

THE HOLY SPIRIT POURED OUT: Acts 2:1-4, 16-18, 32-33; Gal. 3:14; 4:5-6

- Having accomplished redemption, Jesus poured forth the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4, 16-18, 32-33). A new era was inaugurated at that time. This began “the age of grace” (or we could say “the age of the Spirit”), as well as the “age of the church.” The church began at Pentecost. “For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks.” (1 Cor. 12:13)
- This outpouring begins the “blessing of Abraham” for all the families of the earth, as promised in the Abrahamic Covenant: “and in you all the families of the earth will be blessed” (Gen. 12:3). Gen. 22:18 explains further that it is in Abraham’s descendant (Jesus Christ) that this blessing will come: “In your seed [Jesus Christ] all the nations of the earth shall be blessed.” (see Gal.3:16 also) Gal. 3:14 makes all of this very clear: “in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we would receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.”
- This outpouring of the Holy Spirit was the initiation of the New Covenant (an extension of the Abrahamic Covenant), prophesied in Jer. 31:31-37. The New Covenant promises to national Israel will ultimately be fulfilled in the coming 1,000 year kingdom of Christ with a remnant of national Israel. However, the church is now sharing in the spiritual blessings of the New Covenant. These spiritual blessings are fundamentally seen as: (1) the indwelling of the Spirit of God in believers (Jer. 31:33-34 and Heb. 8:10-11), and (2) the eternal forgiveness of sins (Jer. 31:34 and Heb. 8:12). Jesus ratified this New Covenant by His blood with His disciples at the Passover meal just before He was crucified: “And in the same way He took the cup after they had eaten, saying, ‘This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood.’” (Lk. 22:20) The Spirit never permanently indwelt anyone in the OT era, and sins were only passed over, not forgiven (Rom. 3:25; Heb. 10:4). The great promise of the New Covenant is the indwelling of God the Holy Spirit in the believer so that we can know Him in an intimate way and in an increasing way (read Heb. 8:10-11).

Some of the activity of the Holy Spirit in the believer:

- Our human spirit is born again with the life of God by the Holy Spirit when we first believe (Jn. 3:6-8; 1 Pet. 1:23-25). Our spirit is the deepest part of our being and is where we contact and have fellowship with God (Jn. 4:23; 1 Cor. 6:17; 1 Thess. 5:23; 2 Tim. 4:22).
- The Spirit seals us at the time of belief and all the way up to the day of redemption, when Christ returns (Eph. 1:13-14; 4:30). The seal indicates that we belong to God and are kept secure by Him. The Holy Spirit is given to all believers to permanently indwell them (Jn. 14:16-17). The Spirit empowers us to witness for Christ (Acts 1:8). The Spirit gives spiritual gifts for service (1 Cor. 12:7-11).
- *The Spirit working with the Word.* The Spirit guides us into the truth, shows us what is to come, and reveals and glorifies Christ to us (Jn. 16:13-15). The Spirit uses the Bible to transform our living as we direct our hearts toward Him while in the Bible (2 Cor. 3:14-18).
- Believers are commanded to be “filled with the Spirit,” which means to be controlled by the Spirit for Christian maturity and service (Eph. 5:18). Immature believers are controlled by the flesh, their own natural desires (1 Cor. 3:1-3). To be under the Spirit’s control means that we are walking (having our conduct) “according to the Spirit” (Rom. 8:4; Gal. 5:16) and are “by the Spirit putting to death the deeds of the body” (putting to death the sinful inclinations of our old nature before temptations are yielded to and manifested as sins – Jas. 1:14-15). To be under the Spirit’s control means we are also being “led by the Spirit” (Rom. 8:14; Gal. 5:18). Such control by the Holy Spirit is to produce the fruit of the Spirit and to ultimately conform us to the image of Christ (Gal. 5:22-23; Rom. 8:29).