

## Lesson 1: Filled with the Holy Ghost (Part 1)

### Intro

Welcome to the second module of our discipleship course! In the previous 15 lessons you learned a lot about the basics of a personal relationship with Jesus. Jesus wants us to grow in faith, to become like Him, and to make disciples of others. But we can only experience this if we are filled with the Holy Spirit. Being a Christian is more than reading the Bible, praying, and working for God. It is possible to do all of these and still lead a dismal, fruitless life. What we need is an abundance of the Holy Spirit in our lives. He alone can make us into a Christian, who bears fruit through a living and growing faith.

Because this lesson is so important and comprehensive, we will divide it into two parts. In this lesson we will learn what it means to be filled with the Holy Spirit. In the following lesson, we will discover how we can be filled with the Holy Spirit.

### Jesus' promise

Jesus knew that His time with the disciples was limited and that He would soon have to leave them. He knew that this thought filled them with fear. Therefore He gave them a wonderful promise to encourage them.



What promise did Jesus give His disciples and thus also us?

John 7:37-39: \_\_\_\_\_

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John 14:15-17: \_\_\_\_\_

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John 16:5-7: \_\_\_\_\_

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### God in us

What Jesus promises here is an incomprehensible thought! God, in all His magnificence, connects Himself so closely to us that He actually lives in us. When the Bible speaks of the Holy Ghost living in us, it means that the Father and the Son live in us as well. (John 14:17,23) In another place the Bible calls this relationship "Christ in us". Thus, being filled with the Holy Spirit means having an intimate connection with the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

### Without the Holy Ghost it doesn't work

After His resurrection, Jesus spent 40 days with His disciples and renewed His promise to send the Holy Ghost. At the same time "He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father," which, He said, "you have heard from Me; for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." (Acts 1:4,5) Jesus commanded them to preach the gospel to the whole world. But they had to wait until they had received the Holy Ghost. Why? The reason is very obvious. Every mission that isn't under the guidance of the Holy Spirit will be fruitless. This command reminded them how dependent they were on the working of the Holy Spirit! Is it any different today? No, when we are growing in faith and trying to win

others for Jesus, we are just as dependent on the Holy Ghost!

**Quote #1** “Christ, the Great Teacher, had an infinite variety of subjects from which to choose, but the one upon which He dwelt most largely was the endowment of the Holy Spirit. What great things He predicted for the church because of this endowment. Yet what subject is less dwelt upon now? What promise is less fulfilled? An occasional discourse is given upon the Holy Spirit, and then the subject is left for after consideration.” (*Selected Messages, vol. 1, p. 156*)

**Quote #2** “And Pentecost brought them the presence of the Comforter, of whom Christ had said, He “shall be in you.” And He had further said, “It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you.” John 14:17; 16:7. Henceforth through the Spirit, Christ was to abide continually in the hearts of His children. Their union with Him was closer than when He was personally with them.” (Steps to Christ, p. 74)

**Quote #3** “The Holy Spirit was the highest of all gifts that He could solicit from His Father for the exaltation of His people. The Spirit was to be given as a regenerating agent, and without this the sacrifice of Christ would have been of no avail. The power of evil had been strengthening for centuries, and the submission of men to this satanic captivity was amazing. Sin could be resisted and overcome only through the mighty agency of the Third Person of the Godhead, who would come with no modified energy, but in the fullness of divine power. It is the Spirit that makes effectual what has been wrought out by the world’s Redeemer.” (*The Desire of Ages, p. 671*)

**Quote #4** “At all times and in all places, in all sorrows and in all afflictions, when the outlook seems dark and the future perplexing, and we feel helpless and alone, the Comforter will be sent in answer to the prayer of faith. Circumstances may separate us from every earthly friend; but no circumstance, no distance, can separate us from the heavenly Comforter. Wherever we are, wherever we may go, He is always at our right hand to support, sustain, uphold, and cheer.” (*The Desire of Ages, p. 669*)



By giving the disciples the Holy Ghost, Jesus gave them the most valuable gift of all. The Holy Spirit enabled them to lead the life to which Christ had appointed them. After Jesus’ ascension, and according to His command, they waited in Jerusalem for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. How did they spend their time while they were waiting?

Acts 1:14; 2:1: \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Quote #5** “As the disciples waited for the fulfillment of the promise, they humbled their hearts in true repentance and confessed their unbelief ...The disciples prayed with intense earnestness for a fitness to meet men and in their daily intercourse to speak words that would lead sinners to Christ. Putting away all differences, all desire for the supremacy, they came close together in Christian fellowship.” (*The Acts of the Apostles, pp. 36.37*)



After His ascension, Jesus went to the heavenly sanctuary and was again exalted by the Father. It was then that He sent the Holy Spirit as He had promised (compare with Acts 2:33). What was the result?

Acts 2:4; 4:31: \_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_

Note: The word *preach* doesn't just refer to public preaching. It also means *to spread the word, to introduce something, and to witness*.

**The central theme of the Acts of the Apostles**

The Holy Ghost changed everything. The small group of disciples became a powerful movement that changed the world. The book of Acts shows us how powerfully the Holy Spirit worked and how the young church enabled disciples to carry the message to the ends of the world. The experience of being filled with the Holy Ghost is the central theme of the book of Acts. Although different terms are used to describe it (e.g., receiving the Holy Ghost, being baptized with the Holy Spirit, being filled with the Holy Ghost, being full of the Holy Spirit, etc.), ultimately, they all mean the same thing.

**Former and latter rain**

The Bible uses the illustration of the former and latter rain to describe the working of the Holy Spirit. (See Hosea 6:3; Joel 2:23; 3:1,2) The former rain, which made the seed sprout in Palestine, is an illustration for the outpouring of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost. Whereas the latter rain, refers to the end of time. Jesus promised that before He came again there would be a second, larger Pentecost to bring in the harvest.

**Quote #6**

"The work will be similar to that of the Day of Pentecost. As the "former rain" was given, in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at the opening of the gospel, to cause the upspringing of the precious seed, so the "latter rain" will be given at its close for the ripening of the harvest." (*The Great Controversy, p. 611*)

**Quote #7**

"The outpouring of the Spirit in the days of the apostles was the beginning of the early, or former, rain, and glorious was the result. To the end of time the presence of the Spirit is to abide with the true church. But near the close of earth's harvest, a special bestowal of spiritual grace is promised to prepare the church for the coming of the Son of man. This outpouring of the Spirit is likened to the falling of the latter rain." (*The Acts of the Apostles, pp. 54.55*)

**Quote #8**

"The outpouring of the Spirit in the days of the apostles was "the former rain," and glorious was the result. But the latter rain will be more abundant." (*Last Day Events, p. 185*)

**Quote #9**

"Before the final visitation of God's judgments upon the earth there will be among the people of the Lord such a revival of primitive godliness as has not been witnessed since apostolic times. The Spirit and power of God will be poured out upon His children." (*The Great Controversy, p. 464*)

**This very Day**

The work of the Holy Spirit during the latter rain is basically the same as what we can experience today. Although the latter rain will be more intense and characterized by miraculous signs and miracles, the underlining theme is the same: being blessed with the fullness of the Holy Ghost.

**The functions of the Holy Spirit**

The promise of the Holy Spirit belongs to us as much today as it did to the disciples back then. But what does it really mean to be filled with the Holy Ghost? **In short, it means to be changed, led, and empowered by the Holy Spirit. This means that He**

**can accomplish everything in us, which Jesus sent Him to do.** In order to understand what it means to be filled with the Holy Ghost, we must understand how He functions in our life. The Bible clearly describes these tasks.

**Function #1      The Holy Spirit convicts us of our sins.**



What will the Holy Ghost convict us of?

John 16:8-11: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Here Jesus describes that the work of the Holy Spirit is to open our eyes so that we can see things that we normally can't perceive. First He shows us our problem, which is sin. But praise God He doesn't stop there. He shows us the solution, Christ our advocate to the Father. And He shows us that our enemy has been judged.

**Quote #10**

"We can no more repent without the Spirit of Christ to awaken the conscience than we can be pardoned without Christ. Christ is the source of every right impulse. He is the only one that can implant in the heart enmity against sin. Every desire for truth and purity, every conviction of our own sinfulness, is an evidence that His Spirit is moving upon our hearts. " (*Steps to Christ, p. 26*)

**Our reaction to this conviction**

When the Holy Ghost convicts us of a sin, we can react in various ways. The reactions can lead to anything from dismay, to sadness, to joy, or to irritation. We aren't always happy right away when the Holy Spirit makes us aware of a sin in our life. And yet the only good reaction is to yield to the working of the Holy Spirit so that He can change and educate us.



At this point we have to ask ourselves, "Do we honestly want the Holy Ghost to reveal our sins to us?" Without this willingness we cannot be filled with the Holy Spirit. Write your answer here!

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**Function #2 The Holy Ghost wants to lead us into all truth.**



In the following verses from the book of John, which functions of the Holy Spirit does Jesus describe?

John 14:26; 16:12-15: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Quote #11**

“The impressions of the Holy Spirit if disregarded today will not be as strong tomorrow. The heart becomes less impressible, and lapses into a perilous unconsciousness of the shortness of life, and of the great eternity beyond. Our condemnation in the judgment will not result from the fact that we have been in error, but from the fact that we have neglected heaven-sent opportunities for learning what is truth.” (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 489)

**... into all Truth**

The Holy Ghost leads us in all truth. First of all, Jesus himself is truth (John 14:6) and to the same degree so His word (John 17:17). Thus the Holy Spirit has the task of helping us live in a close relationship with Jesus and to understand His word. Jesus said: “I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. “ Did you see the wonderful promise in these words? The Holy Ghost doesn’t show us everything at once, but rather only what we can bear at that moment. Without the aid of the Holy Spirit we can’t even understand the truth, which means that when we understand the truth it is due to the work of the Holy Ghost. God knows this! So when He reveals a truth to us, it means that He believes we are ready to bear it and take the next step in our spiritual journey with Jesus.



Do we want the Holy Spirit to lead us into all truth, even when it isn’t a pleasant truth? Even when it is a step in faith that is hard for me? Write your answer here!

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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Function #3 The Holy Ghost wants to change our character.**



Which character traits does the Holy Spirit want to grow in us?

Galatians 5:22-23: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

We already spoke about the meaning of sanctification, which is Christ forming us into His own likeness. This work of sanctification is a byproduct of the Holy Spirit’s work in us. Thus only a person filled with the Holy Ghost can experience sanctification.



The Holy Spirit wants to replace our bad character traits with good ones. Being filled with the Holy Ghost implies that I am open to change and that I actively work together with the Holy Spirit. This is the real meaning of “willpower,” submitting our will to the power of the Holy Spirit. Do you want the Holy Ghost to change your character? Are you willing to work together with Him to accomplish this? Write your answer here!

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**Function #4**

**The Holy Ghost wants to enable us to be obedient.**



What does the Holy Spirit want to change in us?

Ezekiel 36:26.27: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Fruitful or frustrated?**

God wants to change our lives with our participation. But without the Holy Spirit living in us, we aren't even capable of living our lives according to biblical principles. Since God knows this, He has given us the Holy Ghost, who works in us and enables us to be obedient. A lack of knowledge about this principle has been the source of many a disappointment. When “carnal” Christians want to do God's will, they will often experience failure because they aren't filled with the Holy Spirit. They can only act under their own power, which is often not sufficient. So we try even harder, fail again, and become disappointed, disillusioned, and discouraged. Only when we are filled with the Holy Ghost can we live life to the fullest and produce spiritual fruits.



Our obedience is purely a formality without the Holy Spirit. Only the Holy Ghost can change us so that we willingly keep God's commandments with our whole hearts. Do you want God to accomplish this in you?

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**Function #5**

**The Holy Ghost wants to make us witnesses for Jesus.**



What does the Holy Spirit want to empower us to do?

Acts 1:8: \_\_\_\_\_

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The Holy Ghost wants to use us to lead people to Jesus. Whoever doesn't want to tell others about Jesus can't be filled with the Holy Spirit. Therefore we have to ask ourselves: "Do we want the Holy Ghost to enable us to be witnesses for Jesus? Are we ready to trust in His promise and start witnessing?" Write your answer here!

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**Function #6**

**The Holy Spirit wants to enable us to love other people.**

How does the Holy Ghost want to change our relationship with others?

Romans 5:5: \_\_\_\_\_

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**But how?**

God wants to prepare us to meet Him face to face again someday. Experiencing the outpouring of the Holy Spirit is a necessary preparation for this; and in a way, it is a foretaste of this experience!

Perhaps you are thinking, "I want to be filled with the Holy Ghost, but *how* can I experience it?" Don't worry we will find the answer to this all-important question in our next lesson!

