

## The Holy Spirit and me

From Genesis right through to Revelation we read of the operation of the Holy Spirit as what might be termed the 'executive arm' of the Trinity; ie. He, a person not a 'thing', actively carries out God's will in creation and in the lives of both Old Testament and New Testament believers. We will see from this study, though, that His operation in the lives of N.T. followers of Jesus is far greater than what we read about in the O.T.

### How should I relate to the Holy Spirit?

Many Christians today pay only lip service to the presence of the Holy Spirit in their lives, actually denying the truth that He gives gifts to those who will receive Him, and wants to speak to us as we seek His guidance in our lives. We should expect, as Spirit-filled believers, to become more and more sensitive to His direction, counsel and comfort in our lives.

The Holy Spirit is a person! Knowing this, some people prefer to refer to 'Holy Spirit' rather than 'the Holy Spirit', which perhaps implies the idea of an object rather than a person. However we refer to Him, we need to make sure that we are continually being filled by Him!

**Ephesians 5 v.18: "Do not be drunk with wine, which will ruin you, but be filled with the Spirit.**

**Read v.19 - What can we expect to do if we are filled with the Spirit?**

Let's consider the promise that Jesus made to His disciples in **John 14 v.26:**

**"But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you"**

Why has God sent the Holy Spirit to us?

What do you think our response should be?

Now let's look at some of the aspects of the Holy Spirit's work which will help us understand Him better.

### Holy Spirit in Creation

In **Genesis 1 v.2** we read that the Spirit of God was 'hovering' over the waters. The original meaning conveys more the idea of 'sweeping' or 'moving' rather than being stationary. The Holy Spirit was and is **active**, executing God's spoken commands. He was active in Creation and is active in our new creation lives. The more we co-operate with Him and train our spiritual senses to hear and obey His leading, the more we will experience God's transforming power in and through our lives.

In **John 3 v.5** Jesus speaks to Nicodemus of a spiritual new birth experience brought about by the renewing and transforming power of the Holy Spirit.

**Read John 3 v.1-21. Why must we be born again?**

Why do you think Jesus likened the Holy Spirit's activity to the wind?

### The Holy Spirit empowers us

You may have read about Peter's denial of Jesus after His arrest, and how the disciples all 'forsook Him and fled' out of fear. They were powerless to stand with Jesus in His hour of trial, (**Matt. 26**) and we too cannot be strong in the face of opposition without the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

In what particular situation have you felt the need for greater boldness?

It's hard to imagine that these were the same men who boldly stood up and preached to the crowds in Jerusalem just weeks later, even in the face of ridicule.

**Read Acts 2 v.1-39:** Why do you think the people thought the disciples were drunk?

**v.33** - Who poured out the Holy Spirit?

**v.38** - What is the condition for receiving the Holy Spirit?

### **Holy Spirit in the Old Testament**

In the O.T. (Hebrew) Scriptures we read of certain people being given supernatural ability by the Holy Spirit:

**Genesis 41 v.37-39:** Joseph was given understanding and wisdom from God which enabled the whole land of Egypt to survive seven years of famine. The Spirit of God was in him; even Pharaoh recognised this.

**Exodus 31 v.2-5:** God filled these craftsmen with Spirit-inspired skills for the building of the Tabernacle (tent) where God was worshipped.

**1 Samuel 19 v.20, 23:** Here we read that the Spirit of God enabled Samuel and his prophets to worship and declare truths concerning God that went beyond their own enthusiasm or knowledge.

**Micah 3 v.8:** The prophet declared that he was “**full of power by the Spirit of the Lord**” to speak God’s message to His people.

### **Holy Spirit in the New Testament**

Whereas the Holy Spirit was limited to working in only a few O.T. believers, the great news is that, as new-born believers in Jesus Christ, we are **all** empowered by Him!

We have seen that when we repent of our sins we can receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (**Acts 2 v.38**).

The Holy Spirit also:

- Convicts of sin, righteousness and coming judgement – **John 16 v.8**
- Renews our heart and life – **Titus 3 v.5**
- Lives in the believer and leads us into all truth – **John 14 v.17,26**
- Glorifies Christ – **John 16 v.14**
- Pours out God’s love in our hearts – **Romans 5 v.5**
- Enables believers to walk in righteousness – **Read Romans 8 v.1-8**
- Helps us to pray – **Romans 8 v.26**
- Imparts gifts for ministry – **1 Corinthians 12 v.4-11**
- Strengthens our inner being – **Ephesians 3 v.16**

As we consider all these various aspects of the Holy Spirit’s work we realise just how much we need to acknowledge and welcome His activity in our life; the book of Acts has been referred to by some as the “Acts of the Holy Spirit” rather than the Acts of the Apostles! The power of the Holy Spirit through the church is the most striking feature in Acts, but it is also important to understand that both the public ministry of Jesus in the Gospels and the public ministry of the church in Acts begin with a life-changing encounter with the Holy Spirit.

The power of the Spirit in Jesus’ life authorised Him to preach the kingdom of God and to demonstrate kingdom power by healing the sick, casting out demons, and setting the captives free. ***The Book of Acts is the story of the disciples receiving what Jesus received in order to do what Jesus did.***

**Ask yourself these questions:**

**Do I experience the power of the Holy Spirit in my life? If so, in what ways ?**

**What are the areas of my life in which I lack the empowerment of the Holy Spirit?**

