



GATHERED

The Empowered Presence of God's People

TEACHER NOTES & DISCUSSION GUIDE

SESSION FOUR: **The Spirit's Possession**

A Study on the Church by



SMYRNAFIRST
BAPTIST CHURCH



Session Four

The Spirit's Possession

Introduction

Numbers 11:16-17; 24-30

Everyone loves a “whodunnit”. A story with a mystery at its heart that is expertly unspooled before us causes us to be both fascinated and shocked. It is why Sherlock Holmes inspires such wonder. All the pieces to understand the mystery are there to be observed or deduced, yet only under the powerful eye of the master detective are the pieces assembled to give the everyday person a clear vision of the whole picture.

The progressive revelation of the Bible is like this. It gives light to a little before it gives light to all. There are still aspects of the kingdom and spiritual life and our future that lay partly in shadow. But when we speak of God’s work in the world, we often leave in shadow one person of the godhead that has been revealed in more clarity than we think - the person of the Holy Spirit.

1 Peter 1:10-12

When we talk about the relationship between the church and the Holy Spirit, often the conversation gets hijacked by gifts of the spirit, speaking in tongues, prophesying, healing. We hear rumors of a second blessing or believers who are consistently experiencing a Spirit anointing so that they can do marvelous things or hear directly from God or perform acts of power. Sometimes the Spirit is used as a religious “Get out of jail free” card and we call on God to pour out an extra measure of the Spirit on us during difficult times. If the Spirit is not the most misunderstood person of the God-head, he is most definitely the most exploited.

It would be folly to spend time on the Holy Spirit by talking about what he *can't* or *doesn't* do because he is God and can do whatever he pleases (Psalm 135:6). But it would benefit us to understand better what he actually does for the church so that we might glorify God more as we walk in the truth of the Spirit’s work.

I. The Church Is Revealed by the Spirit

A. The Spirit is not a NT invention, but active from the beginning.

1. Active in creation.

a) **Genesis 1:2b** “And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.”

2. Active in re-creation (or regeneration).

a) The Holy Spirit is the person of God that raises men from death to life.

(1) John 3:5-8 “Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’ The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.”

(a) The Old Testament speaks of people who already have this new heart and are in the kingdom

i) **Isaiah 51:7** “Listen to me, you who know righteousness; the people in whose heart is my law;

ii) **Deuteronomy 30:6** “And the Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, so that you will love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.”

- (b) Abraham believed God by faith and it was reckoned to him as righteousness. (Romans 4:13-25).
 - i) God's people have always been saved the same way.
 - (1) By the operation of the Spirit in quickening and giving a new heart.

(2) **ILL**> Early morning kayaking. The sun lit the sky before we ever saw it.

3. Active in filling the temple of God.

- a) In the tabernacle on the mercy seat
 - (1) **Exodus 25:22** "There I will meet with you, and from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim that are on the ark of the testimony, I will speak with you about all that I will give you in commandment for the people of Israel."
- b) Solomon's temple after bringing in the ark
 - (1) **1 Kings 8:10-11** "And when the priests came out of the Holy Place, a cloud filled the house of the Lord, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord."
- c) In the living temple of the church
 - (1) **1 Corinthians 6:19** "Don't you realize that your bodies are a temple of the Holy Spirit...?"

B. The Spirit actively empowers and reveals God's people

1. Anoints God's servants (prophets, priests, and kings; ministers (gifts))

- a) **Prophets** - **2 Peter 1:21** "For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit."
- b) **Priests** - Joash the King abandons the temple after the priest dies. **2 Chronicles 2:20** "Then the Spirit of God clothed Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest, and he stood above the people, and said to them, "Thus says God, 'Why do you break the commandments of the Lord, so that you cannot prosper? Because you have forsaken the Lord, he has forsaken you.'"
- c) **Kings** - **1 Samuel 16:13** "Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers. And the Spirit of the Lord rushed upon David from that day forward."
 - (1) This is why David prays "Do not take your Holy Spirit from me... (Psalm 51:11) after his sin with Bathsheba. It would remove his anointing as king.
- d) **Artisans** - In equipping Bezalel to craft and teach others the craft of building the tabernacle. **Exodus 35:30-35** "he has filled him with he Spirit of God with skill, intelligence, knowledge, and with all craftsmanship..."

2. Anoints Jesus (prophet, priest, and king)

- a) Prophet - **Hebrews 1:2** "in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son..."
- b) Priest - **Hebrews 9:11** "but when Christ appeared as a high priest..."
- c) King - **Matthew 3:16-17** "And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him,[a] and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; and behold, a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son,[b] with whom I am well pleased."

3. Anoints all his people at pentecost

- a) **Acts 2:1-4** "When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance."
- b) This is the revelation of the church (spiritual Israel).



II. The Church Is Sealed in the Spirit

- A. The Spirit seals the saints in Christ.
 - 1. **2 Corinthians 1:21** “And it is God who establishes us with you in Christ, and has anointed us, and who has also put his seal on us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.”
- B. The Spirit guarantees the inheritance of God’s people.
 - 1. **Ephesians 1:11-14** “In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.”

III. The Church Is Filled with the Spirit

- A. He resides in us.
 - 1. **Romans 8:9** “You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you.”
- B. His power is manifest through us.
 - 1. **2 Timothy 1:7** “for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.”
 - 2. **Acts 1:8** “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”
- C. His gifts are to us.
 - 1. **1 Corinthians 12:7;11** “To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. . . . All these (gifts) are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.”

Throughout history, the Spirit has been expertly unspooling the glory of God for the world to see.

Because the Spirit gave you life, your life is not earned by you.

Because the Spirit fills you, you must be holy.

Because the Spirit seals and gifts you, you are fitted for the kingdom of God.

Therefore, live as subjects of the King, to do his will on earth as it is in heaven.

USE AS MUCH OR AS LITTLE OF THIS DISCUSSION GUIDE AS YOU LIKE.

Introduction

Progressive revelation means that we have received God's redemptive plan in increasing ways throughout the history of man. How do our own lives reflect the way God works in the nations?

How is Christ a mystery to the Old Testament? How is he present in the Old Testament?

I. The Church Is Revealed by the Spirit

Does it surprise you to know that the Spirit has been at work in salvation from the very beginning? How does John 3:5 apply to the people who walked with God in the OT?

Knowing that God always saves in the same way, what does this imply about the Spirit's work in your own life.

How are our lives supposed to reflect the reality of God's presence in the world?

How does our life as a temple change the way we think about holiness?

The Spirit filled and fitted people in the OT. How is his work different today? How is it the same?

The day of Pentecost in Acts 2:1-4 is the pouring out of the Spirit on every believer. How does this shift change the people of God?

Are you cultivating a heart of thankfulness over the level of revelation that God has given you today through his Word? Give some examples of how you are.

II. The Church Is Sealed in the Spirit

What does the Spirit's work of sealing us in Christ do for our confidence? For our repentance over sin?

Is your life a reflection of the reality of your heavenly inheritance? How do we sometimes fail to embrace this inheritance?

III. The Church Is Filled by the Spirit

The indwelling Holy Spirit resides in every believer. What are some areas in your life that must change in light of his presence?

What fears do you have in life? Where do you get your comfort? How does 2 Timothy 1:7 help you?

1 Corinthians 12:7 says we have received the Spirit's gift for the purpose of the common good. How are you using your gifts to bless others around you?

Are you selfish in your gifts? Are you spending more time blessing others than you are seeking blessing for yourself?