



Unit 3: Christian Leadership

How to positively influence the attitudes and actions of others for Jesus Christ.

Lesson 8 Filled with the Holy Spirit

Day One

The Spirit's Anointing

We briefly studied how to recognize, know, and follow the Holy Spirit in Lesson 7: *Holy Spirit*. Now that we have become more aware of the Spirit living within us, we are going to see how He wants to help us glorify God in loving, powerful, and unique ways.

One of the ways we glorify God is to simply seek Him. That is, we are intent on knowing God better and drawing closer to Him. The Holy Spirit, being the Spirit of the Father and the Spirit of Christ, is delighted to help us in pursuing God with all our hearts, souls, and minds.

1. Read Proverbs 8:17. What does God say about those who seek Him?

I love those who love me, and those who seek me find me. Proverbs 8:17

Seeking or diligently searching for God is not just for the salvation of our souls. It is a continual and lifetime pursuit. God's personality and being is like the vastness of the universe—unfathomable and beyond our imagination. There will always be something new and wonderful to learn about the Lord and experience with Him.

2. Read Psalm 105:3–4. How often should we seek the Lord's face (v. 4)?

Glory in his holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice. ⁴ Look to the LORD and his strength; seek his face always. Psalm 105:3–4

3. Would you like to know God better? Yes No (Underline One)

Hopefully, we all recognize that we need more of God. Jesus, our leadership model, was continually seeking God in prayer, desiring to know His will, and following through even to His death. There was nothing and no one who came between God the Father and God the Son's relationship. Jesus wants the same for God's children.

Jesus even prayed for believers to be one just as He and the Father are one (John 17:20–21). This is a really close relationship. Jesus would not have prayed for us to be one with God if this were an impossibility. Therefore, let us rest in Jesus' prayer for us and look at seven ways we can seek our triune God.

Seven Ways You Can Seek God and Draw Closer to Him:

1. Ask the Holy Spirit to direct you in fervently loving and seeking God.
2. Pray about everything and listen for God to speak.
3. Trust God by expectantly watching for Him to move.
4. Actively read, engage, and interact with God's Word.
5. Talk positively about God to others.
6. Fast from food for a day.
7. Read and interact with biblically sound Christian books.

4. What are ways that you seek God, or that you will seek God?

Accountability: Be prepared to share your answers #3–4 with your discipleship team.

In the previous lesson on the Holy Spirit, we looked at the meaning of “anoint” in the Old Testament and specifically how both Saul and David were anointed kings of Israel. Recall Saul acted foolishly, grieved the Holy Spirit, and lost his anointing to another. He lost his position as king to David, a man after God's own heart (Acts 13:22). David loved and delighted to obey the Lord.

Like Saul, we can act foolishly too. Believers can grieve the Holy Spirit by not obeying God and by engaging in sinful behavior. God may set us apart for a special task, but because of our disobedience we may lose this privilege of serving God. Our assignment may be handed over to another who delights in obeying God.

I pray that we are all men and women after God's heart—and serve Him faithfully by listening to His Spirit. The Holy Spirit desires to help us in powerful ways to glorify God and live selfless lives. May you rest in the Holy Spirit's leadership, instruction, guidance, and encouragement.

In lesson 7 we noted that we would address the Spirit's anointing from the New Testament's perspective in this lesson. In the Old Testament the anointing meant that a person, place, or thing

was designated for special use for God's purpose. It was set apart, holy. The oil was used figuratively or as an outward symbol of God's use of the particular person, place, or thing.

Except for anointing the sick (Mark 6:13; James 5:14), there is not an emphasis on the physical use of oil in the New Testament. However, Jesus did tell His disciples to anoint their heads with oil when they were fasting (Matthew 6:17–18). He did not want their fasting to be obvious to others, only to God. In addition, Mary, the sister of Martha and Lazarus poured oil on Jesus' head as an act of worship (Mark 14:3–9).

In regard to the Holy Spirit, the anointing is spiritual in nature; God Himself consecrates us. Remember from lesson 7 that the anointing ceremony for an individual revealed to others this person's right to office and that God's power and favor rested upon him. God was with him through His Holy Spirit and would enable him to fulfill his duties. The Holy Spirit rested upon an individual for God's greater purposes of helping His people know and serve Him.

This is also the overarching meaning of anointing in the New Testament. The Holy Spirit rests on believers to empower them for God's greater purpose of helping people know and serve Him. We can know God only through Jesus; therefore, the Spirit's anointing comes through knowing, serving, and worshiping Christ.

Read Acts 5:31–32 and answer questions 5–7:

“God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Savior that he might bring Israel to repentance and forgive their sins.” ³² *We are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.”* Acts 5:31–32 (In this context *exalt* means God made Jesus Lord over everything.)

Definitions: In the Bible the word *hand* represents the power and control of the whole person. Hence, God's hand represents His divine power, salvation, and protection. The *right* hand represents a position of power, favor, and honor.

5. Who did God exalt to His own right hand (v. 31a)?

6. Why did God exalt Jesus to His right hand (v. 31b)?

7. The Holy Spirit is given to those who _____ God (v. 32b)

Read 1 John 2:20–22 and answer questions 8–10:

But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and all of you know the truth. ²¹ *I do not write to you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it and because no lie comes from the truth.* ²² *Who is the liar? It is whoever denies that Jesus is the Christ. Such a person is the antichrist—denying the Father and the Son.* 1 John 2:20–22 (The New Testament ascribes the name Holy One to Jesus (cf. Luke 4:34; Acts 2:27, 3:14).

8. Do *you* have an anointing from Jesus, the Holy One (v. 20)? Yes No (Underline One)

9. Explain your answer to #8 above about having an anointing from the Holy One:

10. What is the truth (vv. 20b–22)?

Accountability: Be prepared to share your answers #5–10 with your discipleship team.

Read what Jesus said in Luke 4:18–19 and answer questions 11–12:

“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, ¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” Luke 4:18–19 (cf. Isaiah 61:1–2)

11. Why was the Spirit of the Lord on Jesus (vv. 18–19)?

Definition: *The year of the Lord’s favor* is not a calendar year, but it is the proclamation of the Messianic age, the time of Christ, the Anointed One. It is an age or period of grace when everyone who places their trust in the Messiah will have their sins forgiven and their debt of rebellion paid in full. It is an acceptable and favorable time indeed, a time to shout for joy!

12. What do verses 18–19 mean to you personally ?

Accountability: Be prepared to share your answers to #11–12 with your discipleship team.

Jesus was quoting Isaiah 61:1–2 when he spoke the words in Luke 4:18–19. He was the fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecy written about 700 years earlier. Jesus was sent to set prisoners of sin free from the devil’s chains and God’s wrath. Jesus is looking for those who are poor in spirit, the meek, the humble and the repentant. Recall that many of the religious leaders and rulers were proud and arrogant and were unable to recognize Jesus as the Anointed One. We need to make sure we are vigilant (watchful) in guarding our own hearts against pride and arrogance so we can always recognize Christ and His leadership in our lives.

Read Acts 10:38 and answer questions 13–17:

—how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him.
Acts 10:38

13. Who anointed Jesus (v. 38a)?

14. Was Jesus anointed with oil? Yes No (Underline One)

15. God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy _____ and _____ (v. 38a).

16. What did Jesus do after God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and power (38b)?

17. Why could Jesus go around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil (v. 38b)?

18. How are you modeling Jesus' mission of doing good and healing those under the power of Satan?

Accountability: Be prepared to share your answers to #13–18 with your discipleship team.

The Aramaic and Hebrew word messiah, *mashiach* (מָשִׁיחַ), and its Greek equivalent Christ, *Christós* (Χριστός), both mean Anointed One. Jesus, our Model, is *the* Anointed One. He is the One who was anointed to destroy Satan and his works (1 John 3:8) and lead people into God's forever and glorious kingdom (Colossians 1:13; Revelation 22:3–5).

Read 2 Corinthians 1:21 and answer questions 19–21:

Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, ²² set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.
2 Corinthians 1:21–22

19. Who anoints *you* (v. 21)?

20. Is oil necessary for your anointing? Yes No (Underline One)

21. How do *you* know that *you* have the Holy Spirit in your heart (vv. 21–22)?

Accountability: Be prepared to share your answers to #19–21 with your discipleship team.

God has placed His Holy Spirit in our hearts to make us stand firm in Christ. We are anointed for leadership. We are set apart to influence the attitudes and actions of others for Jesus Christ.

Our type of leadership may be different from that of other believers. Jesus' leadership role involved traveling around the country teaching, preaching, healing—and eventually dying on the cross for our sins. There are just as many leadership options as there are talents, jobs, and personal situations. For example, a believer may suffer a terrible accident or illness. Within the confines of this outward tragedy, God may use it in a dramatic way to glorify His name. Just

keeping a positive attitude and staying in a close relationship with God may give nonbelievers a reason to pause and consider Jesus.

Keeping a positive attitude reminds me of a story a friend shared with me years ago. (I believe it to be a true story, although I cannot verify it.) It begins with an atheist reporter or journalist with a local newspaper who thought Christians were hypocrites (frauds). Then one day his editor asked him to write about the work being done with the homeless at a Christian shelter downtown. He really did not want to write about Christians, and he certainly did not want to give them credit for anything positive.

Therefore, the journalist decided to go down to the shelter one cold Saturday morning in disguise; he wanted to observe how things *really* worked. Right away he noticed a young man serving hot chocolate. He politely gave a cup to a shabbily dressed man, who without any provocation (aggravation), threw the steaming hot chocolate in the young man's face and then threw the cup on the ground.

"Boy this is going to be good," thought the journalist. "I'll get some great photos of these charlatans (fakes, imposters) and show the city what they're really like." He grabbed for his camera but then froze at what he saw next. The young man wiped the hot chocolate from his face, picked up the cup, filled it again, smiled, and said politely, "Sir, I believe you dropped your hot chocolate."

This simple instance of self-sacrifice and compassion gave the journalist a reason to pause. He decided to investigate further and get to know this Christian volunteer. In time, the journalist gave his life to Christ. There is a moral to this story. Never underestimate your calling and how it affects the lives of others. This young man was leading simply by serving hot chocolate!

Although the structure of our roles may be different, the goal of Christian leadership remains the same. We are to tell, share, model, preach, and serve in all ways to bring people to God through Jesus for the glory of our triune God. What a tremendous privilege and great honor this is! Nothing in life is more exciting, fulfilling and worthy!

Action Steps

22. Memorize the apostle John's words to believers in 1 John 2:20: *But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and all of you know the truth.* (The Holy One is either the Son or the Father.)

23. Live this day with the recognition that you have an anointing from God and that you know the truth that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. It is the life-saving truth that must be shared. Please write down any way your day was different:

Accountability: Be prepared to share #22–23 with your discipleship team next week.

—End Day One—

Day Two

Baptism of the Holy Spirit (part one)

Read Matthew 3:11 and answer questions 24–25:

“I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me comes one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.”
Matthew 3:11

24. Who is John the Baptist talking about?

25. John the Baptist baptized with water, how does Jesus baptize (v. 11c)?

In the Old Testament fire is used as one of the physical manifestations of God’s presence (Genesis 15:17; Exodus 13:21–22). In other words, God used fire to demonstrate His presence. Similarly, fire was used in Israel’s worship to symbolically represent God with His people (Leviticus 6:12–13).

God is holy and righteous. Thus, God’s presence with Israel as fire also represented judgment and purification.¹ As foretold in the Old Testament, Jesus the Messiah was coming to die for our transgressions, and to purify our souls and appease God’s wrath (Isaiah 53:8–11; Malachi 3:1–4).

In Matthew 3:11, John the Baptist explained that Jesus baptizes with the Holy Spirit and fire. The Greek word for baptize is *baptizo* (βαπτίζω). It has three specific definitions.

First, baptize means to wash ceremonially for the purpose of purification. The priests were required to wash before offering sacrifices to God (Leviticus 16:4, 24–25). After washing, the priest offered the sacrifice with the fat portion of the animal being burned with fire.

The *second* definition of baptize is to use water in a rite for the purpose of renewing or establishing a relationship with God. It means to plunge, dip, and wash. This definition is associated with the ministry of John the Baptist as he immersed men and women in water as a sign of their repentance and turning to God.

A *third* meaning of baptize is to cause someone to have an extraordinary experience. The experience can be overwhelming in that one feels engulfed or immersed with God’s presence.

These unusual experiences may occur at salvation or sometime during a believer’s lifetime. Similarly, they describe experiences with the Holy Spirit coming upon them in remarkable ways.

When individuals are “baptized with the Holy Spirit and fire,” they are not physically set aflame or burned. Clearly fire is not to be taken literally but symbolically. Baptizing *with the Holy Spirit and with fire* “means that Jesus had and has the ability to immerse (baptize) people into the

¹ Trent Butler, “Baptism of Fire” *Holman Bible Dictionary* (Nashville: Holman Bible Publishers, 1991), 152.

presence of God so that they are aware of their sin and their need to be cleansed of that sin. To be baptized with the Holy Spirit and fire is to be convicted concerning sin and righteousness and judgment (John 16:8).”²

The experience of Charles Finney illustrates the third meaning of baptism—causing someone to have an extraordinary experience of God’s presence. Charles Finney (1792–1875) was the youngest of nine children. He was born in Connecticut but moved to New York where he studied as an apprentice to become a lawyer. However, after a dramatic conversion experience he began serving the Lord as his full time vocation. He describes the experience:

But as I turned and was about to take a seat by the fire, I received a mighty baptism of the Holy Ghost. Without any expectation of it, without ever having the thought in my mind that there was any such thing for me, without any recollection that I had ever heard the thing mentioned by any person in the world, the Holy Spirit descended upon me in a manner that seemed to go through me, body and soul. I could feel the impression, like a wave of electricity, going through and through me. Indeed, it seemed to come in waves and waves of liquid love; for I could not express it in any other way. It seemed like the very breath of God. I can recollect distinctly that it seemed to fan me, like immense wings.

No words can express the wonderful love that was shed abroad in my heart. I wept aloud with joy and love; and I do not know but I should say, I literally bellowed out unutterable gushings of my heart. These waves came over me, and over me, and over me, one after the other, until I recollect I cried out, ‘I shall die if these waves continue to pass over me.’ I said, ‘Lord, I cannot bear any more; yet I had no fear of death.’³

All three definitions of baptism discussed above could relate to the statement: *Jesus baptizes with the Holy Spirit*. *First*, the work of the Spirit is to sanctify (make holy). *Second*, believers talk or communicate with God through His Spirit. *Third*, the Spirit makes it possible to have extraordinary experiences with God.

26. Do you judge yourself or other Christians because of extraordinary experiences, or lack thereof, with the Holy Spirit? Yes No Sometimes (Underline One)

27. Explain your answer to #26 about judging regarding extraordinary experiences or lack thereof with the Holy Spirit.

We are commanded not to judge anyone. Therefore, we should be especially careful in judging a person by whether or not they have had an extraordinary experience with God. There are testimonies by great people of God in both camps. The important aspect regarding extraordinary experiences, whether physically or emotionally, is that they have no bearing on God’s love for us

² Ibid.

³ Charles Finney, *Memoirs of Rev. Charles G. Finney* (New York: A. S. Barnes & Company, 1876), 20–21.

and His working in our lives. As in all things, our focus needs to be on God Himself and not on our own feelings, experiences, and circumstances.

There are two main doctrinal teachings on when a believer receives the gift of the Holy Spirit. One group of believers maintains believers receive the fullness of the Holy Spirit when they trust Jesus as Lord and Savior—the time of salvation. This is an Evangelical position.

There are four primary characteristics of the Evangelical position, according to the National Association of Evangelicals:

Conversionism: the belief that lives need to be transformed through a "born-again" experience and a life-long process of following Jesus. Activism: the expression and demonstration of the gospel in missionary and social reform efforts. Biblicism: a high regard for and obedience to the Bible as the ultimate authority. Crucicentrism: a stress on the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross as making possible the redemption of humanity.⁴

These four characteristics should really be the Christian position and should be embraced by all believers. Both Evangelical and Pentecostal churches should agree on these truths. There are other important truths not explicitly included in the above position such as the virgin birth, the divinity of Christ, and the Trinity. Before joining a church or body of believers, we should research their theological beliefs or statement of faith while praying for God's direction.

The Pentecostal⁵ position is differentiated by its strong emphasis on the Holy Spirit for speaking in tongues, divine gifts, healing, power over demons, and the "Baptism of the Holy Spirit." Those who believe in a separate filling of the Spirit acknowledge that salvation and the "Baptism of the Holy Spirit" may occur at the same time. Both groups agree that salvation comes from Jesus Christ alone.

The crux of the dispute has to do with the miraculous or vivid manifestations of the Spirit. Most Pentecostals maintain that in order to have the fullness and power of the Spirit one must have a separate filling known as the "Baptism of the Holy Spirit." However, not all believers have these experiences or display miraculous powers.

28. Have you ever had a miraculous or vivid demonstration of the Holy Spirit in your life? Yes
No (Underline One)

⁴ National Association of Evangelicals (NAE), "What is an Evangelical?" < <https://www.nae.net/what-is-an-evangelical/> > (Accessed 2/2/2021).

⁵ "Pentecostal" Christians may also be described as "Charismatic." Pentecostals include Protestant Christians who believe that the "Manifestations of the Holy Spirit" are alive, available, and experienced by modern-day Christians. These manifestations or gifts of the Holy Spirit were seen in the first-century Christian believers and include signs and wonders, such as the message of wisdom, the message of knowledge, faith, gifts of healing, miraculous powers, discerning of spirits, tongues and interpretation of tongues. The term Pentecostal, therefore, comes from the New Testament experiences of the early Christian believers on the day of Pentecost. <http://christianity.about.com/od/glossary/g/pentecostal.htm> > (Accessed 2/10/2016).

29. If you answered yes in question 28, please describe the experience:

30. Have *you* ever looked down on anyone who seemed less “spiritual” than you? Yes No
(Underline One)

31. Have *you* ever been envious, jealous, or resentful of anyone who seemed more “spiritual” than you? Yes No (Underline One)

32. Is either situation in #30 or #31 more wrong than the other? Yes No (Underline One)

33. Explain your answer for #32 about whether judging someone to be more spiritual or less spiritual than you is worse than the other:

Action Steps

34. How can Christians remain unified (1 Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 2:20), even when we fall into one end of the spectrum of belief or the other—between the charismatic (believing supernatural gifting in the early church continues today; for example, speaking in a heavenly tongue) and cessationist (only certain supernatural gifting remain today)?

35. What can *you* do to improve Christian unity?

Accountability: Be prepared to share your answers to #33–35 with your discipleship team.

—End Day Two—

Day Three

Baptism of the Holy Spirit (part two)

Read Acts 2:1–4 and answer questions 36–38:

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. ² Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³ They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. ⁴ All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. Acts 2:1–4 (See Acts 1:13–15)

Definition: *Pentecost* was a Jewish festival, also known as the Feast of Weeks, celebrated fifty days after the Feast of Passover. It was also called the Feast of Harvest or the Day of Firstfruits and was a holy day of offerings, joy, and thankfulness for the Lord’s blessing of the harvest (Leviticus 23:15–21). After the events recorded in Acts 2:1–4, when the Holy Spirit was poured out on the disciples, Christians began to celebrate *Pentecost* to commemorate this pivotal moment in the birth of the Church.

36. In Acts 1:13–15, we learn that a large group (120 people) had gathered together in one place. Who were some of the people gathered (See vv. 13–14)?

37. In Acts 2, on the Day of Pentecost, where did “a sound like the blowing of a violent wind” come from (v. 2)?

38. What were the audible (heard) and visible (seen) signs of the Holy Spirit’s presence (vv. 2–4)?

We do not know the identity of everyone who gathered in the one place, but those most likely present were the twelve apostles, which included Matthias who was added to take the place of Judas (Acts 1:26). Also present were the women disciples, Mary, the mother of Jesus, and His half-brothers (all of whom had been present in an upper room earlier [Acts 1:14]). The fact the tongues of fire came to rest on each one of them indicates that all 120 present were believers in the Lord Jesus. There are, however, scholars who interpret the passage as only the twelve apostles receiving the tongues of fire.

Not only did those present see what appeared to them like tongues of fire, they also heard a loud sound like the blowing of a strong and forceful wind. The Holy Spirit entered and enabled all to speak in other languages that were recognized and understood by those visiting from many regions far beyond Jerusalem (Acts 2:5–8).

The apostle Paul had a different experience. He was on his way to Damascus when he encountered the risen Christ. This glorious meeting left him blind and helpless for three days. Then the Lord called another believer named Ananias to go to Paul that he might see again and

be filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 9:3–17). After Ananias laid hands on and prayed for Paul, “something like scales fell from his eyes” (v. 18) and he was baptized.

We need to be careful with being too dogmatic (holding rigid views) about how folks place their faith in Jesus and how the Holy Spirit fills those believers. God reserves the right to work in our lives in unique and mysterious ways. There are men and women, powerfully used by God, who have different doctrinal views on how the Holy Spirit fills believers. The important thing to remember is that the Holy Spirit gives exceptional empowerment in order for Christians to follow and exalt the name of Jesus.

Read Acts 2:16–18 and answer questions 39–42:

No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: ¹⁷ “‘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. ¹⁸ Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy.’” Acts 2:16–18 (quoted from Joel 2:28–29)

Definition: *Prophecy* is translated from the Greek verb *propheteuo* (προφητεύω), which means to proclaim God’s message, to preach; *prophecy* means to predict, that is, to speak God’s message intelligibly (as opposed to speaking in an unknown language (1 Corinthians 14:1); to use prophetic insights to make something known.

39. What will God do in the last days (vv. 17–18)?

40. What will the people do when God pours out His Spirit?

41. What happened on Pentecost that caused Peter to quote the prophet Joel (See Acts 2:4–15)?

42. How does the promise of the Holy Spirit being poured out relate to *you*?

Accountability: Be prepared to share your answers to #39–42 with your discipleship team.

The apostle Peter is speaking and quoting from the book of Joel in Acts 2:16–18. The prophet Joel lived in the 9th century BC and had prophesied about the Holy Spirit. Peter is interpreting the prophecy as being fulfilled right then and there in his time. In the context of this passage, the last days are the time of the New Covenant, the time after Jesus’ death and resurrection.

As the time for Jesus’ return draws nearer, the Spirit’s empowerment may be even more visible and powerful. However, the promise and fulfillment of the Holy Spirit being poured on believers (God’s servants) is available right now for you and all who trust in the name of Jesus.

Notice that God emphasizes His promise for men and women to prophesy. God says it twice in a slightly different way: *I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy* (v. 17) and *Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy* (v. 18).

You may be prophesying already and not even know it. When we speak the truth of the Bible with the Holy Spirit's guidance and enablement, we are speaking for God. When we share the plan of salvation and lift up the name of Jesus, we are proclaiming God's message.

Now, back to the subject of when a believer receives the gift of the Holy Spirit. Those who believe that the *fullness* of the Holy Spirit is received at the time of salvation cite these Scriptures: Acts 2:38; Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 2:14, 12:13; 2 Corinthians 1:21–22, 5:5 and Ephesians 1:13–14. In contrast, those who believe in a separate, subsequent baptism of the Holy Spirit after trusting Jesus, cite these Scriptures: John 7:37–39; Acts 1:5, 2:1–4, 8:12–17, 10:44–46, 11:15–17, 19:2–4.

Both sides of this doctrinal issue have explanations, reasons, and additional Scripture citations for their position. It seems possible the Holy Spirit is received at conversion in the sense of indwelling, while the “filling of the Spirit” is a separate anointing. In this way, God sovereignly empowers (“fills”) for specific works and gifts. Pray for wisdom and discernment, study the Bible, and do your own theological research to know the truth and live according to His will.

Read 1 Corinthians 12:13 and answer questions 43–45:

For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body— whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. 1 Corinthians 12:13

Note: The one Spirit is the Holy Spirit— the third person of the Triune God. To drink of the one Spirit is to be filled with His special giftings, fruit, counsel, direction, and all that His pervading presence means. The Holy Spirit is one with God the Father and God the Son and brings unity, empowerment, and refreshment to believers.

43. For we were _____ by _____ Spirit so as to form _____ body (v. 13a).

44. We were _____ given the _____ Spirit to _____ (v. 13c)

45. Why do you think 1 Corinthians 12:13 is so important in Christian leadership?

Accountability: Be prepared to share your answers to #43–45 with your discipleship team.

The opening ceremony for the 2008 summer Olympics in China was phenomenal. For several events 2,008 individual Chinese people worked in amazing precision and harmony. The first

event had 2,008 drummers on the field at individual, illuminated, drum stations. The huge band formed a large square in the Bird's Nest stadium. At the end of their musical light show, they performed the countdown for the opening of the games with their Fou drums. The drummers did this by having a portion of the drums light up with the countdown numbers while a portion of the drums were darkened for the background. After the "one" second disappeared from the drums, grand fireworks commenced.

Although this was a secular event, it reminded me of the body of Christ and how we should each be working together in sync and in harmony. The drummers were not trying to outperform each other, but to synchronize (coordinate) their movements. They were doing this for the overall effect of the ceremony and to bring honor to their country, China.

In the same way, we have a part to play for the good of our eternal country or kingdom. No one is better or more important than another; we are all equal in God's eyes. We need to coordinate our work and efforts so that the overall effect of our actions will bring glory to God.

The lighted drums can remind us of Jesus' words to His disciples—"You are the light of the world" (see Matthew 5:14–16). We are not to hide our light but work together in perfect harmony and precision so that others will be amazed by our deeds—and turn their eyes toward the one, true Light. The countdown inspires us that Jesus will be returning and our time on this earth is short. Let us prepare for the *grandest of the grand* fireworks!

Definition: *Speaking in tongues* can refer to speaking another recognizable language or to the practice of uttering incomprehensible sounds that are considered to be a divine or prayer language. *Speaking in tongues* in an unrecognizable language is known as glossolalia.

Some Pentecostal and charismatic denominations teach that speaking in tongues is the initial evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. They also teach three types of speaking in tongues: 1. Tongues as a supernatural outpouring and sign to unbelievers (Acts 2:11). 2. Tongues for the strengthening of the church. This requires an interpretation (1 Corinthians 14:27). 3. Tongues as a private prayer language (Romans 8:26; 1 Corinthians 14:1–4, 14).⁶

Before we leave the subject of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, let us address one aspect that can be particularly divisive. For example, some who believe in a separate baptism of the Holy Spirit assert that a believer must have the gift of tongues as evidence of this baptism. They cite Acts 2:1–6 and their own experiences. However, in Acts 2 the language was a real language that listeners could understand.

It seems that in the last thirty years there has been a movement to refer to speaking in tongues outside of a public gathering as a "private prayer language" or "prayer language." It is used to communicate with God in private. The "prayer language" or "heavenly language" was defined as such to meet Paul's requirement of having an interpreter present whenever one speaks in tongues (1 Corinthians 14:27–28). Even so, some pastors do allow their congregations to use their "prayer language" during worship, even if there is no one present to interpret what they are saying or praying.

⁶ "Speaking in Tongues"<<http://christianity.about.com/od/glossary/g/speakingtongues.htm>>(Accessed 2/5/2013).

Other pastors or religious leaders prohibit speaking in tongues altogether, whether publicly or privately. These pastors may believe that speaking in tongues only refers to speaking in other languages and that this gift ceased after the apostolic age. They may not believe in a “prayer language” used to communicate with God.

Read 1 Corinthians 14:28 and answer questions 46–47:

If there is no interpreter, the speaker should keep quiet in the church and speak to himself and to God. 1 Corinthians 14:28

46. What restriction does Paul place on people speaking in tongues in church (v. 28a)?

47. Does Paul place any restrictions on speaking in tongues in private (v. 28b)? Yes No
(Underline One)

Paul makes it clear that speaking in tongues is just one kind of spiritual gift (1 Corinthians 12:10). Gifts are given to build up the body of Christ. No one needs them all because no one is the whole body—we are all just a part of the body. Therefore, not all believers who have been baptized into the Spirit will speak in tongues (Romans 8:5–8, 12:5–8; 1 Corinthians 1:7).

Charles G. Finney played a significant role in the development of American Pentecostalism and yet did not speak in tongues. “One writer claimed during the year 1857–58 over a hundred thousand persons were led to Christ as the direct or indirect result of Finney’s labors while five hundred thousand persons professed conversion to Christ in the great revival which began in his meetings. It was found by actual research that over eighty-five in every one-hundred persons professing conversion to Christ in Finney’s meetings remained true to God.”⁷

Now it is a blessing to speak in tongues, and if you desire this gift you should ask God for it. However, biblically this is not a requirement to confirm you are baptized in or with the Holy Spirit. Many different denominations exist because Christians do not give each other enough freedom to serve Christ uniquely. If you speak in tongues, do so humbly. If you do not speak in tongues, humbly accept those who do. There are mighty men and women of God who speak in tongues and those who do not. God hates pride and arrogance in any form.

Do not try to coerce or manipulate others into thinking they must have the same experience with God you have experienced or to exercise the same gifts and abilities you do. Think of the unique experiences and gifts of the men and women in the Bible. Moses met God in a burning bush and led the Israelites out of Egypt with signs and miracles. Paul met Jesus in blinding light on the road to Damascus and was used to bring the gospel to the Gentiles. Mary was visited by the angel Gabriel before the Holy Spirit came upon her and she gave birth to God’s Son. God will gift us differently and for His glory as He chooses for His perfect plans.

⁷ John L. Gresham, Jr., *Charles G. Finney’s Doctrine of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1987), 41.

All relationships, experiences, and services begin with Christ. If anyone preaches a different gospel than Jesus Christ—instead of His deity and humanity, His birth, life, death, and resurrection—then as a Christian leader you must stand up for the truth (Galatians 1:6–8). However, we must be careful to listen, watch, and not condemn the Spirit’s work. For example, Finney believed in not one baptism of the Spirit, but in subsequent and fresh baptisms of the Spirit. He spoke and wrote vividly of these powerful experiences.⁸ Who would have wanted to argue with this man’s experiences *and* the fruit of his labors? But then again, who would demand that his experiences were necessary for following Christ?

In addressing differences, please consider the warning of the apostle Paul: *Who are you to judge someone else’s servant? To their own master, servants stand or fall. And they will stand, for the Lord is able to make them stand.* Romans 14:4.

Pray: O Lord, I pray that I do not judge Your servants. Keep me from a critical spirit and make me stand firm in You. Amen.

Action Step

Meditate on John 14:16–17 and 1 Corinthians 12:3–7. Ask God to speak to you through them:

And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever—¹⁷ the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. John 14:16–17

Therefore I want you to know that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, “Jesus be cursed,” and no one can say, “Jesus is Lord,” except by the Holy Spirit. ⁴ There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. ⁵ There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. ⁶ There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work. ⁷ Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. 1 Corinthians 12:3–7

48. What did God reveal to you while you were reflecting on John 14:16–17 and 1 Corinthians 12:3–7?

Accountability: Be prepared to share #48 with your discipleship team next week.

—End Day Three—

⁸ Ibid.

Day Four
The Spirit's Filling

Read Leviticus 10:9–11 and answer questions 49–51:

“You and your sons are not to drink wine or other fermented drink whenever you go into the tent of meeting, or you will die. This is a lasting ordinance for the generations to come,¹⁰ so that you can distinguish between the holy and the common, between the unclean and the clean,¹¹ and so you can teach the Israelites all the decrees the LORD has given them through Moses.”

Leviticus 10:9–11 (Fermented drink refers to alcoholic beverages.)

49. What did the Lord tell Aaron, the high priest, about drinking wine or other fermented drink (v. 9a)?

50. What reason did God give Aaron (and his sons) for not drinking wine or other fermented drink near His presence in the Tent of Meeting (v. 10)?

51. God expected the priests to know the difference between holy living and unholy living so they could do what (v. 11)?

Read Ephesians 5:17–21 and answer questions 52–54:

Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is.¹⁸ Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit. Ephesians 5:17–18

52. In Paul's Epistle (letter) to the Ephesians he commands believers: Therefore, do not be _____, but _____ what the Lord's _____ is” (v. 17).

53. The Lord's will is that believers “be _____ with the _____ (v. 18b).”

54. What principle (truth) is at work in Leviticus 10:9–11 (above) and Ephesians 5:17–18?

There is a principle at work that Paul is bringing to the first-century church. Just like the old covenant priests were to serve God in holiness, so too the new covenant priests are to serve God in holiness. Christians are new covenant priests serving God in His presence (1 Peter 2:5, 9). Instead of the Tent of Meeting, we serve God continually in His presence through the Holy Spirit. Although the word *wine* is used in reference to a beverage, it is also used as a symbol for common or sinful living.

When we fill ourselves with wine, the alcohol saturates (soaks) our minds. It makes the flesh weak and susceptible to unholy living. Instead, Paul wants believers to be filled with the Holy Spirit so that He will saturate our minds. The Holy Spirit gives you strength and wisdom for holy living.

The Greek verb *pleroo* (πληρόω) is translated “fill” in English. It is a present, imperative, passive verb. The present indicates a continuous action. The imperative means this verb is a command, order, or obligation. The passive means that those being “filled” are to receive or be subjected to the action of the verb.

Paul is commanding the church to allow themselves to be continually filled with the Spirit. The passive makes it clear that we do not control the Spirit of God, but we cooperate in our “filling.” Since the Spirit of God seeks a holy temple (our body) in which to reside, we *are* responsible for choosing holy activities instead of sinful ones.

Definition: *Pervade* means to spread through something and be present in every part of it.

55. How can you cooperate with God, so His Holy Spirit pervades your whole heart, soul, and mind?

Read Ephesians 5:19–21 and answer question 56:

... speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, ²⁰ always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²¹ Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

Ephesians 5:19–21

56. After commanding the believers at Ephesus to *be filled with the Spirit*, in what four activities does Paul say they are to be continuously engaged?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

In its first-century context, the readers of Paul’s letter to the Ephesians would have recognized *the days were evil*. The pagan culture surrounded the Christian church. Paul wanted them to understand that too much wine or any kind of excessive living in their materialistic society would be wrong and out of step with their new life in Christ. Paul was calling them to be different and set apart.

When the early Christians gave up their lives of excess and sin, they were to turn to God in faith. If they did not seek God, they would be tempted to return to their old sinful ways. Paul told them to allow themselves to be filled with the Spirit. They should choose attitudes and actions that would cooperate with the Spirit and His mighty work.

When we ask God to fill us with the Holy Spirit, we cooperate with God by filling our lives each day with activities that are pleasing to Him. How do we do this? First, we will speak to encourage others. This is necessary in leadership. Who will encourage, if not us? Perhaps we will share verses from the Holy Scriptures as a way to build up others. We might also repeat the words of hymns and spiritual songs. In other words, Paul is giving us a new language to speak that involves honoring Christ and not taking part in the language and idolatry of the society in which we now live. We are changing from a common person into a holy one.

A second way we cooperate with God is by singing and making music in our hearts to Him. We can either create our own songs and music in our minds or sing ones we have learned in the past. Praying or speaking Scripture to the Lord is also sweet and acceptable to Him.

A third activity connected with being filled with the Spirit is giving thanks to God for everything in the name of Jesus Christ. God is sovereign and in control of all things. It should be easy to thank God for things we deem (judge) good. Nevertheless, when Jesus healed ten men with leprosy, only one returned to give thanks and praise (Luke 17:17–18). Let us not take God's goodness for granted but give Him thanks.

What about thanking God for things we do not deem good? Remember, we live in a fallen world. God does not cause evil, Satan does. God could stop all evil, and indeed that day will come. Until then, no matter how tragic, painful, or devastating something may seem in our lives, we can be assured that God will work it out for our good so we may be conformed into the likeness of Jesus (Romans 8:28–30). Although we do not rejoice in evil, we give thanks for how God will deliver us and make use of it. Remember, God is incomprehensible, and His ways are past our understanding (Isaiah 55:9).

Fourth, we submit to one another in fear and reverence for Christ. This means we yield or surrender our rights or desires in various situations. This is done to honor Christ, and such actions please Him immensely. Think of His perfect, selfless, path to the cross and follow Him. Jesus gave up His rights *for* everyone. He is the perfect model *for* leadership.

Read 1 Thessalonians 5:19 and answer questions 57–58:

Do not quench the Spirit. 1 Thessalonians 5:19

57. We are commanded: Do not _____ the _____.

Definition: The Greek verb, *sbennumi* (σβέννυμι), which is translated *quench* in English, means to extinguish, put out, *quench*, and restrain. *Quench* is a present active command which means we must not restrain or extinguish the Spirit's holy activity in our lives. The fact we are commanded *not* to *quench* the Spirit means it is possible to sinfully put out the Spirit's fire.

58. If you were in the woods and decided to put out your campfire, what would you do?

You may throw a bucket of cold water or dirt on it. Either way, you would extinguish the presence, light, warmth, and power of the fire. Similarly, when we are cold toward God or bring the dirt of sinful living into His presence, we quench the Spirit.

Action Steps: Live by the Spirit Daily

(Memorize the four activities in #59, complete activities in #60 and answer # 61)

59. Memorize the four activities (Ephesians 5:19–21) of a Spirit-filled Christian.

- 1) Speak to one another with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs from the Spirit.
- 2) Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord.
- 3) Always give thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- 4) Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

60. Put these four activities of a Spirit-filled life into practice today. How did it make a difference?

61. Please write below any doubts you might have regarding the Holy Spirit living in you?

Accountability: Be prepared to share #59–61 with your discipleship team.

—End Day Four—

Day Five
The Spirit's Gifts

Read 1 John 2:27–29 and answer questions 62–65:

As for you, the anointing you received from him remains in you, and you do not need anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all things and as that anointing is real, not counterfeit—just as it has taught you, remain in him.²⁸ And now, dear children, continue in him, so that when he appears we may be confident and unashamed before him at his coming.²⁹ If you know that he is righteous, you know that everyone who does what is right has been born of him.
1 John 2:27–29

Note: The apostle John was writing to believers around 85 AD to combat heresy⁹ and false teaching. He is not saying that there is no need of human teachers, because elsewhere in Scripture they are highly valued (Ephesians 4:11–13). This is a good example of the importance of knowing the context (framework) of a passage and examining the whole counsel of God.

John is saying that all believers need to listen to the Holy Spirit to discern (tell the difference) truth for themselves. This is not to say that we will completely understand difficult passages or have perfect revelation (disclosure). It does mean we have the ability to know enough truth to follow Christ daily and separate truth from falsehood.

62. How do *you* know *you* are anointed (v. 27; see also 1 John 2:20)?

63. How are *you* assured of knowing the truth (v. 27)?

64. What should *you* do to be confident and unashamed when Jesus appears (vv. 27c–28)?

65. If *you* are reading and studying the Bible and *you* do not understand the meaning of a certain passage, what should *you* do?

The Holy Spirit wants you to be an effective and holy leader. He desires you to be like Christ and serve our Holy Father (Romans 8:9–16). He wants you to be assured of His presence and help. He does not desire you to live in fear and trepidation (anxious, nervous).

The Spirit of God is the good Revealer. He uncovers truth for us. He gives us wisdom by making the things of God known to us. He takes the spiritually blind and allows them to see that which was hidden. We cannot have revelation *without* the good Revealer. The word *revelation* means

⁹ Heresy is a term used to describe an unorthodox (unconventional) religious opinion. In other words, it is an opinion or belief that contradicts established religious teaching, especially Christianity.

something has been made known that previously had been concealed (secret, hidden). The Holy Spirit is the good Revealer of our Lord Jesus Christ!!

You and I are given the Holy Spirit for the purpose of knowing, loving, worshipping, and obeying God. The Holy Spirit also resides within us to help others know, love, worship, and obey God. The Holy Spirit manifests (makes known, gives signs, reveals) Himself through all kinds of Christian personalities, skills, and abilities (Exodus 31:3).

The different ways the Spirit manifests Himself through people with divine skills and abilities are called spiritual gifts. Spiritual gifts are from God and given freely (grace). Christians have not worked for these gifts, nor do we merit or deserve them. God favors and works through Christ followers out of His goodness and mercy.

Read 1 Corinthians 12:4–7 and answer questions 66–68:

There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. ⁵ There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. ⁶ There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work. ⁷ Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. 1 Corinthians 12:4–7

66. What do all the different kinds of gifts have in common (v. 4)?

67. The manifestation of the Spirit is given for the _____ (v. 7).

68. What does the “common good” refer to (v. 7)? (Compare 1 Corinthians 14:12; Ephesians 4:11–13; 1 Peter 4:7–11)

Read 1 Corinthians 12:8–11 and answer questions 69–71:

To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, ⁹ to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, ¹⁰ 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. ¹¹ All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines. 1 Corinthians 12:8–11

69. Name the nine gifts of the Spirit that are listed in vv. 8–10):

70. How are these gifts given to believers (v. 11)?

71. What would *you* say to a Christian who envies another’s gift from the Spirit?

Envyng another's gift is really a matter of pride. A person who is jealous of another usually desires the attention or glamour that person is getting from the use of their gift. For example, Christian speakers, writers, singers, or healers who have large followings may seem popular and favored. We may become discontented or resentful toward them because we want what they have, popularity and favor.

Before William Shakespeare called envy the “green eyed monster” in *Othello*, green skin was associated with illness. Indeed, jealousy and envy are sinful emotions that can sicken our very souls. Believers who envy another's gifting have taken their eyes off the Lord Jesus and are focused on receiving their own praise and glory.

To keep us from tempting weaker Christians to jealousy, we must pray to stay humble. Humility is a struggle and challenge for all, especially for those with conspicuous (obvious) gifting. Our humility may lessen jealousy in another. Nevertheless, with consciences clear, we are not responsible for the envy and jealousy of others.

God is not impressed with anyone—He alone is the source of all gifts. However, there is one who will take notice of fruitful gifting. Satan will try and destroy one's gift or make it ineffective. We have all seen the “famous” preacher succumb (submit) to temptation and become a tabloid headline. If you are getting a lot of attention with your gifting, beware of the enemy. He will be lurking around and looking for a way to distract, hinder, or destroy your good work.

Do not be jealous of anyone. God has a good and perfect plan for all of us. The plan is always to use our gifts to glorify Him and to build up the body of Christ. We must remain faithful to our calling and gifting and pray for all Christians to desire anointed ministry for God's honor and the common good.

Gifts of the Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:8–11)

Earlier we discussed tongues as a gift of the Spirit. Here are seven other gifts, all mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12:8-12, along with their interpretation.)

Message of Wisdom

The *message of wisdom* or *word of wisdom* involves communication. People with this gift are given wisdom from the Holy Spirit to edify others with biblical truth. They know when and how to apply this truth in various situations. “The Bible says that wisdom can be exercised through persecution, defending the faith, problem solving, dealing with unbelievers, everyday living, interpreting God's truth, and imparting God's truth,” writes Don Stewart on the website blue.letter.bible.org. “All wisdom is found in Jesus.”¹⁰

Message of Knowledge

The *message of knowledge* also involves communication. People with this gift are given insight and understanding of biblical truth. They have the ability to acquire facts and present them

¹⁰ Don Stewart, Blue Letter Bible, “What Is the Gift of the Word of Wisdom?” at https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/stewart_don/faq/the-various-gifts-of-the-holy-spirit-part-two/20-what-is-the-gift-of-the-word-of-wisdom.cfm (accessed 3/26/2021).

clearly to others. Specifically, their knowledge revolves around the gospel. Knowledge comes from spending time with Jesus and the Word.

Faith

The gift of *faith* is extraordinary trust and confidence in God and His promises. All Christians have some faith, but this is a persevering and powerful faith that inspires others.

Healing

Persons with the gift of *healing* are supernaturally endowed with the ability to cure another of specific ailments. As with all the gifts of the Spirit, it is the Holy Spirit working through the person and doing the healing. The gift of healing should not be considered the same as medical intervention.

Miraculous Powers

Miracles are events or occurrences happening outside of nature or scientific law. The gift of *miraculous powers* entails the Spirit working miracles through a particular person in order draw attention to God.

Prophecy

Prophets are persons inspired by the Holy Spirit to speak for God and His purposes. A prophet may or may not be given insight into the future. When prophets speak God's truth, their words are known as prophecy. The gift of *prophecy* is given to instruct, encourage, warn of judgment, and speak on current events.

Distinguishing Between Spirits

The gift of *distinguishing between spirits* or discerning between spirits is the ability to judge whether someone or something is being influenced by God or the devil. This gift includes identifying false doctrines. The Bible warns us to "test the spirits . . . because many false prophets have gone out into the world" (1 John 4:1).

Read Romans 12:6–8 and answer questions 72–73:

We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; ⁷ if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; ⁸ if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully. Romans 12:6–8

72. We have _____ gifts, according to the _____ given to each of us (v. 6).

73. Name the seven gifts of the Spirit listed (vv. 6–8):

74. Read Ephesians 4:11–13. Name the five gifts of the Spirit (vv. 11–13):

So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, ¹² to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up ¹³ until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Ephesians 4:11–13

Action Step

Pray for God to reveal your gift or gifts of the Spirit for His glory and the equipping of His people. Be patient. God will answer in His timing.

75. Please name the spiritual gift or gifts you believe God has given you.

76. How have you been using your gift or how will you begin to use it?

Accountability: Be prepared to share your answers to #75–76 with your discipleship team.

—End Day 5 and Lesson 8—

Next—Lesson 9: The Name, Unit 3: Christian Leadership

Postscript: The following contains Charles Finney’s own words of his experiences being led and filled by the Holy Spirit. We thought you might enjoy reading it.

To the honor of God alone, I will relate a little of my own experience in this matter, I was powerfully converted on the morning of the tenth of October. In the evening of the same day and on the morning of the following day, I received overwhelming baptisms of the Holy Spirit, which went through me, as it seemed to me, body and soul. I immediately found myself clothed with such power from on high that a few words dropped here and there to individuals were the means of their immediate conversion. My words seemed to fasten like barbed arrows in the souls of men. They cut like a sword. They broke the heart like a hammer. Multitudes can attest to this. Often times, a word dropped, without my remembering it, would fasten conviction and often result in almost immediate conversion.

Sometimes I would find myself, in a great measure, empty of this power. I would go out and visit and find that I made no saving impression. I would exhort and pray with the same result. I would then set apart a day for private fasting and prayer, fearing that this power had departed from me, and would inquire anxiously after the reason of this apparent emptiness. After humbling myself and crying out for help, the power would return upon me with all its freshness. This has been the experience of my life.

I could fill a volume with the history of my own experience and observation with respect to this power from on high. It is a fact of awareness and of observation, but a great mystery. I have said that sometimes a look has in it the power of God. I have often witnessed this. Let the following illustrate it.

I once preached for the first time, in a mill town. The next morning I went into the manufacturing establishment to view its operations. As I passed into the weaving department I saw a large group of young women, some of whom, I observed, were looking at me and then at each other in a manner that indicated a frivolous spirit and that they knew me. I, however, knew none of them.

As I approached nearer to those who had recognized me, they seemed to become more silly and giddy. Their levity made a peculiar impression on me; I felt it in my heart. I stopped short and looked at them, with what expression I do not know because my whole mind was absorbed with the sense of their guilt and danger.

“As I steadily looked at them, I observed that one of them became very much agitated. A thread broke. She attempted to mend it, but her hands trembled in such a manner that she could not do it. I immediately observed that the sensation was spreading and had become universal among the group. I looked steadily at them until one after another gave up and paid no more attention to their looms. They fell on their knees, and the influence spread through the whole room.

I had not spoken a word, and the noise of the looms would have prevented my being heard if I had. In a few minutes, all work was abandoned, and tears and lamentations filled the room.”¹¹

[NOTE: You may wonder what happened next. Finney informs us that the owner stopped the work of the mill and allowed Finney to instruct his workers. Many were saved that day. Then within a few days almost every person who worked at the mill had given their lives to Christ.]

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¹¹ Charles Finney, *Experiencing the Presence of God* (Pennsylvania: Whitaker House, 2000), 14–16.