

OpenTheo

The Holy Spirit (Part 3)



The Holy Spirit - Steve Gregg

Learn about the various gifts of the Holy Spirit and their purpose within the body of Christ in this insightful session by Steve Gregg. Explore how the Holy Spirit distributes these gifts, as mentioned by Paul in Ephesians 4:11, including the ministry of evangelism. Delve into the different gifts mentioned in Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12, such as prophesying, teaching, serving, and showing mercy, understanding the importance of using these gifts to serve others and bring glory to God. Gain a deeper understanding of the Holy Spirit's role in our lives and how embracing His activity can lead to a more fulfilling walk with God.

Transcript

So this is our third session talking about the Holy Spirit. And we were talking about being filled with the Spirit last time. I want to talk a little more about that because that's of course where the biblical teaching about the Holy Spirit impacts us directly day by day.

We saw that the Apostle Paul told the Ephesian Christians that they should be being filled with the Spirit apparently continuously. And we were talking about the reason. We're going to talk about how this happens and so forth, but we got more to say.

The reason why this is so important. I mentioned that one reason it's so important is because God's work can only be done by God. And that if we are not empowered by the Spirit of God and we're seeking to do God's work, we can do nothing better than do it in the flesh.

And God's work has got to be done through the Spirit of God or else it's not really God's work, it's ours. And for that purpose there are the gifts of the Spirit distributed in the body of Christ. Each person has a gift of some sort.

And I want to just make it very clear that when people hear the gifts of the Spirit, there's probably some gifts that come to mind more prominently and immediately than others. Depending on a person's spiritual background, some people might think of the gift of speaking in tongues primarily. Well, speaking in tongues is certainly a gift of the Holy Spirit and interpretation of tongues too.

Some may think of the gift of prophecy. Well, that certainly is biblical. I'll pour out my Spirit on all flesh and they'll prophesy God's heaven.

And prophecy is a gift of the Holy Spirit. So is teaching, so is evangelism. Paul lists evangelists among the gifts that God gave to the church in Ephesians 4.11. So is pastoral ministry as a gift.

But these are all like public ministries. Perhaps in some circles, gifts of the Spirit remind people of miracles, maybe healings, maybe anything supernatural that's sensational comes to mind. And there's plenty of that in the Bible.

There's plenty of that in Jesus' ministry. There's plenty of that in the early church. And I believe there's plenty of that in the church ever since.

If you look in the right places, there have been supernatural signs and wonders worked in the name of Jesus by power of the Holy Spirit, by those who have the gifts in those areas. But a lot of times we may not think in terms of the gifts of the Spirit. For example, that Paul listed in Romans chapter 12.

And I'd like you to look over at Romans 12 just because if you've heard or read about the gifts of the Spirit in the past, it's possible you mainly think about 1 Corinthians 12. And that's where you hear about the gift of the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, the gift of miracles, working miracles, the gift of healing, prophecy, discernment of spirits, tongues, interpretation of tongues, these kinds of things that I was just talking about. When people think of the gifts of the Spirit, a lot of times they do think of 1 Corinthians 12.

But Paul has another list of gifts. And most of these are somewhat different. There's only one gift that's in both lists, and that's prophecy.

It's in both gifts. But Paul has some other gifts he is aware of and wants to say something about. In 1 Corinthians 12, beginning of verse 4, Paul said, For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.

Having then gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them. If prophecy in proportion to our faith, if service in our serving, the one who teaches in his teaching, the one who exhorts in his exhortation, the one who contributes or gives in generosity, the one who leads with zeal, the one who does acts of mercy with cheerfulness. Now, you do find teaching and prophecy and exhortation among the things listed here.

But there's also gifts like giving, serving, showing mercy, leading. These aren't very supernatural-seeming gifts. They're the kind of thing that, frankly, every Christian should give, every Christian should serve, every Christian should show mercy, every Christian

might be in a position to lead at least their own family.

Yet, there are some for whom these are their primary functions in the body of Christ. I had a caller on my radio show once tell me that I shouldn't speak well, as I sometimes do, of Mother Teresa, because they say she didn't evangelize people. And they said, you know, she was dealing with people who were dying, Hindus, Buddhists, Muslims, and she let them die.

She didn't preach the gospel to them. Well, I said, well, maybe her gift wasn't evangelism. She certainly had a gift of showing mercy.

That's one of the gifts Paul mentions, and I think she did that supremely. I'm not sure if we know anyone else in modern times who's a better example of showing mercy. I said, in fact, it's very possible that if you have a gift of evangelism, that she exercised her gift very possibly more remarkably than you exercise yours, even if you're evangelizing people.

Not all are called to be evangelists. Now, true, Peter said everyone should be ready to give an answer to those who ask a reason of the hope, and I'm sure she did. She talked about Jesus all the time.

Maybe she didn't give the four spiritual laws, but everything she did, she did in the name of Christ. Probably people saw Christ in her, at least the one she ministered to, did more than they might have seen him in Billy Graham, who I think is an excellent evangelist, by the way. I think Billy Graham's very Christ-like, but I would think that an encounter with Mother Teresa when you're a leper would be every bit as much a confrontation with Jesus Christ as a person going to the Billy Graham crusade and hearing him lay out the gospel according to the way we do it in America.

If everyone does the thing they're gifted to do, then everything will get done. Evangelism, discipleship, teaching, miracles when that's what's called for, as well as giving and help, service, showing mercy. By the way, service and giving are things that, like I said, all Christians do, but some people actually have the gift in it.

You might say, well, why would it take a spiritual gift to give? Well, because as a Christian, whatever you do, you're supposed to do in the name of Christ, Paul said, and we do it as the Spirit leads and gives ability to do it. Anyone who has money, of course, could give, but not everyone who has money feels a motivation to give as much. J.C. Penney made a lot of money in his lifetime.

He was a Christian. He eventually gave 90% of it away. I had a father-in-law at one time, he's now deceased, who is a multi-millionaire.

He lived modestly and he gave all his money to orphans in Haiti. I mean, definitely he knew a lot of people of his income level that he tried to persuade to give as generously

as he did to the orphans in Haiti, and he said he couldn't get them interested. They were Christians, and some people just don't seem to have that Holy Spirit unction to give.

And if you do, if you have a gift of giving, then I assume that along with the giving of the material goods, there comes a spiritual blessing with it. You see, there's a lot of things that you can do that aren't in themselves spiritual activities, but that doesn't mean that the Holy Spirit doesn't minister spiritually through them. The church I used to go to had a janitor who was a very humble and cheerful and godly man, and everyone who met him just felt like they'd been with Jesus when they were there.

And he was so cheerful in his helping, you know, he'd do it, he was a sort of maintenance man around the church and janitor. And, you know, when you try to think of a Christ-like individual, he always came to mind. And he did everything unto the Lord, and there was a spiritual blessing in what he did, even though he was not doing spiritual kinds of things.

There's people who give, but there's no blessing. There's no overflow of generosity being expressed. They might not even be led by the Spirit to give to the right things.

I think, how many universities have people leave their fortunes to them? Why? You know, what a waste of money that is. And some Christians apparently do that, kind of leave it to the university that they graduated from. And it's even a secular institution.

I think, well, if you're led by the Spirit, if you've got the gift of giving, you'll know who to give to, what to give, in what spirit to give. If you've got the gift of helping or serving, the service you perform will be received by the other party as a spiritual thing. I was mentioning people who can teach naturally.

People who teach naturally can impart information, but there's not always a spiritual dynamic or blessing along with it. A gift of the Holy Spirit carries with it the power of the Holy Spirit to minister to the body of Christ. Some ministry is mostly immaterial things, because the body of Christ is comprised of people who have a physical life with physical needs, as well as a spiritual life with spiritual needs.

And the ministries that are speaking, the ministry of the Word of God, are mostly directed, of course, to meeting the spiritual needs, feeding the church in spiritual ways. Whereas other gifts help the poor and help the material needs of the body of Christ. And that's just as important.

In fact, it may well be that a larger percentage of the body of Christ is given these practical gifts than is given speaking gifts for the simple reason that one person can speak to thousands of people. Whereas giving and helping has to be done one-on-one, and there's a limited number of people that any one person can help, so there might be need for more. But that's why, for example, the Levites in Israel were only one tribe out

of 12.

The other 12 tribes had to support with a tenth of their income. That's not the way giving and support is done in the New Testament, but that's nonetheless a principle that the Levites were ministering to the spiritual needs of Israel, and the rest of them were needed to minister to the physical needs of the Levites. Peter says something about the gifts of the Spirit that's instructive here in 1 Peter chapter 4, verses 10 and 11.

1 Peter 4, verse 10 says, As each has received a gift, the word here is charisma, a gift of the Holy Spirit, a gift of grace. As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another. As good stewards of God's various grace.

Now before I go further and read verse 11, I want to make this very clear. God has given a deposit of grace, which is a gift of grace, in every Christian. The Holy Spirit gives us a gift, a gift of grace, and that is the ministry that Peter says we need to serve one another with it.

That's the purpose of it. It's not for making yourself a big name, getting a lot of attention. Any gift that you have is for the service of others, the service of the body of Christ in particular.

And he says, In doing so, you'll be good stewards of the manifold grace of God. God has given you a manifestation of his grace in whatever your gift is, and as you use it to serve one another, he says you're being a good steward, as opposed to being a poor steward of it. If you have a gift and you don't serve others with it, you're not a good steward.

You're going to have to answer that because Paul said it's expected of stewards to be faithful. And Jesus talked about the Master entrusting his servants with things to steward, and then of course they have to answer to him when he comes back as to how they did. We need to be good stewards of the spiritual gifts that God's given us, and we do so by using them to minister to others.

And the next verse continues, Whoever speaks as one who speaks the oracles of God. An oracle of God would be like an inspired message from a prophet, typically. Whereas whoever serves as one who serves by the strength that God supplies, in order that God in everything may be glorified through Jesus Christ.

Now notice the gifts of the Spirit are broken down by Peter into two categories, the people who speak and the people who serve. There are gifts, various gifts, that involve speaking, whether it's prophecy, evangelism, teaching, word of wisdom, word of knowledge, lots of different speaking gifts, exhortation. But then there's those who serve, gifts of giving, gifts of service, gifts of showing mercy.

I would say even gift of leading. Leading is a service. Remember those who are chief among you are the servants of all.

And this, by the way, this is a very important thing to note because in the church today it's very politically constructed like a corporation. So there's top-down kind of leadership, the person is the CEO or the head pastor or whatever. And the assumption is you're supposed to serve his agenda.

He tells you what the vision is and you're supposed to get in line with his vision. He's basically not serving you, you're serving his interests. He's got a plan and he wants the church to participate in his plan under his supervision.

That's not how leadership was in the New Testament. The leadership in the New Testament were servants. Even the elders of the church were servants.

Even Paul, an apostle, told the Corinthians in 2 Corinthians 1, I think it's verse 23, he said, not that we have dominion over your faith, but we're helpers of your joy. If you have a gift of leadership, you're not standing over people telling them what to do. You provide leadership to those who need it as a servant.

A church I used to go to, a pastor wanted everyone to conform to a particular vision that he had for the church and I wasn't fitting in as well as he'd like because I didn't agree with his vision as a matter of fact. And he said, well, what if everyone just felt free to do whatever they wanted to? How could we disciple our people? How should a pastor pastor his people and disciple his people? I said, well, I guess maybe like Jesus said, where, you know, if a shepherd has a hundred sheep and one of them goes astray, he leaves the 99 to themselves and goes after what's going astray. You got 99 low maintenance sheep, you should be happy.

You got one high maintenance sheep, that's who you spend your time on. You go, that sheep needs you. That person needs you right now.

You go serve him. You don't, you don't try to get everyone to serve your agenda. You're there to serve and provide leadership for those who are straying and need to be led back to the right way.

You should be very happy if you got 99 out of a hundred sheep that don't need your leadership. It's like if I said, well, I think I have the gift of teaching. So everyone needs to sit under my teaching.

And you might say, well, no, thanks. I don't need your teaching. Thank you.

No, you have to understand. I got the gift of teaching. You need to sit under my teaching.

I need to teach you. No, every gift is a service and a service is offered, but not forced upon people. Including leadership is one of the gifts.

Jesus said the rulers of the Gentiles exercise authority over them, but it shall not be so among you. And he that be chief among you should be the servant or slave of all. Leadership is a gift.

It's a service provided. So is giving. So is serving.

So is showing mercy. And so we see that Peter recognizes there's different kinds of gifts. Some of them involve speaking.

Those are going to be the ones that are necessary to the spiritual needs directly. And he says, if you speak, speak as the oracles of God, then that doesn't mean you have to get a direct revelation before you say anything, but it means you'd better be depending on the Holy spirit to speak through you just like a prophet would. And although speaking, God speaking through a prophet is different than speaking through a teacher, slightly different claims that a prophet is making for his word than a teacher is making for his.

A prophet is claiming he's giving an oracle directly from God. A teacher doesn't necessarily make that claim, but a teacher ought to be teaching with the same kind of dependence on the Holy spirit to speak what God wants to have spoken through that particular gift to that kind of situation. Likewise, he says, those who serve should do it as of the strength of the ability that God gives them so that God gets the glory for it.

So a non-Christian can serve, a non-Christian fix somebody's car for them. But if a Christian has a gift of giving, of serving, and let's say they, they, their skill is in auto mechanics and they work on people's cars for them, they should do it trusting God to make them able to do that as a edifying experience for the people they're serving. And it can be done.

I've certainly had auto mechanics that were edifying and auto mechanics that were not edifying in their attitudes and their, in their service. But, but the idea is whatever you do, whether you're in a speaking public ministry or whether you're just kind of working behind the scenes, supporting ministries or serving in, you know, material, practical capacity, you're doing it unto the Lord. And you're doing it with the trust that God is making your service, something that will edify and bless spiritually other people, even though you're ministering to their material needs.

There certainly is no reason to believe that ministry to someone's material needs will not be a spiritual blessing to them. In many cases, it is and should be. There's other reasons though, to be filled with the spirit besides the fact that only God can do God's work.

There's some other reasons I want to give you. One is that we are engaged in a spiritual warfare and even Jesus, when confronting demons, cast out demons by the spirit of God, as he said, of course, in Matthew 12, 28, if I cast out demons by the spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come Jesus himself was acting on the power of the Holy Spirit in

his confrontation with the demonic realm. It would be very foolish for someone who isn't filled with the power of the spirit to engage demons.

And yet, whether you're engaged, demon possessed people or not, you will engage demons. In this world, there are demonic powers that we wrestle against, Paul said in Ephesians 6. We don't wrestle against flesh and blood, but we do wrestle against principalities and powers and rulers of the darkness of this age and spiritual wickedness in the heavenly places. You're wrestling with them.

By whose power are you wrestling with them? By whose insights are you even recognizing them? They're invisible. How in the world are you going to know there's a particular spiritual conflict going on here behind the scenes? If you're just having friction with another person, how do you know if that's a spiritual thing or not? I was raised in a tradition that encouraged us not to see demons too frequently, not to blame things on demons. Blame it on the flesh, don't blame it on the demons.

Well, obviously, there's a lot of things that should be blamed on the flesh, but there are some things to be blamed on demons too. Demons are there. And I remember I was once in a Christian ministry where everyone was having conflict with each other and there was no reason for it.

It was like, they would even, when they get together to sit and talk, it's like one person would say something, another person would hear it wrong in a way that they took offense to and they'd snap back and everyone else could hear that that's not what was said. But this kind of thing was going on all the time in the relationship. It just didn't make sense.

It wasn't rational, the offenses that were being taken and the conflicts. And one of the girls there said, do you think maybe the devil's doing this? And I remember I was thinking because of my upbringing, no, we can't blame the devil for this. This is just flesh.

People just carnal. This is just carnality. But as it turned out later, it turned out there was evidence that it was demonic.

There was a woman involved in the occult who was actually, we found out, trying to cast spells on that ministry. And there seemed to be truly demonic activity going on in other ways too. And I think that this girl probably discerned something that I wasn't discerning.

Now, of course, that was after I was filled with the spirit, but I was still had a lot to learn. The point is that we have a spiritual war we're going against an invisible and supernatural foe. If you are going to depend on your wisdom and your flesh to try to be successful in this battle, you're very foolish and doomed pretty much to failure.

So being filled with the spirit and being able to act through the spirit is the only way to

effectively deal with spiritual powers. They are more powerful than we are. And yet the Holy Spirit is more powerful than they are.

So we need to have that fullness of the spirit before we can effectively confront them. A third reason that we need to be filled with the spirit is because the natural man does not receive the things of the spirit of God. They are spiritually discerned, as Paul said in 1 Corinthians 2, verses 14 and 15.

God wants us to know things. He wants to open our understanding that we might understand the scriptures. He wants us to be given the spirit of wisdom and understanding and the knowledge of him that we might understand the deep things of God.

In fact, 1 Corinthians 2, which Paul says that in, he talks about how the Corinthians were immature and among them he couldn't go very far in his teaching. He actually says in the opening verses of 1 Corinthians 2, when I was with you, I couldn't, I determined I couldn't say anything except about Jesus and him crucified. I couldn't go any further than that with you people.

But he said in verse 6, but with the mature, when we're with mature people, he says we do speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, not the things that human wisdom speaks, but which the Holy Spirit speaks. And that's where he says, for eye has not seen nor ears heard nor has entered into the heart of man the things that God has prepared for those who love him. But he says, but God has revealed them to us by his spirit.

For the spirit searches all things, yea, the deep things of God. He says, for who knows the things of a man, but the spirit of man that's in him. And who knows the things of God, but the spirit of God.

And that's when he says the natural man does not receive the things of the spirit of God. They have to be spiritually discerned. Obviously, God wants us to learn from him.

As I mentioned earlier in 1 John 2.27, John said, you don't need any man to teach you because the anointing teaches you all things. But if you're not walking in the spirit, if you're not filled in the spirit, there's a limit to the degree that you're going to be sensitive and knowledgeable about what the spirit is saying and revealing. And certainly the fact that we want to be taught of God and the Holy Spirit is the teacher should be reason for us to want to have as much of that activity of the Holy Spirit in our life as possible.

And I think it's a little dangerous in some respects to let the Holy Spirit lead you because he might lead you out of traditions that no one else in your church wants to be led out of. I mentioned in my book about the three views of hell that reformed people often say the goal is to be reformed and always reforming. I mentioned there that well to be always

reforming is the most likely way to offend as many of your conservative friends as possible.

Because if you're always reforming, there's a lot of people who aren't going to reform with you. If the Holy Spirit shows you something that he hadn't shown your people before, well that's going to in some sense put you at risk of them not appreciating you very much. But hey, okay, I mean this is something I've had to live with myself as you may have guessed.

You know I was a good old normal Baptist for an awful lot of my years. And then I was right in with the dispensationalist charismatic group for a long time. And yet as I studied the scriptures and I felt the Holy Spirit brought things to my attention, I had to change my views on a lot of different things.

Some of which people who liked my ministry earlier weren't all that happy about. And so yet the answer is it worth it? Would you rather be hearing from God in community with God and have him teach you and leading you into all truth? Or would you rather be with the conservative state traditional views of whatever it is your background may be and your friends? I believe the trade-off is worthwhile. Not that I ever want to be alienated from anybody.

We should seek to be in unity with everybody who disagrees. But the truth is if God keeps leading you... I remember some of you know I don't believe that the Bible teaches anywhere clearly that Satan's a fallen angel. I used to think it.

But when YWAM asked me to teach for them back in 1982 on spiritual warfare, I did my own research and I thought well I guess I'll talk about the origin of Satan. And I knew very well what I was looking for. I was looking for those passages that said Satan was a fallen angel.

I knew where they were. They were Isaiah 14, Ezekiel 28, Luke 10, Revelation 12. But then when I looked at them on that occasion for the first time I noticed they don't say that.

I began to wonder where does it say that? And I began to really have you know the scriptures in a sense as I feel like God was showing it to you for the first time at that point led me away from a view that I everyone I knew believed. And it scared me a little bit. It didn't keep me from going there but it was a little bit with trepidation.

I remember saying maybe you shouldn't show me anything anymore. This is not going to be, you know if you keep showing me this stuff because you know I'm going to get in trouble. Now I don't claim that I know everything.

I still have a lot to learn. But I have learned some things and it's been a little scary sometimes to move away from the comfortable zone of what everybody affirms to

something a little more sketchy I suppose in the eyes of the traditionalist. But honestly if you're going to walk with God you got to walk where he takes you.

And he may lead you and teach you things that none of us here in this room know now but which are there. They're in the Bible but we've just been not paying attention closely. We all bring our traditional grid to our reading of the Bible and it's amazing how many layers of that onion can be peeled off and there's more to peel.

I've often seen it that way. You know I mean I was fitted with factory installed doctoral traditions from my upbringing and it seems like at one point God peeled off some of those and then like an onion being peeled or like moving into an old house. I don't like the color of this thing.

I sand it down. Oh there's a gray layer under here. Oh there's a red layer under here.

Oh there's another layer a blue layer. You know I think is there any wall under all this paint or is it just one layer after another paint. Sometimes I feel that way about the traditions I've been raised with you know one of them gets peeled off say now I'm down to the pure truth.

I remember when I was a Baptist that I had a friend who was a Catholic. He's now a Catholic priest but he wanted to be a priest when he was in high school and we used to have a lot of discussions and stuff and we made agreement he'd come to church with me if I went to church with him. I went to the Catholic church.

I remember thinking oh there's so many traditions here in the Catholic church. I'm so glad I'm a Baptist we don't have any traditions. I really thought that.

I thought I'm so glad we don't have traditions. Let's follow the Bible but then of course later when I came out of the denomination I realized some of the things that have been taught there were traditions but when I came into Calvary Chapel I thought thank God I now have no traditions so I'm now just following the Bible but I have to say there were Calvary Chapel traditions too. I had to be disabused of it in some cases and frankly I don't know that I don't still have some that I don't know about.

Like I said it's an onion. You know how many layers of paint are coming off this wall before you get to the bare wall? I don't know. Maybe a lifetime isn't long enough to find it but a lifetime is well spent in pursuing it and as the Holy Spirit leads you from one thing to another you know here a little bare little line upon line precept upon precept it's an exciting thing.

I actually hope that we'll still have things to learn when we go to heaven because learning is so enjoyable. It's so the thrill of discovery and that especially when you believe the Holy Spirit has illuminated something that you didn't see before it's like life giving to you to see a new thing. It's also dangerous in terms of your social standing in

the body of Christ but it's nonetheless it's a thrill to be able to be led into new insights as you're following the Spirit's leading up of those things.

I really think that some people deliberately cut that off. I know there was a Pentecostal minister a nice guy a friend who you know his denomination was dispensational and a friend of mine at my school staff member gave him a copy of my lectures on eschatology which were not dispensational and my friend asked the pastor later well what did you think about those tapes? It's back when there were tapes some of the young people think those things things that he used to call tapes. And the pastor said well you know all that all he says there in the scriptures it sounds like he could be right but he says I'm a pastor of this denomination and I am paid to teach this view and if I would change my view I'd have to look for another job.

Well that's a pastor being unusually honest. There's a lot of pastors in exactly the same position they wouldn't say it so crassly but they're paid to believe what they believe they're paid to teach what their denomination teaches. If the Holy Spirit wished to open their eyes to them they might even say I think I think that's a good point but I don't dare look you know I mean if the Holy Spirit wants to lead you you better not say this is far enough God I'm going to camp right here I don't need any more because I'm not sure that you can continue to walk in the spirit if you're saying no to the Holy Spirit's leading you into further insights because he's leading you into further insights about himself into a deeper knowledge of himself and those are spiritual things that are spiritually discerned if you're not filled with the spirit I don't really see how you could be any better off than the natural man who can't receive the things in the spirit of God and of course one other reason I'm uh or two I'll make it one that I think we need to be filled with the spirit is because Jesus said God is a spirit and those who worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth and he said God is seeking such to worship him those who worship in spirit and in truth certainly worshiping in spirit includes most probably not restricted to singing in the spirit praying in the spirit serving God in the spirit and these are things that the Holy Spirit allows to do too when Paul said I will pray in the spirit and I'll sing in the spirit in first Corinthians 14 he wasn't talking about ordinary uh singing and praying it's in the context that he's talking about tongues in that particular case but Jude says in Jude verse 20 uh build yourselves up on your most holy faith praying in the Holy Spirit Paul said in Ephesians uh 6 in verse 18 I think it was verse 18 he said praying always with all supplication in the spirit and watching thereto that is losing sleep for it live sleep for it and pray in the spirit the Holy Spirit has got to energize our prayers it's got to guide our prayers we will end up praying only for the things that are dear to our hearts the salvation for our of our children of our husband of our friends and those are good things God cares about those too but the Holy Spirit might want your prayers to impact the rest of the world somehow in ways that you don't even know that he wants to do it I mean being led by the spirit in your prayers being filled with the spirit allows you to worship and pray and and serve God in the spirit Paul calls it walking in the spirit and certainly

our service to God our worship of God our spiritual worship has to do with the way we live our lives that's why Paul said in Romans 12 1 present your bodies a living sacrifice what is a sacrifice it's an act of worship offering sacrifices is the traditional way of offering worship so present your bodies as a living sacrifice holy and acceptable to God he says this is your depending on the translation service but the same two words can be translated and sometimes are translated this is your spiritual worship offering your body as a living sacrifice is your spiritual worship well how do you offer your body as a living sacrifice it certainly has to do with the way you live your bodily life in fact this present your body the word present there the same Greek word is used in Romans 6 13 where he says present your members of your body as instruments of righteousness and not as instruments of unrighteousness so it has to do with doing things with the members of your body the way you the way you act the things you do what the work you do is all to be done as a worship of God as a presentation of yourself to God as a living sacrifice it's a spiritual thing and we can only really do that as we walk in the spirit because Paul said in Galatians 5 16 walk in the spirit and you will not fulfill the lust of the flesh if you're fulfilling the lust of the flesh you're not you're not preparing presenting your body as a living sacrifice it's a god holy and acceptable you need the power of the holy spirit to walk in the spirit and so of course we need to be filled with the spirit so that God can do his work through us so that we can conduct ourselves in the spiritual warfare we're called to be part of that we can receive teaching from the holy spirit and and receive the things of God in that sense and also so we can walk in such a way that it's a spiritual worship of God we can pray sing live in the spirit as an act of worship to God in other words everything everything in the Christian life is the work of the spirit and therefore being filled with spirit is not optional now you can be saved i think without being filled with spirit since Paul told the Ephesians they need to make sure that they are filled with the spirit although they already were saved apparently a person who's saved might not always be filled in the spirit though they could it should be you can be saved in the sense that you are justified by faith and when you die you're going to go to heaven but as far as being of any use to God in this life which by the way you're still breathing so you're not in heaven yet and if you breathe another year then that's another year you're supposed to be living for God if you live another 10 years that's another decade you're supposed to be serving God and that service can only be done by the power of the holy spirit so let me talk about some of the things about the baptism of the holy spirit that people sometimes have questions about i pointed out that in Acts chapter 1 the only place that Jesus ever used the expression baptized with the holy spirit was Acts 1 5 and he was clearly talking of the very same thing that he mentioned three verses later in Acts 1 8 he said you will receive power when the holy spirit comes upon you and then when it happened in Acts 2 4 they were filled with the spirit so here being filled with the spirit at least initially is called the baptism of the holy spirit and the spirit coming upon you now a lot of people don't understand how it is that we could say all Christians have the holy spirit but not all Christians have necessarily been baptized in the spirit and here's what i how i usually would explain it because i think this is how the bible explains

it remember we're talking about a relationship with a real person the holy spirit's personal and as with all personal people that we relate to it's a relationship an interpersonal relationship and God relates to each person individually because everyone is an individual the way God relates with you is not going to be exactly this in all points the way he does with me i mentioned when i was baptized in spirit i didn't speak in tongues i didn't feel warm honey poured over my body i didn't fall down some people did apparently they told me they did i suppose they did that's different i'm not the same person they are the holy spirit's the same person in both cases but the way i relate to my wife is different than the way i relate to my children or to my parents there's different dynamics even though i'm the same person the differing personalities and and situations these people are in dictate different particulars of my relationship with them so the holy spirit is one person but he relates with a whole bunch of different kinds of people and the relationships aren't all identical he'll do one thing in one person's life he'll do a different thing in another person's life apparently and why not the point is there's no standard experience that all people have for baptism spirit but there are words in the bible to clarify the different kinds of relationships that we can have with the holy spirit a word in any language that's uh describes a relationship is called a preposition i'm standing behind this little pulpit here behind is a preposition speaks my relationship my spatial relationship to uh i'm i'm standing in front of you well that's you know i'm standing before you before is a preposition a different we have a different spatial relationship um that you know a preposition describes relations between things there's also prepositions that describe different relations with the holy spirit and jesus used two of them actually used all three but he used two of them in one place in john chapter 14 and he says in verse 15 if you love me you will keep my commandments and i will ask the father and he will give you another helper to be with you forever even the spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive because it neither sees him nor knows him but you know him for he dwells with you and will be in you now as i said earlier i think he when he says the holy spirit is with you i think he means in jesus they had become acquainted with the holy spirit as manifested in jesus who was with them but this holy spirit that had been in jesus and with them was going to be in them that's a different relationship if something is external to you this glass of water was external to me before i drank it now it's in me it was with me before that or beside me different prepositions describe different relationships and so before jesus died the holy spirit was only able to be with them external to them but after he died rose again it was possible for the holy spirit to be in them as he predicted in my opinion the fulfillment of that promise took place in acts excuse me in john chapter 20 not everyone will agree about this but i think it likely that he was predicting this in john 20:22 it says this is after jesus died after he rose from the dead and that very night of his resurrection he appeared to the disciples in the after room he hadn't been back alive for 24 hours yet when he appeared to them and in verse 22 it says when he had said this he breathed on them and said to them receive the holy spirit now if he had just said receive the holy spirit with no action involved i might assume he's just saying you know the time is coming the day of pentecost is ahead

when that happened to be sure but you don't neglect to receive the holy spirit you need to be receptive because i'm going to give you the holy spirit but the fact that he breathed on them with that seems like he was intending to be imparting to them with his breath just as adam was made from the dust of the earth and got breathed into his nostrils the spirit of life or the breath of life depending how you want to translate the word ruach here also breath and spirit are the same word in the greek pneuma is can be breath or spirit or wind for that matter just has all those meanings jesus breathed on them and said receive the holy spirit it certainly seems to me like he was imparting the holy spirit to them in which case this fulfilled the promise that he made in chapter 14 that the holy spirit will be in you i think the spirit may well have come in them at that time i think they were probably regenerated they were ahead of the rest of the believers but they were the apostles after all so i mean for them to be a little ahead of the rest only makes sense the rest of the church had to wait for pentecost for that to happen but the apostles still had to wait for pentecost too for something to happen because it was weeks after jesus had breathed on them and said receive the that he met with them in acts chapter one the day before he ascended there was 40 days between those two events and it was on the 40th day after his resurrection that he said the words we've already seen in acts 1 you will be baptized with the holy spirit when the spirit comes upon you you will power now notice upon is a different preposition than in or with upon describes something's different now apparently the idea of the holy spirit coming upon someone conveys the image of having oil poured upon somebody in an anointing because that's what happened in the old testament when samuel poured oil upon the head of saul the holy spirit came upon him and he prophesied when he poured oil on the head of david the spirit of god came upon him this oil is sort of an image of the holy spirit and the act of pouring it like like jesus breathing on them so also pouring oil apparently corresponded with the spirit coming upon them with the anointing and they received power and jesus said when the spirit comes upon you you will receive power now the holy spirit i'm suspecting was already in them when he had breathed on them but they had not yet been empowered and in fact just before he uh went to heaven according to luke 24 he said remain in jerusalem until you're being do with power from on high i send you the gift of my father and you'll receive power from on high so they were believers they were i believe indwelt even by the holy spirit like all believers are today i think the spirit was in them but they he had not come upon them in power they had not received this power anointing that they would receive when they're baptized in the holy spirit now that did of course happen on the day of pentecost and you know the rest is as we say history we see the book of acts nothing but power manifested in the church well i shouldn't say nothing but sure plenty of it there's some weakness too now how does one get baptized in the holy spirit this is where there's more controversy than i wish there was among christians because as i said there are those who say every christian is baptized in the holy spirit at the time of conversion and i'm saying i'm not sure that that's true if being baptized in spirit is the same as being filled with the spirit paul does not assume that all christians are filled with the holy spirit and in my

experience not all people who are called christians have what you recognize as power in their lives there's some pretty ineffectual christians and they themselves know it they're frustrated they're overpowered with sin just as much as before they were a christian uh they're they're no more effective for god than they were before they were a christian they've become christians the holy spirit dwells in them but there doesn't give there's no evidence that there's power in their lives of anything like a supernatural sort and of course that power might be manifest in gifts or in fruit should be both and you know like i said when i got baptized the only evidence i saw initially was fruit i saw the fruit of the spirit of my life more than before uh and gifts of the spirit a little somewhat later but i just don't think that the evidence of church history or the evidence of scripture would tell us that all christians are automatically baptized with the spirit being baptized with spirit i believe is something separate from conversion but having said that i want to acknowledge that most people in the new testament were probably they probably received both at the same time conversion and baptism of spirit there's no reason why god can't do two things simultaneously and for example in the household of cornelius in acts chapter 10 peter was preaching to these people and the first time they heard the gospel the spirit fell on them and they spoke in tongues and so clearly that they were baptized in the spirit apparently at the very moment they believed in that case they hadn't even baptized with water yet and peter said wow we can't we better baptize these people with water because they've received the powers of the spirit same as us so we can see that god can give the power of the holy spirit the baptism of spirit at the same time that a demonstrated in acts 19 where we have an example of paul's ministry of him leading people to christ and what he did immediately afterward he encountered 12 men in ephesus in x chapter 19 the first seven verses and they they were called disciples but it's not clear what they were disciples of apparently disciples of john the baptist and paul said well have you received the holy spirit since you believe they said we didn't even hear there was such a thing as the holy spirit and he said well what were you baptized into then and they said we're baptized with john's baptism and paul said well john baptized with the baptism of repentance remission of sins but he said that people should believe on the one who's coming after him that is jesus christ now this certainly must be a brief summary of what paul said to them because that's not the gospel clearly stated but it says when they heard about jesus they were baptized in the name of jesus now they've been baptized once before now they got baptized in water in the name of jesus and then it says and when paul put his hands on them the holy spirit came upon them and they prophesied in spoken tongues so here's some this is probably paul's normal way of doing things you lead someone to christ you baptize them in water you lay hands on them and they get baptized in the spirit for this reason it would seem paul assumed that all christians that he wrote to were baptized in the holy spirit we don't find him telling them to get baptized in the spirit because these were his own converts that he was writing to the people he had led to christ and in all likelihood when he baptized he also laid hands on them we see that as his procedure in emphasis why wouldn't it be similar to what he would do at other times and therefore yeah probably

most of the christians paul knew had been baptized in the spirit at the same time maybe moments later as they were baptized in water but we know that wasn't automatic because philip also led people to the lord in baptizing in acts chapter 8 but they weren't all filled with the spirit they must have received the spirit as christians and says the great joy filled the city and there are even signs and wonders being worked by philip but the people had not yet had the holy spirit fall upon them yet it says peter and john came from jerusalem and laid hands on these people and it says they received the spirit because the come upon them they had not yet received the baptism of the spirit when they did something amazing happened we're not actually told what it was it may well be that they spoke in tongues but it doesn't say so what it does say is that the sorcerer philip i mean simon who had been converted by philip um he saw something that impressed him and he offered peter money to give him the power to do that too so obviously there was something impressive that happened whatever it was is not reported but it was obvious that with the giving of the holy spirit's power there was a manifestation of power in the convent now that that story makes it very clear that there can be people who are converted and baptized in water but who have not yet been baptized in the holy spirit that would have been not the norm however it might be more the norm at other times in church history when the church is deviated from apostolic practices we know that we live 2 000 years after the time of the apostles and even within a generation or two after them the church began to adapt traditions of behavior that the apostles didn't follow for example in the didache just a generation after the apostles the didache instructs that a person is going to be baptized should fast first well the apostles didn't practice they just baptized them right away but you see there's certain institutions and traditions being added even in the end of the first century when you get to the middle ages of course the church the roman church has added all kinds of layers of tradition and it shouldn't be surprising if among the things they neglected was the baptism of the holy spirit after all they didn't even practice uh believer baptism they practiced infant baptism so i mean they moved away from apostolic practice considerably when the reformation came the reformers moved closer to biblical christian but they still retain a lot of those traditions they still baptized infants for example and they still didn't lay hands on people to be baptized in the spirit and and from the reformation came other denominations of which there are thousands now tens of thousands really some of them do and some of them don't follow the biblical patterns and if that's true then those people who have been converted like i was in a church that didn't follow the biblical pattern may very well have gotten truly saved and not have experienced the baptism of the spirit just like philip's conference had not if we had been converted by peter or paul we probably would not have neglected that had that neglected that probably would have been taken care of right at the time we were baptized in water but that we weren't converted by peter paul we're converted by people thousands of years removed from them who were practicing traditions not all together found in scripture so in seeking to return to a scriptural church and scriptural christianity we have to recognize that the holy spirit's work was a very central need and being

baptized in the spirit was a norm in fact i believe that all christians were expected to be and probably were now those who don't believe this way those who say no everyone has the baptism of spirit there's no second uh you know blessing or however they want to talk about it no second work of grace they say you say there's a second work of grace uh yeah i would say so but i don't think it's just a second i think there was a second third fourth fifth hundredth and thousandth works of grace i think that our whole life is to be experiencing works of grace in our life but there is something called the baptism of the holy spirit that is we could say a work of grace that's separate from some other works of grace but the people who object to this often say well this can't be true because that would turn the church into a group of haves and have-nots and i say well is that a scriptural objection or more of a objection that people have what if the church in fact is made up of haves and have-nots that's scriptural enough to observe james said to certain christians you have not because you asked not so there were some have-nots there and there were certainly some who had there are christians at any given time who have some blessings that others don't have some people have a wonderful marriage others don't have it a good wife is a gift from god he hasn't given that to everybody some people are single and they have a gift of singleness and and people who are don't have that gifts might if they're single they might be tormented by you know frustration that they're not married but but if god gives a gift to singleness the guy's got something that i don't have i'll tell you that to be content to be single and celibate all the time i could do it i suppose but it's not my gift and some people have gifts i don't have i might have gifts they don't have this sure there's haves and have-nots i mean what kind of objection is that the bible makes it very clear not everybody has everything the same but there are things that everybody could have but not everyone has and it's a matter of neglect you have not because you asked not it's certainly saying there's something god would have given you if you'd asked you didn't ask so he didn't give it to you and if that was true in apostolic times in james time it could certainly be true at any time in church history and i suspect that it very much is true today it was certainly true of me at least i want to make this clear i i don't hold this doctrine because that's what happened to me this happened to me because i came to this doctrine i i actually didn't know this and it's through my studies of scripture that i was convinced that though i was a christian i was not yet baptized of spirit i studied all the things i'm bringing up here with you and because of that i concluded that i was a have-not and but that i could be a have and that's why i went and was prayed for and did receive it my my experience confirms this doctrine but it does not my the doctrine did not originate from my experience it originated from my exegesis of scripture and of course any doctrine that's true should conform to experience as well it'd be a teaching of scripture suggests that there's a certain experience that all christians can have but they really didn't get it when they followed the instructions and i believe that we do have the opportunity to be baptized in spirit and maybe some who are listening to me were even if they didn't have hands laid on because the bible doesn't indicate that it's always with the laying on of hands how does someone get baptized in the spirit well we're going to talk about that but it doesn't

always happen with the laying on of hands uh but it could in fact i guess this is a good time if any to talk about that only we need to take a short break and then we'll come back to this topic and try to perhaps finish it out