

DUDLEY'S MONTHLY MESSAGE

JULY 2025 | JOHN 14:16-29

But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.

John 14:26, ESV

FULL OF THE SPIRIT

Driving in the country a few days ago, a sign caught my attention and has stuck in my memory. A large yellow sign displayed the word "CHURCH." Behind the sign was a herd of cows munching on the grass in the pasture. Some were lying in the shade chewing their cud. Others were slowly meandering and switching their tails to keep the insects off. What a picture of the contemporary church. Peaceful and safe, but not adventurous or exciting. Too many content to munch and rest, too few captured by a power that compels a person to give their life away in fulfilling a purpose that is eternally rewarding.

The early church grew in maturity and in size because the central message offered a risky, adventurous life that includes intimacy with God Himself and victory over evil

forces. There is a common and key phrase used to describe the early believers: "They were full of the Spirit." That description has confused some. They have pictured a vessel full of liquid that could potentially leak out. But the phrase is more akin to describing someone as "full of himself" or "full of fear" or "full of hot air." It means that the most obvious thing about them is the feature that is being described. Those in the early church were so intimately related to God in the Spirit by virtue of their faith in Jesus the Son, that it was obvious that there was a power in them that was beyond human explanation.

A little context might be helpful. Luke, the author of Acts, also wrote the Gospel of Luke. In the Gospel account, he describes what the kingdom of God looks like in the

person of Jesus Christ. In the second document, he describes what the kingdom of God looks like in the corporate body of the church. Jesus was full of the Spirit in His incarnation. The members of the corporate body of Christ were guided and empowered by the Spirit. The fruit of His life was evident in their countenance and their actions. After Jesus' resurrection and ascension, His kingdom was inaugurated. He sat on the seat of authority ruling over what His blood had purchased. He ruled through sending the Spirit to indwell the believers and empower them to preach the truth of gospel in all of creation.

The Holy Spirit is the main character in the story that Luke tells of the early days of the new body, operating under a new covenant in a new creation. The people could and did hear the heart of the Head of the church, and they responded with confidence of heavenly support. On the night of His betrayal, Jesus told the disciples about the nature of their future life in the Spirit:

And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. In that day you will know that I am in my Father,

and you in me, and I in you.

These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid. You heard me say to you, 'I am going away, and I will come to you.' If you loved me, you would have rejoiced, because I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. And now I have told you before it takes place, so that when it does take place you may believe.

John 14:16-20 & 25-29, ESV

On the day of Pentecost, the Spirit came in a new way to empower the believers and complete the mission that Jesus had begun. Their lives were beyond the analysis of the rational - foolish to those limited to the natural mind and attractive to those tired of living in the confines of lifeless religion and superstitions that made for a fearful life. The spiritual realm still confounds the secularists. Even Christians get confused trying to define and describe the person and work of the Holy Spirit.

In an effort to clarify, let's look at some common references to the Spirit and the believer. First, we discover that we are baptized by the Spirit into the body of Christ

when we are regenerated:

For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.

1 Corinthians 12:13, ESV

Since the early days of the Pentecostal movement that began in 1906, the terminology of “being baptized in the Spirit” was often used to describe the experience of speaking in tongues or other manifestations. The emphasis on this “second blessing” was common. Some would even conflate baptism in the Spirit with speaking in tongues, asking “*Have you been baptized in the Spirit with evidence of speaking in tongues?*” Though it is inarguable that believers may and often do have subsequent experiences in the Spirit where their awareness of His love and power becomes overpowering, the best description for such an experience is not baptism. Being baptized by the Spirit into the body of Christ is too important to identify it with a personal encounter. The Spirit moves us from being “in Adam” or “in Moses” to being “in Christ.” We are moved from being outside of God’s redemptive people to being inside. We are in covenant with God by virtue of union with Christ, and that opens up a new world of reality. Jews were “in Moses” when they were in the old covenant. We have a better covenant. That one has passed away. We now, based on our being in Christ, get all the blessings He received upon His complete obedience to the previous covenant. In those blessings we find the Holy Spirit as

our life. He makes truth plain, love palatable, and the future secure. In Him we find various gifts that enable us to do the works of God in our day. We have speaking gifts, working gifts, healing gifts, serving gifts—all for the purpose of fulfilling the mission He left us.

Second, all the saints are anointed with the Spirit:

But you have been anointed by the Holy One, and you all have knowledge, I write to you, not because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and because no lie is of the truth. Who is the liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, he who denies the Father and the Son. No one who denies the Son has the Father. Whoever confesses the Son has the Father also. Let what you heard from the beginning abide in you. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, then you too will abide in the Son and in the Father. And this is the promise that he made to us—eternal life. I write these things to you about those who are trying to deceive you. But the anointing that you received from him abides in you, and you have no need that anyone should teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about everything, and is true, and is no lie—just as it has taught you, abide in him.

1 John 2:20-27, ESV

Anointing was associated with being set apart for a special task with the accompanying grace to finish it. Kings were anointed in Israel. Priests were anointed to serve in the temple. In the new covenant era, we are anointed in our union with Jesus who is the ultimate and final king and priest. That anointing imparts to us the discernment of the Spirit to detect what is true and what isn't. There will always be on earth the attacks upon truth by false teachers and false teaching. Those who are not full of the Spirit are vulnerable to deception. The human mind is not equipped to detect the nuances of the deceiver. We can know some things that are right and some things that are wrong, but only the Spirit searches the source of ideology. The tuning fork nature of the Spirit within us lets us know when we are getting a bogus sound.

Third, the terminology of being filled with the Spirit is often used in the book of Acts. Usually it refers to the extra measure of grace that is being displayed for a special task. They were filled with the Spirit and spoke boldly (see Acts 4:30). Being filled with the Spirit, they did miraculous acts and were aware of things beyond observational knowledge. In his letter to the church at Ephesus, Paul describes what happens when a believer is conscious of being filled with the Spirit:

And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart,

giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.

Ephesians 5:18-21, ESV

Heart-felt worship, genuine gratitude, and respectful service are evidences of one living conscious of being filled with the Spirit. Sadly, too many in today's church have ignored the Spirit in their faith experience. They have been scared or scarred by experiences or stories about the Holy Spirit. They are trying to live life by the manual of scripture rather than in the intimacy and power of the living God. Like cows munching on grass, they settle down in their religion waiting for Jesus to come back or waiting to die. We are not to be different from the early church just because we now have a written canon of Scripture. We have been called and captured to live life to the fullest now and forever. The Spirit is the main actor in a life lived under the influence of the Gospel.

KERYGMA VENTURES

P.O. Box 2022
Colleyville, TX 76034
(817)267-9224
Email: Contact@kerygmaventures.com
www.KerygmaVentures.com