.

Do not neglect the spiritual gift within you, which was bestowed on you through prophetic utterance with the laying on of hands by the presbytery. 1 Tim 4:14

Usually when hands are being laid, prophetic declaration would accompany, indicating what the laying on of hands is to accomplish.

Let us get it clear; prophecy is not the same as foretelling of future occurrences. Prophecy simply means an inspired utterance, which may be someone declaring the praises of the Most High or declaring some other things such as a command. And, of course, it may foretell future events.

* Luke 8:48

Now, even though prophecy sometimes sounds predictive, it is actually more creative than predictive. It is actually commanding something rather than predicting it. A lot of prophecies invoke a blessing upon someone. It may declare a work which the Lord will do in the person's life. It can therefore activate a flow of the Spirit into the person hearing it with faith.

It is clear from the above that even though laying on of hands is often accompanied with prophecy, the Spirit can also be received through prophetic utterance without the laying on of hands. Just as the Lord Jesus healed many as He commanded healing *while* touching them, so did He heal many without touching them. In fact, a few who were far away were healed as He spoke a word.

Many times, a servant of God will pray for people, declaring prophetically over them, and this may be in a large congregation; indeed, it is a way by which the Spirit flows into many. "Receive the Holy Spirit" was first used by the Lord Jesus to impart life into the disciples,* and it is still a way by which

*John 20:22

the Spirit will flow into many today. It is to you according to your faith. As those words are being released, open your heart to the flow of the Holy Spirit. Many times it is in the benediction, as a meeting is closing, that the power will flow into you. The utterances may come over a radio or TV broadcast, or it may even be over the phone. Understand that there is no distance in the spirit, and if your heart is open, the Spirit of God will enter into you.

Let me say to parents again; as you lay those hands on your children, take words of prophecy from the scriptures and adapt those words over them. Don't pray over them only; also command those blessings with faith over them. Say to them, "receive grace to excel;" "Have favour;" "Succeed in the midst of opposition." Utter such blessings in the power of the name of Jesus.



Chapter 6

WAITING ON THE LORD AND PRAYER

The Upper Room Experience

*Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and said to them, "This is what is written: the Messiah must suffer and must rise from death three days later, and in his name the message about repentance and the forgiveness of sins must be preached to all nations, beginning in Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things... **But you must wait in the city** until the power from above comes down upon you. Luke 24:46-49*
GNT

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to

Speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance. Acts 2:1-4

The first time the Holy Spirit came down and alighted upon Christians, filling them with the Spirit in the process, it happened to those who were *waiting* as the Lord had commanded.

What were they waiting for?
Why did they need to wait?

Their assignment in life was to witness some things, and then to go about bearing witness to the things they had witnessed.

Now, they witnessed those things; the things were the life, agony, death and resurrection of Christ Jesus. Initially, they did not understand what the things meant, and for this reason, the first thing the Lord did was to open their understanding so that they saw those things clearly in the scriptures. He gave them understanding.

So, now they had the understanding of what God did through Christ Jesus. They understood that

salvation was available to the nations, and that it would come only through repentance and faith in the name of Jesus. They understood that it was not only for Jews but for all nations, and that the message was to spread to the whole earth, beginning from Jerusalem.

The Need for Power

With such understanding, the disciples would be eager to move and fill everywhere with this truth. However, it was not going to be done simply because they knew the truth; they needed power to do the work. Your knowledge of the truth will not persuade anyone; only the power of God, which is the Holy Spirit, can make anyone see the truth of the gospel and then believe. Paul explained that the work is not done through carefully arranged speech; it is not the eloquence or the persuasive capacity of arguments; people are convinced only as a result of the work of the Spirit and the power of God.* That was what the Lord Jesus essentially warned them about. He said they needed to wait *until* they would receive that power from on high.

* 1 Cor 2:4

They needed to wait. They were not supposed to move, and indeed they *could* not move, until that power would come. The power eventually came upon them on that fateful day of Pentecost.

Note that on that day, no one laid hands on anyone, nor was there any prophetic utterance provoking the impartation. The Bible says it happened suddenly. Yes, they could have been praying, or they may have been sharing those experiences to which they were all witnesses, but one thing we are sure of is that they were waiting in Jerusalem as instructed.

The practical side of this for us is that we must learn to wait before we set out on anything in life. Knowledge alone does not guarantee success in any endeavour. The disciples knew the truth as explained to them by the Lord Jesus, and they knew their assignment, but they could not go in the power of that knowledge alone. They needed to be endowed with power.

The Art of Waiting

In my early days of learning about the in-filling of the Holy Spirit, we were told that there is no need to tarry to receive because the Holy Spirit has been given. It was explained to us that the church needed to tarry in that Jerusalem experience because the Holy Spirit had not yet been given at that time. It was assumed that they were waiting until the day that the promise of the Lord Jesus would be ripe for fulfilment. The logic is that since the day of fulfilment has been accomplished, the Holy Spirit is now always available for taking, once you can stir up faith in your heart.

Well, even though there is a lot of truth in this thought, it is certainly not the whole truth. Actually, there are different purposes for the release of the Spirit, and there are different kinds of circumstances around it. We have already seen that the people who were filled at the beginning were filled *again* after they prayed, as they were prompted by a new set of challenges. At that time, another impartation was needed to meet the new challenge of that moment. Circumstances differ, and so are the means of receiving the infilling.

Under certain circumstances, receivers still need to wait on the Lord. The principle of tarrying or waiting is something we see throughout the whole of the Bible. We must learn to wait on the Lord for different things, and that includes to be filled with the Spirit, when it is necessary. The waiting period is for the preparation of the person to be ready to receive.

So, what do we do when we are waiting?

The first thing is to get detailed knowledge of what our assignment is. Waiting is not an idle process, but a process in which we are being changed by certain activities until we are ready to receive a gift of empowerment from God or to be lifted to a new level of assignment. If you look again at that portion of Luke quoted at the beginning of this chapter, you will notice that the first thing the Lord did was to give the disciples understanding. *“Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures...”* Those who did not understand were not candidates to receive the Spirit. It follows therefore that waiting involves *studying*, praying and meditating, so as to gain insight. Through these activities we are

being prepared to receive the Spirit.

In one of my radio teaching series, titled *Cooperating with the Seasons of Life's Adventures*,* I explained that of the several stages, the first is the stage of *Sit Down and Count*. As you prepare for anything in life, such as ministry, career, marriage, or anything at all, this first stage is that time in which you go aside to pray and meditate on the assignment at hand. It may be for days or months, or even more, but during this period, you are getting all the necessary information through study and praying, before setting out. That is the kind of thing you do when you are tarrying for the Spirit. Jesus first gave the disciples understanding when He told them to wait for the gift of God.

When you would have learnt, then you will be ready to receive the Spirit. A heart must be prepared before the Spirit is given to it. Tarrying is a time of transformation in which we are prepared to receive; it is not a time to be praying as if to persuade a reluctant Lord to release His Spirit to you.

* I recommend that anyone reading this should listen to that series; please go to *pastor.ng*

When you are ready, it may be necessary to go into prayer and also make use of the ministry of laying on of hands to complete the process of receiving the Spirit.

Prayer

Now, I must emphasize that the Holy Spirit is given to those who have the desire. A deep craving is crucial for the release of the Spirit into anyone.

As young people those days in the university, we got into the study and practice of the things of the spirit. We were taught many things about the Holy Spirit, and we were often given the task of helping people receive the infilling of the Spirit. Now, on a certain occasion, we had a program going on in the fellowship, and at a point, a call was made for those who wanted to receive the Holy Spirit to come forward. A number of persons came forth, mostly young women, who were students also, and a few of us were given the task of ministering the Spirit to them. So, we went to the back of the hall to pray.

So we began to pray. I was leading the prayer, and I did something that I stopped after that day—I

closed my eyes to pray with them. We were in prayer for a while, my eyes being shut most of the period, and I kept quoting scriptures and telling them words to use in prayer. At a point I opened my eyes, and to my shock I saw some of the young ladies giggling. Apparently, they found the whole thing amusing. I stopped the prayers and asked what was going on. The apparent leader of the pack proceeded to attempt to show me from scriptures something like the Holy Spirit or speaking in tongues was not for everyone, or that every believer already has the Holy Spirit, or something like that. I didn't argue or try to refute her points, I just wondered aloud why they all came out in the first place in response to the call made. Anyway, whatever they said in reply is not relevant, and I don't remember, but I realized I had been wasting my time. I dismissed everyone in that little group and went back into the main meeting. That was the day I stopped closing my eyes to pray for anyone. I need to *see* if we are in agreement or not.

The point I used that story to illustrate is that desire, manifested in heart-felt prayer, is a crucial ingredient in receiving the Spirit. Those young

women couldn't have gotten anything, judging by their attitude. No matter what other pathway to receiving the Spirit we may have seen so far, the issue of prayer must undergird each one. If you want the Spirit, and you ask the Father for it, He *will* give it to you. He may use someone who will lay hands on you or you may have to spend time in study and meditation, in what we call waiting on the Lord. It may be that you will be filled while the word is preached, but one way or another, the Holy Spirit will overshadow you and fill you with the Spirit of God.

*If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who **ask** Him?" Luke 11:13*

*Jesus was also baptized, and while He was **praying**, heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in bodily form like a dove. Luke 3:21-22*

If you want to be filled with the Spirit, go in sincerity to God, ask Him, and you will receive.*

* There is a prayer at the end of this book to help those who want to receive the Spirit right away.



Chapter 7

SIGNS OF THE SPIRIT - 1

There are Signs

We need to realize that being filled by the Spirit will be noticeable to those the filled person interacts with; believers are the ones that are most likely to notice it, but even unbelievers will notice it too. Unbelievers may however not understand what it is, but they will know something is different. What I am explaining is that the filling of the Spirit has an observable effect in the life of the person that is filled.

Remember the time, in the early days of the Church, when the apostles needed to appoint deacons. The need arose because the Church was growing fast and crisis had begun to brew as a result. The problem was with how provision was being shared among certain groups in the church. When the attention of the apostles was called to the problem, they explained that assistance would be

needed since they could not neglect the word and start serving tables. They, the apostles, needed to give full and continued attention to the ministry of prayer and the word. The solution was to select certain persons who would be in charge of these things. So, they set out criteria for selection of such persons.

*Therefore, brethren, select from among you seven men of good reputation, **full of the Spirit** and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task. Acts 6:3*

The decision was left to the whole congregation after the apostles set out the criteria. They understood that being full of the Spirit was observable by all.

So we see that being filled with the Spirit will be obvious to those around. Many may not understand what exactly is going on, but they will know there is something. One of our brothers gave a testimony; he delivered a lecture to a set of professionals, and at the end of it everyone spontaneously rose and gave him a standing ovation, including his partners and colleagues in

the assignment—people who had known him for a long time. Everyone was impressed at the delivery and how much they were impacted. His long-time associates were amazed, since he was not like that before. Even he was amazed; he knew something was different. So, he kept pondering on how this could have been. Then he remembered that we had just finished a teaching on 'Living by the Spirit.' In that teaching I had explained that everything we do as believers must be by the Spirit. After the teaching, we prayed. It was a few days after this that he gave those lectures. He was empowered by the Spirit, and the empowerment was obvious to all, even though the people there did not know the source.

Peter and John

This is similar to what happened with Peter and John after the Holy Spirit came upon them.

Remember the incidence of the healing of the man at the gate called Beautiful. After the man was healed, he clung to Peter and John and caused some commotion; this caused many people to gather to see what was happening. When they saw the

previously lame man walking and leaping, they were filled with amazement. Then Peter reacted to the situation by preaching the gospel of Jesus to the gathered crowd. But for this, the priests, temple officials and the Sadducees came and had them thrown into jail till the next day; they were upset because these apostles were preaching the gospel of Jesus and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead.

Now, remember that on the following day, when they were brought out to defend their actions, Peter and John displayed no fear but spoke boldly and clearly, and this was before a high-powered panel composed of the High priest, his powerful relatives, and Jewish leaders and elders who had gathered for this purpose. These judges were all amazed at the demeanour of Peter and John.

The members of the council were amazed when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, for they could see that they were ordinary men with no special training in the Scriptures. They also recognized them as men who had been with Jesus. Acts 4:13-14 NLT

There is this tendency we have, which is to be misled by the inference of the elders of the Jews; they thought the fact that Peter and John *had been with Jesus* was the reason they were so bold. Now, having been with Jesus was a part of it, and was actually the foundation, but that was not the exact reason. The exact reason can be seen clearly in one of the preceding verses.

Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them... "
Acts 4:8 NLT

Oh, their boldness and the power in their words was because of being filled with the Spirit. See, when you are filled with the Spirit, it will show. Those around will know something unusual is going on, even though they may misunderstand the reason for it. They may say it is because of the family you came from, the church you attend, or the high level of education you have. They may say it is because of the hurts you have suffered and how you have turned your pain into gain. Yes, they will be very wrong most times in these explanations, but it will be undeniable that something unusual is happening. They may not understand it, but it is

the Spirit in you manifesting.

The Ephesian Story

Now, since the infilling of the spirit has real and observable manifestations, we can easily understand Paul's confusion when he first got to Ephesus and met some supposed believers.

While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul traveled through the interior of the province and arrived in Ephesus. There he found some disciples and asked them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you became believers?" "We have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit," they answered.

"Well, then, what kind of baptism did you receive?" Paul asked.

"The baptism of John," they answered. Acts 19:1-3 GNT

I thought about why Paul would ask this kind of question of that group of men—they were about twelve in number. He had assumed they were believers, but he wanted to know if they received the Holy Spirit when they first believed. There is nowhere else we read of him asking this sort of question, which should imply that it was not a

regular question with him. So why did he ask these fellows? I think I have the answer.

You see, when he met them, he saw signs that showed that they were what was known as God-fearers. Cornelius was such a God-fearer. These were people who sought after the true God and after righteousness. They abstained from iniquity as much as possible and they gathered regularly to pray. Paul simply assumed they were believers in Christ. But within a short time, he saw certain signs that showed that the power of God was not in their lives. Such could have been lack of boldness in their lives. They probably said everything without much confidence. They likely hesitated over every word and every truth they held.

They also very likely reasoned aimlessly over scriptures and showed little understanding. They probably were like the Ethiopian officer whom Philip met by the instruction of the Holy Spirit—they had little understanding of what they read in the word of God. They did not inspire faith in Paul. They were timid and had no testimonies. All these things caused Paul to wonder what was

wrong with them. He said to himself, "the Holy Spirit seems absent in their lives." That was why he asked such a question.

"Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you became believers?"

That was when the truth began to come forth. They had never heard of such a concept or person as the Holy Spirit.

"What?! You have never heard of the Holy Spirit? Ok, let's forget that you have never heard of being filled with the Spirit, but surely when you were being baptized, you must have heard of 'the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit', didn't you?"

"No."

"What is going on here? Did they not tell you what Jesus said?"

"Who is Jesus?"

"Oh my God! Then how were you baptized?"

"According to the ordinance of John."

Oh, these were not believers in Christ Jesus but

were only God-fearers. So, Paul explained to them the work of John, and how the fulfilment was the One to come.

Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in Him who was coming after him, that is, in Jesus. Acts 19:4

It was a thing they had understood before then; they just didn't know the One to come had come. It was not hard to believe in Jesus. It was never hard for anyone who truly followed John. So, they were baptized according to the ordinance of Jesus, which entails faith in Him. After that, they received the Holy Spirit.

When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking with tongues and prophesying. Acts 19:5-6

So we see that being filled with the Spirit has outward manifestations which people around will notice, the absence of which will alert a spiritually keen believer. These manifestations are not just for

you to tick a box in a checklist; they are a sign that there is a flow of divine power in your life. That is what it is about—the ability to live and work for Christ. It is not just for the sake of naming yourself as a Pentecostal.



Chapter 8

SIGNS OF THE SPIRIT - 2

What are the Signs

Now when the Spirit of God comes and fills someone, He comes in with everything, not just a part. He does not just come with speaking in tongues alone. It is like there is a mighty force in you that cannot be stopped, and a fire that cannot be quenched. The infilling may be initially gentle, as with the Lord Jesus in which it was as gentle as a dove* landing on Him, or it may be rather dramatic, with loud speaking in other tongues and other physical displays, as it was in the upper room, on that day of Pentecost, and in the house of Cornelius. We know of the upper room and the house of Cornelius quite well, but we often forget about that of the Lord Jesus and of Paul.

When Paul was first filled with the Holy Spirit, there was nothing dramatic to herald it, apart from

* The dove is a sign of gentleness. Matt 10:16 GNT

the fact that he was healed at the same time, which was another assignment given to Ananias.

So Ananias went and found Saul. He laid his hands on him and said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road, has sent me so that you might regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit." Instantly something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he regained his sight. Then he got up and was baptized. Acts 9:17-19 NLT

I believe firmly that beyond regaining his sight, Saul knew he received something. The thing he received would manifest for all to see in a short while from then.

When the Spirit comes in, everything comes with it. When the Spirit was in Jeremiah and he tried to quench it, he testified that it was as if fire was trapped in his bones.* The Spirit expresses its presence in many ways, and we will see them in brief as we go on. Much of the manifestation is through speaking. As a matter of fact, the first place of expression is most often through the mouth. The

* Jer 20:9

expression of the Spirit through there includes boldness of speech, prophesying and speaking in an unknown language, as the following verses show.

...they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God with boldness. Acts 4:31

...gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also. For they were hearing them speaking with tongues and exalting God. Acts 10:45-46

Tongues and Falling under the Power

Now, language is not an invention of man. It is also not a thing that developed spontaneously as men found the need for it, as evolutionists will like us to believe. Speaking was created by God and language was given by His impartation. This is the reason animals do not have it, even though they do communicate but through other means; the Lord did not give language to them. This is why God could easily confuse the language of men when they gathered to build a huge altar to a false god at Babel—the tower of Babel. God gives languages, and we propagate them through learning.

The incoming of the Spirit of God into a person can therefore manifest with a language. When the Holy Spirit first came on that day of Pentecost, He heralded His arrival dramatically. Those who were inside heard the sound like a mighty rushing wind, and saw the tongues of fire. Those who were outside heard the commotion, which included the disciples speaking in different languages which they did not learn—which we call *tongues*. The commotion included people losing their physical coordination—they staggered and some fell under the power. That was why the observers thought they must have been drunk. We often overlook it, but if one thinks of it, it will be clear they must have been acting drunk. Wine does not teach languages, and drinking much of it does not make you speak a new language, but it rather makes you loud and unsteady. Their loudness and loss of physical coordination is why the outsiders thought they were drunk.

Please note that the Holy Spirit deliberately gave languages that people outside could understand. They are called *tongues of men*. But, there are also

tongues of angels;* no one will be able to understand these if they were to hear them, except it is supernaturally granted for the person to do so. The ability to understand such tongues of angels is another manifestation of the Spirit. God chose the tongues of men on that Pentecost day as a sign for all who came to Jerusalem from different parts of the world.

It is important we understand that when the Lord Jesus said believers will speak with new tongues as one of the signs that would follow them, He was referring specifically to tongues as a *sign* for men.** It will happen that a believer will speak a language of men which he or she did not know beforehand and someone who knows the language will understand. Someone must understand it, and it will be a sign for that person. Others in the congregation may not understand it, but the person or persons who are being targeted will understand it, and will be amazed. That was what happened on the day of Pentecost, and such still happens today.

At some other times, someone may speak in an

* 1 Cor 13:1 ** Mark 16:17

unknown tongue, and another person is immediately given a gift of interpretation, so that he understands what is being spoken clearly. Sometimes the message is for the one who supernaturally understands, or he is to relate to another or to the whole house, if in a gathering. These are all manifestations of the presence of the Spirit.

Praying in Tongues

There is another form of speaking in unknown tongues; in this form, the speaker addresses the words to God and so it is not required that any human understands. This form is not a sign for any person but an overflow of the Spirit in the person uttering the words. At such times, he is not speaking to men, but in the spirit he is uttering mysteries to God—he is praying.

For one who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God; for no one understands, but in his spirit he speaks mysteries. 1 Cor 14:2

For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful. 1 Cor 14:14

Such praying in an unknown tongue is for personal prayer. It is best to do it privately, or as quietly as possible if one is in a group prayer meeting or church service. Christians often create so much cacophony as they speak in such tongues, but it is not necessary, and Paul sought to correct this in his letters.

I thank God that I speak in tongues more than any of you. But in a church meeting I would rather speak five understandable words to help others than ten thousand words in an unknown language. 1 Cor 14:18-19 NLT

Prayer in unknown tongues is often a prayer of praise and thanksgiving,* but at other times it is a prayer of supplication or intercession.

Groanings in the Spirit

And the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness. For example, we don't know what God wants us to pray for. But the Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words. And the Father who knows all hearts knows what the Spirit is saying, for the Spirit

* 1 Cor 14:16-17

pleads for us believers in harmony with God's own will.
Rom 8:26-27 NLT

Sometimes when we pray, we find that the burden is heavy, yet our understanding of the situation may be limited; even when we understand the situation, we often cannot satisfactorily express ourselves as we pray in the words we know. Sometimes we don't even know exactly what to ask God to do, partly because we don't know enough about the whole situation. It is like *the heart is overwhelmed*, using the words of David.* At such times, the Holy Spirit would often fill our hearts with words from the realms of the spirit, words so dense they cannot be articulated well enough by our vocal cords, tongue and lips to be intelligible, but they come out of us only as sighs and groans. In those sighs and groans, the Holy Spirit thus expresses Himself through the child of God.

The Lord Jesus prayed like that a number of times. The following references are of some of those instances. The first reference below was when He

* Psa 61:2

arrived at Bethany after the death of Lazarus, who He later raised up again.

When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled. John 11:33 KJV

Then Jesus looked up to heaven, gave a deep groan, and said to the man, "Ephphatha," which means, "Open up!" At once the man was able to hear, his speech impediment was removed, and he began to talk without any trouble. Mark 7:34-35 GNT

In great anguish he prayed even more fervently; his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground. Luke 22:44 GNT

Yes, the burden of prayer in the Spirit often comes out of the lips only as groans, and many persons may experience this as they first receive the Spirit. They get this unusual burden to pray, and yet they have nothing to say. They open their mouths but all that comes forth is the groanings of the Spirit. It is not something someone puts on deliberately, but is one of those manifestations of the Spirit.

RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT



Chapter 9

SIGNS OF THE SPIRIT - 3

More than Speaking with Tongues

Before we look at the other signs of the fullness of the Spirit further, I will like to quickly correct something among believers, especially among certain of us called Pentecostals.

You will notice from what I have already explained that I believe in speaking and praying in tongues. But I dare to say many Pentecostals have pushed the truth about the signs of being filled with the Spirit off balance. They have thereby caused much confusion to arise and, in the process, so much blessing has been lost. Many are so fixated on speaking with tongues that they forget that there are other manifestations of the infilling of the Spirit. I have hardly heard preachers emphasize that prophesying is a sign that accompanies being filled with the Spirit, or boldness of speech or a renewed

zeal for Christ. It seems that as far as many are concerned, once you utter something we don't understand, whether it makes sense to anyone—angel or man—or not, you have received the Spirit. I think that is inaccurate.

It is quite possible for someone to utter total gibberish, simply because they have heard others speak things that are unintelligible. People do copy the 'tongues' they heard others speak. Also, we have heard unbelievers 'speaking in tongues' in mockery or as they act in dramas and movies. I have even seen mentally unstable people do it. I think all of this is because of our skewed emphasis on speaking in tongues. When it comes to signs of being filled with the Spirit, prophesying is listed more often than speaking in tongues in the Bible as a whole.

Prophesying is essentially speaking by inspiration in a language the speaker understands. It can bubble up in psalms or hymns and as spiritual songs. I dare to say that it is more common than speaking in tongues even in the New Testament, even though speaking in tongues is peculiar to the

New Testament dispensation. Under the former dispensation, prophesying was the main thing, and it continues to be important in the new dispensation. Speaking in unknown tongues is an addition in the new and it was given *mainly* as a unique sign under certain circumstances. It was also given as a manifestation of the help of the Holy Spirit when we pray. Many people receiving the Holy Spirit for the first time will speak in an unknown tongue, but that is not the only type of experience such persons may have. I say this judging from the record of scriptures. Prophesying is a frequent accompaniment of being filled with the Spirit but, unfortunately, we have often failed to recognize it or encourage it.

Please don't get me wrong, I am not trying to take away from speaking in unknown tongues at all, rather I am asking the church to receive the Holy Spirit completely. Also, if indeed we have received, we need to activate the gifts completely and not get stuck with just one aspect. Indeed, the gifts of God may need to be activated, having been made dormant by ignorance and our lack of attention to it. This is shown by Paul writing to Timothy to stir

up the gift of God which had become dormant in Timothy because of timidity.*

How do you explain that we have so much speaking in tongues going on but very little signs and wonders? Brethren are speaking in tongues but lack the boldness to stand up for Christ and resist the pressures of the world. How do we explain that too? How come some of the people who we teach that they were *not* filled with the Spirit, according to our principle of *you-must-speak-with-tongues-or-you-don't-have-the-Spirit*, did much more signs and wonders, with prophesying and bold speaking for Christ, than we modern tongue-speaking Christians? How can we say that men like Martin Luther, John Alexander Dowie, Hudson Taylor, Billy Graham, D. L. Moody and C. H. Spurgeon were not filled with the Spirit, when those who are supposedly so filled have not shown us the power of God as much as these men of old? Something is wrong. There is absolutely no doubt in my mind that these men of old were filled with the Spirit and operated their ministries by the anointing of God.

* 2 Tim 1:6

Many people these days speak in tongues and yet habitually lie, cheat, commit adultery, love money, and speak satanic counsel from the pulpit. They do all these and yet claim they are filled with the Spirit just because they speak in tongues or spoke in tongues at a time. There are no signs and wonders following them too. If Paul was to meet many of our tongue speakers of today, he would very likely still ask, like he did at Ephesus, “did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?” That is because, apart from the fact that they speak strangely when supposedly praying, he would observe no other sign of the presence of the Holy Spirit in their lives. That is not right.

Boldness to Speak

I am of the opinion that many Christians these days are not filled with the Spirit at all but only speak nonsense in what they call speaking in tongues. There has to be something else in your life, apart from talking unintelligibly, to show the Holy Spirit is there. If there is none, then I doubt if you are actually speaking in the tongues given by the Holy Spirit of God. I think that the proportion of gibberish-speaking among us is shown by the

amount of the power of God that is *absent* from our midst. For goodness' sake, the Holy Spirit does not impart tongues-speaking alone. The power of the Spirit of God would be manifested in boldness, prophesying and in working of signs and wonders. If we are truly filled with the Spirit of God, then the Holy Spirit will fill us with boldness to speak His word, the Spirit of prophecy to testify of Jesus, and the power to work signs and wonders, all at the same time. We have limited Him to only giving us 'tongues' and we are happy because our names have been written in the list of Pentecostal brethren. That is a tragedy.

...and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God with boldness. Acts 4:31

Boldness is a crucial sign of being filled with the Holy Spirit. When the Spirit of God comes into you in His power, He imparts into you the ability to speak for Christ and proclaim the kingdom of God. That was why the Lord Jesus told the people not to leave Jerusalem until they are filled with the power from above. Anyone who is thus filled will be able to speak the word of God with boldness. The Holy

Spirit particularly drives out timidity out of our lives. It is not a spirit of timidity at all. What the Holy Spirit brings into us is power, ability to do good works, and a sound mind.

For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline. 2 Tim 1:7 NLT

I have seen this many times. I remember a particular incident in fellowship on campus. There was a sister who was rather shy, but on this eventful day in which we had a Holy Spirit meeting in fellowship, her countenance changed; she would prophesy, jump to the front to lead prayer and songs, give exhortations, and actually lay hands on people and pray for them. We were all pleasantly surprised. It was as if she was high on something, and she most certainly was — she was filled with the Holy Spirit.

The Spirit of Zeal

The infilling of the Spirit makes the believer have the strength to take a stand for righteousness. It makes the Christian able to make 'dangerous' decisions for the Lord and the kingdom of God.

Those who are filled with the Spirit are not afraid of the threats of the enemy. They are bold for Christ and for the righteous walk. They have their minds set on the things of the spiritual realm and are not tied to the flesh. They lose the spirit of timidity. A sign that one is spiritually down and has lost the Spirit is when such a one can no longer take a bold stand for the Lord and for His word but would start making compromises with the world and with unbelievers for the sake of peace.

The Spirit of God puts the zeal of God into us; we become more passionate about the things of God and the kingdom of God. In our lives the word of God becomes fulfilled which says, *“for zeal for Your house has consumed me”**. It is as if we tap into the heart of God; we start to feel what He feels, we love what He loves, and what He hates turns us off. Sometimes you weep physically, and it is because of the pain in the heart of God.

Yes, the Holy Spirit brings into us the joy of God, but there will be time that we will feel His other

* Psa 69:9

emotions, and it is the same Spirit. We never feel fear of anything though, apart from the fear of God Himself, because God has no fear, but we feel His compassion, His joy, His sorrows, and sometimes His heartbreak.

The important thing I am bringing out is that we feel the passions of God, and we become more passionate for the things of God, as a result of being filled with His Spirit.

RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT



Chapter 10

SIGNS OF THE SPIRIT - 4

Led and Driven by the Spirit

After being baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove and lighting on Him, and behold, a voice out of the heavens said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased." Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness... Matt 3:16-4:1

Another thing that accompanies being filled with the Spirit is that the zeal and ability to pursue the assignment of God for your life comes upon you. A believer filled with the Spirit is zealous for the things of God. The zeal for the house of God consumes the person. If you read about people possessed of evil spirits in the Gospels, you will notice that they are sometimes driven to do things. One boy would be thrown into the fire or water;* a

* Mark 9:22

man was compelled to live in the tombs against his will and not to wear clothes. When the Lord Jesus drove out the demons, they entered the pigs and caused them to rush into water; all the pigs drowned.* Now, these are on the negative side; I am only using them to show the power of spirits. But we are on the positive side with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit infilling children of God will make them do things beyond usual reasoning, but in line with the will of God.

Normally, our daily decisions as Christians are conscious and made through our spiritually enlightened intellect. We are expected to make decisions pleasing to the Lord using the word of God which we understand. We are to increase daily in righteousness and holiness as we increase in understanding. However, when one is filled with the Spirit, there is an added special anointing to guide us into places and decisions which our intellects cannot decide upon. This guidance comes in different ways.

A new urge may become persistent and recurrent

* Luke 8

in the heart of the person. The zeal of God burns. The heart longs after the word more than before. All of these are manifestations of the Spirit. I remember an experience in my early days as a student in the university, when we participated in some of those Holy Spirit meetings. After leaving the place, an urge stayed with me to preach the gospel to people. I did not know what it was until I went to fellowship one day and someone gave a word of knowledge about it. We were supposed to come out and be prayed for so that we will receive a special grace. But I was too young and too 'fearful' to go forward; I missed out in that one. What I am bringing out is that the Spirit created a zeal in us. I wonder what would have happened if I had stepped forward to receive that added anointing. I believe I would have received the boldness needed, which was what I lacked up till then. Yes, there is more than just that urge; the Spirit actually *drives* us when we are full of it.

Many times, I have heard it taught that the Holy Spirit is a gentleman and He does not force or compel anyone to do anything. It is implied that the Holy Spirit only nudges and whispers to children

of God so as to give them direction; for this reason we have to be very sensitive to His gentle nudgings so we don't miss them. When I hear such, I sometimes wonder which Holy Spirit they are speaking of. Yes, He can be gentle, but so also can He be forceful. I don't think King Saul was deliberately yielding to the Spirit when he began to prophesy and fall before Samuel. Not at all. There is a kind of infilling of the Spirit one will have that he will actually lose control. No one needs to yield to wine when it has been consumed in excess; your yielding to wine is in drinking plenty of it. If the Spirit fills you enough, you don't have to yield to it; it will take you over.

The disciples in the Upper Room were not trying to do anything; the Spirit *made* them do those things. Our point of control is when we yield for the Spirit to come into us. When we are filled, there is no limit to what He can do without our *further* consent. The Holy Spirit actually propels and compels us to follow the Lord and His assignment for that moment. He can make you do things you did not plan for. You will find yourself in a place you did not plan to go, doing things you did not plan to do

or even considered you could do. It is as you are driven by the force of the Spirit. Ezekiel testifies about his own experience in this regard.

As He spoke to me the Spirit entered me and set me on my feet. Ezek 2:2

If we are truly being filled as a church, such a manifestation will happen again and again.

Illustrations

To illustrate, let us read a story told by John G. Lake of an experience he had while ministering in South Africa many years ago. It is about a young man who came to be prayed for so that by being filled with the Spirit the yearning in his heart might be satisfied. According to him...*

So without more ado he came forward and knelt, and looking up he said to me, "Lay your hands on my head and pray." And as I did the Spirit of God descended on Von Shield in an unusual manner. He was baptized in the Holy Ghost very wonderfully, indeed. He was a transformed man. I tell you from that hour that man

* From the sermon, *The Real Christian*, by John G. Lake.

became the living personification of the power of God, and in all my life I have never found a soul through whom such majestic, intense flashes of power would come as through that soul at intervals. He was not a student of the Word of God. Presently, he disappeared. His father came to me saying, "I am troubled about Harry. He took a Bible and went off into the mountains almost three weeks ago, and they tell me he has gone up to such a mountain, a long piece off. I am afraid he is going insane."

I said, "Brother, do not worry yourself. One of these days he will come down in the glory and power of God." I knew what was in that fellow's heart.

One day he returned under such an anointing of the Spirit as I had never before witnessed on any life.

The young man was fired up with the zeal of God and the Spirit drove him into the wilderness, so to speak, for a period, and he returned in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Kenneth E. Hagin told an experience in which he ministered through laying on of hands to a woman who had a deadly disease. He said he often told the

incomplete story when ministering at other times after this, until the day one of his co-workers pointed out to him that he wasn't telling the whole story. He was surprised to find out through many witnesses about how he had actually ministered to the woman. Actually, he had jumped off the platform to cast out demons of infirmity and death from the woman. They testified it was like a tiger pouncing on a prey as he tore at those demons. The woman was fully delivered, and he went back to the platform to continue preaching, but he had no recollection of that part. He only remembered that he had laid hands on her on the platform. Apparently, he was filled with the Spirit and the Spirit used him without his being aware of it.

In my ministry, I am often amazed at what people will relate to me that I said while preaching, many of which had come to pass, and I would have absolutely no recollection of saying such. Again, apparently, I would speak by the Spirit, and not even know I said anything immediately afterwards. My own understanding had nothing to do with it. It was simply a prophetic Spirit and not my own intellect.

The Spirit of God drives people. It propels and compels them. That is one of the manifestations of being full of the Spirit. Many of the good works we are to do will not be accomplished by our intellectual decisions and calculations, but by the fullness of the Spirit in our lives. We will find ourselves accomplishing great things for the Lord in different areas of life and ministry, and we will not even know when we started it.



Chapter II

LIVING BY THE SPIRIT

Operations and Manifestations of the Spirit

Now, dear brothers and sisters, regarding your question about the special abilities the Spirit gives us. I don't want you to misunderstand... 1 Cor 12:1 NLT

When the Spirit comes into a person, the infilling comes with supernatural operations. Like I said earlier, it is not just about speaking in tongues. Speaking in tongues is one, and prophecy is another one of those special manifestations, but there are more.

In this portion of the letter to the Corinthians, Paul sought to show the church different types of manifestations of the Spirit so they would understand.

There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit gives them. There are different ways of serving,

but the same Lord is served. There are different abilities to perform service, but the same God gives ability to all for their particular service. 1 Cor 12:4-6 GNT

It is easy to notice that Paul was not addressing only the preachers and pastors, but the whole church. The manifestations of the Spirit are not limited to the lives of preachers at all. Every child of God is supposed to receive the Holy Spirit and have the ability and power of God manifest in their lives as a result, in different forms and fashions.

The Holy Spirit comes to empower us to live for Christ on this earth and accomplish various assignments that the Lord gives to us. When we are filled with the Spirit, we have abilities that are not natural to us; they are beyond what we may get from training. As a matter of fact, the entrance of the Spirit makes us have more understanding than we had before; we become wiser than before, have more ability to solve difficult problems, become more effective in ministry, etc. These are some of the effects that will be found in believers who are filled with the Spirit.

The Man, Bezalel

There was a man in Israel, whom the Lord said He filled with the Spirit, and he was neither a priest nor a prophet. Usually, under the Old Covenant with Israel, the Spirit used to rest upon judges, kings, priests and prophets, but not the average person around. The only such person said to be filled with the Spirit under that old order was this man, Bezalel.

Then the Lord said to Moses, "Look, I have specifically chosen Bezalel son of Uri, grandson of Hur, of the tribe of Judah. I have filled him with the Spirit of God, giving him great wisdom, ability, and expertise in all kinds of crafts. He is a master craftsman, expert in working with gold, silver, and bronze. He is skilled in engraving and mounting gemstones and in carving wood. He is a master at every craft!" Exo 31:1-5 NLT

Notice that the infilling of the Spirit of God in his life produced skill in craftsmanship. He was a master designer and maker of articles of gold and other metals. He could make fine jewellery. He was a master of every such craft. The ability was Spirit-breathed.

Imagine therefore today an architect who is filled with the Spirit.

Imagine a tailor who is filled with the Spirit.

Think of an engineer who is filled with the Spirit.

Imagine a chef who is filled with the Spirit.

Imagine a school teacher who is filled with the Spirit.

Imagine a student who is full of the Holy Spirit.

We have been called by God to do excellently, but not by our own strength; rather it is to be by the Spirit. Every child of God must determine to live filled with the power of God and manifesting it in every aspect of their lives. We must determine that there will be no aspect of our lives that is not being energized by the Spirit of God. It is a conscious decision that we must each make. Our work must be by the Spirit of God. We are not to trust in our power or our own strength, but in the Spirit of God.

R. G. LeTourneau

Talking about engineers, the story of Robert G. LeTourneau comes to mind. Reading his autobiography,* I saw how a self-taught engineer,

* Mover of Men and Mountains (Prentice-Hall 1960, 1967)

as he sometimes referred to himself, would experience the inspiration of God in producing machine designs. He is described as having had an unequalled impact on the earthmoving equipment industry. He held nearly 300 patents in equipment design, manufacturing processes, and machine tools needed to produce the equipment. The man also used to give 90% of his salary and company profits to mission work.

Sometime in his life as a young man, wanting to serve the Lord fully, he had thought of going into the ministry; he considered being a missionary. Upon requesting counsel from a minister, he was advised that God needs businessmen as much as He needs preachers. That was a turning point for this man; he decided to go back fully into his business as the work of God. Little wonder he was powered by the Spirit.

Oh, what we need these days are Christians in the so-called secular world, who are full of the Holy Spirit. Doctors, nurses, and other medical caregivers, who are filled with the Spirit, will definitely have better results when it comes to

treating sick people. Teachers who are full of the Holy Spirit will be transforming agents in education.

So many times, I have experienced the Spirit of God coming upon me to teach in the secular world. The fact is that there is nothing secular for the Christian—everything is the work of God for us. As I would go to teach a class of students, I would confess the word of God before going into the class, and I would always feel the difference. Inspiration would come on how to explain things and make them clear. There have been times the Spirit would make me study something totally unrelated to the subject at hand before going to class, only to get there and find a student bring up a question in that area. Without that study I just did, I would not have been able to explain it, but the Holy Spirit knew it would happen, and He made me prepare adequately ahead. These are signs of the Spirit in the child of God.

A Christian in civil service, governance and politics should not be average in function. They should work empowered by the Spirit of God. We have an

example from the Bible in the person of Daniel. Let us see the testimony of others concerning his work:

There is a man in your kingdom who has within him the spirit of the holy gods. During Nebuchadnezzar's reign, this man was found to have insight, understanding, and wisdom like that of the gods. Your predecessor, the king... made him chief over all the magicians, enchanters... of Babylon. This man Daniel... has exceptional ability and is filled with divine knowledge and understanding. He can interpret dreams, explain riddles, and solve difficult problems." Dan 5:11-12 NLT

Please pardon the use of the expression 'holy gods' for a moment; that was the queen mother in Babylon, and she did not understand the one true God; to her, He is 'the holy gods.' But she understood that Daniel had the Spirit of God because she saw the effect. Focus on the manifestations in the life of this man of God.

Daniel's life was marked by signs and wonders. He used to interpret dreams and solve difficult problems. These are the kinds of things that should mark the child of God that is filled with the Spirit of God.

At Work

The word of knowledge and the word of wisdom are not only for church services. They will manifest in the accounting office or the banking hall when we encounter difficult issues, if we put a demand on the Spirit. The scientist will employ these gifts as the Holy Spirit helps him to solve difficult problems. Actually, most scientific leaps are not humanly determined, but are actually inspired by God. We easily overlook this fact because God has often used some who did not acknowledge Him.* Those who might have studied organic Chemistry will remember how August Kekule solved the problem of the structure of Benzene through a dream. The world did not know about cyclical hydrocarbons and were confounded as to what the structure of Benzene might be like. Then Kekule dreamt of a snake with its tail in its mouth. That was not natural; it was God breathing an answer into him.

Charles Townes explained how he got the idea of the MASER** which earned him a shared Nobel

* God often uses those who don't know Him to serve His purpose (Is 45:4)

** Microwave Amplification through Stimulated Emission of Radiation.

Prize in Physics (1964) and which set the stage for the later development of the LASER;* it came as a sudden burst of inspiration, an epiphany, as he sat in a park one morning. He said he believed that it was the same way prophets received messages.** The man believed science and religion should find a convergence point.

If God can give such manifestations to those who do not have the Helper, the Holy Spirit, as a usual companion, how much more should children of God expect such manifestations in their scientific endeavours?

At Home

The word of knowledge and the word of wisdom will work in our everyday lives. They will help find missing items in the home. The inspiration of the Spirit will speak to the mother concerning what the children are up to behind her back. It will help the father give specific instructions concerning how to

* Light Amplification through Stimulated Emission of Radiation.

** He described the experience in his seminal article, "The Convergence of Science and Religion" in the IBM journal THINK in 1966. For this, he was awarded the Templeton prize in 2005. The *Templeton Prize for Progress Toward Research or Discoveries about Spiritual Realities* was founded in 1972 by Sir John Templeton.

manage the home and the finances thereof.

You cannot rule your house well, keeping your children in subjection with all gravity, as the Lord expects of you,* except by the Spirit of God. There will be signs, wonders and various operations of the Spirit to help you do this.

Imagine that your son snuck out of the house and your heart went with him as he turned aside to join a wrong group of friends, just as the Lord gave Elisha revelation concerning Gehazi. He will learn the fear of God when you confront him. He will know that there is God in your house.

...the secrets of his heart are disclosed; and so he will fall on his face and worship God, declaring that God is certainly among you. 1 Cor 14:25

A woman gave a testimony of how her child became depressed but would not reveal what was wrong with him to her. He kept saying nothing was wrong. So, she prayed, and the Lord reminded her of something that happened to her when she was

* 1 Tim 3:4, KJV

young. She was small-sized and she was being mocked that she would never grow big. Well, she realized that was a word of knowledge, and that the Lord was telling her something. She told the story of her childhood experience at the next morning's family devotion, and testified of how God had blessed her over the years and she became a grown and full-sized person. As she told the story, the son lifted his head and asked a few questions. She answered and his spirit revived. Well, it turned out that he was at that time going through the same thing his mother went through. He was being mocked and bullied in school, but he kept it to himself. The Lord solved it with a word of knowledge given to the mother.

You cannot be an effective parent without the gifts of the Holy Spirit operating, consciously or unconsciously, in your life. As a father and as a mother, you must have the word of knowledge, the word of wisdom, and prophecy operating in you to raise children well. These are tools for everyday use; they are not meant for show in church services.

What about working of miracles? It is not limited to

preachers. Miracles will happen in the home. Multiplying of food has not passed away. God multiplied food for the widow when she was visited by the prophet during famine, until food returned to the land. This was not done for the sake of Elijah the prophet, but to save the woman's life.*

When I was young, a man of God told us of how God multiplied food for him and his household. They had a bag of rice which seemed inexhaustible, until the wife shouted one day, "this rice, won't you ever finish?" It happened that the day she said that, the rice ceased. It finished that day. They had been sustained by it for a long time. The same man testified of how he prayed water to flow in the home when he travelled with his young family to see his parents. He prayed until dry taps began to flow with water. The water that was stored up that day did not reduce in volume, even after over a week of consumption, as he had declared. He had told them at the beginning that the reservoir would remain full until he leaves the house.

Those days when my wife was trading in goods,

* 1 Kgs 17:16, Luke 4:26

mostly clothing, it would happen many times that she would look at her store, and be unhappy with the volume of unsold items. Then she would pray, and then go in and lay hands on the goods, commanding them to be sold, in the name of the Lord. Over the next few days, the calls would start coming in, and testimonies of miraculous sales would abound. This happened again and again.

There is working of miracles as a gift of the Spirit available to every Christian, who is filled with the Spirit. We should be bold to pray for the sick and expect the gifts of healings to manifest. It is not limited to preachers alone. It is one of the signs of the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Don't be satisfied with speaking in tongues only, but earnestly desire the manifestation of more gifts in your life. Expect the manifestations of these gifts of the Spirit. They are the effect of the presence of the Holy Spirit with you.

Visions and Revelations

I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. 2 Cor 12:1 KJV

Another manifestation of the presence of the Holy Spirit is visions and revelations. These are different from the gifts of the Spirit Paul explained in that twelfth chapter of the first letter to the Corinthians. Here we are talking about visions, dreams (which are visions of the night) and special visitations of angels and the Lord Himself.

Paul was taught the gospel by special visitations of the Lord Jesus. He told him after his conversion that He will reveal many things to him through visitations.

...I have appeared to you to appoint you as my servant and witness. You are to tell the world what you have seen and what I will show you in the future. Acts 26:16 NLT

That was why Paul was bold to say that what he knew of the gospel, he did not get from any man but by a revelation, or visitation, of the Lord.* When he told of the events at the Last Supper, he was telling of what the Lord Himself described to him. He didn't hear it first from Peter, John, or any of the

* Gal 1:11, 12

other apostles, but because the Lord Jesus appeared to him and told him.

For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread... 1 Cor 11:23

Let us look at the life of another of God's servants in the scriptures. Philip was ministering by the power of God and was preaching the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans.

But an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip saying, "Get up and go south to the road that descends from Jerusalem to Gaza. Acts 8:26

That was how he met the now famous Ethiopian Eunuch. It is not every time you will make the right decisions by sound spiritual reasoning, or through the nudging of the Spirit; there are times an angel of the Lord will appear to you and minister the word of God to you.

My point is that these are the kinds of things that the Holy Spirit activates in our lives. We must

expect such to happen when we receive the Holy Spirit. It is not just about an initial sign of prophesying or speaking in tongues, but about a life full of the wonders of God.



Chapter 12

MEET THE HOLY SPIRIT

Two Different Experiences

Every Christian must have a point in his or her life, after being born again, at which they received the Holy Spirit for the first time. It is the point of being introduced to the experience of being filled with the Spirit. Let us call it an introduction to the Lord the Spirit.

Now, many people have argued that each believer receives the Spirit upon being born again, that it is part of the new birth experience, but that viewpoint can be easily seen to be inaccurate when we check the evidence of the scriptures. Certainly, in the lives of some persons, the two experiences may come so close to each other that they could be said to have happened together. This was the kind of thing that happened in the household of Cornelius. In their case, before Peter even had the opportunity to ask them to make a decision for Christ, they were

already filled with the Spirit. We understand that they must have been born again while Peter preached—they definitely believed what he was preaching. But that is not proof that being born again automatically comes with being filled with the Spirit, or that the two are the same. We can easily see that they are different from the experiences of other persons.

First, look at the one in Samaria.

Now when the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent them Peter and John, who came down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit. For He had not yet fallen upon any of them; they had simply been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they began laying their hands on them, and they were receiving the Holy Spirit.
Acts 8:14-17

This is so clear that it hardly needs any explanation. The people received the word of God, believed, and were baptized, but the Holy Spirit had not fallen on them. Peter and John had to come down to pray for them so that they might receive the Holy Spirit as

another experience.

The same thing is clearly illustrated by the life of Paul who did not receive the Spirit until days after meeting the Lord. He only received when Ananias came to see him on the instruction of the Lord. The Lord Jesus *Himself* sent Ananias to go and lay hands on Paul so that he might have his sight restored and also to receive the Holy Spirit.* We can easily see the fact that receiving the Spirit is not the same as becoming born again, and also that they don't always go together. That was why Paul asked the question when he met some God-fearers at Ephesus, whom he noticed some deficits in them.

Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?"
Acts 19:2

The question indicates that it is possible not to receive the Holy Spirit at the point of believing.

Now let us note that Paul had an expectation. Even though we are dealing with two clearly different experiences, he expected that they should have

* Acts 9:17

received the Spirit when or soon after they believed. Someone should have been careful to minister the Holy Spirit to them. The believer should quickly be introduced to the Holy Spirit and begin to have the experience of being constantly filled with the Spirit. That was why Peter and John rushed quickly to Samaria as soon as they heard that the word of God had been received there. It is a matter of urgency, and it is not supposed to be a hard thing. The moment you explain who the Holy Spirit is and what it means to receive the in-filling of the Spirit, they will receive, if they open their hearts.

The Holy Spirit comes upon the believer and fills him with the power of God. That power makes the person bold to stand with the testimony of his faith. The power comes to give understanding, and to bring various manifestations of the spiritual.

Can I Receive by Faith?

Is it possible for someone to receive the infilling of the Spirit simply 'by faith'? By this, I mean for someone to believe that he has received the Spirit simply because he asked the Father in prayer, but

not yet having any sign such as speaking in tongues or prophesying?

Now, if the principle of 'receiving by faith' works in anything, it most certainly works here.

Therefore I say to you, all things for which you pray and ask, believe that you have received them, and they will be granted you. Mark 11:24

If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?" Luke 11:13

It used to amaze me that some of us would teach that we can receive healing by this kind of faith but will say that unless we see the sign, such as speaking with tongues, we cannot say or be confident that we have received the Spirit. I don't think that is being consistent. As a matter of fact, a child of God who goes to Him in prayer, asking for the Lord to fill him with the Spirit can leave there confident that the Lord heard and answered, as the prayer is certainly in line with the will of God. What would be the evidence that such a person has received? The

evidence is the promise of God. He promised He would answer such a prayer. That is what faith is.

Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. Heb 11:1

What I am saying is that every child of God should be confident to go to Him in prayer and ask to be filled. Leave there believing that you have received the gift from the Father. Confess your faith, that "I have received the Holy Spirit because my Father is faithful to His promises. I asked Him to fill me with the Spirit, and I know He heard me. Now I am filled with the Spirit of God. I have the power of God working in me." Make this confession boldly and often. The manifestation will definitely come when it is needed.

I like the way Witness Lee says this:*

We must take the baptism in the Holy Spirit by living faith. If we are right with the Body of Christ, we are in a position to take the baptism in the Holy Spirit. We should

* From *The Divine Economy* by Witness Lee. Published by Living Stream Ministry

realize that it has already been accomplished and now exists upon the Body of Christ. As members of the Body of Christ maintaining a right relationship with the Body, we are entitled to claim it through the exercise of living faith. We must take it just as we took the value of the Lord's redeeming death. We did not take that according to our feeling or any kind of so-called manifestation. We received the Lord's redemption simply by believing, and the Lord honored it. When we believe in the accomplished fact of the Lord's death for our sins, the Holy Spirit quietly honors our faith; forgiveness of sins and divine life are imparted to us, and we have peace and joy within. We just believe what the Lord has accomplished according to what we are told in the Will (the New Testament). The Will also tells us that the baptism in the Holy Spirit is accomplished upon the Body of Christ and waiting to be taken. We who are rightly related with the Body of Christ should simply take it by living faith. If we mean business with the Lord, He will honor our faith, and we will experience it.

All the signs that we have seen that follow being filled with the Spirit will begin to show in your life from that time and as time goes on. Remember to keep the switch of faith turned on, and to employ

all the other means for being filled, which we have seen, as the Lord will make them available.

The truth is that the Lord may choose different methods to perfect what He began at that time of prayer in the life of that child of God. He may want a transference of an anointing from a certain individual; He may want someone, for certain reasons, to prophesy upon you to both impart a spirit and to give you a message, and most certainly He wants us to keep being filled by being constantly filled with the word of Christ. We must pay attention to all these.



Chapter 13

KEEP BEING FILLED - 1

The Right Company

Once the child of God has received the Holy Spirit, it is important that he keeps filled. Like we have already alluded to here and there, it is not a *once-and-it-is-done* experience. We can be filled again and again, and we should be. The best thing is to maintain a constant infilling.

And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father. Eph 5:18-20

We have already seen the various ways by which a person can be filled with the Spirit, and like we saw earlier, the number-one way to do this is to keep being filled with the word of God. It is to be

deliberate. Fill yourself with the word of God for the purpose of drinking the Spirit in it.

Also, fill your environment with the right influences, just as we earlier saw. Be deliberate to obey the word which David admonished us with.

*How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel
of the wicked,
Nor stand in the path of sinners,
Nor sit in the seat of scoffers!
But his delight is in the law of the Lord,
And in His law he meditates day and night. Psa 1:1-2*

Keep company with people who are full of the Spirit as much as possible, and avoid those who drain the Spirit from you. Keep company with true believers, people who fear the Lord, as it is written...

...they that feared the Lord spake often one to another...
Mal 3:16 KJV

When you are together, what are you to do?

Speak out to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, offering praise with voices [and instruments] and making melody with all your heart to the Lord. Eph 5:19

What you do when you are with other brethren is only an outflow of what you have been doing when alone. On your own, put that word of God on your lips. Joshua was told that the power for victory comes from meditating on the word day and night. The word 'meditate' means to mutter to oneself and to ruminate. If you do this constantly, then when you gather with friends, it will be a natural overflow.

And of course, you will meditate on the things which fill your heart. The heart is filled through the focus of the eyes and the attention of the ears. It is what you spend time reading and listening to that will fill your heart.

These are practical things. Read books and social media messages that speak of the Lord and His works. Use your electronic device for all these actions. These are the things that will spill out of

you, as it is written that, *the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart.* *

The Habit of Thanksgiving

Always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father. Eph 5:20

I think one of the most important things we must make into a regular practice is the matter of thanksgiving. The habit of continual thanksgiving and praise to the Lord is a potent instrument for keeping filled with the Spirit. There are so many things to thank God for. We are to be deliberate about counting these things in giving thanks to the Lord.

*Bless the Lord, O my soul,
And forget none of His benefits;
Who pardons all your iniquities,
Who heals all your diseases;
Who redeems your life from the pit,
Who crowns you with lovingkindness and compassion;
Who satisfies your years with good things,
So that your youth is renewed like the eagle.* Ps 103:2-5

* Matt 12:34

We give God thanks for the promises He gave us in His word. These are the good things that He satisfies us with. The good things are beyond the material, even though we give thanks for those ones too. We are to be deliberate in giving thanks for all the provision of food, shelter and bodily health. Giving God thanks every time we are about to eat or drink is an important practice.

Also, we give thanks for the things that He did for us in Christ Jesus. Forgiveness of sins is a major one of them. We are redeemed in Christ. We have been purchased by the blood of Jesus Christ. We are a new creation in Him; old things have passed away.

Paul was very profuse in giving thanks for the churches; I think we should learn from that. He gave thanks for his work, the church, and for the people he loved. There were many things wrong in the churches, but before he would say anything about the things that were out of order, he almost always would start with thanking God. He gave thanks especially for the faith of the brethren and for the love they had for one another. He gave thanks that the word was coming to them and that

they were abounding in the things of the Spirit. We must give thanks for our relationships in Christ.

Thanksgiving is by faith, even though the things we see do help, but our first focus must be on the spiritual as we give thanks. We thank God for His word and we thank Him for the things that are happening around us, including things we do not like or don't understand. We must give thanks even for the things that look bad, simply because we understand the word of God which says...

And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. Rom 8:28

Oh, there are so many things to give the Lord thanks for.

The Habit of Praise

Praise is closely related to thanksgiving, of course. In praise we are telling of the power and glory of God. We are declaring what we recognize about His power and character. We may offer the praises to Him in prayer or declare it for all creation and

creatures—man, spirits and others—to hear. We call Him names as revealed to us in the scriptures. The following are examples:

For the kingdom is the Lord's: and he is the governor among the nations. Psa 22:28 KJV

The Lord, the Lord God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth; who keeps lovingkindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity. Exo 34:6-7

He makes the barren woman abide in the house, As a joyful mother of children. Psa 113:9

Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. 1 Tim 1:17

I am the first and the last, and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades. Rev 1:17-18

One of the things that Satan and the world try to do is to make us give praise and glory to another god. Satan often makes believers ascribe glory to many things and many persons other than the Lord

Himself. We sometimes speak as if prosperity came to us from our labour. We speak as if our smartness gave us all the wealth around us. We are tempted so that we will forget that it is the Lord who gives the power to create wealth.* What we have so done is to remove praise from the Lord. It is a killer of the Spirit in us. We will see more of these killers later.

Many times, Christians join unbelievers in ascribing prosperity to a nation and the leaders thereof, and ascribing blame to humans and nations for the lack of abundance in their lives. These are all the opposite of praise. We must be careful to give God the glory due to His name. Prosperity is from Him, but He also punishes nations and sends adversity. It is praise to speak of such.

*But the Lord is the true God;
He is the living God and the everlasting King.
At His wrath the earth quakes,
And the nations cannot endure His indignation.*
Jer 10:10

* Deut 8:18

Then he told me, "Son of man, I will make food very scarce in Jerusalem. It will be weighed out with great care and eaten fearfully. The water will be rationed out drop by drop, and the people will drink it with dismay." Ezek 4:16 NLT

When you see good around, give Him glory. When you see adversity, recognize His wrath and glorify His name just the same. When we do so, we are able to plead for mercy and so end the wrath and provoke blessings, but when we don't, we continue in darkness and prolong the day of wrath.

Praise is to recognize and acknowledge the hand of God all around. Let us not glorify the devil or any false god. A habit of praise and thanksgiving keeps us filled with the Spirit.

RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT



Chapter 14

KEEP BEING FILLED - 2

Praying in the Spirit

There is a list of prayer and prayer-like spiritual activities* we must be engaged in if we are to keep filled with the Spirit.

With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit... Eph 6:18

What does it mean to pray in the Spirit?** Many times, we are tempted to think it means to pray in other tongues; we say this because Paul said, "If I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is

* Prayer, by definition, is talking to the Father and the Lord Jesus; but there are other activities that are powerful in the realm of the spirit that we also do. These include meditations, confession of the word and declarations. Many times, we lump all of them together as prayer but, strictly speaking, they are not all prayer.

** Note that spirit or Spirit is not distinguished in the original text of the New Testament; when 'the Holy...' is not attached, we have to use the context to know whether it is talking of the spirit of man, the Spirit of God, or simply the realm of the spiritual. However, they are sometimes all merged into one thing.

unfruitful.” For this reason, we have often interpreted every place in the New Testament where 'praying' is joined with 'spirit' as meaning praying in tongues.

Well, we should note that to do something in the spirit (or Spirit) is a very common expression in the Bible, especially in the New Testament. For example, we can love in the spirit, purpose in the spirit, walk in the spirit, and be in the spirit. Of course, we can pray in the spirit, and most importantly, we are to worship in spirit.* This shows that there is definitely more to praying in the spirit/Spirit than praying in unknown tongues. Praying in the spirit certainly can and often does overflow into praying in other tongues in which “my spirit prays but my understanding is unfruitful,”** but that is not all.

What does it mean to do something in the spirit?

It means to do it with sincerity, without guile, and beyond simply following instructions. It is to do it

* Col 1:8, Acts 19:21, Gal 5:16, Rev 1:10, Eph 6:18, John 4:24

** 1 Cor 14:14

from the bottom of your heart, like we say, or with a whole heart.

When the Lord Jesus said that the Father is seeking those who will worship Him in spirit and in truth, the Lord was contrasting with worshipping in a mountain or a temple. It was a contrast with things done in the flesh in which the worshipper was only following the instructions of Moses or the traditions of the fathers. Usually, the word of God uses “in the spirit” or 'in spirit', to show opposition to that which is in the flesh.

However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Rom 8:9

To do something in the spirit/Spirit means to do it with the following qualities:

- In sincerity, based on personal conviction.
- According to the will of God and the word of God.
- In love.
- In compassion.

- As inspired by the Spirit of God and with the power of the Holy Spirit; for example, when your spirit prays.

So, to pray in the spirit is the opposite of praying in the flesh or rote-praying. Praying in the flesh is when we pray according to liturgy, according to prayer books, and as a routine—a thing which can be done absentmindedly, yet appearing as much activity.

To pray in the spirit is to come to God, conscious of who He is, bringing prayer points according to His word and according to love and compassion. It is what James called the prayer of faith. Note that the prayer of faith is not a special type of prayer as all genuine prayers that get the attention of Heaven, are prayers of faith. Whether it is intercession or supplication or worship; they are all prayers of faith, otherwise they would not be effective.

...pray [also] for one another, that you may be healed and restored... The earnest (heartfelt, continued) prayer of a righteous man makes tremendous power available. Jas 5:16 AMP

Many times, when you are praying in the spirit, as I have here described, you get to a point in which you do not have words to explain your desires or the burden placed upon your heart; at such times the Holy Spirit would often take over your tongue and you will begin to pray in other tongues, or you may begin to have the groanings of the Spirit, as we have already seen. The prayer may be initiated by the Spirit of God, in which you are not even clear concerning what you are to pray about, but you have a burden in your heart to pray. Such prayers cannot be prayed any other way but by that anointing of God that bursts forth in other tongues and with groanings that are too deep for clear words. The Holy Spirit is only thus using our members and authority to pray.

When the bubbles of the Spirit come forth from you in other tongues, please let it flow. Do not quench the Spirit. If it is in a public place, then you may quickly excuse yourself and run into a lonely place to release the pressure of the Spirit. Continue to pray in other tongues, and in your understanding, if understanding is given, until that burden lifts.

Praying at All Times

A person who will be constantly filled with the Spirit must be one who prays at all times in the spirit. He is a man of compassion, who knows he is to bring it all to God in prayer. He fulfils the words of the Lord Jesus who taught us that we ought always to pray and not to lose heart. Paul said we are to pray without ceasing.*

As we have already seen, the prayer of worship, which includes praise and thanksgiving, is an important form of prayer and we must continue in it. Also, we must come forth all the time with the prayer of consecration, in which we constantly lay ourselves down before the Lord, telling Him that we will live for Him alone, and that His will is what we will seek and do always. This prayer of consecration is also an integral part of the prayer of worship

And there is more. We tackle all temptations with prayer. Just like the Lord Jesus who when the visions of the cross were overwhelming for His flesh, He went to the garden to pray. "I know how I

* Luke 18:1, 1 Thes 5:17

feel, but Father, no matter how I feel, it is not my will but yours that must be done.” That is how to tap into the Spirit of God that empowers us to overcome temptations.

The supply of the Spirit is available to the one who thus prays constantly.

RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT



Chapter 15

KEEP BEING FILLED - 3

Meditation and Confession

Now let us see some prayer-like activities that we must engage in as part of our keeping filled with the Spirit.

We have already seen that one way by which we tap the Spirit is by paying attention to the word of God. Well, the Spirit of God tells us that the word you have heard must be constantly recycled through our mouths if we want the power therein to continue to flow through us.

This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night... Josh 1:8

If you ever wondered why the contrast is between meditating and the word departing from your mouth, it is because to meditate means to mutter the word to yourself quietly. To meditate is beyond

mere contemplating in thought, but to think with the heart and mutter with the lips. It is to constantly confess the word of God.

You want to see a child of God who is full of the Spirit? Then look for the one who is constantly meditating on the word of God. The Spirit in the word constantly flows into such a person.

*But his delight is in the law of the Lord,
And in His law he meditates day and night. Psa 1:2*

This portion of the scriptures keeps coming back in this book. Note that we have already seen how the company we keep affects us, reading from this Psalm. It is beyond merely avoiding the wrong ambience, but we must go further to constantly generate the right one around us with meditation.

What are you to meditate upon? (Remember that meditation is to ruminate and mutter words to yourself.)

Meditate on the greatness of God.
Meditate on His past works.

Meditate on who Christ is.

Meditate on what the Father did in Christ Jesus for you and for all who believe, such as the forgiveness of sins.

Meditate on what you have become in Christ. You are a new creature, and you have been made righteous.

Meditate on His power working through you.

Let me summarise the things we are to meditate on and confess, using the words of Paul:

...how rich are the wonderful blessings he promises his people, and how very great is his power at work in us who believe. This power working in us is the same as the mighty strength which he used when he raised Christ from death... Christ rules there above all heavenly rulers, authorities, powers, and lords; he has a title superior to all titles of authority in this world and in the next. God put all things under Christ's feet and gave him to the church as supreme Lord over all things. Eph 1:18-21 GNT

People of God, keep your mouth uttering these things all the time, and you will find the power of God surge through you.

Sample

The following are the kinds of words we are to put on our lips in meditation and confession of the word.

The Person of Christ *

I am a believer in Christ Jesus, the Son of God, who came and died for my sins; and not mine only but that of the whole world.

This my Jesus Christ is the visible likeness of the invisible God.

He is the first-born Son, superior to all created things, for through Him God created everything in heaven and on earth, whether visible or invisible. God created everything through Him and for Him.

Jesus Christ existed before all things; it is He who upholds all things by the power in His word.

He is the head of the church, which is His body. And He is the source of life for the body.

He is the first-born Son, who was raised from death, in order that He alone might have the first place in all things. The Father has decided that the Son has in Himself the full nature of God.

Through Christ, God reconciles all things to Himself.

* Col 1:13-20, Psa 2, Jer 10:6-16

God made peace through the blood of Jesus on the cross and so brought back to Himself all things, both on earth and in heaven.

The Father has spoken, "The whole earth and the nations therein are the possession of the Son."

Anyone who does not submit to the Son will be destroyed out of the way by the fury of His anger.

He is seated at the right hand of the Father, and from there He is coming to judge the nations of the earth.

There is none like the Lord Jesus.

He is great, and His name is full of power

He is the King of all nations; all will fear Him

Among all the wise rulers of the earth

and in all the kingdoms of the world,

there is no one like Him.

He is the living God and the everlasting King!

The whole earth trembles at His anger.

When He speaks in the thunder, the heavens roar with rain.

He is the Creator of everything that exists, including Israel, His own special possession.

The Lord of hosts is His name!

*The Work of Christ**

In Christ Jesus, the Father rescued us all from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of His dear Son; in Him we have redemption and the forgiveness of sins.

He died that we may have life. Because of Him, we live.

On that cross, He paid for all my sins and washed them away. He made me a child of God.

Now He lives forevermore; He makes intercession for me before the Father.

*What I am in Christ***

My sins are forgiven. I have a new life in Christ. I have the spirit of a son of God.

The same spirit that raised Jesus from the dead is now in me, and it is giving life to my mortal body.

I am a new creation. I am of a new species, of the Second man.

Now, I have been made righteous.

I now walk in righteousness and holiness of truth.

I now walk in the plan of God. I am being washed until every defilement is removed, so that I will be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. One day I will be exactly like He is, in holiness and in righteousness.

* Col 1:13,14 ** Rom 8:11, 2 Cor 5:17, Eph 4:24, John 14:16

The power of God is working in me. The life of Christ is working in me.

I have the power to overcome all temptations. I live above sin. Sin shall have no dominion over me any longer.

I obey the word of God; I walk in the love of God and of the people of God. I walk in the fear of God.

I walk in the Spirit, and I do not fulfil the desires of the flesh.

The Holy Spirit is with me always, as the Lord Jesus promised. I am never without help. I always have the guidance of the Helper. He is leading me into all truth.

*I Live for Christ**

My body is laid down on the altar of God as a living sacrifice.

Now I live for Him alone. I do not live for my own self. I do not have my own ambition; my only ambition is to be found pleasing to Him in all that I do.

My desire is to fulfil the plan He wrote concerning me in His book, plans written before I was formed in my mother's womb; when I did not even know Him.

I have the power to fulfil those plans

I am confident of this because of my trust in God through Christ Jesus. I know I am not qualified to do anything on

* Rom 12:1, 2 Cor 3:4-6, 2 Cor 5:15

my own. Without Him I can do nothing. My ability comes from the Spirit of God by which I have been enabled to be a doer of His work and a minister of His new covenant. This is a covenant not of written laws, but of the Spirit.

Indeed, I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

I am not afraid. I can endure hardship when necessary. I will fulfil all the plans of God for me.

I have the power, like the saints of old, to resist the trials of the enemy. I have the spirit of the martyr, and I will never deny my Lord. I am not of those who draw back unto perdition; but I endure to the end to the glory and pleasure of God.

My household, businesses, career, and all in my care, are circumcised and dedicated to the Lord. They will serve the Lord. My children are taught of the Lord, and great is their peace. They are raised in the knowledge of God and they will know righteousness and justice.

All that I am and all that I have belong to my Lord Jesus Christ.

*I am a Minister of the New Covenant**

The power of apostleship is working in me as He

* Mark 16:17,18

promised.

I am filled with the Spirit; I am filled with power from on high.

Signs follow me. I manifest the power of the Spirit in all that I do. Because I am a believer in Christ Jesus and a messenger of the New Covenant.

By the laying on of my hands, the sick are healed. I speak with new tongues. If I drink any deadly thing, I will not be harmed.

*All My Needs Are Supplied**

*The Lord is my Shepherd, so I lack nothing
He makes all grace abound towards me so that I have all
sufficiency in all things, and I abound to every good
work.*

*My God shall supply all my needs according to His
riches in glory through Christ Jesus.*

*I am free from the love of money, because I know His
word, that He will never leave me nor ever forsake me.
Therefore I boldly say, the Lord is my Helper, there is
nothing any man can do against me.*

*The angels of God have charge concerning me; they keep
me in all my ways.*

* Psa 23:1, 2 Cor 9:8, Phil 4:19, Heb 13:5,6

*There is none like my God**

*There is none like the God of Israel, the people of God,
Who rides the heavens to my help; He rides through the
skies in His majesty.*

*The eternal God is my dwelling place, and underneath
me are His everlasting arms;*

*He drives out all enemies from before me, pronouncing
destruction on their paths.'*

*So I dwell in safety, the fountain of my life secluded in a
land of grain and new wine;*

The heavens over me drop down dew.

I am blessed. The church of Jesus Christ is blessed.

*There is none like the people of God, a people saved by the
Lord, who is the shield of our help, and the sword of our
majesty!*

*So our enemies will cringe before us,
And we will tread upon their high places."*

* Deut 33:26-29



Chapter 16

QUENCH NOT THE SPIRIT

Plug All Leaks

Do not quench the Spirit. 1 Thes 5:19

To keep a vessel full, you don't only have to fill it, you also have to ensure there are no leaks. It is the reason why we do not fetch water with a basket; it leaks so fast from its many holes that one can't fill it fast enough.

No matter how much we spend energy filling our spiritual vessels with the Spirit of God, if there are leaks in the vessel, it may drain so fast it will be like we are not being filled at all. Remember that the aim is to be *full* of the Holy Spirit. So, we must plug all leaks to our vessels and avoid anything that will produce leaks. The following are the drains of the Spirit and the killers of anointing to avoid in this walk of faith.

Sin

Do not cast me away from Your presence

And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. Psa 51:11

Why did David pray the way he did here? It was because he had done a thing that he understood would result in his being cast away from the presence of God, and having the Spirit of God removed from him. He had committed adultery with Bathsheba and had murdered Uriah, her husband.

Sin is a mighty drain of the Spirit.

David must have remembered that this was the way Saul lost the Spirit too. Saul was instructed by God to carry out His vengeance against the Amalekites, but he did not fully obey. When he was rebuked through the ministry of Samuel, he was stubborn in his ways and would not repent. As a result, the Lord rejected him as king in Israel and removed His Spirit from him.

The Lord's spirit left Saul, and an evil spirit sent by the Lord tormented him. 1 Sam 16:14 GNT

Sin is a killer of God's power. Many have taught as if it was only under the former times that sin had such an effect; they claim that grace does not allow such under the New Testament. But that assertion is totally false. Grace actually heightened the demand for holiness, as it was spoken by the Lord, "To whom much is given, much is required." We have abundance of grace and so we have no excuse for sin. No one, especially Christians, should continue in disobedience to the express instructions of the Lord and expect that there will be no judgment. The problem is that judgment for sin does not come so early, but definitely it will come, if not stopped by confession and repentance.

Now these things happened as examples for us, so that we would not crave evil things as they also craved. Do not be idolaters, as some of them were... Nor let us act immorally, as some of them did... Nor let us try the Lord, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the serpents. Nor grumble, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer. Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. Therefore let him

who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall. 1 Cor 10:6-12

This was what Samson did not realize. Though he was a special child, filled with the Spirit by calling from his youth, yet Samson shipwrecked his life and lost the Spirit when he needed it most. He thought that his immoral lifestyle meant nothing because he was 'called of God' and had the anointing. He did not know that sin is a potent poison that removes the anointing. Samson did not have the strength to resist the pressures of Delilah because he had lost his spiritual strength little by little, here and there, in those houses of harlots and women he used to visit.*

The anointing does not remove the effect of sin; it only gives you the power to work for God. When Satan wants to cripple the ability of the child of God, he fires up the temptations to sin. Sin redirects the power of God in your life for the purposes of the enemy, and that is one major reason God has to remove the Spirit on the person or remove the

* For a more detailed teaching on this, please see the little book, *Beyond Gifts and Talents*. (Visit pastor.ng)

person. This was what Satan wanted to achieve when he tempted the Lord Jesus even after He was anointed by the Holy Spirit.

See, sin will leak the power of God out of our lives. Balaam understood this and that was how he counselled Balak to tackle Israel.

Balaam had been hired by Balak to curse the children of Israel for him so that he might overcome them in battle. Now, Balaam heard from God clearly, and prophesied accordingly, that Israel could not be cursed. He declared:

*No curse can touch Jacob;
no magic has any power against Israel.* Num 23:23 NLT

The power of God to protect them was too strong. So what could they do? Because he understood spiritual things, he knew the effect sin would have in the lives of the people of God. So, he taught Balak how to overcome Israel from within. He was to send his ladies to go and entice the men of Israel into sexual immorality and feasting in a festival to the gods of Moab.

...you have there some who hold the teaching of Balaam, who kept teaching Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit acts of immorality. Rev 2:14

And it would have worked, but that the Lord quickly intervened before the plague spread to the whole of the camp of the people of God, but even then, it was at the cost of 23,000 lives. Sin is deadly.

Please if you want to be full of the Holy Spirit, avoid sexual immorality and other forms of sins. Obey these instructions of Paul simply:

God wants you to be holy and completely free from sexual immorality. Each of you should know how to live with your wife in a holy and honorable way, not with a lustful desire, like the heathen who do not know God. In this matter, then, none of you should do wrong to other Christians or take advantage of them. We have told you this before, and we strongly warned you that the Lord will punish those who do that. God did not call us to live in immorality, but in holiness. So then, whoever rejects this teaching is not rejecting a human being, but God, who gives you his Holy Spirit. 1 Thess 4:3-8 GNT

Let there be no sexual immorality, impurity, or greed among you. Such sins have no place among God's people. Obscene stories, foolish talk, and coarse jokes—these are not for you. Instead, let there be thankfulness to God. You can be sure that no immoral, impure, or greedy person will inherit the Kingdom of Christ and of God. For a greedy person is an idolater, worshiping the things of this world.

Don't be fooled by those who try to excuse these sins, for the anger of God will fall on all who disobey him. Don't participate in the things these people do. Eph 5:3-7 NLT

The spirit of disobedience is a mark of the children of this age and not of the children of God. Therefore, we believers must crucify the flesh by denying it its desires so that we can walk in the holiness of Christ. If we do this, we would have plugged a major hole through which the Spirit of God in us drains away.

Lack of Acknowledgment

One other important thing that kills the manifestation of the Spirit in us is when we are not careful to acknowledge the works of God and

follow it up with thanksgiving. It is a dangerous thing.

Many times, God does a special thing in our lives, and we are tempted to call it common. As an example, we pass an examination through a special manifestation of the Spirit, but our friends come to praise our abilities and we accept the praise, either actively or passively. That is not right. We must be careful to give the glory to the Spirit of God at such times. We must let people know that it was the favour of God and His power that was in manifestation.

There was a time some people tried to ascribe to Paul and Barnabas glory that was due to the Lord Jesus; this was after the healing of the man who had been crippled all his life at Lystra. The people shouted, "These men are gods who have come to us in human form." They proceeded to prepare sacrifices to be offered to them. These apostles quickly came and openly rejected it, redirecting the praise to where it belonged.

...saying, "Men, why are you doing these things? We

are also men of the same nature as you, and preach the gospel to you that you should turn from these vain things to a living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all that is in them. Acts 14:15

They were saying in effect, “What you saw is the power of that living God in operation.” They were careful to acknowledge the working of the Spirit of God. The same thing was done by Peter after the healing of the man at the gate called Beautiful. He and John had prayed over the crippled man and he had been healed, and everyone had begun to look at them with awe.

But when Peter saw this, he replied to the people, “Men of Israel, why are you amazed at this, or why do you gaze at us, as if by our own power or piety we had made him walk? The God of Abraham... has glorified His servant Jesus... the one whom God raised from the dead, a fact to which we are witnesses. ...it is the name of Jesus which has strengthened this man... and the faith which comes through Him has given him this perfect health....” Acts 3:12-16

Peter was quick to ascribe the glory to the Lord.

If God manifests His power through His Spirit in your life, you must be careful not to claim the glory, but to give it to the Lord of the Spirit. If you don't do that, you are committing a sin and are quenching further manifestations. Never ascribe the glory to yourself or to any other things, such as chance, or luck. Even if someone else has done a similar thing, but you know that in your life it was by the Spirit of God, then be quick and glorify God in your own life. The fact that the Egyptian magicians were also able to make serpents from their staves did not change the fact that Moses, who did a similar thing first, was operating by the Spirit of God.

(Concerning Herod) The people kept crying out, "The voice of a god and not of a man!" And immediately an angel of the Lord struck him because he did not give God the glory, and he was eaten by worms and died. Acts 12:22-23

Unclean Words

Another major way by which the Spirit leaks from us is through the wrong use of our mouths. Please read again that portion of the scriptures quoted a few lines above from the letter to the Ephesians.

Paul warned about obscene or filthy and silly talk, or joking in a worldly manner, which includes vulgar jokes. Also, elsewhere he warned about grumbling, which is actually a very grievous sin in the eyes of the Lord. None of these should be found in the lives of children of God. These things seriously grieve the Spirit of God and cause a drain on the anointing. You cannot be full of the Spirit and your mouth will not be a fountain of life.

I have found grumbling, which is an expression of lack of thanksgiving, to be a very potent killer of the anointing. It is a thing that God hates so much, so much that He swore in His provocation that the people of Israel, whom He had delivered with a mighty hand from Egypt, would not enter the Promised Land. Grumbling is an attitude and it is evil. A grumbler or murmurer will always find something wrong in every situation. Such persons tend not to be able to see the good the Lord has done for them. They have lost the ability to count their blessings.

I have found a lot of my fellow Christian countrymen in this category. They seem to be

chronically angry with the nation and its rulers, and are so unable to count any of the abundant blessing God showers on them and on the nation. Yes, the nation has its share of worldly problems, but as a matter of fact, it is more blessed than most nations on the same continent and indeed the world. The fact that you have reason to murmur and grumble does not justify it. Israel also had legitimate reasons to murmur, but God was still provoked and they were destroyed.

Nor grumble, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer. 1 Cor 10:10

Grumbling is a sign of ingratitude and it is a grievous sin in the eyes of the Lord.

What are we to replace these negative things with?

...but rather giving of thanks. Eph 5:4 KJV

Thank You Lord

Thanksgiving is the antidote to those negative words. With thanksgiving we are to continually speak the word of God in psalms, hymns and

spiritual songs. We must continually make melody in our hearts to the Lord. We must meditate on the word of God continually.

Lord, thank you for what you have made me in Christ. Thank you for you have a purpose for my life, and you are working it out in all my circumstances, even in the ones that do not look so good to me.

I want to thank you that all things are working together for my good, because I love you and I am called according to Your purpose.

I am grateful that I know You, and I am special to you, and that I understand that at the end of all, I will be made like the exact image of Christ Jesus, and I will live eternally with Christ.

I am not moved by what I see; I am only moved by what I believe in the word of God.

Thank you for life. For me, to live is to serve Christ, and to die is to gain in glory.

I give you praise for everything.

In the name of Jesus

Negligence and Sloth

Now, let us see the last of our short list of the drains of the Spirit.

If you keep water in a cup, eventually it dries up. Even the ocean would eventually dry up if it is never replenished. Astronomers have even told us how long our sun will last before running out of fuel and becoming something else.* The point I'm making is that the way life is designed is that living and active things must constantly be replenished. So it is with the Spirit of God in the life of the child of God. That is why we started with the discussion on *being constantly* filled with the Spirit. We have to continually fill up with the Spirit, otherwise the fullness will die out. It is like a spontaneous decay.

For this reason, we can easily understand that a major killer of the anointing is negligence.

By much slothfulness the building decayeth; and through idleness of the hands the house droppeth through. Eccl 10:18 KJV

Anyone who is not taking the filling of the Spirit as a serious agenda in his life is actually guilty of deliberately killing the infilling. Negligence is an

* Space scientists say the sun has enough fuel to last another 5 billion years.

active offence in spiritual things. If you are not taking the time to worship the Lord, to be in His presence, to feast on His word, and to get into the gathering of believers, then you are guilty of deliberately draining the Spirit in your life.

He also who is slack in his work

Is brother to him who destroys. Prov 18:9

Many Christians leave the things of the Spirit until it is convenient. Church going must be convenient, otherwise they won't go. Bible studies and other church meetings are easily omitted once an excuse can be found. It is as if they only accidentally get filled with the Spirit. They are hardly ever deliberate about it. Some don't read much, neither do they ever listen to any messages apart from the ones they hear in church. Yet, the Lord has given us so many avenues to make these things relatively easy to do. This attitude constitutes slothfulness which is a thing that indeed quenches the Spirit. Every Christian must repent of it and become active in pursuing the filling of the Spirit as a matter of regularity.

RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT

If you will pay the price to be constantly filled with the Spirit of God, you will discover that your life is always full of the Spirit and the power of God will make you an overcomer in every area.

Child of God, receive ye the Holy Spirit!



Appendix

PRAYER TO RECEIVE

For those who want to receive the Spirit at this time, let us pray.

There are many portions of the word of God that show that God wants to give us the Holy Spirit as part of His plan for us. We know that it is the promise of the Father, and that the Lord Jesus said we will be endued with power after the Holy Spirit comes upon us. So, we know that He wants us to have the infilling of the Holy Spirit. In the midst of all this understanding, there are two critical portions of the scriptures upon which our faith is based for asking and receiving the infilling of the Spirit.

For everyone who asks, receives; and he who seeks, finds; and to him who knocks, it will be opened. "Now suppose one of you fathers is asked by his son for a fish; he will not give him a snake instead of a fish, will he? "Or if he is

*asked for an egg, he will not give him a scorpion, will he?
"If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to
your children, how much more will your heavenly Father
give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?" Luke
11:10-13*

*if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.
And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we
know that we have the requests which we have asked from
Him. 1 John 5:14-15*

Because of these, I want to lead everyone who wants to receive the Holy Spirit in prayer, and I believe every single person who prays the following prayer sincerely will receive the infilling of the Spirit. There will definitely be manifestations of different kinds, as discussed earlier in this book. These will come either immediately after the prayer is complete, or shortly afterwards, over a few hours or even days. Whichever way the manifestation happens notwithstanding, every single believer who prays this prayer will receive the Holy Spirit.

Let us go.

1. Thanksgiving and Acknowledgement

Let us start with giving thanks for a number of things: Give thanks for God has caused you to believe in Christ Jesus.

Give thanks that you are a child of God, that you are one who can receive the Spirit of God. Thank Him because He has forgiven all your sins by the precious blood of Jesus, and that He has made you righteous in Him.

Give thanks also because of the promises He made, which we have seen, that the Holy Spirit will be with the believers always, and that He will give the infilling of the Spirit to whoever would ask.

2. Dedication

Now, dedicate yourself to live for Christ Jesus whom you have believed in, as it is written:

He died for everyone so that those who receive his new life will no longer live for themselves. Instead, they will live for Christ, who died and was raised for them. 2 Cor 5:15
NLT

Tell Him now, that you will live for His purpose for your life and as a witness for Christ. With your declaration, present your whole life to Him and your body as a living sacrifice.

Yours I am, and your purpose I will serve forever. I will live a life of righteousness and do all that You command, in the name of Jesus.

3. Request

Declare your need for the power of God in your life, proclaiming that without Him you can do nothing, that you understand that it will not be by your power or by your own might, but by a supply of the Spirit of God.

Now, make your request simply to Him. Say, “Lord, empower me now, and fill me with your Holy Spirit. I open my heart to receive. In the name of Jesus.”

4. Receive with Thanksgiving

Now, know for sure He has heard you, and His Spirit is flowing into you now. If you believe that,

then a sign of your faith is thanksgiving.

Begin to thank God for He has heard. Thank Him for all the truths you have so learnt in this book and the fact that He has heard this prayer.

5. Expect a Manifestation of the Spirit

This may happen immediately, or anytime from now, but there will certainly be a manifestation.



ABOUT

Kingdom-Word Ministries

The author ministers from the platform of Kingdom-Word Ministries, a non-denominational organization based in Enugu, Nigeria. Activities of the ministry include weekly Bible classes at the ministry office, publication of free teaching tracts, magazines and books, radio/TV broadcasts and organizing teaching seminars in various towns and cities.

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