

Acts 2 | The Holy Spirit – God In Us
Redemption Hill Church | Simon Murphy
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Acts 2.1-4:

Churches normally fall either side of the pendulum swing on their view of the Holy Spirit! There are extreme views on either side, and we want to make sure that our theology is in no way a reaction to anything. We want to see what the bible teaches us. We also don't want to superimpose our views on the Scripture but to let it speak to us.

3 QUESTIONS:

Who is the Holy Spirit? He is the third Person of the Trinity. The Trinity is One, but three. **We should not dichotomize the Trinity**, by trying to make the Persons of the Trinity completely different in our minds! They are the Godhead, united, One. Jesus is the exact radiance of God (Heb 1), the Spirit is referred to as the Spirit of Christ (Romans 8). This is not a separate person, separate agenda. It's separate person, same agenda.

How did He come? He came by the Sovereign will of God when Jesus poured out the Holy Spirit.

Acts 1.4: 'you will be baptized not many days from now..'

Acts 2.33: 'exalted to the right hand of the Father, he has now poured out what you see and hear'.

How is He received? By simply believing Jesus' promise that He would come! Gal 3.2 'Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith?' This means that we should believe God's promise for us, have faith and long for the Person of the Holy Spirit, but not try to do something to qualify for His outpouring.

This also means that the time of the first outpouring of the Holy Spirit is likely to be very symbolic, not random! God made them wait til this time, which was the day of Pentecost!

What was Pentecost? It was the **feast of the first fruits** and the **anniversary of the giving of the law** at Mt Sinai.

It was the Celebration of the Harvest, or the First Fruits

By sending His Spirit on the feast of first fruits God is giving us a taste of what is coming.

PRESENCE OF GOD: 2.4: "They were all filled with the Holy Spirit". Holy Spirit is God! They were filled with a taste of God!

Ephesians 1.13: 'the promised Holy Spirit is the guarantee / deposit of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it'.

Romans 8.23: 'we have the firstfruits of the Spirit .. as we wait eagerly for our adoption as Sons'.

What is the presence of God? It's a sense that God is here, with you, in all His might and majesty. This will completely undo you, as it did to Isaiah (Isaiah 6). It's seeing something of God in the fullness of His nature.

Moses in Exodus 33 - 34: He says he needs God's presence, then asks God to show him His glory. God responds by saying he will cause His goodness to pass before Him, and then reveals his nature to Moses by saying 'The Lord, the Lord, gracious and compassionate,

abounding in love.. etc. But there is even an apparent contradiction here where he says 'forgiving' and also 'but by no means will he leave the guilty unpunished!'. How can this be? It's a reference to the work of Christ, all the way in Exodus! Only in Christ can God forgive sins and by no means leave the guilty unpunished! This is the glory of Christ's substitutionary death on the cross.

We see though this passage that God's presence reveals His Nature.

Being filled with the Holy Spirit is getting filled with Christ. It's an experience of truth. It brings both **comfort and conviction. It brings great conviction because it shows us that Christ DIED for us, but it brings great comfort because it says that Christ died for US.** This is neither rationalism (purely academic logic) or mysticism (weird philosophy). It is both rational and spiritual. It's truth applied to our hearts.

What does it do to you? It makes doctrine come alive. (My testimony of being filled with the Holy Spirit: The dead doctrine I had grown up with in an amazing Christian home became real to me in one moment).

CS Lewis says "I think all Christians would agree with me that though Christianity at first seems all about morality, all about duties and guilt and virtue, yet it leads you on, out of all of that, into something beyond. One has glimpses of a country where they do not talk of those things, except perhaps as a joke. Everyone there is filled full with what we should call goodness as a mirror is filled with light. But they do not call it goodness. They do not call it anything. They are not thinking of it. They are too busy looking at the Source from which it comes".

John 14.22-23: Judas asked, "How will you manifest yourself to us and not to the world?" "If anyone loves me he will keep my Word and my Father will love him and we will come and make our home with him.

This "making our home" is by the Holy Spirit. This is how we abide in God. **John 15.**

Challenge: Have you experienced the Holy Spirit? Are you alive to God? Living in Him?

Giving of the law (it's the Word applied to our hearts)

The Bible tells us that God gave the law (which was perfect) as a guardian to lead us to Christ (Galatians 3.24) but that there was a day coming, when God would take that law, and He would write it on our hearts (Heb 8) '**For this is the covenant.. I will put my laws into their minds and write them on their hearts**'. He would take his heart, and put his heart in us. (Ez 36.26 "**And I will give you a new heart, and a new Spirit I will put in you**") He would change us from the inside. **This is what it means to be born again.**

It shows us that **this is how we now serve God and walk with Him day by day.** By the Spirit.

We do not serve God in the old way of the letter, but in the new way of the Spirit. Rom 6.7

We are led by the Spirit of God as sons of God. Romans 8.14

When we walk in the Spirit we do not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. Galatians 5.16

This speaks of truth **changing our hearts, and fellowship with God** who leads and guides us.

This corresponds with what Jesus said about the Holy Spirit: **John 15.26:** "The Spirit of truth will bear witness about me".

Some are nervous of **super spiritualism! The guard against this, is that we do not separate Word and the Spirit.** The Spirit makes the Word alive. They do not have separate agendas! The Word is Jesus, and the Spirit of God is referred to as the Spirit of Christ. So nothing the Spirit would do would ever contradict God's Word to us.

John 16.14: "He will glorify me, he will take what is mine and make it known to you".

Filled – what does this mean?

There are few points to consider when we ask this question:

1. The Spirit had been at work in the Old Testament ('David spoke by the Holy Spirit' Acts 4.25).
2. In John 20.22 the disciples receive the Holy Spirit from Jesus! So this moment wouldn't have been the first time for them all. For some maybe, but not all.
3. In Acts 5.31 after praying for boldness they were all filled with the Holy Spirit! (Again?!) This shows us firstly that an experience like this is not a once off event!
4. All believers have the Holy Spirit when they become Christians. It's Christ's work being made real to us. But we see this throughout scripture, especially in Romans 8.9, Ephesians 1.13. This is where we are made alive to God.
5. Ephesians 5.18: "not a one time filling but a regular pattern of life". You may have a measure, but there is more!

So what is the infilling? It exactly what it says: A baptism, immersion into God's presence! It is not a once off event, and it does not mean that if you have not experienced a secondary experience of the Holy Spirit that you don't have the Holy Spirit in your life. **However**, what we read here shows us that we as Christians should long for other experiences of the Spirit's working in our life, for greater power, conviction, knowledge of God, love of Christ, freedom from sin etc. We should make Paul's command in Ephesians our aim 'to be [continually] filled with the Holy Spirit. We should long for God's Spirit to fill us again and again.

As we close I want to ask you if you have experienced the reality of God's presence the way that these disciples did? Has Christ come and made His home with you? Have you had your eyes opened by the Spirit to the awesomeness of Christ and His work? Won't you believe God's promise to you today that His Spirit is for you, and won't you ask God to fill you.