

Discussing How To Restore The Early Church

Returning Intimacy and Power to the Father's Children

*"I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for,
it will be done for you by my Father in heaven.
For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them."
(Matthew 18:19,20)*



SECTION 4 - LESSON 28

THE FATHER AND JESUS

Part 4. The Seal Of Consummation—The Holy Spirit

- *Streams Of Living Water—The Indwelling Holy Spirit*
 - *The Spirit Throughout The Bible*
- *All Generations Of Jesus Followers Need The Holy Spirit*
 - *Empowerment From The Spirit*



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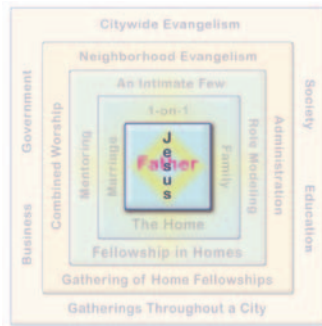
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THE FATHER AND JESUS

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THE FATHER AND JESUS
Part 4. The Seal Of Consummation—
The Holy Spirit:
Streams Of Living Water—The
Indwelling Holy Spirit

“You also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having trusted, 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).

What a marvelous difference happens in your life when you embrace the stipulations of our Father’s Covenant! He consummates that Covenant by *sealing you with the Holy Spirit*. You are joined in *union with the Spirit of Christ*. The Holy Spirit is our Father’s guarantee that *He will keep His part of the Covenant*. Through the empowering pres-



ence of the Spirit in you, you’ll be a conduit from which flows the “*streams of living water*” that evidence His work in and through you.

Stop for a moment and picture this. *The Spirit of the One Who raised Jesus from the dead now indwells you!* (See Romans 8:11.) A union of oneness with our Father now exists as you become a child of God (see Romans 8:16). Hey! A wonderful miracle has taken place within you!

The indwelling Holy Spirit engenders a spiritual union within you that perhaps can be pictured by the loving intimacy a pregnant woman experiences with her growing child. A woman who is pregnant for the first time knows that this new life is more than just a biological event. She has a physical and emotional *union* with that new life.

If you’ve embraced our Father’s Covenant, the Spirit’s indwelling is critical if you’re to press on in your life pilgrimage as our Father desires. The Spirit’s presence has a special ministry to complete both *in you* and *through you*. All you have under your control is your willingness to yield to Him, or resist Him.

With the Holy Spirit within, you have the potential to be transformed into the character of Jesus and to live an *empowered life*. This type of living threatens the very gates of hell. It is open warfare between you and the minions of Satan. And, just as with Paul, our strength comes only through relying on power from the indwelling Spirit of Christ.

*[Jesus] said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my **power is made perfect in weakness.**' Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that **Christ's power** may rest on me (2 Corinthians 12:9).*

Through trusting in the power of the Spirit of Christ within you, you're able to understand your purpose and goals according to *God's perspective* rather than from your limited human nature. Knowing how important the power of the Spirit is in your ability to live for God, you can empathize with the depth of the apostle's emotions when he chastises the Galatian believers.

*Are you so foolish? After **beginning with the Spirit**, are you now trying to attain your goal by **human effort**?" (Galatians 3:3).*

How many who are trying to follow Jesus end up quenching His Spirit and *struggling in their own strength*, refusing to trust in His loving power to direct and deliver them? It's *because* we trust and are faithful that the Spirit works in us! It's by *His power* that we can confidently expect our hope of attaining righteousness to be fulfilled as we continue to walk in obedient trust. (See Galatians 5:5.)

Don't ever lose sight that it's sadly within your power to break the Covenant. You rebelliously quench the Holy Spirit by *habitually persisting in sin* (see Hebrews 12:29). As the writer to the Hebrew believers warned, along that sinful path lies *"the terrifying prospect of Judgment, of raging fire that will consume the enemies"* (Hebrews 10:26,27, apperceived from Isaiah 26:11).

Those who refuse to live repentantly with contrite heart often find themselves

blaspheming the Spirit. They've habitually resisted the convicting power of the Spirit Who is calling them to repent. Jesus' words to those who persistently resist His Spirit's call are heart-wrenching. These individuals have no idea how serious their state of unforgiveness is before the Father.

*"[E]veryone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who blasphemes **against the Holy Spirit** will **not be forgiven**" (Luke 12:10).*

The deluded blaspheme the Holy Spirit by *negating His significance* to the followers of Jesus, and denying His power or *attributing it to Satan* as did many of the Pharisees. In their desire to "save" others, Spirit-deniers make them *"twice the sons of hell"* that they are. Yet, the truth is, *"If anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ"* (Romans 8:9).

What difference does it make to your faith walk if the Holy Spirit is indwelling you? How do you think His presence will change your life?

Describe a time when you knew the Spirit was directing you in a particular situation or encounter and you followed through in obedient trust. Did you share that testimony with anyone to encourage and strengthen them in their own walk?

Describe a situation in which you resisted His prompting through disobedience. What consequences or conviction followed?

THE FATHER AND JESUS

Part 4. The Seal Of Consummation— The Holy Spirit:

The Spirit Throughout the Bible

Skim your concordance to see how much the Holy Spirit was part of God's work in the Hebrew Bible. He is so much more involved than we can imagine!

The Spirit of God is found all throughout the Older Testament. You don't go far into it without encountering the Spirit: "*Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters*" (Genesis 1:2).

In another example, the elders who were selected by Moses validated their God-given authority through the anointing of the Spirit. They were able to respond in a manner in which they'd been unable before He rested on them:

*Then the Lord came down in the cloud and spoke with [Moses], and he **took of the Spirit** that was on him and **put the Spirit on the seventy elders**. When the Spirit rested on them, they **prophesied** [one sign of the Spirit's presence], but they did not do so again [because He wasn't indwelling them]" (Numbers 11:25).*

When God had specific assignments that required His servants to be empowered beyond their natural capacity, He sent His Spirit to fill them. In order to oversee the construction of all that was needed for the Tabernacle in the wilderness, God singled out Bezalel from the tribe of Judah and "*filled him with the Spirit of God—with wisdom, understanding and knowledge concerning every kind of artisanry*" (Exodus 31:3).

When Moses laid hands on Joshua, his apprentice and assistant, the younger man was **filled with the Spirit of wisdom** in order to lead the Israelites to victory in the Promised Land (Deuteronomy 34:9).

Just as the Spirit of God can come upon an individual and change him, the same Spirit can leave through persistent unrepentance. After Samuel anointed Saul to prepare him to become king, he prophesied that the Spirit of the Lord would fall upon him. The young man was "*given another heart*" by God. The **Spirit of the Lord fell on him** and he prophesied with a group of prophets and was "*turned into another man*" (see 1 Samuel 10:1-12).

Tragically, through rebellious presumption, Saul lost his kingdom as well as intimacy with God through His Spirit. We're told, "*the Spirit of the Lord had left Saul*" (1 Samuel 16:14).

In the Newer Testament the Holy Spirit's work continued in a deeper dimension. For Jesus to become incarnate as both "*the Son of God*" and "*the Son of Man*", a very human Mary conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit: "*The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God*" (Luke 1:35).

In order for Jesus to take up the priest-

hood of Melchizedek, the Spirit descended on Him upon His immersion in the Jordan River. With that anointing, the Levitical priesthood ended and an everlasting Priest in the order of Melchizedek came into being (see Hebrews, chapter 7).

Realizing that from Jesus would come the power for those who followed Him to carry out their Covenant responsibilities, John the Baptist announced to his listeners, “He will **baptize** you with the **Holy Spirit and with fire**” (Luke 3:16b).

When Jesus was about to ascend to His Father, He knew His disciples needed a reminder of the Spirit He had promised earlier to send them. The work to which He had commissioned them was too vital for them to think they had to fulfill it on their own! He urged them,

*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**...You will receive power when the **Holy Spirit comes on you**; and you will **be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth** (Acts 1:4,5,8).*

When that promised moment of the Spirit’s indwelling and empowerment came, it didn’t arrive unnoticed! These man and women were **changed**:

*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** (Acts 2:2-4).*

In response to this miraculous manifestation and consummation of the Messiah’s promised anointing of His Spirit, the apostle Peter proclaimed the fulfillment of Joel’s prophecy:

*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’ (Acts 2:17).*

Peter was addressing devout Jews from all over who had come to Jerusalem to celebrate at Pentecost the giving of the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai. These men were thoroughly acquainted with the Hebrew Bible and its promises.

Stung in their hearts, they pleaded with the apostles, “‘**Brothers, what shall we do?**’ Peter replied in words that are as pertinent for us today as they were when he uttered them:

***Turn from sin, return to God, and each of you be immersed on the authority of Jesus the Messiah into forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit! For the promise is for you, for your children, and for those far away—as many as the LORD our God may call!** (Acts 2:38,39).*

What glorious hope and purpose for these Spirit-filled followers who trained up their households as Abraham did, in devotion and intimacy with their Lord!

How has the Holy Spirit shown Himself to be real in your life?

Why is He so much a part of God's activity with man? How would you *not* have been changed were He not indwelling you?

THE FATHER AND JESUS

Part 4. The Seal Of Consummation— The Holy Spirit:

ALL Generations Of Jesus Followers Need The Holy Spirit

“For the promise is for you, for your children, and for those far away—as many as the LORD our God may call!”
(Acts 2:39).

This verse bears repeating until it becomes firmly planted in your heart. It's not as if the Holy Spirit isn't being given to consummate the Covenant any longer! Our Lord's promise is still in effect. *Nothing* in this promise has been revoked by our Father. *“The gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about”* (Acts 1:4), is still being offered to all who enter into Covenant with Him through the atoning blood of the Lamb.

Remember, the ongoing presence of the indwelling Holy Spirit is your assurance that the Covenant with your Father is still viable. That interaction offers you security and confidence to represent Him: *The [Hebrew Scripture] says, ‘I trusted, therefore I spoke.’ Since we have that same Spirit who enables us to trust, we also trust and therefore speak* (2 Corinthians 4:13, CJB, apperceived from Exodus 34:34).

There's no way Satan wants people to

experience the indwelling Holy Spirit and declare to others the glory of God! The enemy recognizes the *power of testimony* as changed lives blossom through the Spirit's power within them.

You may wonder what's happened to dissuade people who call themselves “Christian” from walking wholeheartedly in Covenant with Jesus through His Spirit. Centuries' worth of satanic assaults have deterred the intimate relationship our Father has desired with His people through the Spirit.

- Because of the inroads of *Hellenistic philosophers* in the second and third centuries, the Hebraic covenant foundations of the Gospel were cloaked.
- The Bible was *hidden in Latin* for over eleven hundred years, available only to the few who were educated.
- Well-meaning theologians over the last three hundred years have developed man-centered “gospels” but have *ignored the Covenant foundation* of the Good News that's found in the Hebrew Scripture.

If religious leadership had set aside their anti-semitic bias, their “gospels” would have been grounded on the substructure of the Older Testament and its prophetic fulfillment in the Lamb. The one true Gospel would have been clearly revealed in the manner *our Lord* called for to receive it: through repentance, love and obedient trust.

As it is, few false gospels even quote a verse from the Older Testament. Even fewer call for repentance. Many internationally known “evangelists” overlook repentance; instead, they offer a “for-

givenness” without the need to *turn away from* the old way of death.

This may be the reason that, according to evangelist Ray Comfort, 90% of those who are *declared* “born again” by man fail to live on in Christ. Without repentance, there is no “new birth.” And without that turn from darkness into the Light, there is no indwelling Spirit to empower and to convict.

Grievously, so many who call themselves evangelists rely on “drive-by” crusades. They’ve failed to apperceive the role of evangelist as recognized through Spirit gifting in the earliest Church.

A true evangelist shares the Gospel and *stays on* until a *faith community is started*. An evangelist is a “**church planter and repairer**” as were Paul, Timothy and Titus. Understanding the relational issues of our Father’s Covenant, these men entered into a discipling/spiritual parenting relationship with those who turned from sin to embrace the Covenant in Jesus.

Sense the parental heart of Paul in his letters to the different faith communities. The apostle had spent a great amount of time and loving personal effort as he came alongside the spiritually newborn. These followers of Jesus were *family*, not the demographic targets that so depict modern evangelistic techniques!

As emissaries of the Messiah, we could have made our weight felt; but instead, we were gentle when we were with you, like a mother feeding and caring for her children...for you know that we treated each one of you the way a father treats his children. We encouraged you and comforted you and appealed to you to lead lives worthy of God (1 Thessalonians 2:7,11,CJB).

These were spiritual sons and daughters to Paul! And the depth of that intimacy takes time and devotion to develop. You can’t share the true Gospel at an impersonal evangelistic Crusade. Fruit that lasts calls for faithful nurturers and pruners to role-model “lives worthy of God.”

Keep in mind that the false gospels which have developed in the last three hundred years consider relationship unnecessary, and the *need* for the indwelling Holy Spirit optional at best.

How dependent in your daily life are you on the indwelling Holy Spirit? Can you recognize Him in the lives of others who call themselves “Christian”? How?

Did your discipleship consist of discussing Bible knowledge, or was your mentor concerned that you grow in increasing dependence on the Holy Spirit?

Have you ever discipled anyone as a spiritual parent, helping them to grow deeper in their relationship with Jesus? How long did that relationship continue? When you completed discipling, was that person fully equipped to reach others as a discipler?

THE FATHER AND JESUS

Part 4. The Seal Of Consummation — The Holy Spirit: *Empowerment From The Spirit*

“Neither the delivery nor the content of my message relied on compelling words of ‘wisdom’ but on a demonstration of the power of the Spirit, so that your trust might not rest on human wisdom but on God’s power”

(1 Corinthians 2:4,5).

Have you ever observed streams? There is something beautifully pleasant about each one, yet no two are ever alike. They are on a pilgrimage themselves, with a starting point and an ending point. Many end up joining with other streams to become rivers before they rush into the ocean.

We, too, can be streams of *living water* that, when joined together through Covenant union with our Father, can become mighty rivers. The Spirit Who indwells each person born from above brings this flow about. No programs or scheduled activities are needed for living water to bring refreshment and healing to others—just the empowerment of the Spirit.

As fellow “streams” we want to share what the empowerment and work of the Holy Spirit might mean to you. At the same time, we don’t want to become definitional about Him. No one can adequately describe God!

When the Spirit of Jesus indwells those with whom our Father consummates His Covenant, you become the Spirit’s temple. If someone asks you where God is, you can answer, “In me!” You don’t have to try to conjure up His Presence. Intimacy with Him is a special privilege, rather like being pregnant with

spiritual fruit ready to be birthed as you draw nourishment and strength from your Holy Indweller!

A reminder of encouragement and exhortation: When the Covenant is consummated, you are *sealed* with the Holy Spirit. No other payment for your sins is needed or acceptable, nor are there any works you can do to add to your acceptability before our Father.

*Moreover, it is God who sets both us and you in **firm union with the Messiah**; he has **anointed us**, put his **seal on us**, and given us **his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee for the future** (2 Corinthians 1:21,22,CJB).*

Our Father guarantees that *He* won’t break the Covenant. Make sure *you* don’t become a covenant-breaker through habitual, unrepentant sin that forfeits your obedient trust in Him. A sure way to avoid even drawing near that woeful condition: Live in reliant trust in the Spirit as one who *knows* you’re loved!

*Now those who **belong to Christ Jesus** have **crucified the flesh** with its **passions and desires**. If we **live in the Spirit**, let us also **walk in the Spirit** (Galatians 5:24,25).*

Our Father verifies His love for us *through the Holy Spirit*. The Bible is not God Himself, but only *His Word* for us. Both Testaments point to our Father and His salvation purposes: “...*the Holy Scriptures, which can give you the wisdom that leads to deliverance through trusting in Jesus the Messiah*” (2 Timothy 3:15,CJB).

The Word presents truth to us, but only the Holy Spirit can open our hearts to *believe it as truth* and empower us to *live it*.

As you yield your life to the Holy Spirit, He produces ever-increasing character traits that mirror those of Jesus:

“... love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control” (Galatians 5:23).

- These qualities are necessary for you to have healthy relationships with others.
- They are also personal indicators that the Spirit within you is winning the spiritual battle!

As your motives and attitudes are changed, your behaviors follow. This is our Father’s process of sanctifying you into conformity to His Son Jesus—a life-long pilgrimage of *heart change* in which your actions follow suit out of love. Remember: *God examines your heart’s motivation for your behavior.* The Pharisees had the right behavior, but *not* the loving heart.

Scripture overflows with proof of how greatly our Father loves those in whom rests the indwelling Holy Spirit. No matter what trials or challenges you face, you can continue to hope for deliverance because that’s the *nature* of our Lord! “*And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us*” (Romans 5:5).

The Spirit’s presence in you starts to change your motives and attitudes—a *lifelong process* of decisions and choices. His goal is to conform you to the image of Jesus our Messiah, the First Born among us. In the midst of this alteration process, a battle rages between the Spirit and your carnal nature. Which one will rule your mind, will and emotions? Paul voiced this tension when he counseled the Galatians,

What I am saying is this: run your lives by the Spirit. Then you will not do what your old nature wants. For the old nature wants what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit wants what is contrary to the old nature. These oppose each other, so that you find yourselves unable to carry out your good intentions. But if you are led by the Spirit, then you are not in subjection to the system that results from perverting the Torah into legalism” (5:16,17, JNT).

Choosing to consistently make choices according to the will of God as expressed through His Word and empowered by His Spirit protects you two ways: You won’t give in to the deceits of your old nature nor will you try to justify yourself through obedience that lacks trust.

The Roman followers of Jesus also needed admonition to turn away from their sinful desires and live by the Spirit of Christ in them. This battle takes place in your mind. If you consistently give way to thoughts that tempt that old sin nature, your emotions will be stirred to prod you into sinful action.

Rome had as decadent a culture as modern America. Your need to purposely set your mind under the Spirit’s control is just as compelling as theirs! Paul writes this lengthy passage because the followers of Jesus are needing to confirm the Holy Spirit’s presence in their lives:

For those who identify with their old nature set their minds on the things of the old nature, but those who identify with the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. Having one’s mind controlled by the old nature is death, but having one’s mind controlled by the Spirit is life and shalom...But

you, you do not identify with your old nature but with the Spirit—providing the Spirit of God is living inside you, for anyone who doesn't have the Spirit of the Messiah doesn't belong to him (Romans 8:5,6,9, JNT).

[We encourage you to download our book *God's Instruments for War*, where we address the importance of gifts of the Spirit so that followers of Jesus may effectively wage war against Satan].

Note that you first have to *identify* your spiritual weaponry and that of your extended spiritual family, then *use* it. The Spirit disseminates such a variety of gifts throughout a community of believers so that they'll learn to depend on each other through the Spirit's unique empowerment of each person.

To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines" (1 Corinthians 12:8-11).

So few take God at His Word to put on their spiritual armor and wield the spiritual gifts that will conquer the enemy and bring glory to the Father. This is why Satan continues to attract people into powerless "Christianity". Their *lives* aren't changed even if their vocabulary has added some new religious phrases. When the Spirit of God is

in control of one of God's children, "stuff happens" (as John Wimber was fond of saying!).

Make sure you don't forsake the only Source of *living water* as the Israelites did. If you delete key truth from Scripture (as many have done by ignoring the examples and warnings of the Older Testament), you dig a faulty spiritual cistern which is devoid of the Spirit of Christ:

For My people have committed two evils: they have abandoned Me, the fountain of living water, and dug themselves cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water! (Jeremiah 2:13).

Have you identified your spiritual gifting? How are you using your gifts to bring praise to our Father?

What is your most frequent temptation to give in to your old nature? How do you handle that temptation?
