

WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?

The Holy Spirit is:

- God (Genesis 1:2; Acts 5:3, 4).
- A Person (Revelation 22:17).
- The Helper (John 16:7).
- The Convictor (John 16:8).
- The Guide (John 16:12-15).
- The Teacher (John 14:26; I Jn. 2:27).
- The Empowerer (Acts 1:8).
- The Presence of Jesus in the here and now (Matt. 28:20; I Cor. 5:4).
- The Sealer who marks us for total salvation & guarantees our inheritance in the life to come (Eph. 1:13-14).

The Holy Spirit is NOT:

- A mystical fog (Isaiah 11:2)
- An impersonal power source to make meetings better (John 15:26).
- Casper the Friendly Ghost (Acts 5:1-11).
- A spirit of fear (Romans 8:15; II Timothy 1:7).
- A power to be used for your own selfish gain (Acts 8:9-25).

The Holy Spirit is described as:

- A dove (Matthew 3:16; Luke 3:21-22).
- Fire (Matt. 3:11; Luke 3:16; Acts 2:3)
- Wind (John 3:8; Acts 2:2).
- Water (John 7:37-39).
- Oil of Gladness (Hebrews 1:9).
- Wine (Acts 2:13).
- A “down payment” guaranteeing our salvation (II Cor. 1:21, 22).
- A sensitive entity that can be quenched or grieved because of sin (Eph. 4:29-30; I Thess. 5:16-22).

But didn't I receive the Holy Spirit when I put my faith in Jesus?

- The Holy Spirit Seals you for salvation (one experience) - Ephesians 1:13-14
- The Holy Spirit Empowers you for service (many experiences) - Acts 1:8

When you are saved, at that moment, the Holy Spirit seals you for Salvation

- The Holy Spirit seals you -- He puts the imprint of God upon you, securing your salvation and depositing in you various gifts and revelations of Jesus Christ. These are a down payment on everything you will receive when you are raised from the dead to live with in Christ in Heaven forever (Eph. 1:13-14).
- You know you are “sealed” in the Holy Spirit when you exhibit faith in Jesus & a love for other Christians (Eph 1:15).

But there is more...

- The baptism or infilling of the Holy Spirit is more than a one-time experience. In the early church, the same disciples:
 - Received the Holy Spirit when Jesus breathed on them (Jn. 20:22).
 - Were filled with the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:4).
 - Were filled with the Holy Spirit after prayer (Acts 4:31).
- Paul viewed the baptism of the Holy Spirit as a necessary qualification for walking out the Christian life. He commands the Ephesian Christians to be filled with the Holy Spirit (Eph. 5:18).

What happens when you are baptized by the Holy Spirit?

There are different terms used in the Bible to describe the “Baptism” of the Holy Spirit, but they are referring to the same thing. Jesus says, “to wait for the Baptism of the Holy Spirit” in Acts 1:4-5. In Acts 1:8 He says, “you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you.” Then on the day of Pentecost it says “they were all filled with the Holy Spirit,” in Acts 2:4. You may also hear terms like “Spirit Filled, Led by the Spirit, or Power of the Holy Spirit,” these terms are also referencing the same thing.

- He forms Christ’s character in you (Isa. 11:1-5; Gal. 5:22-23).
- He clothes us with Christ’s power so that you can do the works that Jesus did, and even greater ones (Isaiah 61:1-3).
- He increases your faith (Jude 1:20).
- He enables you to pray even when you don’t know what to pray (Rom. 8:26-27).
- He allows you to receive spiritual gifts from Jesus for the common good (I Cor. Chapters 12, 13 & 14)
- He allows you to operate in specialized spiritual functions (Rom. 12:4-8; I Cor. 12:27-31; Eph. 4:11-13).
- He fulfills the prophecy of Joel 2:28-32 (see Acts 2:16-21).

What is the Fruit of the Holy Spirit?

Galatians 5:22-23 tells us, “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.” The fruit of the Holy Spirit is the result of the Holy Spirit’s presence in the life of a Christian. The Bible makes it clear that everyone receives the Holy Spirit the moment he or she believes in Jesus Christ (Romans 8:9-11; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 1:13-14). One of the primary purposes of the Holy Spirit coming into a Christian's life is to change that life. It is the Holy Spirit's job to conform us to the image of Christ, making us more like Him.

How did the first Christians receive the Holy Spirit?

- Jesus received the Holy Spirit as a dove descending on Him, and heard the voice of God declaring His favor on Him (Matt. 3:16-17).
- The first Christians were filled with the Holy Spirit as they waited on the Lord in prayer and worship. They did this in accordance with Jesus’ instructions (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8).
- A blinded and humbled Saul was filled with the Holy Spirit when Ananias laid his hands on him. Saul received back his sight, arose, and was baptized (Acts 9:17-19). Saul later became Paul.
- Cornelius’ household spontaneously received the gift of the Holy Spirit when Peter preached the gospel to them. They received the Holy Spirit before they were baptized in water (Acts 10:44-48).

- Peter and John laid their hands on believers who had been baptized but had not yet received the Holy Spirit. For these Christians, getting saved and receiving the Holy Spirit were two separate experiences (Acts 8:14-17).
- Paul laid his hands on men who had just been saved, and they received the gift of the Holy Spirit. These men told Paul, “We have not even heard whether there is a Holy Spirit” (Acts 19:1-7).

Each person receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit manifested at least 1 of 5 things

The manner was different for each person just like the way the Holy Spirit decides to manifest Himself today is different. Remember that this is a gift from God, which means He is creative enough to do it differently.

- **Boldness:** the ability to do the will of the Lord in the face of fear (Acts 4:31).
- **Joy:** real joy based on a knowledge of God, not on feelings or circumstances (Acts 13:52).
- **Tongues:** other languages, both natural and supernatural in dialect (Acts 2:4-11; Acts 10:45-47; Acts 19:6; I Cor. 14:2).
- **Supernatural power:** to do the works of Jesus such as healings, words of knowledge, the casting out of unclean spirits, etc. (Acts 9:10-12; Matt. 4:23-24; Mark 16:17-18)
- **Prophecy:** speaking the thoughts of God in love, mainly encouragement (Acts 19:6; I Cor. 14:3).

How do I receive the baptism or infilling of the Holy Spirit?

- Cultivate a hunger and thirst for righteousness (Matt. 5:6).
- Cultivate an eager desire for spiritual gifts (I Cor. 14:1).
- Confess your sins and drop every wall of fear (Rom. 8:15; II Tim. 1:6-7).
- You may want to have someone more mature in the Lord lay his hands on you and pray (Acts 8:17; Acts 19:6; II Tim. 1:6).
- Approach the Lord with faith that He eagerly desires to give you the Holy Spirit when you ask Him (Luke 11:9-13).
- Ask and receive (Matt. 7:7-11).
- Look to God and begin with praise and thanksgiving (Eph. 5:18-20).
- You receive the Holy Spirit by faith; just as you first became a Christian by faith, just as you walk with the Lord by faith (Gal. 3:2, 14; Rom. 1:17).

As a general rule, the Holy Spirit will not forcibly compel you to do anything. You have to eagerly desire to be filled with the Holy Spirit. As the Holy Spirit responds to your hunger, you respond to His presence in faith and with a sincere heart.

It is good to communicate

With the Holy Spirit comes new experiences in spiritual gifts and the process of being refined in God’s cleansing fire (Matt. 3:11-12). Communicate with someone more mature in the Lord as you experience these things so that you can get answers to your questions.

On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood up and said in a loud voice, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.” By this he meant the Spirit whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit has not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified. - John 7:37-39