



STEP 2020-2021

Session 5 – Leaders Live in the Spirit

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## Introduction/Context

Life in the spirit is something that is for all believers and everyone who is in Christ. In Acts 2, Peter says, “Repent and be baptised...and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” and it is a fundamental part of our doctrine (what we believe).

“Everyday Supernatural” by Mike Pilavaci and Andy Croft: chapter 5, in particular, provides a helpful explanation of the different spiritual gifts listed in 1 Corinthians.

## Who is the Holy Spirit?

- God is three distinct persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit
- Each person is fully God, having all of his attributes (eternal, holy, perfectly loving, all knowing, etc)
- There is one God.

God is the Father, God is the Son, God is the Holy Spirit.

But the Father is not the Son, the Son is not the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit is not the Father.

So, God is **one** and **three**. One substance/being, three persons. We use the word “Trinity” to convey this complicated maths.

The Holy Spirit is God and is fully God.

The Holy Spirit first appears in the Bible in Genesis 1:2: “the Spirit of God hovered on the waters”. He is not any less important than the Father or the Son and is certainly not an add-on to the Christian life. He’s not just something that we charismatics enjoy and so emphasise or elevate above its rightful place. The Holy Spirit is a core part of who God is, and to know God, we must know the Holy Spirit. To be in relationship with God, we must be in relationship with the Holy Spirit.

In the same way that there are different names for God the Father and Jesus the Son throughout the Bible, there are lots of names for the Holy Spirit, such as breath / wind.

So, if Holy Spirit is distinct from the Father and the Son, then what specifically are His roles, and how do we live life in the Spirit?

## What does the Holy Spirit do?

The Holy Spirit is mentioned 3,000 times in the Bible. We’re going to focus on three overarching themes of the work of the Spirit from the New Testament that different writers have different levels of emphasis on.

### Pause: Reflect

- What would you say is the role / are the main roles of the Holy Spirit in the world and in the Christian walk?

These names reflect his role: Counsellor, Teacher, Helper, Spirit of God, Spirit of truth, Spirit of prophecy/grace/life/holiness/wisdom and revelation/justice/glory.

## Luke

Luke wrote **Luke** and **Acts** (or 'Luke volumes I & II'). His key message is: **the Holy Spirit enables and empowers God's people to witness to the world.**

Acts 1:8 Jesus said

*"but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth."*

At Pentecost (Acts 2), the Spirit enables disciples to speak in different tongues so that the gathered crowds could hear them speaking the gospel in their own language. The crowds could presumably speak a common language in order to live together in Jerusalem - but the gift of the Spirit to the crowds at that moment was to allow them to hear the good news of Jesus in their own language. A show of God's great power, it glorified Him and was an act of loving kindness towards them.

Luke 3:15-17: One is coming who will baptise you with the Holy Spirit – judgement will come

24:49: "stay in the city [don't go to do mission] until you have received power from on high [i.e. HS]"

## John

### Giving light and life

When Jesus is preparing His disciples for His death, He says this in John 14:16:

*"the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. "*

John 16:7-15

*"But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. When he comes, he will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment: about sin, because people do not believe in me; about righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; and about judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned.*

*"I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you."*

So, the Holy Spirit is sent by the Father, on Jesus' request: to convict the world of its sin, to guide the disciples in truth, to glorify Jesus.

## Paul

### New life in Christ, revelation of the truth.

*"we declare God's wisdom, a mystery that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began. None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. However, as it is written:*

*"What no eye has seen,  
what no ear has heard,  
and what no human mind has conceived"—  
the things God has prepared for those who love him—*

*these are the things God has revealed to us by his Spirit.*

*The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. [...] What we have received is not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may understand what God has freely given us. This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, explaining spiritual realities with Spirit-taught words."*

*(1 Corinthians 2:7-14)*

Elsewhere in Scripture, we read that the Spirit Intercedes on our behalf. The Spirit was present at Creation, glorifies the Father and the Son, people are baptised into the Holy Spirit and there are visible manifestations, e.g., tongues, prophesy, healing. And there are gifts that the Spirit Himself gives to believers.

**Pause: Of those three emphases (activating mission for the church, helping individual believers in their own walk and giving light and life, and new life in Christ / revelation of truth):**

- Which do you think about the most?
- Do you over-emphasise (or under-emphasise) any of them?
- Are any of those surprising or new to you?

## Living in the Spirit

Walking each day in step with the Spirit could look like lots of things. Some suggestions:

- Holy Spirit, what do you want me to do today? Who can I bless today or be generous towards?
- When you're reading the Bible - responding to the Holy Spirit's prompts when something jumps out. God, what are you saying to me through this passage?
- When you're praying about a person or situation – the Holy Spirit giving the gift of faith to declare truth and pray bolder prayers than you might on your own.
- Going about your day if someone comes to mind – could be a prompt from the Holy Spirit. Acting on it is an example of living in the Spirit.
- At work, submitting your work to God, praying about situations
- Sharing the gospel with a non-Christian friend
- Praying to be filled with the Spirit
- Displaying the fruit of the Spirit (but not by trying!): love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control
- Eagerly desiring, and exercising, spiritual gifts.

## Spiritual gifts

Lists in 1 Corinthians 12:1-11, Romans 12 and Ephesians 4 also provide foundations for what a Spirit-filled life looks like.

The passage in 1 Corinthians 12 tells us why spiritual gifts are given and why we ought to pursue them – for the common good. 1 Corinthians 13 talks about love. 1 Corinthians 14 goes back to talking about orderly worship and the use of spiritual gifts in congregational settings. So straight away you can see that they must be used in love – if not, they're like a noisy gong or clashing cymbal. These spiritual gifts are inherently communal and to be used in love.

1 Corinthians 14: since you are eager for the gifts of the Spirit, try to excel in those that build up the church. Spiritual gifts are a way to encourage those in the church and those outside the church (Luke). And they are

gifts – they point to the gift-giver. We can learn to use them and hone them for his glory, but ultimately it is about glorifying Him: it should never be about the individual operating in the gift.

Why should we desire them?

- Because the Bible clearly instructs us to desire them. Paul says this in the same sentence he says “pursue love” ([1 Corinthians 14:1](#)). Both are Holy Spirit-inspired imperatives. Paul doesn’t say this won’t be hard, but it’s a clear command.
- Because spiritual gifts help us to love one another well. It is not about creating limelight for gifted individuals. They are given for the glory of God and are an act of service. You only have to read some of the Old Testament prophets to work out that the burden God had given them for prophesying His Word to His people was nothing to do with their own popularity.

**Pause: Think of a time when you have been blessed by someone else’s spiritual gift.**

(E.g., someone has prayed for you for healing, or has had wisdom or insight into a specific situation for you, or given you a prophetic word.)

- How did you feel?
- What did it achieve?

Spiritual gifts require the power of God to be at work – we cannot conjure this up on our own!

## Something practical / activation

God wants to give us gifts not for ourselves but for the building up of his church and the salvation of the lost.

Of that list in 1 Corinthians 12, one or two may have stood out for you and you might have felt a little something inside! If that didn’t happen, go back to the list and pray through it and read the chapter from Everyday Supernatural if any of them don’t make sense or aren’t clear to you. Pick one or two, with the Holy Spirit, to focus on growing in and ask God for this. Be diligent in praying for it, ask others, e.g., your personal pastor, to pray with you for it, and start practising it. Be careful and honest with yourself when you pick one. Don’t pick healing because you want the glory of being able to heal. Pick healing because you feel compassion when you see people hurting.

**Pause: Pray to be filled with the Holy Spirit and to receive His gifts.**

## Ways to practise:

- With friends, in a safe place where you can get things wrong
- Picture a blank picture frame, ask God to fill it
- Might help to soak in worship music first and ask the Holy Spirit to come and minister to you.
- Prophecy to someone using a person in the Bible
- When people remind you of someone else, God might have something to encourage person A based on person B

You will have to take some risks. But God is kind and God is gentle and God is pleased when His children step out in faith. And the more you do, the more you practice, the more you’ll get used to hearing God.

Practical tip: Write down prayers and pictures. The act of writing slows thoughts to the pace of writing and can help identify that God inspiring you because it flows, and it makes sense.

## Practicalities – giving a prophetic word / word of knowledge / dream

- If you think you know what the picture/word means, don't assume that it will be obvious to the person you're giving it to. Explain it! It's not always necessary to explain the picture – but you might sometimes want to give the sense that you got through it from God about a situation.
- It will not contradict Scripture – if you are uncertain, seek counsel from a mature Christian.
- Likely that you'll feel doubts about it – need courage and faith to share.
- It is wise to share in the presence of others, not just you and the person.
- Encourage whoever you've given it to to weigh it up. Pray together. Ask – does that resonate? Be ready for the answer to be no and be okay with that!
- Likewise, if you are given one, be honest. Thank the person (it might have taken real courage), take it away and pray about it. Share it with others to weigh it up together. Does it sound like God?
- Delivery is important – point to the gift-giver, glorify God, not ourselves.

## Going on being filled

Pray with others. Pray regularly. Ask God to fill you with the Holy Spirit and expect that He will. Why wouldn't he? It might not manifest in the way that you expect but God is God, and you are not. Trust in Him. Be accountable to others in it. Tell others what you think and feel, and let their responses and their prayers change your attitude and how you approach God.

Read the gospels and Scriptures which talk about the Holy Spirit. Let them get into your way of thinking.