



## LIFE WITH GOD: Filling

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One of the biggest changes after the Resurrection was not only that Jesus ascended to heaven, but he also sent his Holy Spirit. Let's read about what happened. Read Acts 1:1-9

Notice that the disciples were still expecting Jesus to establish an *earthly* kingdom. But he had something different in mind. Not only was it not going to be a political uprising, but he wasn't going to do it! He was leaving! As they were watching, Jesus ascended to heaven. Before he left he told them to wait in Jerusalem for the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Now READ Acts 2:1:1-4.

After this filling of the Holy Spirit, Peter got up to preach and about 3000 believed and were "added to their number that day" (v 41).

### **1. What do you notice about these events?**

Many times Jesus talked about the importance of the Holy Spirit. In John 3 he tells Nicodemus that he must be born again "of the Spirit." Then, in John 4, he tells the woman at the well about the need to worship "in Spirit and in truth." Later, in John 16, Jesus told his disciples that it would be better if he went away because the Holy Spirit, or the "Advocate" would come. Over and over Jesus talked about the Holy Spirit, and these are just the references in the book of John! What we see is that the work of the Holy Spirit is not an optional side issue that we can ignore. The Holy Spirit is essential to our walk with God.

- 2. Why do you think it is better than Jesus went away and sent the Holy Spirit?**
- 3. How is the Holy Spirit's work different in the New Covenant than we see in the Old Testament?**

In another passage in John, Jesus prepared them for the coming Holy Spirit. It says, "On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, 'Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.'<sup>39</sup> By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified." (John 7:37-39)

### **4. In what ways is the Holy Spirit in us like a river?**

The Holy Spirit may be one of the most misunderstood or ignored parts of the Gospel. Many of us have a distorted picture of him and have kept our distance. The first step to understanding

the Holy Spirit is to know that he is God! Read the following and look for how Jesus is related to the Father and the Spirit in this passage:

“I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. <sup>13</sup> But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. <sup>14</sup> He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you. <sup>15</sup> All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you.” (John 16:12-15 NIV)

**5. How do you understand the Holy Spirit? What does these verses tell us about him?**

As we learn and explore our life with God we need not be afraid of the Holy Spirit. As we’ve seen above, he is God, which means he loves you and wants the best for you! He is also good and kind and full of peace. While we can trust the Spirit to lead us well, we also cannot predict what he will do next. Jesus said, “The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit” (John 3:8). We don’t always know how the Spirit might work, and it often looks different than we expect—but isn’t that how God often works?

**6. When the Disciples were baptized with the Holy Spirit, what was unexpected about it?**

**7. How does God use these things?**

Jesus wanted the Disciples to be equipped and prepared for the mission, but they needed the Holy Spirit. Why? Because the Holy Spirit is powerful! In Luke 24:49 Jesus told the disciples to wait until they would be “clothed with power from on high.” This is a fascinating statement. He wanted them to have power!

Of course, power can mean a lot of different things. Mainly, power is the ability to do something with the help of the Holy Spirit, that you couldn’t do on your own. This means that power may take lots of forms in our lives. Just like you might have different tools for different jobs, Jesus can use different forms of power based on what is needed as well. People who disregard the work of the Holy Spirit are not employing the power that is available to us to live Godly lives and advance the kingdom of God. Let’s not settle for a powerless Christianity but realize that God has clothed us with power as it says in Acts 1:8, “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

**8. What is challenging to you about living in the power of the Holy Spirit?**

**9. In what ways have we disregarded or tried to ‘tame’ the Holy Spirit?**

GOING DEEPER> READ Galatians 5:13-26. Consider how power is related to the fruit of the Spirit. How can you “walk by the Spirit” today?