

SERMON NOTES

From *In Touch With Dr. Charles Stanley*



Your Convictions About the Holy Spirit

KEY PASSAGE: Luke 24:47-49 | SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES: Genesis 1:26 | John 14:16-18, 26; 16:7-8, 13
Acts 1:8; 2:1-6 | Romans 10:9 | 1 Corinthians 12:4-7 | Galatians 5:22-23 | Ephesians 1:13-14; 5:18 | 1 John 1:9

► SUMMARY

Even as Christians, it's possible for us to be unaware of one of God's most awesome blessings.

Although we may know we've been saved, we might not realize that the Holy Spirit came to live within us at that moment. And even if we've heard this truth, we may not understand who the Spirit is or why His indwelling presence is significant. The Scripture tells us everything we need to know about this amazing gift of the Holy Spirit sent to us from our heavenly Father to enable us to become and do what He desires.

► SERMON POINTS

The Holy Spirit is a person, not just a power or force. Even if a translation of the Bible may occasionally refer to Him as it, the overwhelming original Greek terminology signifies that He is a person.

Who is the Holy Spirit?

When God created mankind, He said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness" (Gen. 1:26). The plural pronouns in this passage refer to the three persons of the Trinity—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. All three were involved in the creation; and as human beings, we bear the image of the Trinity.

In the Old Testament, God's Spirit would come upon individuals in order to achieve His purposes, but He could also leave. However, the night before Jesus was crucified, He promised to ask the Father to send the disciples a Helper, the Spirit of truth, who would be with

them and in them forever (John 14:16-18). Even though Jesus would no longer be physically present with them, He wasn't going to leave them to fend for themselves like orphans, but promised to come to them through the presence of His Spirit.

Why did the Father send the Holy Spirit?

Before His ascension, Jesus gave His disciples the assignment of proclaiming repentance for the forgiveness of sins in His name to all nations, beginning with Jerusalem. He told them He'd send His Father's promise upon them, but they were to stay in the city until they were clothed with power from on high (Luke 24:47-49).

Christ's words were fulfilled shortly thereafter on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-6). While the believers were gathered together, suddenly they heard a noise from heaven that sounded like a violent rushing wind. "There appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them" (v. 3). They were all filled with the Spirit and began speaking in tongues (or languages) to the Jews from various countries, who were gathered in Jerusalem, and each one heard the message in his own language.

When does the Holy Spirit come?

Today, the Spirit comes to indwell and seal believers at the time of salvation (Eph. 1:13-14). The seal implies God's authority and authenticity—we are now His children, and our names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life. Since this seal cannot be broken by anything or anyone, it guarantees our eternal security.

The fruit of the Spirit found in Galatians 5:22-23 describes what He produces in those whom He seals—“love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.” We could never consistently live out these qualities apart from the working of the Spirit within us.

What does the Holy Spirit do?

- He convicts us of sin (John 16:8).
- He permanently indwells us (John 14:16-17).
- He seals us (Eph. 1:13).
- He teaches us (John 14:26).
- He guides us into all truth (John 16:13).
- He reminds us (John 14:26).
- He bears fruit through us (Gal. 5:22-23).
- He comforts us (John 16:7).
- He equips us with spiritual gifts (1 Cor. 12:4-7).
- He fills us (Eph. 5:18).
- He empowers us (Acts 1:8).

Although the Spirit comes to indwell us immediately upon salvation, His work within us takes a lifetime. His job is to enable us to do everything God desires and to transform us into the people He wants us to be. Since we now have a constant Helper reminding us who we are in Christ and equipping us for each day’s challenges, we never have to struggle through life in our own strength. This doesn’t mean we’ll never have difficulties, conflicts, or misunderstandings; but through them all, He guards our way and gives us His wisdom. And when we sin, He immediately convicts us so we can confess and receive forgiveness (1 John 1:9).

The Holy Spirit is our source of power.

When Jesus gave His disciples the task of preaching the gospel to the entire world, they had absolutely no power to carry it out (Luke 24:49). That’s why Jesus told them to wait until the Spirit came. In the same way, if we hope to accomplish what God desires in our lives, we need to see Him as our source of power and strength.

The power of the Holy Spirit is God’s divine ability and authority released in believers’ lives for the purpose of godly living and fruitful service. When we walk in the Spirit, we’re relying on His strength to accomplish God’s will. As a result, we experience the following benefits:

- We may get tired, but we won’t burn out.
- We won’t get discouraged by obstacles, knowing the Spirit within us will enable us to do whatever He’s called us to accomplish.
- We’ll trust God rather than trying to manipulate our circumstances.
- We may experience distress, but we won’t become desperate.

When we do God’s work in His strength, in His way, and with His wisdom, we’ll be blessed no matter what goes on around us. Walking in the Spirit doesn’t make life easy, but we never have to walk through it alone because our Helper is always with us.

What does it mean to be filled with the Spirit?

Although we’re sealed and indwelt by Him when we’re saved, this is not the same as being filled. To be filled with the Spirit means we have surrendered our lives to Him, acknowledging that He owns us and has the right to lead us. When we are fully yielded and walking in obedience to His will, then He has full control and fills us with Himself.

► RESPONSE

- What role does the Holy Spirit play in your life? Are you yielding to Him? What do you think a fully surrendered life would require of you? What would you have to relinquish or change?
- Have you ever tried to live the Christian life in your own power? What was the outcome?
- As you examine your life, is the fruit of the Spirit displayed in all you do (Gal. 5:22-23)? How can you remind yourself to respond to others based on the Spirit’s promptings rather than your own emotions?

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