THE PERSON & WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT  
Lars Wilhelmsen

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you; and you will be My witness in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

During the Middle Ages a proud bishop pointed to the magnificent cathedrals and said to St. Thomas Aquinas, the theologian, concerning the church:

"No longer can we say with Peter, 'Silver and gold have I none.'"

"St. Thomas replied,

"Neither can we say, 'In the name of Jesus of Nazareth rise up and walk.'"

The Southern Baptist preacher Vance Havner put it,

"We often see churches build million dollar launching pads to send up firecrackers."¹

Where is the power? Where is the power that we, at least intellectually, believe in? Where is the power that we so often talk about, write about, read about and even argue about?

One of the main reasons for the lack of power in our lives and the life and ministry of our churches is the neglect and misunderstanding of the person and work of the Holy Spirit, and a lack of seeking this fullness.

THE HOLY SPIRIT IS INDISPENSABLE

It was A.W. Tozer, truly a 20th century prophet, who said that if the Holy Spirit were to be removed from the average church that it wouldn't notice the difference. An awful, yet realistic, indictment!

The Swiss theologian Karl Barth called churches where the Spirit had gone out of them as "flat-tire" Christianity. It is the Spirit that gives life! Without the presence and power of the Spirit our lives are flat.²

While we Christians have neglected the person and work of the Holy Spirit the Bible has not. He is directly mentioned no less than 86 times in the Old Testament and at least 261 times in the New Testament. He has at least 25 different names or titles as mentioned in the Bible. If He has such a prominent place in Scripture He must also have priority in our own lives.
HOLINESS AND POWER

What the Holy Spirit is about is holiness and power. His very name "Holy Spirit" gives us the key to the significance or impact of His person and work in our lives. Since He is a "holy" Spirit His indwelling, filling and empowering our lives result in holiness.

How the world needs to see the power of a holy, godly life!

Will Durant, the historian, said,

"Christ was the most permanent influence on our thoughts, but not our actions."

What an indictment! He has accused us Christians of thinking and talking the truths of Christianity without walking them. He is saying that we have failed to translate our thoughts and words into shoe-leather. Durant continued,

"I have never seen a level of commitment that sold me that this is the truth."

The atheistic philosopher Nietzsche said,

"You will have to look more redeemed before I will believe in your Redeemer."

The world is not drawn to insipid Christianity! The godlessness of the Christian world does not demand the respect of the unbelieving world. People must see, as well as hear, the GOOD NEWS.

A Scot, quite ignorant of the theological dogmas and influential theologians, said of Marcus Dods, the great Scottish expositor,

"I am a Christian because of Dr. Marcus Dods."

Talk about evidence of Christianity—Marcus Dods is it.

What the unbeliever needs is less advice and more example! It is the presence and power of the Holy Spirit in our lives that makes that example possible.

God's promise is power! The power of a holy life and the power to witness! That witness is to begin at home in Jerusalem and then it is to spread throughout the entire world.

It is the power of the Holy Spirit that makes us effective witnesses. Paul stated:

"For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power" (I Cor. 4:20).
The book of Acts is an historical account of the power of God in the lives of His people. While the book has often been called "The Acts of the Apostles" it really should be called "The Acts of the Holy Spirit." For it is the history of the acts of the Holy Spirit in and through the apostles.

Power in and of itself is neither good nor bad, although it seems to have a corrupting influence. This is why we have such statements as:

"Power corrupts. And absolute power corrupts absolutely."

Power is a lot like electricity—difficult and dangerous to handle. In the Bible there are more examples of bad leaders than good leaders. Even in the case of good leaders there are plenty of examples of how they sinned as they gained power and thus became overly confident, independent and proud.

British philosopher Bertrand Russell, American psychologist Alfred Adler and others have emphasized that "the will to power" is one of the driving forces of our day—driving us often to our destruction.

It was not so different in Jesus' day. Luke tells us about a man by the name of Simon, a magician, who was so impressed with the power of God that he tried to buy it. When Simon saw what the Holy Spirit could do, he offered Peter money and exclaimed,

"Give me also this power" (Ac 8:19).

He wanted the Spirit because of the power. He did not ask for the Holy Spirit who would work His holiness in his life. Rather, as Peter points out, the "lust in his eyes" blinded him to the true nature of the Spirit's power. Simon was into power games. But the power of the Holy Spirit is not something we can hold; it is something that holds us. It is not a possession. It is a pilgrimage—a pilgrimage of experiencing the holy presence and power of the third person of the Godhead in our lives.

THE PROOF OF THE PERSONHOOD OF THE HOLY SPIRIT
Personal Characteristics

**Intelect**—"The things of God no one knows but the Spirit of God" (1 Co 2:11; see also Jn 15:26; Ro 8:16).

**Emotions**—"The love of the Spirit" (Ro 15:30; see also Isa 63:10; Eph 4:30).

**Will**—"All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and He gives them to each one, just as He determines" (1 Co 12:11; see also Ac 16:7; Ro 8:27; Heb 2:4).
Paul in his benediction includes all three aspects of personality as he talks about the "fellowship" of the Holy Spirit (2 Co 13:14). It is impossible to have fellowship with a thing. Fellowship is only possible with another person. Since we can have fellowship with the Holy Spirit this proves that He is a person.

Since the Holy Spirit is purely a "spirit being" He has no physical form. As an invisible person, He can identify Himself with the human personality so as to produce the Christlike personality in God's children. He is Christ's other self (Jn 14:16), and when He is allowed full control of the human intellect, emotions and will, the child of God is then ready to present his body as a living sacrifice (Ro 12:1-2).

**Personal Names**

He is called "**Paraclete**" (Comforter—Jn 14:16,26; 15:26; 16:7).

He is called "**Another Comforter**" indicating that He is Christ's other self.

**Personal Pronouns**

The word for "spirit" is *pneuma*, a Greek neuter noun. When this word is the antecedent of the Greek pronoun, the latter is naturally neuter also. But this mere grammatical agreement of gender does not make the idea neuter. The proof of this is the use of the Greek *masculine pronoun* in other contexts to refer to the Holy Spirit (Jn 14:16-17; 15:26; 16:7-14).

**SYMBOLS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**

A symbol is a material emblem portraying and unfolding a spiritual reality. The Greek words from which we get our word "symbol" are *sun* and *ballo*. They mean "something thrown alongside another"; that is, to represent and explain it. Some writers differentiate between "symbol" and "emblem" by "essential likeness" and "no essential likeness," but the words are used here synonymously.

1. **Dove**: The descent of the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove upon Jesus at His baptism shows clearly that the dove is a symbol of the Holy Spirit (Mt 3:16; Mk 1:10; Lk 3:22; Jn 1:32). The suitability of this symbol is seen in the following traits of the dove:

   • gentle (Gal 5:23)
   • love (Ro 5:5; 15:30; Gal 5:22-23)
   • purity (Cant 6:2; 6:9)
   • peace (Gn 8:8-12; Ps 55:6; Gal 5:22)

3. **Fire**: A symbol both of the Word and of the Spirit. As a symbol of the Word, it signifies searching and purification (Jer. 23:29). As a symbol of the Spirit it represents the presence of God (Ex 3:2-6; 1 Ki 18:38; Isa 83:9-14; Ac 2:3), the power of God (in the same references) and the purging of God (Isa 4:4; 6:6-7; Mal 3:3; Mt 3:11; Heb 12:29).

4. **Wind**: Denotes life and activity and refers particularly to the work the Spirit in man in a two-fold way. First man is born of the Spirit (Gen. 2:7; Ezek. 37:5-10; Jn. 3:3-8; Titus 3:15). Second, man is baptized with the Spirit (Mt. 3:11; Mk. 1:8; Lk. 3:16; Jn. 1:33; Acts 1:5; 11:16).

5. **Wine**: As a symbol of the Spirit, wine stands stimulation, exhilaration, and rejoicing (Ps 104:15; Pr 31:6; Isa 55:1; Lk 5:37-39; Jn 2:1-11; Ac 2:13; Eph 5:18).

Ephesians 5:18 shows two possible sources of stimulation—drunkenness and Deity. Since human nature needs a stimulus of some kind, God has met this need by the fullness of the Holy Spirit. On the other hand, Satan has invented alcohol as a substitute, seeking to counterfeit the true joy of the Lord.

6. **Oil**: The key to the symbol of oil is found in the meaning of the name "Messiah." In both Hebrew and Greek it signifies the "Anointed One" (Isa 61:1-3; Lk 4:14-18).

Oil stands for the following:

- Enduement of gifts for ministry (Isa 61:1; Ac 10:38; 1 Co 12:7-11).
- Bestowment of graces for living (Ps 23:5; Gal 5:22-23).
- Healing for the body (Isa 1:6; Jas 5:14).

7. **Seal**: A symbol denoting ownership, authority, security, approval, and a completed transaction (Jn 6:27; 2 Co 1:22; Eph 1:13; 4:30; 2 Ti 2:19; Rev 7:3-8).

**DRUNK WITH THE SPIRIT**

"When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound Like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit
enabled them. . . We hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues! Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, ‘What does this mean? Some, however, made fun of them and said, “They have had too much wine.”’

Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd:

“Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say.

These men are not drunk, as you suppose. It’s only nine in the morning! No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel . . .” (Ac 2:1-4,11-16).

On the Day of Pentecost the disciples were accused of being drunk. Why? Because they did not act normal—like themselves. Something extraordinary had taken place. They were not being themselves. No longer somber, timid cowards! Rather, they were “beside themselves” as they joyfully flung themselves in reckless abandon at danger, poverty, persecution. To follow their lives in the book of Acts we see that these former cowards became flaming evangelists who turned their world upside down (17:6).

The trouble with today's church is that she is not accused of drunkenness! She does not do anything out of the ordinary. She can be totally explained on the natural plane. There is nothing supernatural about her. She is sober: proper, controlled, cautious, calculating, safe, predictable, timed, dry, boring and dead.

A popular misconception which resulted from the teaching of Sabellius is that in creation, God the Father works; in redemption, God the Son works; and in salvation, God the Spirit works. Another way of stating this error is that the Old Testament dispensation was the dispensation of the Father; the New Testament dispensation was the dispensation of the Son; and the present dispensation is the dispensation of the Spirit.

On the other hand, the Scriptures do teach that in every manifestation of the works of God, the Father, the Son, and the Spirit are alike active. In every divine activity the power to bring forth originates with the Father, the power to arrange proceeds from the Son and the power to perfect (complete) comes from the Spirit (Ro 11:36; 1 Co 8:6).

The Father, therefore, has been referred to as the Originating Cause or the Ultimate Source of the universe (1 Co 8:6; Rev 4:11), divine revelation (1:1), salvation (Jn 3:16-17), and Jesus' messianic works (5:17; 14:10).

The Son has been referred to as the Instrumental Cause or the Personal Agent through whom the Father works to bring about the divine activities such as the creation and maintenance of the universe (1:3; 1 Co 8:6; Col 1:16-17), divine revelation (1:1; Mt 11:27; Jn 16:12-15; Rev 1:1), salvation (Mt 1:21; Jn 4:42; 2 Co 5:19), and His messianic works (Jn 5:17,19; 6:38; 8:29; 17:4).
**The Holy Spirit** has been described as the Dynamic Cause by which the Father brings about these divine activities: the creation and sustenance of the universe (Gn 1:2; Job 26:13; Ps 104:30), divine revelation (Jn 16:12-15; Eph 3:5), salvation (Jn 3:6; Titus 3:5; 1 Pe 1:2), and Jesus’ messianic works (Isa 61:1; Ac 10:38). The typical pattern in Scripture is that the Father does all these things through the Son by means of the Holy Spirit.

### The Holy Spirit in Creation

The Scriptures ascribe the work of creation to each member of the Trinity. The causative force proceeds from the Father (Gn 1:1), the constructive force proceeds from the Son (Col 1:16; Heb 11:3) and the perfective force proceeds from the Holy Spirit (Ps 33:6; 104:30).

The special work of the Holy Spirit in creation is to lead creation to its ultimate, which is the glory of God. So the particular work of the Holy Spirit is to sustain and mature life and to bring order and beauty into the universe (Gn 1:2; 2:7; Job 26:13; 33:4; Ps 33:6; 104:10-30; Isa 40:12-13; Gal 5:22-23; Eph 5:18).

### The Holy Spirit in the Scriptures

One of the greatest works the Holy Spirit has accomplished is the giving of the Holy Scriptures (2 Ti 3:16; 2 Pe 1:20-21). His threefold work in this respect is:

- **Revelation** (Gn 2:16; Ex 20:1-12; Rev 1:1-12).
- **Inspiration** (2 Sa 23:1-2; Jn 14:26; 15:26).
- **Illumination** (1 Co 2:10-12; Eph 1:17-18).

Revelation is the giving of new truth which is the unaided human mind could not discover. Inspiration concerns the transmission of truth both old and new. Illumination concerns the apprehension of revealed truth.

All Scripture is given by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit (2 Ti 3:16—"All Scripture is God-breathed"), but not all Scripture necessitated a divine revelation. For instance, some facts which Scripture writers used were available to anyone, but inspiration guided as to the use of these facts. Also the entire book of Ecclesiastes represents the best that natural man can do apart from divine revelation. Inspiration sets down accurately what passes, but the conclusions and reasonings are, after all, man's.

**Illumination** means an understanding of the truth which inspiration records. "The realm of the Spirit is closed to the human intellect. The human intellect is not the organ by which we apprehend spiritual things. Spiritual truths cannot be intellectually perceived. Before I can understand a Bible text it takes an act of the Holy Spirit equal to the work of the Holy Spirit who inspired the text." This work of the Holy Spirit is called illumination.
The Holy Spirit in the Old and New Dispensations

The old dispensation refers to the period from Adam to Pentecost; the new refers to the time from Pentecost to the Second Advent. The problem here is to determine the distinction between the work of the Spirit before and after Christ was glorified.

Some teach that the difference is expressed by two Greek prepositions: upon (epi) and in (en); that is, the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples (Lk 24:49), and the Holy Spirit was to come upon the men at Pentecost (Ac 1:8). Compare Judges 6:34 (upon Gideon) and Judges 15:14 (upon Samson).

On the other hand, there is a sense in which the Holy Spirit was not given until the Day of Pentecost. Jesus said, "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, from his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water. Then John explains, "But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified" (Jn 7:38-39).

This prophecy of Christ indicates that the best point of approach to this problem is the Christian church. While the Old Testament saints are in the body of God, the forming of the New Testament church awaited the Day of Pentecost. The Old Testament assembly was not the same as the New Testament church. The former was a politico-religious body, including all of Israel, while the latter is a spiritual body made up of only born again individuals who are members of the body of Christ. Christ is the Head of this body which is a temple of the Holy Spirit. In the age of the Old Testament, chosen individuals were the objects of the Spirit's grace for life and gifts for service, while in the New Testament the present age He works in and upon the body of Christ and individuals as members of that body.

In the Old Testament times, the Holy Spirit came upon and temporarily indwelt chosen individuals only, such as prophets, kings, and specially chosen individuals for special service (Ex 31:1-2). In the New Testament times, the promise says,

"I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions and your old men shall dream dreams; and on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy" (Ac 2:17-18).

Today all of God's children are eligible for this special work of the Holy Spirit.

Before Christ was Glorified

The action of the Holy Spirit may be seen in the hearts of individuals in saving grace in men such as Abel, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Samuel, David (Ro 4; Gn 5:22-24; Heb 11:5; Jude 14:15).
His action upon **prophets, priests, and kings** seemed to be wholly external—an operation which qualified them for office (Lev 8:10; 1 Sa 10:1).

His action upon **divinely appointed workmen** conferred gifts and talents for the service of the people, as in Aholiab and Bezaleel (Ex 31:2-6; Isa 45:1; Zec 4:6).

**After Christ was Glorified**

The Holy Spirit gave birth to the Christian church on the Day of Pentecost (1 Co 12:27; Eph 1:22-23), and He is still effecting the New Birth in the hearts of individuals.

The Holy Spirit also began His special work of sanctifying and filling the believer on the Day of Pentecost, and subsequent records in Acts and later church history show that He is continuing this work today.

Accompanying this work of sanctification and infilling is the conferring of His gifts (1 Co 12:4-11) and graces (Gal 5:22-23).

**The Holy Spirit in the Church**

The New Testament church is working under the New Covenant prophesied by Jeremiah (31:31-14; Heb 8:10-12). But for unbelief and judicial blindness, national Israel might be the beneficiaries of this New Covenant today. Paul explains that God spared not the natural branches of the olive tree (Ro 11:21). It will not be until the Great Tribulation that this blindness will be lifted so that they will look upon Him whom they have pierced and wail and mourn in repentance. "And so all Israel shall be saved" (Ro 11:26). Until then, it is the responsibility of the church to witness to the world by the preaching of the gospel so that men out of every tongue, tribe, people, and nation might be saved.

**The New Birth**

What Jeremiah calls the "New Covenant" and what Ezekiel calls the "new heart" and the "new spirit" (36:26), Jesus calls the "new birth" (Jn 3:3). For this reason, some hold that even though men were saved in the Old Testament times by grace through faith in the coming sacrifice of Christ, and the new birth, as such, is an experience which began at Pentecost and continues by means of the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit today (Titus 3:5). Nowhere in Judaism was taught the coming of the Spirit upon all men for their personal regeneration.

The **new birth** is also described by Paul as being "baptized into Christ" and the experience described should not be confused with the work of the Holy Spirit subsequent to conversion and sometimes called "the baptism with (of, or in) the Holy Spirit." We are baptized into the body of Christ by the Holy Spirit.
The Baptism with the Holy Spirit

The baptism with the Holy Spirit is mentioned six times in the New Testament:

• "He Himself (Jesus) shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit" (Mt 3:11).

• "He Himself (Jesus) shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit" (Mk 1:8).

• "He Himself (Jesus) shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit” (Lk 3:16).

• "This is the One (Jesus) who baptizes with the Holy Spirit" (Jn 1:3).

• "You shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now" (Ac 1:5).

• "You shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit" (11:16).

These literal translations show that in each case the emphasis is upon Jesus as the administrator—not the Holy Spirit as in the case of the new birth (1 Co 12:13). Being baptized into the body of Christ by the Holy Spirit is a description of the crisis of salvation, but being baptized with the Holy Spirit by Christ is a description of the crisis of sanctification or the Spirit-filled life. In salvation, the Holy Spirit presents Christ to the sinner, but in sanctification, Christ presents the Holy Spirit to the believer.

Other expressions used in Scripture for this experience subsequent to salvation:

1. "Filled with the Holy Spirit" (Ac 2:4).


3. "Received the Holy Spirit" (8:17).

4. "The Holy Spirit was given" (v. 18).

5. "The Holy Spirit fell on all them that heard the word” (10:44).

6. "On the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Spirit" (v. 45).


8. "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit” (Ac 10:38).

9. "But the anointing which you have received of Him abides in you" (1 Jn 2:27).
All these expressions seem to be used in the New Testament to describe the same crisis experience subsequent to salvation. Since the disciples who were baptized with the Holy Spirit at Pentecost were again filled with the Spirit in Acts 4:32, some prefer to use "baptism of the Holy Spirit" to describe the crisis experience, and to use "filling with the Holy Spirit" to describe the frequent encounters that should characterize the life of walking in the Spirit.

God intends this new life whereby the believer is being moved positionally from Adam to Christ to be more than a position of a crisis experience. It is to be a new way of living—a new purpose for existence. The crisis of sanctification or the infilling of the Holy Spirit is of little value if it is not thought of as the beginning of a life-long process of development "unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Eph 4:13).

**The Reception of the Holy Spirit**

Is it Scriptural for Christians to ask for the Holy Spirit? Is it not true that every Christian has the Holy Spirit? He who does not have the Spirit of Christ, does not belong to Him" (Rom. 8:9).

According to Luke 11:13, we must ask for the Holy Spirit:

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

Does Pentecost make these instructions of Jesus obsolete? Some argue that this was a saying which was superseded by the great gift which came once for all at Pentecost. But Luke's Gospel was written long after Pentecost, and this promise was recorded by the Holy Spirit Himself without any indication that the time for asking was over.

A. Torrey speaks to the need for the fullness of the Spirit:

"It is one thing to have the Holy Spirit dwelling in us as He does in every believer) way back in some hidden corner of our being where we are not distinctly conscious of His presence, and quite another thing and a far more glorious thing to have this indwelling Spirit take entire possession of the house that He inhabits, and He does when one is baptized (or filled) with the Holy Spirit."3

The record of the Samaritan revival in Acts 8 is a clear indication that the time for asking for the Holy Spirit is not past.

"When they believed Philip preaching the good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were being baptized, men and women alike (v. 12)."
"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. When they began laying their hands on them, and they were receiving the Holy Spirit" (Ac 8:14-17).

The experience of Paul also supports the idea that Christians may receive the Holy Spirit subsequent to conversion:

"And Ananias departed and entered the house, and after laying his hands on him (Saul) 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" (9:17).

Another clear indication that Christians may ask for and receive the Holy Spirit is found in Acts 19. Paul asked these Ephesians, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" They answered, "No, we have not even heard whether the Holy Spirit has been given" (19:2). After Paul explained what it meant to believe in Christ, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, signifying a full entrance into the Christian way of life. Then subsequent to salvation and Christian baptism, "Paul laid his hands upon them," and the result was that "the Holy Spirit came on them and they began speaking with tongues and prophesying."

Some theologians bypass all these incidents in Acts by assuming that they were special or exceptional cases. Is this not assuming the conclusion to be proved? Should we not rather say that these testimonies of experiences with God recorded in the book of Acts furnish patterns for us today?

Is there any logical explanation, then for these experiences in the light of Romans 8:9? Yes. In the original creation of man who was made in the image and likeness of God, he was spirit, soul, and body (Gn 2:7; Heb 4:12; 1 Th 5:23). Proverbs 20:27 teaches us that "The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord" and this candle was lit by the indwelling Holy Spirit. So the spirit of man is that part of his being which makes it possible for him to contact God.

Then came the Fall. Sin entered, the spirit of man was no longer indwelt by the Holy Spirit, and man's contact with God was lost. The day sin entered, the spirit of man died (Gn 2:17; Eph 2:5), and he became alienated from the life of God (4:18).

Hopeless degradation was the result. The spirit of man which was originally designed to rule is "twice dead, plucked up by the roots" (Jude 12). The soul is now possessed of a reprobate mind, a depraved will, and vile affections (Ro 1:26-28). It is completely centered in self. The body is the virtual ruler of those "whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is their shame" (Php 3:19).
Then Christ came as the true pattern man—a paradigm of the righteousness of God. He was born of the Spirit through the Virgin Mary. He was baptized or filled with the Spirit upon the occasion of His water baptism. The Holy Spirit filled, not only His human spirit, but also His soul and His body; so Christ was wholly sanctified. It is through the cross of Christ that man may appropriate all of Christ's righteousness as his very own. It is only through the cross that man can follow the true pattern man, Jesus Christ.

In the New Testament pattern, the Christian begins to follow Christ first of all in regeneration. At this time God gives him a new spirit (Eze 36:26). Whereas he was spiritually dead, he is now alive to God because his new spirit is indwelt by the Holy Spirit. His candle is now lit (Ps 18:28), and he is in contact with God. He now has the gift of eternal life (Jn 3:5; Titus 3:5).

But the newborn soul must not stop here. It is true that his sins have been forgiven and cleansed away by the blood of Christ, but the sin principle must be dealt with. Paul said,

"I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members" (Ro 7:22-23).

The "I" of the self life must be dealt with by the inwrought cross of Christ.

Sanctification or the fullness of the Spirit is another step in following Christ. At this time the sin principle is dealt with by the inwrought cross. Man's part is to ask for the Holy Spirit to take full possession of his mind, his will, and his emotions. This will enable him to have the mind of Christ (1 Cor. 2:16), to will to do only God's will (Mt 26:39) and to love only what God loves (1 Jn 2:15). This is the area of the personality, and the coming of the Holy Spirit to take complete possession of the personality means the complete control of the thought life, love life and the volitional life. This is both a crisis and a progressive experience wrought in the life subsequent to conversion.

Sanctification should be thought of in three phases. The believer is sanctified positionally from the moment of salvation (Heb 10:9-10; Php 1:1; Heb 3:1). He is sanctified experientially when he asks the Father for the Holy Spirit (Lk 11:13; Ac 8:17; 19:6), and the process of sanctification which follows this crisis enables the believer to walk in the Spirit (1 Th 4:3-4,7; Gal 5:25). In consummation the believer's complete sanctification comes at the appearing of the Lord with all His saints (1 Th 3:13; Eph 5:27; 1 Jn 3:2).

Whether the believer enters into the fullness of the Spirit at the time of conversion or much later, the important thing is that a person is filled. Having the Holy Spirit is one thing, but being filled by or being completely possessed by the Holy Spirit is quite another.

Every Christian has the Holy Spirit, but not every Christian is sanctified wholly: spirit, soul, and body. The Holy Spirit must have complete control of every member of the physical body: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and
soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Th 5:23). Only then can the Christian truly say with Paul "I have been (and still am) crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I but Christ lives in me" (Gal 2:20).

This identification with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection makes it possible to follow the Holy Spirit's instructions for complete dedication:

"I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable and perfect, will of God" (Ro 12:1-2).

It is, therefore, scriptural for the Christian to ask for the Holy Spirit to come into his soul and body. In fact, Christ said that the world cannot receive Him (Jn 14:17) because of a lack of spiritual perception. Only the Christian may ask for the Holy Spirit in this sense.

The reception of the Spirit may be thought of as equal to "the baptism of the Holy Spirit." The former is used eleven times in the New Testament (7:39; 14:17; 20:22; Ac 1:8; 8:15,17,19; 10:47; 19:2; Gal 3:2), and all of these references indicate a post-regeneration experience.

FILLED (DRUNK) WITH THE SPIRIT

"Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead be filled with the Spirit. Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ" (Eph 5:18-21).

On the Day of Pentecost the disciples were accused of being drunk. Why? Because they did not act normal—not like themselves. Something extraordinary had taken place. They were not being themselves. No longer somber, timid cowards! Rather, they were beside themselves as they joyfully flung themselves at reckless abandon at danger, poverty, persecution. To follow their lives in the book of Acts we see that these former cowards became flaming evangelists who turned their world upside down (Ac 17:6).

THE NEED FOR FULLNESS

Unfortunately the church has more of the atmosphere of being drugged than being drunk, more of stagnation than intoxication! Over 100 years ago A.B. Simpson, founder of The Christian and Missionary Alliance declared:
"We must recognize the supernatural ministry of the Spirit, which never was intended to be interrupted, and ought to be expected yet more wonderfully in these last days before the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. If there ever was an age when the world needed the witness of God's supernatural working, it is this day of unbelief and satanic power.

Therefore, we may expect as the end approaches that the Holy Spirit will work in the healing of sickness, in the casting out of demons, in remarkable answers to prayer, in special and wonderful providences and in such forms as may please His sovereign will—to prove to an unbelieving world that the power of Jesus' name is still unchanged and that all the promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him, Amen forever."

A. B. Simpson had personally struggled early in his ministry because of a lack of spiritual power. As Simpson experienced the fullness of the Spirit his life and ministry took on a new dimension—a new power that transformed his evangelistic ministry.

A CONTROVERSIAL DOCTRINE

While the Spirit-filled life is the greatest experience that any believer can have it is also the most misunderstood experience in the life of the Christian. A.W. Tozer warned:

"Satan has opposed the doctrine of the Spirit-filled life about as bitterly as any other doctrine there is. He has confused it, opposed it, surrounded it with false notions and fears."\(^5\)

How tragic!

A careful study of the book of Acts shows that while speaking in tongues was at times evidence of the fullness of the Holy Spirit (2:1-4; 10:44-46; 19:1-6), power for witness was the normative evidence (the evidence) of the filling of the Holy Spirit (1:8; 2:4,11; 4:31; 6:5-8; 8:19; 13:52; 19:8).

In the Pauline epistles (Gal 5:22-6:2; Eph 5:18-21; Col 3:16) it seems that the infallible sign of spiritual fullness is moral and religious (spiritual).

The fruit of the Spirit is the natural result of the fullness of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit produces fruit. Fruitfulness, therefore, is a question of submitting to that productivity.

MEANING OF FULLNESS

The clearest and the most complete treatment on the fullness of the Holy Spirit in the epistles is found in Ephesus:

"Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit" (Eph 5:18).
When we are drunk on wine, we are "under the influence." When we are drunk or filled with the Holy Spirit, we are also "under the influence." The idea is to be "controlled by." "They . . . were filled with wrath" (Lk 4:28) means "they were controlled by wrath" and for that reason tried to kill Jesus. "The Jews were filled with envy" (Ac 13:45) means that the Jews were controlled by envy and opposed the ministry of Paul and Barnabas. To be drunk with wine is to be under the control of alcohol, to be filled with the Holy Spirit is to be controlled by the Holy Spirit, not by our minds, emotions and will.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF BEING FILLED

Notice the wording carefully as Paul addresses this issue of the fullness of the Holy Spirit. "Be filled" is in the imperative mood. Therefore it is not a mere suggestion or an ideal, but an authoritative command. Paul does not leave this as an option; it is an obligation.

The command is also in the plural form which means that it is addressed to the entire Christian community. No one is to get drunk; all of us are to be filled with the Spirit of God. The fullness of the Spirit is not for a chosen few, for an elitist group of super Christians; it is available for all of God's people.

This command is also in the passive voice. This is why the New English Bible renders it, "Let the Holy Spirit fill you." It is not a matter of our doing something but in allowing the Holy Spirit to fill us with Himself. This, of course, means that we must first be empty, for you cannot fill something that is already full. We must be empty of self and not entertain anything that would grieve the Holy Spirit, so that He can invade our lives to the fullest.

The parallel passage in Colossians reads, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly . . ." (Col 3:36). We must never divorce the Spirit and the Word as Martin Luther so faithfully emphasized. To be filled with the Word so it is lived out in our lives and to be filled with the Holy Spirit so He controls us, is virtually the same thing.

Paul wrote in the present tense which means that we are to continually be filled with the Spirit. A literal translation would be, "let the Holy Spirit continually fill you" or "be being filled with the Holy Spirit." The fullness of the Spirit is not a once-for-all experience which we can never lose but a reality that needs to be renewed constantly by a continuous appropriation of God's grace by faith.

Though the phrases "speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs," "Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord," "always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ," and "Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ" (Eph 5:19-21) are translated as imperatives, they are present participles dependent on the command, "be filled with the Spirit" (v. 18).

Many times people who claim to have been filled with the Spirit of God have been anything but submissive. Pride, brashness and self-assertiveness has often characterized such people. But Paul's point is that the Holy Spirit is a humble Spirit, and therefore those who are controlled by Him are also humble and thus submissive—to God and to His children.
It should be pointed out here that these four participles which are dependent on the command, "be filled with the Spirit" are to be literally translated: "Speaking to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs" (Eph 5:19), "Singing and making music in your heart to the Lord" (v. 19), and "Always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (v. 20).

THE EVIDENCES OF FULLNESS

The evidences of the fullness of the Holy Spirit in our lives all have to do with relationships. If we are filled with the Holy Spirit, says Paul, we will be glorifying God in our worship by "singing and making music" in our hearts to the Lord "always thanking" Him "for everything." A joyful and thankful heart to the Lord is evidence that we are filled with His Spirit.

In addition to our joyful and thankful attitude toward God, Paul also states that being filled with the Spirit of God affects our relationship to one another. He states that we speak to encourage one another. He puts it, "Speaking to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs" (v. 21). Love for God and each other is the result of the Spirit-filled life.

An encouraging, joyful (worshipful), thankful and submissive spirit are evidences a person has been filled with the Holy Spirit. These attitudes always go together. You cannot be controlled by the Holy Spirit and have a discouraging, sad, complaining, rebellious, independent or insubordinate spirit at the same time. It has to be one or the other.

When you are filled with the Holy Spirit you are filled with a humble Spirit. For the Holy Spirit did not come to bring attention to Himself; He came to glorify Jesus. Everything He said and did was in complete obedience to Jesus Christ (Jn 16:13-14). When you are filled with the Holy Spirit—when you are submissive—you no longer bring attention to yourselves but serve our Lord and His people unobtrusively.

It is useless to command a person to be encouraging, joyful, thankful and submissive apart from the fullness of the Holy Spirit. This is Paul's point. All these attitudes flow out of being filled with the Spirit of God. This is why you are commanded to allow the Holy Spirit to continually fill you.

Apart from the fullness of the Holy Spirit, encouragement, joy, thanksgiving and submission become "forced." But God is demanding more than external obedience; He is demanding a spirit or attitude that humbly yields to others.

IS A MYSTICAL EXPERIENCE ESSENTIAL?

Many have taught that a mystical experience is essential to validate that our being filled with the Spirit has been real and genuine. Is this scriptural?

There is no denying the fact that some of the great saints throughout church history had had some great mystical experience when they were filled with the Holy Spirit. D. L. Moody, Charles Finney, and Jonathan Edwards would be examples of such experiences.
While they had remarkable accounts of the filling of the Holy Spirit and were mightily used by God to reach between two and three million people for Christ, does this mean that unless we have the same experience that we have not had a legitimate visitation of God's Spirit in our lives?

Definitely not! The Bible simply does not teach that there is a necessary connection of the Spirit's fullness with a mystical experience. Does this mean that there will not be any manifestation of the Spirit? Not necessarily. There may or there may not be any unusual manifestation. This is no different than our conversion where some people have some tremendous emotional experience like the apostle Paul whereas others have no unusual emotional experience at all. The emotional experience is not really the issue at stake. The reality of the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives is what is crucial.

Some teach that there must be a period of "waiting" in order to experience the fullness of the Holy Spirit. This, however, is not scriptural. Paul was not obliged to wait (Ac 9). Ananias came and told him of his wondrous gift of the Holy Spirit and then laid hands on him as he then received back his sight that he had lost on the Damascus road as Jesus appeared to him. After this the Holy Spirit filled him. He then "got up and was baptized" (vv. 17-18). There was no waiting in Acts 10 and 19. As the conditions were met the people were filled. Even in the account of Charles Finney we see that he did not wait for the Holy Spirit to come upon him.

We only need to wait when we do not meet the conditions. What God requires is for a person to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

WHY WE NEED TO BE FILLED CONTINUALLY

Someone once asked D.L. Moody why he urged people so often to be filled with the Spirit. He is reported to have answered, "Because we leak badly."

The apostles show us that there are other reasons why we need to be filled again and again. On the day of Pentecost they were filled (2:4). A short time later, after a prayer meeting for boldness, the same group was filled again (4:31). Here the apostles did not need to be filled this second time because some specific sin had come into their lives but because they needed control in a new area (boldness to witness) in the face of a new situation or problem (the prohibition to witness about Christ by the Sanhedrin). Repeated fillings may be necessary because new areas of life come to light that need to be brought under the control of the Spirit of God.

Merrill Tenney illustrates the repeated fillings with a city house. Since most homes are connected to a water main they are supplied with adequate water for normal life. But suppose a fire breaks out. Then firemen tap a nearby hydrant to secure a much greater flow of water to meet the emergency. To be "full" of the Spirit is like a house supplied continuously with adequate water. But to be "filled" on occasion, as the apostles were, is to be given extra energy and power for special service. While they had been "full of the Spirit" all along they periodically needed "extra filling" to meet the extra demands on them.11

It is also true, of course, that a Christian needs to be filled repeatedly when sin (which is ego control) breaks the control of the Holy Spirit.
THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Another evidence of the fullness of the Holy Spirit in a person's life is that he is serving the body of Christ with the tools God has given him. These tools are called "spiritual gifts."

When you as a believer exercise your spiritual gift/s, it is an exhibition of the Spirit's power through you. It is not simply a matter of you doing something you are good at. Spiritual gifts are manifestations of the Holy Spirit (1 Co 12:10).

As indicated in the study on *Ecclesiology*, the major passages dealing with spiritual gifts are 1 Corinthians 12, Romans 12:4-8; Ephesians 4:11-13 and 1 Peter 4:10-11. Please refer to that study for further material on this subject.

Walking in the Spirit involves sensitivity to the promptings of the Holy Spirit. Since one of the ways the Spirit manifests Himself through His people is the exercise of spiritual gifts, it is not possible to walk in the Spirit without exercising one's spiritual gift/s.

When you discover, understand, develop and use a spiritual gift your spiritual life takes on a new and liberating dimension as YOU begin to see in a practical way what the Bible has been saying all along: YOU are important! Important to God! Important to God's people, the church! Important to God's work—His plan and program!

Understanding your spiritual giftedness will go a long way in understanding better God's will in your life. Elizabeth O'Connor, an active member of the Church of the Savior in Washington, D. C., a church known for its effective use of spiritual gifts, put it:

"We ask to know the will of God without guessing that His will is written into our very beings. We perceive that will happen when we discern our gifts."6

Spiritual gifts have to do with commitment since the practical result of knowing what our gifts are lead to responsibility and sacrifice in using them to the benefit of the church family. Elizabeth O'Connor put it:

"The identifying of gifts brings to the fore . . . the issue of commitment. Somehow if I name my gift and it is confirmed, I cannot `hang loose' in the same way. I would rather be committed to God in the abstract than be committed to Him at the point of my gifts . . .

If I develop one gift, it means that other gifts will not be used. Doors will close on a million lovely possibilities . . . Commitment at the point of my gifts means that I must give up being a straddler. Somewhere in the deeps of me I know this. Life will not be a smorgasbord I have made it, sampling and tasting here and there. My commitment will give me an identity."7
Knowing your gifts then, helps you **plug into God's work**. As you discover, develop and use your spiritual gifts you are released into meaningful service in the Kingdom of God.

**Spiritual vitality**, therefore, involves discovering, developing, and using your spiritual gifts. A deep sense of **satisfaction and fulfillment** comes only as you are sensitive to the leadership of the Holy Spirit who has **equipped** you by giving you **tools (gifts)** for ministry.

**THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT**

It is extremely important that whenever the topic of the gifts of the Spirit are discussed that the emphasis is brought to the **fruit** of the Spirit. When the gifts are studied and used in the context of the fruit of the Spirit, balance occurs. Fruit has to do with **character**—who we are, our spiritual condition—whereas **gifts** has to do with **ministry**, our effectiveness in service. The fruit of the Spirit must be central since who we are, is always more important than what we "have" or "do."

**THE FRUIT**

**BELIEVERS RELATION TO THE SPIRIT**: Love, Joy and Peace

**LOVE**—Wanting the best for others and willing to help to bring it about.

Paul in speaking of the fruit of the Spirit begins with love which really captures the rest of the fruit. Joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control are different manifestations of love. This is clearly seen in Paul's description of love in 1 Corinthians 13 John Wesley put it: "Love is the root of all the rest."

**JOY**—Inner assurance of God's love that is not affected by circumstances.

Joy is frequently associated with the Holy Spirit (Ac 13:52) and Paul describes it as inspired by the Holy Spirit (1 Th 1:6). The word is used 60 times in the New Testament with the word "rejoice" being used 72 times. It is the most typical and popular Christian greeting (Mt 28:9; Lk 1:28; Ac 15:28; 2 Co 13:11; Jas 1:1).

**PEACE**—Cessation of strife vs. wellbeing (harmony).

The word peace (**shalom**) is used 88 times in the New Testament. Next to joy it is the most popular Christian greeting in the New Testament. Paul refers to the peace of God as "surpassing all understanding" (Php 4:7)—peace that goes beyond our reasoning powers.

**BELIEVERS RELATION TO OTHERS**: Patience, Kindness and Goodness

**PATIENCE**—Positively putting up with others when severely tried.

The primary meaning is patience with people although it includes patience in difficult circumstances. It means "forebearance" or "longsuffering" (1 Co 13:4). It is the willingness to "suffer long" for the benefits of others.
KINDNESS—Love in little things.

Kindness is another positive characteristic of love (v. 4). It is an attribute rooted in the very fiber of God's character: "And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with Him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages He might show the incomparable riches of His grace, expressed in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus" (Eph 2:6-7).

GOODNESS--Active benevolent deeds for others.

Goodness is not a passive, pietistic withdrawal from society. It is that characteristic of ministry which Peter referred to in Jesus: "You know . . . how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power and how He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil; for God was with Him" (Ac 10:38; 11:24).

BELIEVERS RELATION TO SELF (BELIEVER AS A PERSON)

Faithfulness, Gentleness and Self-Control

FAITHFULNESS--Trustworthy, loyal and reliable in fulfilling a promise or completing a task.

Faithfulness is faith in the sense of fidelity (Titus 2:10). This word (pistos) describes the trustworthy nature of God. He remains available, accessible and always dependable. He is never too busy or distracted to pay attention to any of us. Our present and future life depends on the reliability of God to honor His covenants (1 Th 5:24).

GENTLENESS--Strength that is expressed in tenderness, consideration and sensitivity.

Gentleness is meekness which is "strength under control." Meekness is not weakness. It was used in referring to the taming or domestication of animals. A gentle person is one who is mild toward others in trying and difficult circumstances, tender when others are rough, and quiet and kind when others are loud and coarse.

SELF-CONTROL—Mastery of one's own desires, impulses, and behavior.

Self-control is specifically opposed to the drunkenness and carousing of the "works of the flesh" (Gal 5:19-21). However, its meaning extends to all the carnal lusts insofar as they threaten to enslave a man and dominate his life (Ro 6:12).

The Spirit-filled and Spirit-led life, then, manifests itself in Christ-like attitude, words, conduct and loving service to others.

FRUIT & GIFTS

The following chart shows a comparison between the fruit and the gifts of the Holy Spirit.
The Spirit-filled life is a fruit-filled life. Spiritual fruit is indisputable evidence of the Spirit's presence—or His absence.

The fruit manifest in the believer's life is neither a human product nor an artificial creation; it is the natural yield of the life-giving Vine into which he has been grafted (Jn 15:1,5). It is, therefore, the evidence of a vital and healthy relationship to Christ, through the presence and power of His Spirit.

Fruitlessness is a sign of degeneration or stagnation caused by malnutrition or disease. When this happens, the Christian life becomes barren, unproductive and useless. But where there is growth in grace, there will be spiritual fruit.

The cultivation of the fruit is crucial. There must be the proper soil or right atmosphere for the fruit to grow (Gal 5:25-26). Fruit grows in a climate where there is an emphasis on the Spirit and the Word. The soil of prayer, praise, worship and fellowship makes the fruit grow. This means that there must be the pulling of the weeds so that the seed of the Word can take root and bear fruit.

It is one thing to overcome the flesh and not do certain evil things; it is something else to do good things. The Pharisee or legalist might be able to brag that he is not guilty of certain evil behavior such as stealing, murder or adultery (Mt 5:21-32), but can the positive and beautiful graces of the Spirit be seen in his life? Negative "goodness" is not enough; there must be positive qualities that beautify one's life and thus make it attractive to everyone.
Works and Fruit

There is a distinct difference between works and fruit. While a machine in a factory works and produces a product, it can never manufacture fruit. Fruit grows out of life. Spiritual fruit grows out of a life in the Spirit (Gal 5:25). Whereas effort, strain, sweat, labor, toil are associated with work; beauty, quietness, natural growth are associated with fruit. While the flesh produces "dead works" (Heb. 9:14), the Spirit produces living fruit.

Behind "action-fruit" is "attitude-fruit." Action is the product of attitude. Whatever is going on inside will eventually manifest itself on the outside. Action-fruit or behavior-fruit without attitude-fruit is mere legalism and hypocrisy. But where the Spirit of God produces a change in attitude and thought a positive change in behavior is the natural outflow.

The fruit of the Spirit is never self-centered. Fruit is grown to be eaten, not to be merely admired and put on display. We do not bear fruit for our own consumption; we bear fruit that others might be fed.

Although the flesh may manufacture "results" that bring praise to men, it cannot bear fruit that brings glory to God.

The secret is the Holy Spirit. He—and He alone—enables us to overcome the flesh and bear fruit. Fruitfulness requires complete dependence on the Holy Spirit. God's Holy Spirit keeps producing. Fruitfulness, therefore, is a question of submitting ourselves to that productivity.

HOW TO BE FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

HUMILITY

The first step in obeying God's command to be filled with the Spirit requires humility for it means admitting that you need the Holy Spirit's fullness. This means the recognition that apart from the work of the Spirit what you do accomplish has no real eternal significance. It is vital that you realize that your life and ministry rests on the Spirit's empowerment. This is a declaration of dependence! It is a declaration that you must have His fullness if you are to be and do what God has called you to.

PERSUADED

The second step you must take if you are to experience His fullness is to prayerfully study the Scriptures so that you are fully persuaded that this is what the Bible teaches. Search the Scriptures for yourself to see what the Bible teaches concerning the Person and Work of the Holy Spirit.

FAITH

The third step requires faith, for you must believe that God wants to fill you. You must realize that the Spirit-filled life is nothing added or extra in the sense that it is a special, deluxe edition of Christianity. Rather it is part and parcel of God's will and plan for all of his people.
There is nothing eerie, nothing strange, nothing contrary to the normal operations of the human heart about the Holy Spirit. He is only the essence of Jesus imparted to believers; to be filled with the Holy Spirit, then, is to act more like Jesus.

BAPTISM

The fourth step is found in baptism:

"When all the people were being baptized Jesus was baptized too. And as He was praying, heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit descended on Him in bodily form like a dove" (Lk 3:21).

It was at His baptism that the Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus. In His baptism, Jesus, though sinless, humbled Himself and identified Himself with mankind. At that point God exalted Him by the giving of the Holy Spirit and by the audible testimony:

"You are My Son, whom I love; with You I am well pleased" (v. 22).

The fullness of the Holy Spirit is not for those who secretly "follow" Christ, but for those who do so openly.

Baptism is important because it is commanded by Jesus! He instituted the Lord's Supper and He included baptism in the Great Commission (Mt 28:19). Thus baptism is not an option, but an obligation for every Christian not to be taken lightly (Ac 2:38). Just as obedience is important in this issue of being filled with the Holy Spirit, so it is vital with the issue of baptism.

It is possible, however, that the fullness of the Holy Spirit precedes water baptism as in the case of the household of Cornelius (Ac 10:47). This, of course, would be an exceptional case. It is important to notice that baptism was immediately followed by the filling of the Holy Spirit.

DESIRE

The fourth step in seeking the fullness of the Spirit is desire. Before you can be filled with the Holy Spirit you must desire to be filled. To be drunk implies a craving for wine that will not be satisfied with anything but wine. The drunkard has but one consuming desire—to drink wine; to satisfy that he will sacrifice everything else in life, however precious.

To become filled with the Spirit implies thirst on the part of the Christian for the living water, the Holy Spirit, that will not be content with anything less than fullness, and that makes him willingly yield all for the sake of this priceless treasure. God requires nothing less than a whole-hearted yearning to be filled or possessed by a spirit other than your own. This means nothing less than allowing Him to be Lord of your life.

Although the Spirit's filling does not make you instantly saintly, it does decide your loyalties and the bias of your living which enables you to "go on to maturity" (Heb 6:1).
It is not enough that there is an intense desire to be filled with the Holy Spirit. There also has to be a proper motive. It is possible to want the fullness of the Spirit of God from a purely selfish and carnal reason: to bring glory and honor to oneself. This is attempting to make the Holy Spirit the servant of oneself.

HONESTY

A fifth step in experiencing the filling of the Holy Spirit requires honesty since it is vital that you be open with God about yourself.

It is crucial that you identify any hindrances that may be blocking the Spirit's work in your life. Serious self-examination is a necessary prerequisite to being empowered by the Holy Spirit of God. Barriers common to many are unbelief, anxiety, jealousy, bitterness, hatred, prejudice, covetousness, fear, immorality, etc. God will not pour out His power upon a vessel that is unprepared and unwilling. You must honestly seek God as you recognize your own sinfulness (Ps 139:23-24).

CONFESSION

Another essential step is confession. The word "confess" means "to agree with," "to open up or lay bare," to see sin as God sees it and to say the same thing God says about it." It is the opposite of rationalizing, justifying. It means to look at our sin honestly and admit to it and ask forgiveness for it.

There are many people who know they are sinners, and they can tell you what particular sins are a problem to them. They may even feel sorry for their sins and wish things were different. But there is never any change because they have never confessed their sins to God and others.

It is essential to confess all known sin (1 Jn 1:9). Verbalizing your sins is key in finding release. If you have wronged others you must openly and verbally confess your sins to them and ask them for forgiveness.

REPENTANCE

Closely related to confession is repentance. Repentance means "changing" or "turning around." It includes deep sorrow for sin (2 Co 7:9-11).

Not only must we confess our sins and ask for forgiveness but we must also turn from those sins and follow Jesus. Repentance is the proof that confession was sincere. Since the Holy Spirit is a holy Spirit He will not come in fullness until self and sin is thoroughly dealt with. You cannot fill what is already full of—self and sin.

SURRENDER

The eighth step in seeking to be filled with the Holy Spirit is surrender or yielding. As an act of your own will you must yield all areas of your life over to God. The greatness of a man's power is the measure of his surrender.
OBEDIENCE

The ninth step is obedience. Peter and other apostles replied to the Sanhedrin:

"We are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey Him" (Ac 5:2).

If we want to be filled with the Holy Spirit we must be ready to obey and do what He wants us to do. Obedience is the acid test whether we are in earnest about our relationship to the Lord.

ASKING

Step ten is asking the Holy Spirit to fill you (1 Jn 5:14-15).

Since the Bible assures you that being filled with the Holy Spirit is God's will, then you can come to Him and ask in confidence knowing that He will honor your request.

It is crucial that you realize that being filled with the Spirit is a matter of faith. Based upon the authority of God's Word we know that He will fill us if we are sincere and earnest in this matter.

The Spirit is not a matter of feeling, but of faith. You may feel strongly the closeness of God when you are filled, or you may not. Instead of trusting in your feelings, you must trust God's promises. You must reckon yourselves to be filled by His Spirit.

ACKNOWLEDGING AND THANKING

The eleventh and last step in seeking the fullness of the Spirit of God is acknowledging and thanking God that He has in fact filled you. This is a crucial step in exercising your faith. It is taking God at His word. It is the gracious acknowledgment that you have received God's gracious promise.

The fullness of the Spirit is indispensable for living the abundant life and experiencing fruitful service. The Spirit-filled life is the normal, not abnormal, Christian life. Anything less is subnormal and sub-Christian. Because we all need to experience the fullness of the Holy Spirit, it is God's intention for all to be filled. This is why we are all commanded:

"Be filled with the Spirit" (Eph 5:18).

HOW TO CULTIVATE THE COMPANIONSHIP OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Since the Holy Spirit is a Person—the third Person of the Trinity—He can be cultivated as any person can be. As a living Person, He can be known in an increasing degree of intimacy. Because He is a personality, He can never be fully known in a single encounter.
It is one thing to experience the filling of the Spirit, it is another to maintain a consistent, intimate walk with God.

In Galatians 5, living and being led by the Spirit is set in opposition to living by the desires of the sinful nature.

Living and being led by the Spirit is to live in **constant awareness of the presence of the Holy Spirit**. By allowing the Holy Spirit to empower and guide you, you will not be deflected by the desires of the flesh (sinful human nature—Gal 5:25).

**ABIDING**

**Abiding in Christ** is the key in experiencing the continual fullness of the Spirit of God (Jn 15:1,4-8).

As a branch is grafted into the vine in the springtime that branch receives the life of the vine which begins to pulsate through it as the union is complete. This is just like the believer receiving the Holy Spirit, through union with Christ by faith, at the time of his conversion.

Suppose now some obstruction in the channels of the branch stops the flow of the sap so that although the branch receives some flow of the sap, it is not filled. The moment the obstacle is removed the branch is filled again with the life of the vine.

This pictures the believer who has received the Holy Spirit but, by an unyielding will and life, is surely hindering the fullness of that life which he has received. As soon as he gives himself wholly to God, he is filled with the Spirit which he already received the moment he gave his life to God.

**CRUCIFIXION**

The remedy for the flesh is **continual crucifixion**. The self-life with its unlawful desires and tendencies is the citadel of the fleshly principle and it will continue to dominate until it is consigned to the cross. This is why Paul says that you must die to self (Ro 6:4-6; Gal 5:24).

It is not for you to crucify your flesh or your self-life; that was done for you through Christ's death on the cross. How, then, can you be crucified? Paul answers:

". . . count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus" (Ro 6:11).

As you by faith reckon or "count it as true" that you are dead to sin and self, the Holy Spirit will make it true in experience and thus you become emancipated from the dominance of fleshly desires. As you walk in the Spirit you will find that you will acquire new tastes and desires that fit you for fellowship with God.
OBEDIENCE

Continual obedience is another way of experiencing the fullness of the Spirit. When Jesus promised the Holy Spirit, He said three times over that the blessing was for the obedient (Jn 14:15-16; 21:23; Ac 5:32; Php 2:8-9).

It is obedience that attains what was lost by the Fall. It is the power of obedience that Jesus came to restore. His life was a life of obedience. The way to keep the blessing of Pentecost is a surrender to obedience in the minutest details as communicated by the Spirit of God through His inspired Scriptures (Jn 14:21; 1 Jn 3:24).

Although these times of manifestation have come from these acts of doing God's will, constancy of manifestation can come only from a continual doing, a daily living in the will of God. Thus, the surrender of the life is only the beginning of a life of surrender. The act of consecration must be incarnated into a life of surrender, if initial filling is to be continued. For consecration is the threshold, not the climax, of the Spirit's fullness.

STUDY THE SCRIPTURES

Continual study of the Scriptures is essential if you are to experience the fullness of the Spirit. It is the Bible that tells you about God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Since God has revealed His will in the Scriptures it is only through serious study of His Word that you can know what He wants for you and expects of you (Jn 5:39-40).

While it is possible to know the Scriptures—the written Word—without knowing Jesus Christ—the living Word, it is not possible to know the living Word without knowing the written Word since it is the written Word that testifies about the living Word. What we know of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit we know only because of what has been revealed to us through the Scriptures.

Spiritual prosperity and success is promised to those who diligently and continually meditate on God's Word and does everything written in it.

FOCUS ON JESUS CHRIST

Focus your attention on Jesus Christ (Jn 15:26; 7:37-39).

The Spirit came to "testify" about Jesus and He was given when Jesus was "glorified." The Holy Spirit has been referred to as the humble member of the Godhead since He draws no attention to Himself but promotes the glory of Christ (16:13-15).

The Holy Spirit is manifested only in the person in whom Jesus is glorified since part of His mission and ministry is to bring honor and glory to the Person of Jesus Christ.

As we live in the fullness of the Spirit, therefore, we are not preoccupied with talking about the Holy Spirit but in talking about Jesus Christ. Our theology must always be Christocentric. Anything less is to give undue attention to the Spirit who came to glorify the Son.
GUARD THE THOUGHT LIFE

Since it is impossible to concentrate on two diverse objects at the same time there will be no room for unhealthy thoughts in your mind if you think healthy thoughts.

Personal holiness is then closely connected with your thinking. Your mind is the battleground on which every moral and spiritual battle is fought. Because of its inherited bias toward sin you are exhorted repeatedly to submit it to God (Ro 12:2; 2 Co 10:3-5).

Carefully guarding the thought life is vital to knowing the continued fullness of the Holy Spirit since you are what you think (Pr 23:7).

Right thinking is the mark of the spiritual person:

"... those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their mind set on what the Spirit desires. The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace" (Ro 8:5-6; see also Php 4:8).

PRACTICE THE PRESENCE OF GOD

Finally, practicing the presence of God is a must if you are to enjoy His fullness. You need to cultivate the art of recognizing the presence of the Spirit of God everywhere. Brother Lawrence is the classic example of one who knew what this meant. In his book, The Practice of the Presence of God, he shares how natural fellowship with God can be. He points out that the most effective way of communicating with God was to simply do his ordinary work out of a pure love for God. He considered it a serious mistake to think of one's prayer time as being different from any other time. One's actions should unite one with God when one is involved in one's daily activities, just as one's prayer unites one with Him in one's quiet time.8

Cultivating the companionship of the Holy Spirit is key to the continued and increasing manifestation of the fullness of the Spirit of God. It is not enough to experience the filling of the Holy Spirit; it is also necessary to maintain that fullness and grow in it. The principles presented will help you in doing so as you "walk in the Spirit" and "keep in step" with Him.
NOTES

2 Karl Barth *Fireside Chat.*