

Accessing God's Power

Part 5 – The Power of the Holy Spirit

Acts 1:4-8; 2:1-4

This is now our fifth and final message in our series Accessing God's Power.

So far we've looked at the power of the name of Jesus, the power of praise and worship, the power of the blood of Jesus, and the power of God's Word.

The passage we just read describes the day of Pentecost when God made available to all believers the most powerful force in the universe, more powerful than a nuclear bomb.

Today, we're looking at the power of the Holy Spirit.

Every believer should be filled with, and utilising the power of, the Holy Spirit.

So today we're asking: What does Holy Spirit have the power to do, and how do we access that power?

My friend and mentor, Pastor Trevor Chandler, teaches in the Dunamis Bible College on the subject of the Holy Spirit. He asked the students to examine all the Scriptures they could find that were linked to the Holy Spirit and put their findings in alphabetical order. Here's what they came up with: **A**cceptance, ability, adoption, anointing, appointments, **B**oldness, blessing, **C**leansing, character, comfort, commands, conviction, confidence, confirmation, counselling, conscience, **D**eliverance, discernment, discipling, disciplining, deposit, **E**mpowering, enabling, encouraging, **F**aith, fellowship, freedom, fruit, **G**ifts, glory, **G**odhead, goodness, grace, grieving, guidance, guarantee, **H**ealing, hope, helping, holiness, **I**mpartation, inspiration, inner witness, interpretation, **J**oy, judgment, **K**nowledge, **L**ife, liberty, love, **M**iracles, **N**ew birth, **O**bedience, oneness, **P**eace, perseverance, power, prayer, prophecy, preaching, persuasion, **Q**uickening, **R**elease, revival, revelation, righteousness, **S**anctification, the sword, sealing, sonship, strength, **T**eaching, truth, tongues, **T**rinity, transformation, **U**nity, utterances, understanding, **V**itality, vindication, victory, **W**arning, wisdom, witness, **X**-ray vision, **Y**outhfulness, **Z**eal

I added a couple of my own, and that makes a total of 88, and 8 being the number of resurrection, there can't possibly any more to add... just kidding.

88 is a lot, and we're only going to look at a few.

1. The Holy Spirit gives us the power to be witnesses

Acts 1:8 But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.

Being a witness means two things: Being the kind of person

If we're not the kind of people God wants us to be, then we should keep our mouths shut.

But at the same time, there's no such thing as a silent witness.

2. The Holy Spirit has the power to transform us

2 Cor 3:18 But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

In the process of this transformation, He releases us from bondage, the power of sin, and addictions.

ILLUS – I have a friend, who's a pastor, and for years he was a chronic stutterer. It was an ordeal for him to get through one sentence. Until the day he was filled with the Holy Spirit. God completely set him free.

Except in one small way – he can't say his surname without stuttering. Pastors might be standing around introducing themselves with their full names. But all he can say is, "Hi, I'm John." God's left him a little reminder of what he was like before God's power touched his life.

Isn't it interesting that when Jacob wrestled with God, God left him with a limp, a reminder of his encounter with the Lord?

Being under Holy Spirit control is like a business hanging a sign out front: Under New Management.

3. The Holy Spirit empowers us against the enemy

ILLUS – A number of years ago, a movie came out called *The Bear*, and it went something like this: Once upon a time, there was a mummy bear and a baby bear, and they were sooo happy together. Then one day, an accident happened and the mummy bear died, leaving the little baby bear all alone in the world. One day the poor defenceless baby bear was out minding his own business, when he was spotted by a big, mean, hungry mountain lion. The baby bear started to run; he was trapped next to the river, and jumped in. The mean and nasty mountain lion followed him downstream to where the baby bear came ashore at a crossing. The baby bear was trapped again, and made a puny, squeaky sound as the mountain lion closed in for the kill. Then suddenly, the baby bear stood to his feet, opened his mouth, and there was a massive great roar. The mountain lion suddenly remembered that he had another pressing engagement, and ran for his life, terrified. How did the little baby bear do that? The cameras panned round, and there standing behind the baby bear was the hugest, most ferocious daddy bear.

Friends, Satan isn't scared of us, but he's terrified of who's within us.

1 John 4:4 You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.

The Holy Spirit within us is far more powerful than the devil.

4. The Holy Spirit gives us guidance

ILLUS – A number of years ago, a man in our church (let's call him George), was one of those responsible for taking an offering bag into a back room to be counted. There were a number of them, and they all went through a corridor behind the stage, left the bags with the offering-counters, and returned to the service. One day, a lady went to the pastor and said, "God has given me a word of knowledge. George is stealing from the offering." They worked out a way they could verify this, and it turned out to be true. They caught him in the act.

ILLUS – When my wife, Allison, worked for the Health Department in a facility, it was suspected that one of the inmates was being sexually molested, but no one knew who the perpetrator was – till the Lord showed Allison who it was. At the time, she was in a training role and whenever she was in class, every time she looked at him, she saw the little girl's face superimposed on his face. She arrived at his work section unannounced and caught him in the act. As a result, that man went to jail.

John 16:13 However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.

5. The Holy Spirit convicts us of sin

John 16:7-8 Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. (8) And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:

Part of the work of the Holy Spirit is to let us know when we're doing the wrong thing.

Why does He do that? To make us feel bad? To keep us from getting too close to God?

No, He convicts us of sin so that we will draw nearer to the Saviour.

But conviction often hurts.

It's like being in a dark room for some time and having someone suddenly turn on the light.

It hurts your eyes.

How can we access the power of the Holy Spirit?

1. Be baptised with the Holy Spirit

The beginning of a full relationship with the Holy Spirit is an event known in the Bible as the baptism with the Holy Spirit.

There are five separate times in the book of Acts when it talks about this special event in the life of a believer.

Acts 2 – 120-odd disciples were filled with Holy Spirit and speak in tongues.

Acts 8 – The Samaritans become Christians through the ministry of Phillip, are baptised in water, and Peter and John hear about it and go and pray for them to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Something visible occurred because Simon the magician was so impressed that he offered to by the ability to impart the Holy Spirit.

Acts 9 – Saul, persecutor of the church, becomes a Christian, is filled with the Holy Spirit, and speaks in tongues. (1 Cor 14:18)

Acts 10 – Cornelius and his household receive Christ, are filled with the Holy Spirit, and speak in tongues.

Acts 19 – Some disciples – about twelve men – are prayed for by Paul to be filled with the Holy Spirit and they speak in tongues and prophesy.

When we put all these passages together, we learn some important facts about the baptism with the Holy Spirit.

1. It is a separate and subsequent experience to being born again.
2. You can be born again and not filled with the Holy Spirit.
3. You may or may not automatically be baptised with the Holy Spirit when you receive Christ.
4. There is a supernatural manifestation when a person is baptised with the Holy Spirit.
5. Every time it mentions what that supernatural manifestation is, it's speaking in tongues.

If you have never been baptised with the Holy Spirit, we'll give you opportunity to be prayed for later.

But the first step to accessing the power of the Holy Spirit is to be baptised with the Holy Spirit.

2. Live a life yielded to the Holy Spirit

Eph 5:18 And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit

The Greek language has a verbal tense that doesn't exist in English, and it indicates an ongoing action.

That's the tense that's used in this verse, and literally it means, "keep on being filled with Holy Spirit".

That's because as we live life, the power drains out of us, just as it did with Jesus. (Mk 5:30)

That means we need to keep being filled.

So how do we do that?

It goes on to tell us in the following verses that a key to that is worship.

But really, being filled with the Holy Spirit means being under the control of the Holy Spirit.

You can sing and worship all you want, but if you have areas of unyieldedness to the Lord, you can't really be filled with the Spirit.

It is essential that we keep our hearts soft, pliable and open to the Holy Spirit, allowing Him to do whatever He wants to do.

3. Pray in tongues every day

1 Cor 14:5 I wish you all spoke with tongues...

1 Cor 14:18 I thank my God I speak with tongues more than you all;

1 Cor 14:4 He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself...

1 Cor 14:14 For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays...

Praying in tongues is an essential part of our spiritual growth.

I pray in tongues every day.

Is that because I'm such a spiritual giant?

No, it's because I recognise my great need, and that God has given us this great ability that we can use any time we want, and it builds us up.

When you pray in tongues, you build yourself up in the Spirit.