

# The Spirit has Anointed You

God never intended for us to minister in our own strength. We must allow the Holy Spirit to empower us so we can walk in a supernatural dimension.

✖ Church life was boring when I was growing up. We sang the first, second and fourth verses of the songs from the hymnal. The pastor preached a three-point sermon and dismissed us by noon sharp. Although there were people who responded to altar calls and received Jesus as Savior, nothing else exciting seemed to happen.

When I was 30, our youngest son, Mark, was miraculously healed of a condition that the doctors said would become cancerous by the time he reached adulthood. For the first time in my life I realized that the Lord still heals.

My church taught that apostles, prophets, divine healings, miracles, and supernatural signs and wonders had all passed away. And speaking in tongues was of the devil. We certainly did not want anything that is of the devil so we did not speak in tongues.

Although we claimed to believe the entire Bible, we were actually “cessationists”: We thought much of the work of God described in the Bible is not for today. The cessationist view is that some things that were available for God’s people during Bible days are not available for believers today because they have ceased.

The statement in 1 Corinthians 13:10, “but when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away” (NKJV), has caused much controversy because some leaders

interpret it to mean that when Jesus came, the perfect kingdom of God also came. However, other Scriptures show that all the disciples who come to Jesus can have the sign gifts (see Mark 16:15-18).

Many believers today live their Christian lives the way I did. Week after week they attend Bible studies, listen to sermons and read Christian books-and still live beneath the potential that God has provided for them.

They do not have the power they need to walk through difficulties. They do not have the power to reach a hurting world. The Scriptures concerning the supernatural life of the believer do not seem to work for them.

It was not until Mark's healing was declared by the doctors to be a miracle that I realized the Lord still provides supernatural power for His people. At that time, I was filled with the Holy Spirit and given a prayer language.

The infilling of the Holy Spirit changed me in many ways. First, my prayer language gave me the ability to speak to God when my mind did not understand what I was saying. "For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my understanding is unfruitful" (1 Cor. 14:14).

Second, I became bolder. Until I was filled with the Spirit, I was timid, shy, bashful and introverted. It was impossible for me to speak to more than three people without my voice shutting down.

However, after being filled with the Holy Spirit a new boldness came into my life. Today I can stand before thousands to speak and prophesy. Fear and timidity never cross my mind.

Religion had caused me to believe that a "good Christian" is to be quiet and reserved. Yet the Bible says "the righteous are bold as a lion" (Prov. 28:1). Boldness empowers a person to make a stand for truth.

The third change that occurred in me after being baptized in the Holy Spirit was that I became intensely hungry for God's Word. Although I had attended church all my life, I had not read my Bible. The Bible did not make sense to me, and I had trouble understanding most of it. But after my encounter with the Holy Spirit, all I wanted to do was pray, worship and read the Bible.

The fourth change I experienced was the release of healings, signs and wonders, and miracles. Praying for the sick became a joy when I saw cancers disappear and broken bones knit together, when I heard that incurable blood disorders were healed, and when I observed many other supernatural miracles. I learned that God has purposed for His people to operate in the same supernatural power Jesus did when He was on earth.

## **The Promise of the Holy Spirit**

During Old Testament times, the Holy Spirit would come upon believers and empower them to fulfill a special task. After that the Holy Spirit would lift from them.

Men such as the prophet Elijah would receive the power of the Holy Spirit to stop the rain, defeat the prophets of Baal and do many other supernatural feats (see 2 Kin. 18). The Holy Spirit was given for only a short time to accomplish God's tasks. In other words, the Holy Spirit was *lent* to certain people for a period of time. Then the Holy Spirit lifted until God gave the next assignment.

On Pentecost, the Holy Spirit descended and filled believers. He was no longer given for a specific task and then taken from them. Now the Holy Spirit is received, and He continues to live permanently inside believers.

To live a victorious life, believers must receive the infilling and empowerment of the Holy Spirit. He was not only for the early church; God promised to send Him to every

believer who asks.

The prophet Joel prophesied that the time would come when the Holy Spirit would be poured out on all people. “‘And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions. And also on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days’ ” (Joel 2:28-29).

The promise was for the Holy Spirit to be poured out on young and old, men and women. Neither age nor gender exempts a person from receiving the Holy Spirit.

On the day of Pentecost, God fulfilled His promise. “And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance” (Acts 2:4).

The outpouring of the Holy Spirit forever changed the world. Ordinary men and women were empowered to perform miracles, raise the dead and stand strong in the midst of terrible persecution. These men and women were not praying to escape this world. They prayed for the power of the Holy Spirit to manifest through them and change the world they lived in.

If a believer has not been filled with the Holy Spirit, he has not received part of his birthright as a child of God. God promised the filling of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament. His promise was fulfilled at Pentecost. We do not need to wait any longer.

Many Christians do not realize the filling of the Holy Spirit is available to them. Though I received the Holy Spirit when I was saved, I did not know that I needed to be *filled* with the Holy Spirit.

Paul asked the Ephesians whether they had received the Holy Spirit since they believed. “He said to them, ‘Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?’ So they said to him, ‘We

have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit' " (Acts 19:2). Paul realized that they needed the power of the Holy Spirit. He wanted to be sure they had received the spiritual equipment they needed as children of God.

The Holy Spirit is a gift to believers. Too many Christians believe they have to *earn* the Holy Spirit. In the same way that salvation is a gift, so is the filling of the Holy Spirit. "Then Peter said to them, 'Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38).

## **How to Be Filled With the Spirit**

I am so thankful that the Holy Spirit did not go away. He is still available to believers today. In fact, believers are commanded to be filled with the Holy Spirit. "And do not get drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:18).

The Holy Spirit empowers believers to do the impossible. "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth" (Acts 1:8). Before being filled with the Holy Spirit, I was not able to be a bold witness for the Lord. The empowering of the Holy Spirit gave me the boldness I needed to be the Lord's strong witness.

I have often observed believers struggling to receive the Holy Spirit's infilling, but it is not hard. Jesus has made it easy for us. He is the baptizer. All we need to do is ask. He will not allow the devil to give us a counterfeit when we are asking for the Holy Spirit (see Luke 11:11,13). You can expect to receive the Spirit when you ask.

The next step in being filled with the Holy Spirit is to

believe you can receive when you ask. In the same way that we believe we are saved when we ask Jesus to be Lord and Savior of our lives, we believe we receive the Holy Spirit when we ask.

Believers do not need to wait for a feeling as proof of the Holy Spirit's filling. A person may not have the feeling of being saved. However, faith must be in what God's Word says and not in our feelings.

The final step is to receive the Holy Spirit. "For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened" (Luke 11:10). Some people have a dramatic experience when they receive the Holy Spirit's infilling. Others experience only a deep sense of peace and the presence of God.

Often the person will be given a prayer language with the evidence of speaking in tongues. This prayer language builds the person's faith and allows him to pray outside his limited knowledge.

Speaking in tongues can be either a heavenly language or a known language that is unknown to the believer (see Acts 2:11; 1 Cor. 13:1). Even if the believer speaks only a few words, the words are significant to God (see 1 Cor. 14:10). He should continue speaking until there is a full flow of the river of God coming from his inner being.

Although a person who receives the Holy Spirit may not have a dramatic encounter, he will usually see a tremendous transformation in his life. If you have received this gift, ask the Lord to give you opportunities to be a bold witness for Him. Expect the Bible to come alive and fresh revelation to flow into your spirit. Pray for the sick and watch the Lord perform healings and miracles through you.

You have just entered the best time of your life. The Holy Spirit has empowered you as a supernatural Christian for the

glory of God.

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