

The Ministry of the Holy Spirit

WHY IS THE HOLY SPIRIT THE GREATEST GIFT YOU WILL EVER RECEIVE?

Without the Holy Spirit, there would be:

- No salvation (John 3:3-8)
- No Scriptures (2 Peter 1:21)
- No future bodily resurrection (Romans 8:11)
- No real spiritual life (2 Corinthians 3:6)
- No genuine freedom (2 Corinthians 3:18)
- No spiritual transformation (Galatians 3:2-3)
- No virgin birth (Matthew 1:18)
- No qualified church leadership (Acts 20:28)
- No victory over fleshly sins (Galatians 5:16)
- No Jesus Christ (Matthew 1:20)

How important is the ministry of the Holy Spirit?

Essential. Jesus said, "it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you..." ([John 16:7](#)). The ministry of the Holy is vitally and actively involved in every aspect of a believer's life. There are 324 Scriptural references about the Holy Spirit which help us understand His indispensable role and relationship in the world and in and through God's people.

Who is the Holy Spirit?

The Scriptures identify the Holy Spirit in three basic ways:

- The Spirit is a real Person, not an impersonal force or an "it". He is referred to with personal pronouns (John 16:7-14, Romans 8:16-26), all the attributes of personality (intelligence - 1 Corinthians 2:11, will - 1 Corinthians 12:11, emotion - Ephesians 4:30).
- The Spirit is the third member of the Godhead (Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14)
- The Spirit is God, manifesting Divine attributes (ex. truth 1 John 5:3, John 5:6), Divine works (ex. creation - Job 33:4) and the Divine name of God (God - Acts 5:3-5).

The Scripture identifies the Holy Spirit with various titles and descriptions: "the Spirit of God" (Matthew 3:16); "the Spirit of our God" (1 Corinthians 6:11); "the Spirit of the living God" (2 Corinthians 3:3); "the Spirit of your Father" (Matthew 10:20); "the Spirit of the Lord" (Judges 3:10); "the Spirit of the Lord God" (Isaiah 61:1); "the Lord who is the Spirit" (2 Corinthians 3:18); "the Spirit of Jesus" (Acts 16:7); "the Spirit of Christ" (Philippians 1:19); "the Spirit of Jesus Christ" (Philippians 1:19); "the Spirit of the Lord" (Acts 5:9; 8:39); "the Spirit of His Son" (Galatians 4:6); "the Spirit" (Matthew 4:1); "the eternal Spirit" (Hebrews 9:14); "your good Spirit" (Psalm 143:10); "the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 1:18); "the seven Spirits" (Revelation 1:4; 3:1; 4:5; 5:6); "the Spirit of Glory" (1 Peter 4:14); "the Spirit of Truth" (John 16:13); "the Spirit of Holiness" (Romans 1:4); "the Spirit of Grace" (Zechariah 12:10); "the Spirit of Life" (Romans 8:2); "the Spirit of Promise" (Ephesians 1:13); "the Helper" (John 14:26; 15:26; 16:7); "the Spirit of wisdom and understanding" (Isaiah 11:2); "the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord" (Isaiah 11:2); "the Spirit of counsel and might" (Isaiah 11:2).

What kinds of ministry does the Holy Spirit perform?

In a real sense, the Holy Spirit is our resident CEO, both our Chief Executive Officer (Romans 8:2) and Chief Empowering Officer. By His indwelling Presence, He is committed to generating the following ministries in us and through us.

- He adopts us into His family (Romans 8:15)
- He baptizes us in the church (1 Corinthians 12:13)
- He bears witness to the truth (Acts 5:32; Romans 8:16: 9:1; 1 John 5:6-8)
- He calls to ministry (Acts 13:2-4)
- He comforts us (Acts 9:31)
- He convicts unbelievers (John 16:8-11)
- He controls our desires (Galatians 5:16)
- He delivers us from sin (Titus 3:5)
- He empowers us (Romans 15:13; 1 Corinthians 2:4; Ephesians 3:16) to accomplish a skill (Exodus 31:1-3), to be strong (Judges 13:25) and to witness (Acts 1:8)
- He enhances our worship (Philippians 3:3)
- He fights for us against the flesh (Galatians 5:17)
- He fills us to lead us (Luke 4:1; Acts 2:4; Ephesians 5:18)
- He gifts us for ministry (1 Corinthians 12:7)
- He guarantees our salvation (2 Corinthians 1:22; 5:5; Ephesians 1:14)
- He guards the gospel and truth in our lives (2 Timothy 1:14)
- He helps us in time of need (John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7; 2 Timothy 1:14)
- He illuminates our minds to know what God has given us (1 Corinthians 2:10-13)
- He indwells us permanently (John 14:16-17; Romans 8:9-11; 1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:19)
- He interprets Scripture (John 16:14-15)
- He leads us to follow God's will (Psalm 143:10; Matthew 4:1; Mark 1:12; Luke 4:1; Acts 20:22-23; Romans 8:14; Galatians 5:18)
- He liberates us (2 Corinthians 3:17-18)
- He motivates worship (Philippians 3:3)
- He points us to Jesus Christ (John 15:26)
- He produces fruit in us (Galatians 5:22-23)
- He provides fellowship (2 Corinthians 13:14; Philippians 2:1)
- He provides life and peace (Romans 8:6)
- He provides wisdom (Isaiah 11:2)
- He regenerates us (John 3:5-6, 8; Titus 3:5)
- He reminds us of God's truth (John 14:26)
- He restrains and convicts us of sin (Genesis 6:3; Acts 7:51; 2 Thessalonians 2:6-7)
- He resurrects us spiritually and physically (Romans 8:11)
- He reveals truth to us (2 Samuel 23:2; Nehemiah 9:30; Zechariah 7:12; John 14:17; 15:26; 1 Corinthians 2:10; Ephesians 3:5; 1 John 5:6)
- He sanctifies us (Romans 15:16; 1 Corinthians 6:11; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Peter 1:2)
- He seals us for redemption (Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 2 Corinthians 1:22)
- He selects church leaders (Acts 20:28)
- He sends out workers (Acts 13:4)
- He strengthens us (Ephesians 3:16)
- He teaches us by His anointing (John 14:26; Acts 15:28; 1 John 2:20, 27)
- He unites us (Ephesians 4:3-4)

How is the ministry of the Holy Spirit received in our lives?

The Holy Spirit is imparted at the point of belief in the Lord Jesus Christ (John 7:37-39, Acts 11:17). This gift is referred to as "the promise of the Father" (Acts 2:33), "the gift" (Acts 2:38) or "the baptism of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 11:16-17).

What does it mean to be baptized or immersed by the Holy Spirit?

There is much confusion about the meaning of the "baptism of the Holy Spirit". It is the work of God whereby He immerses you into His body, the church (1 Corinthians 12:13). 1 Corinthians 12:13 teaches that "all" believers are baptized by one Spirit. This baptism is not just for a select few, but for all who put their trust in Jesus Christ. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is mentioned seven times in the New Testament (Matthew 3:11-12, Mark 1:8, Luke 3:16, John 1:33, Acts 1:5, Acts 11:16, 1 Corinthians 12:13). Sometimes confusion is created when a manifestation of tongues is expected as the objective evidence of being baptized with the Spirit. This confusion is due because of a misunderstanding of three passages that reference this connection (Acts 2:1-6; 10:44-46; 19:1-17). What these passages teach is the transitional work of the Holy Spirit who used similar evidence (speaking in tongues; apostolic presence) as a testimony that God was doing the same work of grace in their area and people group (Gentiles; Samaritans; disciples of John the Baptist) as He did with the Jews when He founded the church in Acts 2. Believers are never commanded to be baptized in the Holy Spirit because it is a Sovereign work of God performed in believers at salvation and thereby initiates the Christian life.

What does it mean to be filled with the Holy Spirit?

The filling of the Holy Spirit is command by God for every believer to be under His full control in every area of life. It isn't a second blessing nor the ability to receive more of Him. It simply means you willingly and willfully allow Him to permeate and control your life on a moment-by-moment basis (Ephesians 5:18). Because the command is in the present active tense, believers are to be continually filled with the Holy Spirit.

What is my responsibility in cultivating a relationship with the Holy Spirit?

The responsibility of believer's in relation to the ministry of the Holy Spirit revolves around the following commands.

- Do not grieve the Holy Spirit with your sin (Ephesians 4:30-32). Sin in thought, word or deed brings a great sadness to the Holy Spirit. It's also further proof the Holy Spirit is a real Person with real feelings, since an impersonal thing cannot be grieved.
- Do not quench (extinguish) the Spirit's ministry with an unyielding spirit (1 Thessalonians 5:19). One translation says, "do not put out the Spirit's fire." Don't throw cold water on His zeal in your life by displaying a rebellious spirit.
- Pray in the Holy Spirit by ordering your prayers according to God's Word (Jude 20, Ephesians 6:18). This also means to pray with the understanding that the Holy Spirit is taking your prayers and communicating them to God the way they ought to be presented (Romans 8:26).
- Walk by the Spirit by staying in-step with His truth, avoiding the deeds of the flesh and producing fruit that will honor God and bless people (Galatians 5:16-25).
- Use your ministry gift of the Spirit to serve the body of Christ (1 Peter 4:10-11, 1 Corinthians 12:7).
- Be filled with the Holy Spirit as you allow Him to permeate your whole life with His perfect and sufficient will (Ephesians 5:17-18)
- Take up the sword of the Spirit by which we use God's specific Word to defend against the schemes of the devil and His demonic forces (Ephesians 6:17)
- Be diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace with attitudes of humility, gentleness, patience and tolerance for one another (Ephesians 4:2-3)

Should I be concerned about committing the unpardonable sin?

A believer cannot commit the unpardonable sin and blaspheme the Holy Spirit. Genuine believers in Jesus Christ will never attribute the works of God to Satan as did the unrepentant unbelievers in Jesus' day (Matthew 12:22-32). The unpardonable sin is committed when Jesus Christ is finally rejected as the only true God and Savior.