

Measures of the Holy Spirit

Intro:

- A. Not an easy study, but is one which we people must understand; esp. those who **teach** God's word to others. We will look at what the *Bible* has to say, and not what some man or church has said about it!
- B. So, the subject is "**Measures of the Holy Spirit**."
 - 1. In the use of the word "measures", we should not understand that the Holy Spirit can be divided into **portions**, or **parts**; the Bible teaches that you either **have** the Spirit within you, or you do **not**; you do not have "a little", or "a lot".
 - 2. My understanding of a person having the Spirit within them – particularly in biblical days – is more about what the Spirit **did** within a person, & for what **reason** He did that, more than a **quantity**, or how **much** of the Spirit one might have (which some might misunderstand when we use the word "measure").
 - 3. So, let's not think in terms of "how **much**" of the Spirit one might have, but rather the different **activities** of the Holy Spirit in different **people** at different **times**, and for what **purposes**.
 - a. For example, the difference between an **Apostle** (and even **some** of the early Christians in the 1st century) and a Christian today, is not that they had "**more**" of the Spirit's essence within them than someone **else**, or than **we** do...
 - b. ...The **difference** is in the miraculous spiritual gifts given to the Apostles, or some of the early Christians for a specific period of time – the 1st century – and for a specific **purpose** – i.e. of confirming or proving the word of truth that they spoke – this being **before** the New Testament writing had been completed. And these miraculous things are not needed **today**, because **now** we have **the written word** to prove and support the message we believe and proclaim today
- C. There is no question as to whether we as Christians are **given** the Holy Spirit to live within us when we **become** Christians, and give our lives to Jesus.
 - 1. But the question is, "Were there differences in **how** the Spirit dwelled in different people in **biblical** days, & in how He dwells in us **today**? And **if** there is a difference, **why**?"
 - 2. We will explore the **reasons** for those differences. And the reasons why the Spirit's being within **us**, may be **different** from what they were in **biblical** days, especially **New Testament** days.
- D. 1st, we must understand that the Holy Spirit is a **person**, not a "**thing**". He is **Deity, God** – the 3rd individual Person of the God-Head – which consists of God, the Father, God, the Son (Jesus), and God, the Holy Spirit.
 - 1. So, we should not **de-personalize** the Holy Spirit by referring to Him as a "thing."
 - 2. He is a **person**. And we refer to Him with the personal pronoun, "**He**", not the **impersonal**, "**it**."
- E. So, let's look at how the Holy Spirit worked in the lives of certain individuals in biblical days, and **why** He worked in them the way He did, and what that means for us **today**.

There are numerous people of God in the Bible – both Old & New Testaments – who are said to have God's Spirit within them. But because of **time** limits for our class, we will not refer to those in the **Old Testament**, because our main focus is what we learn from the **New Testament**, since that is the covenant of God that we live and serve under today.

I. In the NT We See How the Holy Spirit Operated in Certain People in Certain *Circumstances*, And for Certain *Purposes*.

- A. Of course, the apostle John tells us that **Jesus** received the Holy Spirit **fully** ...with no **restrictions** – and, if we use the term "measure", we see that He had the Spirit **without** measure – John 3:34.

- B. Jesus could do many miraculous things – He miraculously healed many, many people, He raised people from the dead, He turned water into wine, He took 5 loaves of bread & 2 fish and fed more than 5,000 people, He knew peoples’ minds and could read their hearts, and many **other** marvelous, miraculous things that no one else could do.
- C. The complete cooperation of the Holy Spirit with Jesus is shown clearly, not only in the prophecies of the Old Testament, but in the New Testament teachings...
- D. However, there are some things about the relationship between Jesus and the Holy Spirit that we are not **told** in scripture – and that is all that we can know for sure – that is, what is said in scripture; anything else is only **presumption**, and we must not **presume, anything!**
- E. Let’s examine some things which **have** been revealed about Jesus and His relation to the Holy Spirit:
 - 1. Jesus was **begotten** by the Holy Spirit – Matthew 1:20; Luke 1:35
 - a. Every aspect of the life of Jesus had been prophesied through the power and inspiration of the Holy Spirit – by the Old Testament prophets, and John the baptizer.
 - b. The angel Gabriel told Jesus’s mother Mary that she had **conceived** of the Holy Spirit – Luke 1:35. This was the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy – Isaiah 7:14; Genesis 3:15.
 - c. Jesus was **begotten** of the Father through the Holy Spirit – John 1:14; John 3:16.
 - 2. The Holy Spirit came down **at Jesus’s baptism** in the form of a **dove** – Matthew 3:16.
 - 3. It was the Holy Spirit who led Jesus into the **wilderness** to begin His **temptations** by **Satan** – Matthew 4:1; Mark 1:12. Jesus voluntarily yielded to the powerful influence of the Spirit as He led Him to do the will of His Father.
 - 4. **Others** were not able to do all that Jesus did by the Spirit – even the apostles. But there were no limits to what Jesus could do by the Spirit.
 - 5. So, the Spirit **aided** Jesus in His work: He **cast out demons** by the Spirit – Matthew 12:28; He **spoke** by the Spirit – Luke 4:18, 21.
 - 6. The Spirit was with Jesus from the beginning of His perfect life, all the way to the end – Hebrews 9:13, 14 – The Spirit was with Jesus **in His death**, & He was **raised from the dead** by the Spirit – Romans 8:11.
- F. So, to sum things up, the Holy Spirit: 1) Predicted Jesus’ coming, 2) was present in His birth, 3) at His baptism, 4) aided Him in speaking & teaching, 5) with Him in death, 6) with Him in the resurrection, 7) with Him at His ascension, and 8) He came back to inspire the apostles to bring Jesus’s message on the day of Pentecost, **and**, 9) to write the words of God in the New Testament.
- G. So, Jesus had the **full** power of the Spirit in Him.

II. But Then, There Were Those in the N.T. Who Had a More *Limited* Power of the Spirit Than Jesus Did – His Apostles – and THEY Received the BAPTISM of the Holy Spirit.

- A. And although the Spirit gave them **much** power, it was not to the same extent as He gave to **Jesus**.
- B. This is what the Bible calls “The **Baptism** of the Holy Spirit.” But this was limited to the 12 apostles of Jesus... and to the Gentile Cornelius and his household in Acts 10 and 11. Let’s explore the “baptism of the Holy Spirit”:
- C. Remember, the term “baptism” means “an immersion, surrounding, or engulfing in something.” And remember the biblical **context** tells what that immersion is **in**.
 - 1. In the New Testament, when the word “baptism” is used **without** telling what the immersion is **in**, it is always talking about being baptized in **water**.
 - 2. But **sometimes**, a “baptism” in something **else** is described. Such as:
 - a. Matthew 20:22, 23 and Luke 12:50 describe a baptism – or immersion – in **suffering**.
 - b. Matthew 3:11 John the baptizer says that there will be those who will be baptized – engulfed, immersed, surrounded – by **fire**.

- D. So, then we read of being **baptized – immersed, surrounded – by the Holy Spirit**.
- E. We must understand that the Baptism of the Holy Spirit is not the same as being “*filled with the Spirit*”. There are those in scripture who are said to be “*filled with the Spirit*”:
1. Zacharias, Elizabeth, and John the baptizer were “*filled with the Holy Spirit*” – Luke 1:15, 41, 67.
 2. Stephen and Barnabus were “*filled with the Spirit*” – Acts 7:55; Acts 11:24.
 3. ...**filled** with the Spirit, but not **baptized** with the Spirit.
- F. But the **apostles were “baptized”** in the Spirit. Jesus promised that they **would** be.
1. And Jesus is the **Administrator** of that promise – according to what John the baptizer said – Matthew 3:11; John 1:33 :
 - a. Jesus promised to send the Spirit to these apostles – Jesus calls Him “*the Comforter*” and “*the Spirit of truth,*” and “*the Helper*”:
 - b. John 14:16-20; 25-26; 15:26; 16:7, 13-15 (notice that the context shows that these promises were made **to the apostles only**)
 - c. Acts 1:4, 5 – After His resurrection, when He was about to ascend back to heaven, He promised.
 - d. Then, in Acts 2, 10 days later, we see the fulfilment of Jesus’s promise on the day of Pentecost – Acts 2:1-4;
 - (1) Peter **preaches**, and he quotes the prophet Joel from the Old Testament – Joel 2:28-32, and says that what they were witnessing there **that day** was the fulfilment of that prophecy – that God’s Spirit would be poured out, and marvelous, miraculous things would happen.
 - (2) And they did. Even that day, the power of the Holy Spirit was shown through the sound of the rushing mighty wind, the split tongues of fire resting on the apostles, and the ability for the apostles to speak in understandable languages they had never studied.
 - (3) The good news about Jesus was preached, Peter invited the people to “*repent and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins ... and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.*” (That will be important later in the study.)
 - (4) So, on the Day of Pentecost, the **apostles** were baptized with the Holy Spirit, just as Jesus said they would be ...now, **not everyone** who was present that day, but just the apostles.
 2. Then, throughout the rest of the New Testament – especially the book of Acts – we see the apostles doing wonderful miracles – instantly healing sick and lame people, raising people from the dead; even when a poisonous snake bit the apostle Paul, it didn’t hurt him. And there were many **other** miraculous things.
 - a. And the **purpose** for them doing all these miraculous things was in order to **prove**, or **confirm** the Word of God that had been revealed to them by the Holy Spirit, which they were preaching and teaching.
 - (1) Hebrews 2:1-4 – So, since the New Testament had not yet been completed, God **proved** the message the apostles preached, by allowing them to do miraculous things by the Power of the Holy Spirit... until the writing of the New Testament was finished.
 - (2) This was even the reason for the miracles that **Jesus, Himself** did – John 20:30, 31
 - (3) The purpose of the miracles done in the New Testament was to cause belief in Jesus, and to prove that what was being proclaimed was **true**!
 - b. The Holy Spirit **also** “*guided (the apostles) into all truth*” just as Jesus promised, and inspired them to write much of the New Testament – The apostles John, James, Peter, and Paul.
 3. So, the **baptism of the Holy Spirit** was **necessary** for the apostles so that the word they preached and wrote could be **proven** and **confirmed**, since the writing of the New Testament had not been completed at this time.

- G. But there was also **another** small group of people that the baptism of the Holy Spirit was necessary for a special reason – A **Gentile**, **Cornelius**, and his household – look carefully at Acts chapters 10 & 11.
1. Remember, there was a deep hatred that many of the Jews had against Gentiles – anyone who was not a Jew. The Jews thought God only loved **them**, and hated everyone else.
 2. But they were **wrong**; and should not have been prejudiced against Gentiles.
 - a. Jesus said, “*Come unto me **all** you who labor and are heavy-laden...*” – Matthew 11:28
 - b. Peter said that God “*is not willing that **any** should perish; but that **all** should come to repentance.*” – 2 Peter 3:9.
 - c. Jesus, also said in Revelation 3:20, “*Behold! I stand at the door and knock. If **anyone** hears my voice, and opens the door, I will come in eat with him, and he with Me.*”
 - d. So, the gospel is for **everyone**, and God wants **all** people to hear, obey, and be saved.
 3. But the Jews – even some of the Jewish **Christians** – didn’t want Gentiles to hear the gospel, respond, and be saved.
 4. So, God had to do something **special** ...which He did **only one time**, to show the Jewish Christians in a powerful way that the gospel is for **everyone**; even **Gentiles**.
 5. So, after convincing the apostle Peter of that in a dream, God sends him and some Jewish brothers to the house of a high-ranking Roman soldier, Cornelius, who was a **Gentile**, but a good man, who believed in the true God, and even gave gifts to poor people. His heart was open, and God knew it.
 6. READ Acts 10:44-48a
 7. Then, look at chapter 11.
 - a. When some of the Christian brothers in Judea and Jerusalem hear about the conversion of Gentiles, they began to **criticize** Peter for even going into the **house** of a Gentile. Then Peter tells them how it all came about, and notice what is said in vs. 14-18 - READ.
 - b. So, v. 16 specifically **says** that what these Gentiles received was **the baptism with the Holy Spirit**.
- H. But these are the only 2 instances where the Bible says anyone received the **baptism** of the Holy Spirit – The apostles, and Cornelius and his household.
- I. So, we can conclude that the purpose of Holy Spirit **baptism** was:
1. **Not** to save men from their sins – that is what baptism in **water** is for – Acts 2:38; Acts 10:48
 2. But the purpose was to reveal truth – John 16:13; 1 Corinthians 2:13
 3. To confirm or prove the word, the Gospel, being spoken – Acts 1:8; 2:43; Hebrews 2:3, 4.
 4. **And**, that **one** occasion to convince Jewish Christians that Gentiles could receive the gospel and be saved – Acts 10 and 11.

III. Then, There Were Those in the New Testament Who Were Not *Baptized* or *Overwhelmed* by The Holy Spirit, But Who Were Given the Ability to Do Special Things Through *Certain Specific Miraculous Gifts* Given by the Spirit.

- A. And the only way **these** gifts could be given was **through the laying on of the apostles’ hands**.
- B. There are 4 cases, possibly 5, mentioned in the New Testament of the laying on of hands to impart spiritual gifts:
 1. The 7 special servants (“deacons”?) in Jerusalem – to empower them to take care of the poor Grecian widows and their needs – Acts 6:6 (It is important to note that both Stephen and Philip were among these, and we will see Philip again in this study.)
 2. The Samaritans in Acts 8:14-18
 3. The 12 men in the city of Ephesus by Paul – Acts 19:6, 7
 4. Timothy by Paul – 2 Timothy 1:6 – “*I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands.*”

5. One other which is **inferred** in Romans 1:11 – “*I long to see you that I may impart to you some spiritual gift so that you may be established.*” Though they had received the Holy Spirit at their baptism in water – as every Christian does – obviously they had not received any **miraculous** gift, since Paul’s **presence** must have been required in order to impart those gifts; therefore, likely “the laying of Paul’s hands on them.”

C. The **purpose** of the laying on of hands was:

1. To give some miraculous gift to an individual Christian to be able to better do the work of God.
2. One powerful example in **explaining** this is in 1 Corinthians 12, 13, & 14 – Chapter 12 **names** the gifts, and teaches them to use their gift in **unity** with **others**, who **also** had a gift. Chapter 13 tells with what **attitude** the gifts were to be used – i.e. with love and kindness – and **also** chapter 13 tells how long the gifts were to last. And chapter 14 tells how – in what way – the gifts were to be exercised, especially in their **worship** services.
 - a. The Corinthian Christians **had** various miraculous gifts; and apparently, each person had only **one** gift.
 - (1) In chapter 12 there are 9 spiritual gifts listed – vs. 7-11 – miraculous **wisdom**, miraculous **knowledge**, miraculous **faith**, miraculous **healing**, working of **miracles**, the ability to **prophecy**, ability to **discern** or **identify spirits** – whether they were good spirits, or evil spirits – the ability to **speak in tongues** – i.e. to speak in understandable languages which they had never studied – and **interpretation** of tongues.
 - (a) But these Christians were not using these gifts with love and acceptance of each other.
 - (b) In chapter 12, some thought that because of the gift that they had, that they were **superior** to, and **better** than others who they thought had a less important gift. So, they were **prideful**, and looking down on others.
 - (c) So, Paul says, “You can’t do that. Each person’s gift is just as important to the work of God, as another’s. And you must work in **unity** with each other in **exercising** those gifts.
 - b. So, in chapter 13 he tells them to exercise their gift with **deep love** for each other – verses 1-8a
 - c. Then, in verses 8-13 he identifies **how long these gifts were to last**.
 - (1) Vs. 10 and 11 – the spiritual gifts were only **partial**. But when the **perfect** (mature, complete) thing is come, the **partial would end**.
 - (2) What is that “**perfect**,” complete, mature thing? (not a person – Greek – neuter gender – “thing”). James 1:25 identifies **God’s word** as the “*perfect* (complete, mature) *law of liberty*”. It’s the same Greek word.
 - (3) Read vs. 11-13
 - (4) So, what is Paul saying? He is saying that when the Word has been completed... when the apostle John laid down his pen having finished the book of Revelation, the Word of God, the New Testament would be **complete**.
 - (5) So, **then** there would be no further **need** for the miraculous things to prove or confirm the message. The scriptures are their **own** proof of authenticity and truth – as we read in Hebrews 2.
 3. There were also some special gifts which seem to have been given to the **leadership** of the church – Ephesians 4:7-16.
 - a. These were to empower the men whose job it was to **lead** the church, and help it **grow in faith**, and **mature**, until the word was completed in the writing of the New Testament.
 - b. There are 5 gifts listed which were given for church leadership – apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors (shepherds, elders), and teachers.

- c. And these gifts were for the equipping of the saints, for the work of ministry, and for the maturing, or building up of the body of Christ, the church – Ephesians 4:7-12.
- d. Then, vs. 13-16 tell how long those gifts to church leadership were to last – READ
- e. And the church would “*grow up*”, mature, when they had the written word in the New Testament to follow. So, even the special gifts to the church **leadership** would end when the New Testament was finished being written.

D. We just saw from the examples of Stephen, Philip, Timothy, and the Roman Christians that the gifts were passed to them by the laying on of the apostles’ hands, but there is more that we can learn from the example of the Samaritans in Acts 8:4-8, 12-18. Here’s what we learn:

1. Philip had had the apostles’ hands laid on him in Acts 6:6. But apparently, he couldn’t pass the ability to do miracles on to **others**, because the apostles Peter and John had to come down from Jerusalem and **personally** lay hands on the Samaritan Christians for them to receive the Holy Spirit. Even Simon, the magician, “*saw that it was through the laying on of the apostles’ hands the Holy Spirit was given...*” -- verse 18.
2. So, if the miraculous gifts could only be received by the laying on of an apostle’s hands, and those on whom they laid their hands could not pass them on to others, what would naturally happen to the gifts when the apostles died, and all those on whom they laid their hands? **The gifts, the miracles would naturally end.**
3. But by the time **that** happened, there would be no more **need** for the miraculous gifts... because by **then** the New Testament would have been **written**, and the **purpose** of the gifts – which was to prove or confirm the word that the apostles and early Christians were preaching – the **need** for the miraculous gifts would have **ended**.
4. So, from then on, even up until **now**, we have the **written** word to go by. And the Word no longer needs **confirming**; it confirms **itself**; its truths are proven by what is **written**; we can **read** of all the miraculous confirmation of the gospel.

IV. Which Leaves the Most Important Thing for Us Today: How Do *WE* Have the Holy Spirit in Us Today?

- A. There is no question that if we have been baptized into Christ for the forgiveness of sins, **we have the Holy Spirit living and abiding in us!** There are so many places in the New Testament that tell us this:
1. John 7:39 - “*But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom **those believing in Him would receive**; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.*”
 2. Acts 2:38 – “*Then Peter said to them, ‘Repent and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission (forgiveness) of sins, **and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.**’*”
 3. Acts 5:32 - “*And we are His witnesses to these things, and so also is **the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him.***”
 4. Romans 5:5 - “*Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by **the Holy Spirit who was given to us.***”
 5. Romans 8:11 - “*But if **the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you**, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies **through His Spirit who dwells in you.***”
 6. 1 Corinthians 3:16 - “*Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that **the Spirit of God dwells in you?***”
 7. 1 Corinthians 6:19 - “*Or do you not know that **your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God**, and you are not your own?*”
 8. 2 Corinthians 13:14 - “*The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and **the communion of the Holy Spirit** be with you all.*”

9. Galatians 4:6 - *"And because you are sons, God has sent forth **the Spirit of His Son** into your hearts, crying out, 'Abba, Father!'"*
10. Galatians 5:22, 23 - *"But the **fruit of the Spirit** is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³gentleness, self-control."*
11. Ephesians 2:22 – Speaking of Jesus, *"in whom you also are being built together for **a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.**"*
12. Ephesians 3:16 - *"that He (God) would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might **through His Spirit in the inner man,**"*
13. Ephesians 5:18 - *"And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but **be filled with the Spirit,**"*
14. 2 Timothy 1:14 - *"That good thing which was committed to you, keep by **the Holy Spirit who dwells in us.**"*
15. 1 John 3:24 - *"Now he who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And by this we know that He abides in us, **by the Spirit whom He has given us.**"*

B. So, if we receive the Spirit when we are baptized, and He lives and dwells within us, what does He do for us?

1. We have learned that **today**, He doesn't do any **miraculous** things **in us**, or enable us to **do** miraculous things – such as heal the sick, blind, or lame; or raise the dead; or know and preach truths without having to **study** them; or speak in **languages** we have never studied and learned. We don't **need** those things anymore since the Word of God has now been **written** for us to study, learn, and preach; it is the teachings of the **Word** which prove that Jesus is the Son of God – we don't **need** miraculous things today.
2. But we **do** need the Holy Spirit to **help** us, and **guide** us, and **comfort** us, and **encourage** us. And **those** are the things He does today.

C. So, just for a few minutes let's just identify **some** of the things He does for us today:

1. He sets us apart from the world, and **dedicates** us to do God's work; He gives us our **identity** as God's children. – 1 Peter 1:1, 2.
2. He is the **seal**, the **pledge**, the **guarantee** of our salvation – 2 Corinthians 1:21, 22; 5:5; Ephesians 1:13.
3. He works **for** us beyond what we think, or even realize – Ephesians 3:16, 17, 20, 21
4. He encourages us to live lives of **holiness** – 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20.
5. He empowers us in the warfare against evil – Romans 8:12-17.
6. He gives us help and strength in our weaknesses; even helping us **pray** – Romans 8:26, 27.
7. He gives us assurance of our salvation – Galatians 4:6, 7; Romans 8:14-16.
8. He empowers us for life – Ephesians 3:16; Romans 15:13.
9. And many other things, which we may or may not be **conscious** of, or **realize**.

Conclusion:

- A. The Holy Spirit has always been at work in the world, and in the people of God.
- B. His work **began** even before the **creation**, when He was *"hovering over the face of the waters"* – Genesis 1:2.
- C. And He continues to be active today in the life of every Christian who will **allow** Him to be.
- D. He worked in Old Testament days as the Father directed Him.
- E. When Jesus left heaven and came to earth, He had the Holy Spirit helping and empowering Him.
- F. When Jesus left earth to go back to heaven, He left the Holy Spirit to miraculously empower, guide, teach, comfort, and inspire His Apostles.

- G. The apostles then imparted miraculous gifts of the Spirit to early Christians to teach and preach the truths of the Gospel, and to be able to carry on God's work. And that lasted until the New Testament writings were completed by the writers who the Holy Spirit **inspired**.
- H. Then there was no longer a **need** for the miraculous things; the Word became its **own** witness; so, the miraculous **ended**.
- I. So, from then on, and on down to today, the Holy Spirit still lives within us. He comes to live in us when we are baptized and become Christians, and though He does not do any **miraculous** things **in** us or **for** us, there are very important things which He **does** do:
 - 1. He sets us apart and dedicates us to God's work, and gives us our identity as God's children.
 - 2. He is the seal, the pledge, the guarantee of our salvation.
 - 3. He encourages us to live lives of holiness.
 - 4. He empowers us in the warfare against evil.
 - 5. He gives us help and strength in our weaknesses; even helping us **pray**.
 - 6. He gives us assurance of our salvation.
 - 7. He empowers us for life.
 - 8. And many other things, which we may or may not be **aware** of.
- J. Let's praise and thank God for His Holy Spirit who lives within us!