



Part I: Lesson 5

# Becoming Good Soil: The Power of the Holy Spirit

Fertile Soil: Starting Your New Life with Jesus

---

It is impossible to live the Christian faith with our own strength. The standards are just too high, and we are not strong enough. Only one person has ever done that, Jesus Christ. **But God has not left us alone or without resources to help. He promised a gift to help us to know Him, to live for Him, and to serve Him. That gift is the Holy Spirit.** After His crucifixion and resurrection, Jesus spoke privately with His disciples.

*After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: “Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit” (Acts 1:3-5).*

*What is the command that Jesus gave His disciples?*

*What is the promised gift?*

*Why do you think Jesus told them to wait?*

## YOUR GROWTH GOAL



In this lesson, you will learn three essentials about the ministry of the Holy Spirit:

- 1) **When you received the Holy Spirit into your life**
- 2) **What the Holy Spirit does in your life**
- 3) **How to be filled with the Holy Spirit.**

The nature of the Holy Spirit is complex because the Spirit is the third person of God—not three gods but One: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. In this lesson, you will learn about the ministry of the Holy Spirit in your personal, daily life.



**Before you go any further, stop and ask God to help you understand His word, to help you experience His presence, and to become the person He wants you to be.**

## A STORY ABOUT THE SPIRIT: The Arrival of the Promised Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-21, 37-38)



Read this story about the dramatic arrival of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost after Jesus had instructed His disciples to wait for the gift.

*When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken. Utterly amazed, they asked: “Aren’t all these who are speaking Galileans? Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language? Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs—we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!” Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, “What does this mean?” Some, however, made fun of them and said, “They have had too much wine.”*

*Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: “Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. These people are not drunk, as you suppose. It’s only nine in the morning! No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:*

*In the last days, God says,*

*I will pour out my Spirit on all people.*

*Your sons and daughters will prophesy,  
your young men will see visions,  
your old men will dream dreams.*

*Even on my servants, both men and women,  
I will pour out my Spirit in those days,  
and they will prophesy.*

*I will show wonders in the heavens above  
and signs on the earth below,  
blood and fire and billows of smoke.*

*The sun will be turned to darkness  
and the moon to blood  
before the coming of the great and glorious day of  
the Lord.*

*And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.*



*When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?”*

*Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.”*

*Using your own words, how would you describe this event?*

*It says that the crowd was “amazed and perplexed,” and they asked one another “What does this mean?” If you had been in this crowd of people, how would you have reacted, and what would you have thought was happening?*

*The Scripture says that they “were filled” and “enabled” by the Holy Spirit. What do you think that means?*

*Peter told the people that, if they repented and were baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins, they would receive a gift and a promise. What is this gift and promise?*

*Have you ever experienced an overpowering presence of God in your life?*

## DIGGING DEEPER: EXAMINING THE HOLY SPIRIT



Prior to the Day of Pentecost, there were only a few accounts of the Holy Spirit's activity recorded in Scripture. These events were present at select times and for select people, even though God's Spirit was always at work before the creation of the world. Before they received the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, Jesus' disciples were a frightened and confused group of men. With the Holy Spirit's arrival, they were **transformed and empowered** to serve Christ. God's Spirit is given to help all followers of Jesus. Today, the Holy Spirit is the power of God actively at work in your life.

### I. WHEN YOU RECEIVED THE HOLY SPIRIT

Examine the following Scriptures:

*Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call" (Acts 2:38).*

*And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory (Ephesians 1:13-14).*

***According to these Scriptures, when did the Holy Spirit enter your life?***

***What does the Holy Spirit guarantee?***

### 2. WHAT THE HOLY SPIRIT DOES IN YOUR LIFE

On the evening before His arrest and execution, Jesus told His disciples about how the Holy Spirit would work in our lives:

*"I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate to help you and be with you forever—the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you" (John 14:16-18).*

***What are two names that Jesus called the Holy Spirit?***

- 1)
- 2)

***What did Jesus ask the Father to give us?***

***What are two things the Spirit of Truth does?***

- 1)
- 2)

*“All this I have spoken while still with you. But 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. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid” (John 14:25-27).*

***How does Jesus tell us that we will know the Spirit?***

***What are three other things the Holy Spirit does for us?***

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

*“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. All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you” (John 16:7-15).*

***Why is it to our advantage that Jesus went away?***

***What does the Holy Spirit prove about the following?***

- 1) Sin
- 2) Righteousness
- 3) Judgment

*What else does Jesus say the Holy Spirit will do?*

*Whom does the Holy Spirit glorify? Where does the Spirit come from? Where does the Spirit receive what to tell us?*

God's knowledge and power has no limits, and His presence is everywhere. But God accepted limitations when He became a human being in the form of Jesus Christ. His presence was limited to the places where He lived. That is why it is to our advantage that Jesus returned to His Father. Now, God's presence is everywhere through His Spirit—even in Haiti, and right now with you. He sees you; He is at work everywhere, and He lives within you.

Other parts of the New Testament provide additional information about the work of the Holy Spirit.

*For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory (Romans 8:14-17).*

*What does the Holy Spirit testify about our identity and relationship to God?*

*How does this make you feel?*

*In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God (Romans 8:26-27).*

*How does the Holy Spirit help you?*

### 3. BEING FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

In the Book of Acts, the word used most often to describe the activity of the Holy Spirit in the lives of the Christians was “**filled**” or “**full**.” The word means that one’s personality is entirely influenced by the Spirit’s power. Sometimes, it is referring to as the “**act of being filled**” or “**acting in the fullness of the Spirit**.”

- ❖ *All of them were **filled** with the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:4);*
- ❖ *Then Peter, **filled** with the Holy Spirit, said to them (Acts 4:8);*
- ❖ *After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all **filled** with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly (Acts 4:31);*
- ❖ *Stephen, a man **full** of faith and of the Holy Spirit (Acts 6:5);*
- ❖ *“has sent me so that you may see again and be **filled** with the Holy Spirit” (Acts 9:17);*
- ❖ *He was a good man, **full** of the Holy Spirit and faith (Acts 11:24);*
- ❖ *And the disciples were **filled** with joy and with the Holy Spirit (Acts 13:52).*

In the New Testament, this was considered the normal Christian experience. As we studied in Ephesians 1:13-14, all Christians receive the Holy Spirit as a seal of their salvation, but not every Christian lives in the “**fullness**” of the Holy Spirit. **This is a privilege every follower of Jesus can experience.** In fact, **we are commanded to be filled with the Spirit.**

*Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is. Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, **be filled with the Spirit** (Ephesians 5:17-18).*

*Why do you think being filled with the Spirit is contrasted with getting drunk?*

*What does this command mean to you?*

Scripture promises that, if we ask for things according to God’s will, we can be assured that God will respond.

*This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him (1 John 5:14-15).*



**Do you want to be filled with the Holy Spirit? If so, take some time and ask God to fill your life with His Spirit. Pray in confidence and thank Him.**

## BECOMING GOOD SOIL: LIVING IN THE FULLNESS OF THE SPIRIT



### I. APPLYING THESE TRUTHS

You have read several important verses about the work of the Holy Spirit. Write about the work of the Holy Spirit and what these truths mean in your life in the chart below. For example, Jesus said the Advocate, the Holy Spirit would teach us all things. (John 14:26). Therefore, the work of the Holy Spirit is teaching us. For my life it means that God will teach me about who He is and how I should live.

The Work of the Holy Spirit	What It Means in Your Life

### 2. REFLECTING ON THESE TRUTHS

Carefully read these words of Jesus that describes the nature of the Holy Spirit:

*Jesus answered, “Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, ‘You must be born again.’ The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit” (John 3:5-8).*

*On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, “Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.” By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified (John 7:37-39).*

Jesus describes the nature of the Spirit with two natural elements, **wind** and **water**. The word “spirit” can also be translated as “wind” in the original language. As we read earlier, the Holy Spirit arrived as a strong, violent wind on the Day of Pentecost.





**Remembering the verses that you just read, try these exercises to understand God’s Spirit.**

- ✓ Go to a place where you can feel the wind and reflect on its nature. Is it strong or soft? Is it warm or cool? How is the wind like the Spirit in your life? Like the wind, you will experience times of great power and times when you do not feel the wind as you walk in the Spirit. Don’t be afraid. God’s Spirit is always with you.
- ✓ Remember a time when you were very thirsty and needed water. What did that feel like? When you were able to drink water, what did that feel like? Jesus describes the Spirit’s ministry as abundant and flowing within our hearts. How is this “living water” flowing inside your life? Go take a drink of water, then pray that God will refresh your life. Give thanks for His living water.

### 3. COMMITTING TO THESE TRUTHS

**Every day this week, read, reflect, and pray on this Scripture:**

*“I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate to help you and be with you forever—the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you” (John 14:16-18).*

