



**Who's Afraid of the Holy Spirit? – Part 2**  
**Various Scriptures**  
**GCSP – 02/13/2010**

As we open our study of God's Word tonight I need you to ask yourself a few questions; and whether you make it a habit to keep notes or not, I suggest you write these down so you can contemplate them and pray over them on a regular basis.

1. Can I honestly say that I experience the full and unhindered power of the Holy Spirit on a daily, if not moment-by-moment, basis?
2. Why not?
3. Am I allowing preconceived notions and past teachings on the Holy Spirit to clog my mind and thus severely limit my beliefs on what the Spirit can do in my life? And wrong teaching on either side of the equation will severely limit what the Spirit can do in your life.
4. Will I humble myself, repent of any wrong thoughts and ideas about the Holy Spirit, ask Him to illuminate my mind, and give Him free reign to teach me any and everything about Himself He desires for me to know?
5. Will I get over any fears I have about the gifts of the Holy Spirit and allow Him to use me in any way He chooses?

If your answer was yes to any of the last three questions, let's pray before we get started.

Allow me to quickly review a few points from last week's sermon.

First and foremost, the Holy Spirit is a Person. He is just as much God as the Father is and just as much God as Jesus Christ is; He is not some second class deity. We saw in John 14 that the Father was sending another Helper, Comforter, Counselor that is the exact same as Jesus only in a different form. While Jesus was in bodily form on this earth you had to be next to Him to be in His presence; all genuine believers are in the presence of the Holy Spirit 24-hours a day because He dwells within us.

Secondly, we saw that the Holy Spirit will be with us always and forever. The Holy Spirit's filling and indwelling was primarily on an as needed basis throughout the Old Testament and the Gospel accounts; He came and went based on the need of the hour. After Pentecost every genuine believer receives the Holy Spirit at conversion and He is there to stay. Receiving the Holy Spirit and being filled with or immersed with the Holy Spirit are two entirely different things though; which we will study at some point during this series.

Third, if you know God the Father as a Person, and you know God the Son as a Person, but you do not know God the Holy Spirit as a Person, but only as some impersonal influence or power, you will be robbing Him of the worship that is due Him, you will be robbing Him of the love that is due Him, and you will be robbing Him of the reverence that is due Him.

The great woe of the church is not the presence of stages and bands and singers and multi-media and drama, but the necessity for them because the presence of the Holy Spirit is absent. We are constantly creating enticements for the world to come to church, when all we really need to do is make the Holy Spirit the center of attention and He will draw people to church.

Fourth, the reason most Christians do not want to be filled with the Spirit is because they want to live the way they want to live and have the Holy Spirit as a little something extra when they need it. The Holy Spirit will not be some add-on to your life; He will be the Lord of your life or He will be nothing in your life.

Fifth, there is a danger of viewing the Holy Spirit only as an influence or power in your life as opposed to Him being God: Your thoughts will constantly be, "How can I get hold of the Holy Spirit and use this power and influence in my life?" Your thoughts should be, "How can the Holy Spirit get hold of me and use me?"

Lastly, we looked at **Zechariah 4:6**, which tells us, "**Not by might, not by power, but by My Spirit says the Lord.**" For much too long the church and its members have been operating on its own power and might. And it is very possible to run a church without the Holy Spirit; which I dare to say, most do.

We need to restore the Holy Spirit to His rightful place in our lives individually and in His church corporately; and that begins by recognizing Him as a divine Person, by loving Him, by honoring Him, by worshipping Him, and by obeying Him, just as much as you aspire to do all these things for God the Father and God the Son.

Turn with me in your Bibles to the Book of **Acts**.

### **Acts 4:13**

Another question we are compelled to ask ourselves: Is the world amazed at what you do and accomplish as a believer in Jesus Christ? Do unbelievers look at your life and marvel in utter bewilderment and awe?

That's the example we have in Peter and John. They were ordinary, common, unremarkable people, yet they amazed the high priests and Pharisees with the things they said and the things they did.

Hold your place in the Book of **Acts** and turn with me in your Bibles to the Book of **Judges**.

### **Judges 13:24-25**

At an early age the Holy Spirit began to visit and fill young Samson.

### **Judges 14:5-6; 19; 15:14-15**

Through the power of the Holy Spirit, Samson was able to do amazing things and exhibit superhuman strength.

### **Judges 16:4-5**

The Philistines were baffled as to where his strength came from. Samson was not some hulking human figure as the Sunday School depictions and movies make him out to be. He didn't have muscles growing on top of his muscles; nothing about his physical presence gave the people around him any hint that he possessed this enormous strength.

Back in the Book of **Acts**, even though the Holy Spirit's power is being displayed in a different manner than unbelievable human strength, the same principle applies; just like the Philistines of Samson's day, the high priest and the Pharisees have no clue how Peter and John are displaying the power and wisdom they are displaying. It is beyond belief for the world around them to see them do and accomplish what has happened.

So what was it that had the leaders of Israel so amazed? Go back with me a page or two in your Bibles and let's find out.

### **Acts 3:1-10**

Is making a man, who was lame from birth, get up and walk and leap around something that a common fisherman could do in his own power? – Of course not. The people were not filled with wonder and amazement because Peter and John gave the lame man some money or brought him a sandwich or wrapped him in a blanket. The people were not filled with wonder and amazement because Peter and John picked the man up and carried him to their home to care for him. The people were not filled with wonder and amazement because Peter and John prayed for this man. While all of these things are good, and while you may be led by the Spirit at times to do these things for the poor and unfortunate of this world, all of these things can be done in your own power and ability. The notice and wonder and amazement of the people will come from what the Holy Spirit's power accomplishes through you, not what you accomplish through your own power and ability.

### **Acts 4:5-13**

Not only are the rulers amazed at a lame man jumping around the Temple, they are also amazed at the wisdom of Peter and John, and the confidence and boldness by which they speak. Again, this being a display of the Holy Spirit working through them and not them displaying their own knowledge, intellect and wisdom.

I go back to the last few questions I asked: Is the world amazed at what you do and accomplish as a believer in Jesus Christ? Do unbelievers look at your life and marvel in utter bewilderment and awe?

Here is where we get off track and here is why we totally miss the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives: When it comes to serving God we look at what we are good at and what we like to do; and then we serve according to our own ability. We have been duped into saying things like, "Let me pray about that" or "I'm just not gifted to do that" or "That doesn't fit into my calling."

What are we really saying? We are saying "I'm not comfortable with that" or "I don't have the talent or knowledge to do that." And in doing so we are totally discounting the Holy Spirit and choosing to not experience His power in our lives.

Beloved, the results of only serving according to our own abilities and knowledge is we then think we have everything under control, and thus have absolutely no need for the Holy Spirit! If your service in the church does not require you to be crying out to the Holy Spirit for His power and His wisdom and His help, then you are only serving and working according to your own personal talents and abilities; and any person off the streets can do that whether they acknowledge God or not.

The world then sees good people doing good things for God but they do not see the power of God being displayed through you; accomplishing things only God can accomplish.

So is it any wonder that the world wants nothing to do with the church? If the only thing the world sees is you doing are things they could just as easily do too, what's the attraction in that? In their eyes that's just additional work that takes away from their leisure and pleasure.

Of course we are to be busy doing good works in obedience to God's Word and as evidence of our salvation, **Ephesians 2:10** and many other verses tell us that; but if all of our good works are done in our own power and our own ability and our own knowledge, we are relegating the Holy Spirit to that second class status we mentioned last week and telling Him to stay in the corner, out of our way, so we can get something accomplished for God.

But let me ask you something, what is truly accomplished for God when we operate within the realm of our own power and our own knowledge and our own ability? How is God glorified and how is the world impacted for the cause of Christ when God is not needed? Who is going to be filled with wonder and amazement by the work of your hands?

Do you know what has people outside of our church excited about the building that is going up across the highway? It's not the fact that another church building is going to be in the community, it's the fact that 39 acres of land were given to us and the fact that such a small congregation has the funds to put that building in place debt-free. The people see and understand that things like this don't just happen; something supernatural or miraculous is going on here.

And quite honestly this is really just a very small and minute display of God's power; we haven't even scratched the surface of what God desires to do through every one of His children and through every one of His churches. We haven't even begun to see what God desires to do through you and through me. And everything He desires to do is through the power of His Holy Spirit actively working in the lives of each of His children, not in what you can accomplish under your own power.

So let me ask you this: Does God ever ask His children to do something they cannot do? The answer is an emphatic YES, all the time! God will never ask you to do something that He will not empower you to do, but He will always ask you to do things you cannot do. It has to be this way. As I already mentioned, if you serve only according to your own talents and knowledge and ability, then who gets the glory? – You do! So how then does God get the glory? – By you doing things only God can do as the Holy Spirit

empowers you and teaches you and leads you; by serving beyond your human wisdom and capabilities.

God desires to reveal Himself to this unbelieving world, and for some divine reason He chooses to do that through us, His children. But God is not going to be revealed to the world if everything you do is according to your own knowledge and your own talents and your own abilities.

Let's continue to backtrack in this account of the early disciples in the Book of **Acts**.

### **Acts 2:38**

The Holy Spirit is the gift. We will eventually study the difference between natural talents and abilities, and Spiritual gifts, but I want to plant in your minds right now that the Holy Spirit is the gift. All of the things we call Spiritual gifts are simply a manifestation of the gift of the Holy Spirit in our lives. So it is of the utmost importance in your to be seeking and pursuing the Holy Spirit in your life instead of seeking and pursuing the gifts; the gifts will come if your goal is the Spirit.

Again, there is a danger in getting this backwards. If we are simply pursuing the gifts and the power instead of pursuing the Spirit, the Giver of the gifts, we will be guilty of trying to manipulate the Holy Spirit into being our servant. And allow me to present the concept from last week in a slightly different manner: The Holy Spirit is not for us to use as we see fit, but we are for the Holy Spirit for Him to use as He sees fit.

Most Christians have a very self-centered approach to the Holy Spirit; our attitude is one of pursuing what we can get from Him not yielding our lives to His desires and His direction for our lives.

Go all the way back to very first verse in the Book of **Acts**.

### **Acts 1:1**

Luke is referring back to what we know as the Gospel of Luke when he speaks of the first account he composed. The implication of his wording in this verse is that the things Jesus did while in His earthly body were just the beginning of His involvement in this world. Just because Jesus ascended into heaven and has sat down at the right hand of the Father on His throne does not mean He is no longer actively and intimately involved in the lives of His disciples.

What we studied last week confirms this; the Holy Spirit is God and He is Jesus living within us to continue His activity in this world of drawing all men unto Him. When Jesus said, "**It is finished**" while hanging on the Cross He meant He had accomplished what the Father sent Him to do in order to provide the way of salvation for all who would believe. And there is much more included in that statement which we will not get into here tonight, but that statement did not mean that Jesus was done being involved in the lives of His disciples and was going to flip the leg rest up on His throne and relax.

The activity and teaching of Jesus continued throughout the Book of Acts and continues today through the power of the Holy Spirit as it is released and displayed in the lives of His disciples. And beloved, the only reason we do not see the miraculous as it is

recorded for us in the Book of Acts is because we are not fully yielded to the Holy Spirit like Peter and John were; are not fully yielded to the Holy Spirit like Philip and James were; are not fully yielded to the Holy Spirit like Paul and Silas and Barnabas were; are not fully yielded to the Holy Spirit like Ananias who laid hands on Saul after his conversion was; are not fully yielded to the Holy Spirit like the prophetess daughters of Philip the evangelist were; and on and on we could go.

The activity and teaching of Jesus is still alive today even if it is on life support because of the indifference and apathy of most believers. The activity and teaching of Jesus is still alive today even if it is buried under layers of calloused unbelief in those who claim to be His disciples.

Satan doesn't have to worry about counterfeiting miracles to counteract God like he did in the courts of Pharaoh, because God's children have abandoned the power of the Holy Spirit and have explained away the need for miracles today! How arrogant can we be to try to explain away what the Word of God says!

Oh Father, forgive us for denying Your power! Lord Jesus, forgive us for burying Your power! Holy Spirit, forgive us for grieving You and ignoring Your power!

### **Acts 1:5; 8**

Jesus left this small group of disciples with a monumental task: Evangelize the world. They couldn't do that, after all they didn't have the Internet to stream their services on, they didn't have an elaborate sound system equipped with the latest multi-media gadgets, they didn't have a fancy building to meet in, they didn't have a slick marketing and advertising strategy, and they didn't even have mass-produced Bibles and clever tracts to hand out to the people they came in contact with.

And beloved, do not take me wrong; there is nothing inherently wrong with any of these things, we will be using many ourselves, but all of these things should be used to compliment the power of the Holy Spirit manifest in our lives not to replace the power of the Holy Spirit manifest in our lives. The disciples in the Book of Acts had none of these things but they did have the Holy Spirit and **Acts 17:6** says, "**These men who have upset the world have come here also.**" The Amplified Bible says, "**These men who have turned the world upside down have come here also.**"

As far as I know that's the last time that was said about any group of Christians. You don't here hear about city authorities or county authorities or state authorities or federal authorities leveling this complaint on any churches or groups of Christians any more. Instead we are just a nuisance the unbelieving world swats away like a mosquito.

We should be an earthquake! We should be a nuclear explosion! People should be unnerved every time we pass them by because the power of the Holy Spirit is so strong the unbelieving world can smell it.

The Apostle Paul tells us, "**For we are a fragrance of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing; to the one an aroma from death to death, to the other an aroma from life to life**" (**2 Corinthians 2:15-16**). Paul is simply saying that the power of the Holy Spirit should

be so strong in us that believers recognize Him and are spurred to living according to the life of Jesus Christ, and unbelievers recognize Him and the doom and destruction and damnation that awaits them, if they fail to repent.

Can the world smell the fragrance of Christ on you as you pass them by? Are believers smelling the fragrance of life on you, and are unbelievers smelling the fragrance of death on you?

Beloved, let us repent, let us be baptized in the power of the Holy Spirit, let us be filled with His power and be used by Him in such a way that it is said of us, "These followers of Jesus Christ have turned the world upside down!"

Let's pray.