

“Defense May Win Championships But the Holy Spirit Plays Offense!”

The Ministry of the Spirit

September 27, 2026

INTRO ...Do We Factor in "HOLY SPIRIT INTRUSIONS"?? (Does you "Deck of Cards" have any "Jokers Wild Cards" in it?)

“The Spirit as an experienced and empowering reality was for Paul and his churches the key player in the Christian life, from beginning to end. The Spirit covered the whole waterfront: power for life, growth, fruit, gifts, prayer, witness, and everything else. ...If the church is going to be effective in our postmodern world, we need to stop paying mere lip service to the Spirit and instead recapture Paul’s perspective: the spirit as the experienced, empowering return of God’s own personal presence among us...” **Gordon Fee**, “Paul, the Spirit and the People of God”, p. xix

Eph 3:14-19

- **PAUL's PRAYER for a Christian!**

v. 16 ...*“that he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being”*

- **There is a concept called "STRENGTHENING"** ...“Strengthening” is a “more” concept, an “increase”, a “non-stagnant” (you have it all) concept!

Eph 6:10-11

...A “fallout” of the “Charismatic/non-Charismatic debate”...

In Eph’s and the N.T. ...there is a dimension of “MORE” (conveyed by words like “strengthened”, “filled”, “growing”, etc.)

- **There is a substance described by the word "POWER"**

“The single most notable characteristic of the Spirit of God is his power. ...Thus, the Spirit of God is recognized as the invisible power creating or effecting a whole variety of realities. ...The Spirit of God, therefore, meant the effective working of the power of God. It is probably fair to say that even though the two words (spirit and power) are not coterminous, the presence of the one (spirit) always implies the presence of the other (power).” **Gordon Fee**, “God’s Empowering Presence”, p. 906-907

...This “power” is associated with the Holy Spirit! ...and... His Power Experientially Touches “a whole variety of realities”—What Does That Mean for You/Me?

- **There is an IMPACT/EXPERIENCE in us** (mysteriously in our “inner being”)
...This is “EXPERIENTIAL” ...it is a “transfer” an “EXCHANGE” with the presence of God by the Holy Spirit!
...The Normal N.T. Christian Life is an EXPERIENTIAL Life!

- **Paul's "REASONING" to Pray That Prayer** ...v. 14 “For this reason I bow my knees”

?? – What REASON Drives Paul to Pray for This “EXPERIENTIAL EXCHANGE” for these Christians?

Eph 3:7, 10-11, -21 ⁷ Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace, which was given me by the working of his power. ...¹⁰ so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. ¹¹ This was according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord, ...
¹⁴ For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, ...¹⁶ that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, ... ¹⁹ ...that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

v. 7 ... **"This Gospel"** ...this landmark, defining event/concept—**"A GOSPEL REASON!"**

...There is Something **SO BIG**—that it Requires Beyond Human Strength/Power to Impart it to Paul... and Through Paul! ...I think one of the reasons the church lacks the pursuit of this power is because we have no plans to do something **BIG & RADICAL & BEYOND US!!**

?? – What is this "SO BIG" Assignment?

v. 10 ... "so that through the church [something] is MADE KNOWN" ...a revealing, a 'making visible/making manifest'

?? – What is being made known? ...v. 11 "the eternal PURPOSE of God that was realized in Christ"

Eph 1:7-11 ⁷ In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, ⁸ which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight ⁹ making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ ¹⁰ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. ¹¹ ...having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will,

...There's that word **"PURPOSE"!!** ...a word that "EVERYTHING" reports back to!

...**REALITY – The World's Sense of "Purpose" has been HI-JACKED! ...Visit history, culture, civilizations and notice—there's a Formidable Obscuring of "Purpose" everywhere!**

?? – What Kind of Power Does it Take to "REVEAL" This Purpose Once Again?

Eph 3:10 "so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places."

- **There is a "right now" thing going on** (ie, God is doing something 'right now'!!) ...there is a "making known" (a "revealing", an "emerging", "a making visible/manifest"
- **There is a VEHICLE through which this "revealing" is taking place**—It is THE CHURCH!
- **There is an AUDIENCE that is watching!** ...(elsewhere, all of Creation is the audience in both Heaven & Earth)

Note: "rulers and authorities in heavenly places" ...where have we heard this phrase before? ...**Eph 6:12**

Summary: **"There is a Purpose to be Realized THROUGH MAN (The Church) ...there is a Resistance ...there will need to be a POWER to see this purpose come to pass! ...The "Ministry of the Gospel" (The Great Commission) has its roots in the Creation Mandate ...These are "OFFENSIVE CONCEPTS"!! Concepts where WE take something of God's Purpose and SPREAD It into the Earth!**

"If the command to fill the earth is an injunction to procreate, then the command to subdue the earth is an injunction to paracreate.²⁷ It is crucial that we remember, if we are to grasp the significance of what God is commanding Adam and Eve to do, that the garden of Eden was only a small corner of God's creation, a "royal park"²⁸ and not the whole of the earth: ... The majority of the created world was outside the garden, and it would have taken a great deal of work to make it like the garden. Now, presumably, for a God who created the stars by speaking a word, it would not have been too great a task to push back the borders of the garden a little further. But God did not do that. It is as though, among all the vast universe, he left a little corner of it unfinished in order that Adam and Eve might paracreate, participating in the ordering work of creation under God's direction and mandate. ...Adam and Eve are mandated to participate not in the work of this primary creation, but in God's work of bringing order to the world: separating, setting limits, and filling. So in Genesis 1, creation is both complete and incomplete. It is complete because all its spaces (days 1–3) and populations (days 4–6) are in place, but it is incomplete because humanity is commanded to carry on the work that God has begun of bringing order to the world and subduing it. God leaves creation incomplete (though not imperfect) so that only through human labor in obedience to him will the ordering and filling work of the Genesis creation narrative be brought to fulfillment." **Christopher Watkin**, "Thinking Through Creation", p. 103, 104

...THIS is the basis for recognizing that Part of Our Life-Mandate (Mission) is OFFENSIVE!! ...Whether the moment is Gen 1:26ff or it is Gen 4 or it is Matt 28:18-19 or it is Eph 3:10—there remains a mandate of our "going", "spreading", "advancing", "enlarging", "paracreating" in the earth!

OUR CHAPTER—"Redemption ⇔ Restoration" ...Redemption Accomplished & First Fruits Available!

Rev 21:5 And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new."

2 Cor 5:17-18 ¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. ¹⁸ All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation;

Rom 7:6 But now we are released from the law, having died to that which held us captive, so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit and not in the old way of the written code.

Eph 2:13, 18 ¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. ¹⁸ For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father.

"...the Spirit of God is recognized as the invisible power creating or effecting a whole variety of realities. ...The Spirit of God, therefore, meant the effective working of the power of God. ... the presence of the one (spirit) always implies the presence of the other (power)." **Gordon Fee**, "God's Empowering Presence", p. 906-907

...Paul thinks this "New Day" has ushered in a New Day of God's Power among God's People!—Thus his great prayer of Eph 3 ...THIS Day of Unique Power... has always been God's Purpose/Plan (750BC – Isaiah) (Notice Isaiah's N.T. Language & Anticipation)

[Is. 43:18-21 ¹⁸ "Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old. ¹⁹ Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. ²⁰ The wild beasts will honor me, the jackals and the ostriches, for I give water in the wilderness, rivers in the desert, to give drink to my chosen people, ²¹ the people whom I formed for myself that they might declare my praise.

... **"former/fallen things" are NOT our reference point!** They don't 'define' nor 'control' us!! Christ HAS Redeemed us—so, Restoration can Now FLOURISH!!

... **"now it springs forth"** ... "I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert ...for I give water in the wilderness, rivers in the desert, to give drink to my chosen people" ...**notice the "GRACE-Basis" for This!!**

Is. 44:1-5 ...Notice the "Outpouring of the Holy Spirit" is a "Sovereign Grace" Thing!!!

??— What is this? ...It is "The Ministry of the Spirit"!! ...

The promise in verse 3 is that God will pour out his Spirit ...God promised in the eighth century BC that a day was coming when he would fill his upright servants with himself. The idea of pouring is the idea of copiousness. When we say, "It's pouring outside," we mean something more than, "It's drizzling, or misting, or dripping." We mean, "If you go out, you'll get drenched." So God's pouring corresponds to our being drenched or soaked or filled. In other words, God promises a day when his people, his servants, will be drenched with the Spirit.

I would argue that ever since the day of Pentecost, when this prophecy (as well as Joel 2:28, Ezekiel 39:29, and Zechariah 12:10) received its inaugural fulfillment, it has been a Christian duty to delight to seek and maintain the fullness of God's Spirit. Ever since Peter claimed in Acts 2:16—17 that the last days of outpouring had begun, none of us who reads this promise in Isaiah 44 should be content until we are drenched with the Holy Spirit." **John Piper**, "A Precious Promise: The Outpouring of the Holy Spirit"

This "Pouring Out" brings a NEW DIMENSION of Renewal!! ...where there was a wilderness & desert conditions—there's a RIVER!! ...and it's By God's Doing!! ...It is His Sovereign Outpouring!! ...**Do I have a category for this???** ... Outpourings are a GOD THING!!

It Takes an OUTPOURING of the Spirit to PLAY OFFENSE in This World!!

...Something is being "made known/manifest" through us!!—Eph 3:10 *"SO THAT through the church the manifold wisdom of god might now be MADE KNOWN to the rulers and authorities in heavenly places."*

...Thus, Paul's Prayer for Holy Spirit Power—Eph 3:14, 16 *"For this reason I bow my knees before the Father ...¹⁶ that he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner beings"*

...Is. 43:19 ***"do you not perceive it?"***

Do we have a "Deck w/ no Jokers" and faith for "Dampness but Not DRENCHING!"