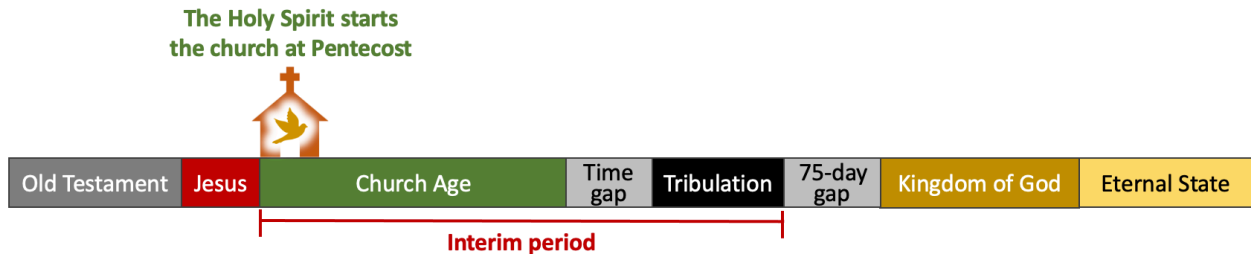


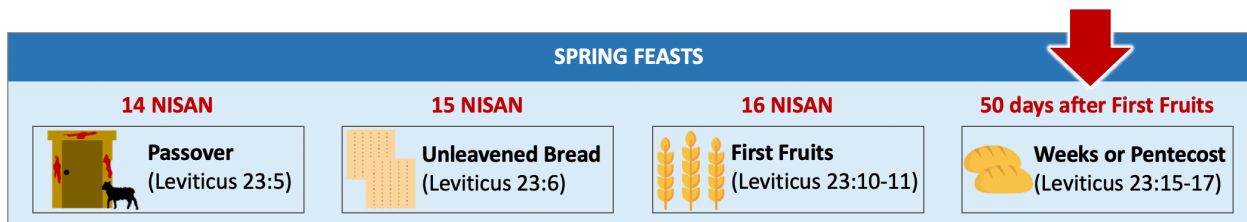
# Lesson 42: The Holy Spirit Directs the Church

## Previously...

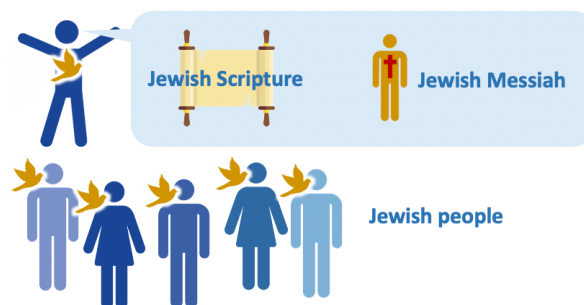
Jesus postponed restarting the Kingdom of God because the Jews as a nation rejected Him. Instead, He introduced an interim period that would include the church age. He told His disciples to wait in Jerusalem for the coming of the Holy Spirit which He and the Father would send once He ascended to heaven (John 14:16–17, 26; 15:26; 16:7).



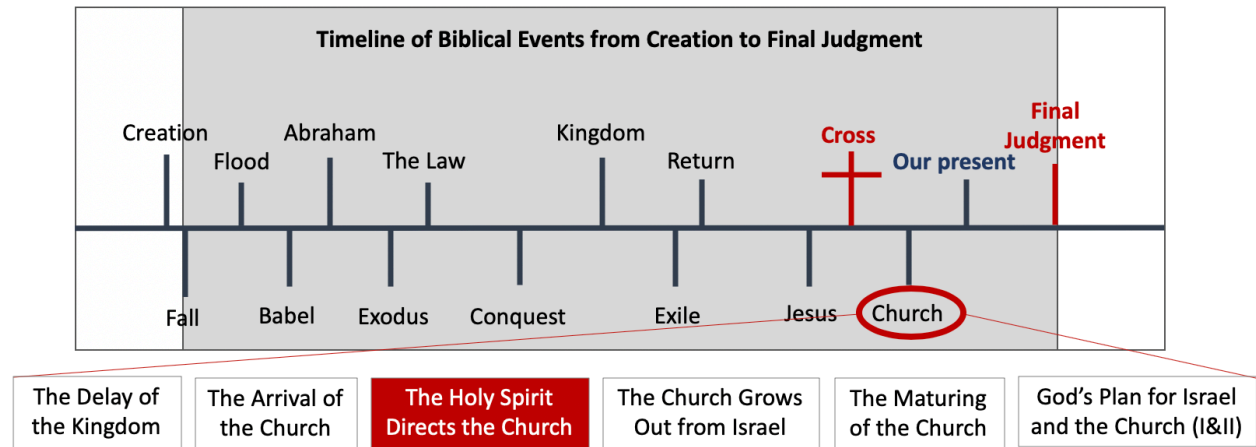
On the morning of the Festival of Weeks (Pentecost), the Holy Spirit came and entered the disciples in a dramatic and unusual way.



When the Jews heard the disciples speaking about Jesus in different languages, they were amazed. Then Peter made his first public speech. He explained that Jesus is the Messiah and Yahweh. He died for the salvation of people. To enter the Kingdom of God, the Jews had to believe in the Messiah they had killed.

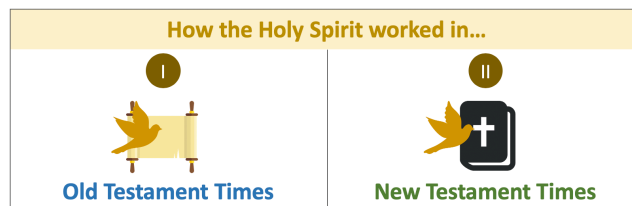


That day, three thousand Jews believed. These Jews, together with Jesus' disciples, were the beginning of the church. This was how the Holy Spirit started the church on earth.



But what is the work of the Holy Spirit in the church during New Testament times?

To better understand His work now, we first need to know that the Holy Spirit works in different ways in different ages.



## I. How the Holy Spirit worked in Old Testament Times

We first see God the Holy Spirit working with the Father and the Son to create the universe (Genesis 1:1-2).



Then we see the Holy Spirit working to build, protect and guide the Kingdom of Israel. He worked from heaven and “He came upon” or “filled” certain people for specific reasons.



Who? There were five main groups of people:





## 1. Prophets

The Holy Spirit empowered the prophets to speak the words of Yahweh. Here are several examples.

### Elijah and Elisha

The Holy Spirit guided Elijah throughout his ministry and when Elijah left, the Holy Spirit guided Elisha.

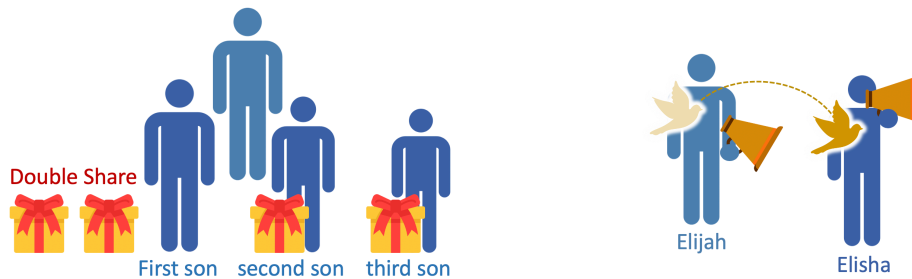
#### 2 Kings 2:9–10, 15

<sup>9</sup> When they came to the other side, Elijah said to Elisha, “Tell me what I can do for you before I am taken away.” And Elisha replied, “Please let me inherit a double share of your spirit and become your successor.”

<sup>10</sup> “You have asked a difficult thing,” Elijah replied. “If you see me when I am taken from you, then you will get your request. But if not, then you won’t.”

<sup>15</sup> When the group of prophets from Jericho saw from a distance what happened, they exclaimed, “Elijah’s spirit rests upon Elisha!” And they went to meet him and bowed to the ground before him.

When Elisha asked for a double portion, it was very similar to how the eldest son would inherit a double share of the father’s wealth. Elisha was asking to inherit the ministry of Elijah. The Holy Spirit responded by also coming upon Elisha.

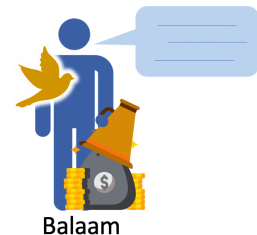


### Balaam

Interestingly, the Holy Spirit did not only work through obedient prophets. He also worked through unbelievers.

Balaam was a wicked prophet who would do anything for money. When Balak, the king of Moab, bribed him to prophesy against Israel, the Holy Spirit came upon him to speak a blessing on Israel instead!

He was a wicked prophet but not a false one. The Holy Spirit gave him true prophecies to speak.



Balaam

### Numbers 24:1–3

<sup>1</sup> By now Balaam realized that the LORD was determined to bless Israel, so he did not resort to divination as before. Instead, he turned and looked out toward the wilderness, <sup>2</sup> where he saw the people of Israel camped, tribe by tribe. Then the Spirit of God came upon him, <sup>3</sup> and this is the message he delivered:

The Holy Spirit didn't just work through this unbelieving prophet, He spoke in human language through Balaam's donkey as well (Numbers 22:28–30)!



This shows that in Old Testament times, the presence of the Holy Spirit doesn't prove that a person is a believer. It is simply the Holy Spirit working through them to complete a job that God has in mind.

## Other Prophets

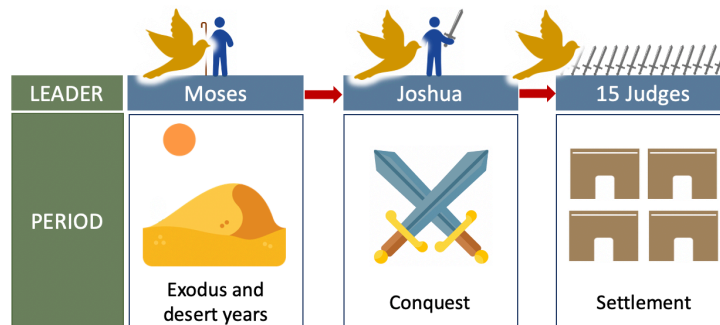
The Holy Spirit also came upon other prophets to guide them in their ministry. For example:

- Azariah (2 Chronicles 15:1)
- Jahaziel (2 Chronicles 20:14)
- Isaiah (Acts 28:25).



## 2. Leaders

In building the nation of Israel, the Holy Spirit also filled leaders like Moses and Joshua to enable them to do their jobs well.



### Moses

Moses led Israel during their 40 years of wandering after their rebellion at Kadesh-Barnea. Even though there were other leaders in Israel at that time such as Aaron, Joshua, Caleb and others, the Bible tells us only Moses had the Holy Spirit guiding him!

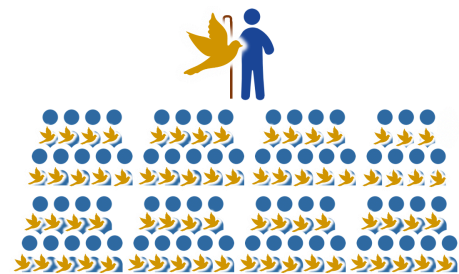
Moses' job of leading the people was very hard because they kept grumbling. Finally, God decided to help Moses by taking the Spirit that was on him and giving it also to 70 other tribal leaders, so they could help him lead Israel.

**Numbers 11:10–12, 16–17, 24–30**

<sup>10</sup> Moses heard all the families standing in the doorways of their tents whining, and the LORD became extremely angry. Moses was also very aggravated. <sup>11</sup> And Moses said to the LORD, “Why are you treating me, your servant, so harshly? Have mercy on me! What did I do to deserve the burden of all these people? <sup>12</sup> Did I give birth to them? Did I bring them into the world? Why did you tell me to carry them in my arms like a mother carries a nursing baby? How can I carry them to the land you swore to give their ancestors?”

<sup>16</sup> Then the LORD said to Moses, “Gather before me seventy men who are recognized as elders and leaders of Israel. Bring them to the Tabernacle to stand there with you. <sup>17</sup> I will come down and talk to you there. I will take some of the Spirit that is upon you, and I will put the Spirit upon them also. They will bear the burden of the people along with you, so you will not have to carry it alone.

<sup>24</sup> So Moses went out and reported the LORD’s words to the people. He gathered the seventy elders and stationed them around the Tabernacle. <sup>25</sup> And the LORD came down in the cloud and spoke to Moses. Then he gave the seventy elders the same Spirit that was upon Moses. And when the Spirit rested upon them, they prophesied. But this never happened again.



<sup>26</sup> Two men, Eldad and Medad, had stayed behind in the camp. They were listed among the elders, but they had not gone out to the Tabernacle. Yet the Spirit rested upon them as well, so they prophesied there in the camp. <sup>27</sup> A young man ran and reported to Moses, “Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp!”

<sup>28</sup> Joshua son of Nun, who had been Moses’ assistant since his youth, protested, “Moses, my master, make them stop!”

<sup>29</sup> But Moses replied, “Are you jealous for my sake? I wish that all the LORD’s people were prophets and that the LORD would put his Spirit upon them all!” <sup>30</sup> Then Moses returned to the camp with the elders of Israel.

This event was very unusual! When the Holy Spirit came upon the tribal elders, they began prophesying just this once, as if to visibly show the Holy Spirit’s presence. It was such a surprise to everyone, including Joshua, who tried to make them stop. This was because not every believer had the Holy Spirit in them during that time.

**Joshua**

After Moses, God also put the Spirit into Joshua and commissioned him to lead Israel.

**Numbers 27:15–21**

<sup>15</sup> Then Moses said to the LORD, <sup>16</sup> “O LORD, you are the God who gives breath to all creatures. Please appoint a new man as leader for the community. <sup>17</sup> Give them someone

who will guide them wherever they go and will lead them into battle, so the community of the LORD will not be like sheep without a shepherd.”

<sup>18</sup> The LORD replied, “Take Joshua son of Nun, who has the Spirit in him, and lay your hands on him. <sup>19</sup> Present him to Eleazar the priest before the whole community, and publicly commission him to lead the people. <sup>20</sup> Transfer some of your authority to him so the whole community of Israel will obey him. <sup>21</sup> When direction from the LORD is needed, Joshua will stand before Eleazar the priest, who will use the Urim—one of the sacred lots cast before the LORD—to determine his will. This is how Joshua and the rest of the community of Israel will determine everything they should do.”



The Holy Spirit also came upon Joshua. However, notice that even though Joshua had the Holy Spirit with him, he still needed to consult the priests for God’s instructions.



### 3. Craftsmen

The Holy Spirit also came upon craftsmen like Bezalel, to enable them to build the Tabernacle for the people. The Spirit of God did not affect his character or cause him to love Yahweh more but gave him high-level skills!

#### Exodus 31:1–5

<sup>1</sup> Then the LORD said to Moses, <sup>2</sup> “Look, I have specifically chosen Bezalel son of Uri, grandson of Hur, of the tribe of Judah. <sup>3</sup> I have filled him with the Spirit of God, giving him great wisdom, ability, and expertise in all kinds of crafts. <sup>4</sup> He is a master craftsman, expert in working with gold, silver, and bronze. <sup>5</sup> He is skilled in engraving and mounting gemstones and in carving wood. He is a master at every craft!



### 4. Judges

During the Conquest and Settlement period, God the Holy Spirit chose men and a woman to be judges for Israel. The judges were military and political leaders.

- God chose some of them to fight off the enemies who were oppressing Israel.
- At other times, when Israel stopped driving out the people groups from the land, the Holy Spirit would come upon a judge to stir up battle with the enemy to force Israel to continue the job of clearing the Promised Land. One such example is Samson.

#### Judges 13:24–25

<sup>24</sup> When her son was born, she named him Samson. And the LORD blessed him as he grew up. <sup>25</sup> And the Spirit of the LORD began to stir him while he lived in Mahaneh-dan, which is located between the towns of Zorah and Eshtaol.

(See also Judges 14:6, 19, 15:14.)

It is however, important to understand that even though the Holy Spirit guided the judges to political and military victories, many of them did not rely on Him to guide their thinking, morals or values. Samson's life was not a godly model for anyone to follow. Another judge, Jephthah, made a foolish vow to God that ended with him killing his own daughter (Judges 11:33–40).

Other examples of the Holy Spirit coming upon the judges:

- Othniel (Judges 3:9–11)
- Gideon (Judges 6:33–34)
- Jephthah (Judges 11:29–32).

## 5. Kings

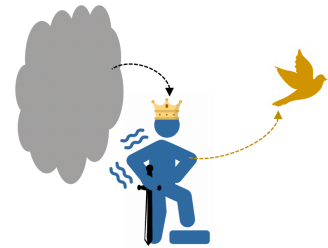
### Saul

The Holy Spirit also came upon God's chosen kings to guide them in their leadership. This happened with Israel's first king, Saul. When the Ammonites started a war with a group of Israelites, the Jews were too afraid to do anything. Then the Holy Spirit came upon Saul to motivate him to lead all Israel to defend themselves against the Ammonites.

#### 1 Samuel 11:6

Then the Spirit of God came powerfully upon Saul, and he became very angry.

The Holy Spirit guided and protected Saul's kingship of Israel. But when Saul rebelled against Yahweh, the Holy Spirit left, showing that God had removed His approval of him and his descendants as kings. Instead, God gave permission for an evil spirit to take His place. God is sovereign and even demons cannot do anything without Yahweh's approval.



#### 1 Samuel 16:14

Now the Spirit of the LORD had left Saul, and the LORD sent a tormenting spirit that filled him with depression and fear.

### David

The Holy Spirit then went to David when the prophet Samuel anointed him as the next king.

#### 1 Samuel 16:13

So as David stood there among his brothers, Samuel took the flask of olive oil he had brought and anointed David with the oil. And the Spirit of the LORD came powerfully upon David from that day on. Then Samuel returned to Ramah.



Interestingly, David had seen how the Spirit had left King Saul. This was probably why he prayed for Yahweh not to take the Spirit from him after his sin of adultery and murder.

**Psalm 51:9–11**

- <sup>9</sup> Don't keep looking at my sins.  
Remove the stain of my guilt.
- <sup>10</sup> Create in me a clean heart, O God.  
Renew a loyal spirit within me.
- <sup>11</sup> Do not banish me from your presence,  
and don't take your Holy Spirit from me.

David was correct to believe that the Holy Spirit came upon people and left when the job was done or if the person rebelled against God. This was true in Old Testament times.

The way the Holy Spirit worked in Old Testament times can be summarised as this:



God the Holy Spirit came upon people to **PROVIDE** skills, leadership abilities, courage, God's Word and guidance to build up the nation of Israel.

His presence is **LIMITED** only to some believers and even some unbelievers!

His presence in a person's life was **TEMPORARY**.

His presence could be **ASKED** for.

In the entire Old Testament, only about 100 people were said to have had the Spirit come upon them. There was no mention that the Holy Spirit would come upon all believers.



## II. How the Holy Spirit Works in New Testament Times

The Holy Spirit works differently in New Testament times. This was what Jesus told His disciples as He prepared them for their mission of being His witnesses to the world.

**John 14:16–17**

- <sup>16</sup> And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, who will never leave you. <sup>17</sup> He is the Holy Spirit, who leads into all truth. The world cannot receive him, because it isn't looking for him and doesn't recognize him. But you know him, because he lives with you now and later will be in you.

In the past, when the Holy Spirit came, He was generally said to be **with** the people. He came upon people, He guided them, He gave them skills and then He left.

But when Jesus ascended and returned to heaven, the Father and Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to live **in** believers permanently. This was a startling change from Old Testament times!









When did this begin? At Pentecost.

At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit descended from heaven and entered the disciples in a dramatic way. The disciples heard noise like a whirlwind or tornado, they saw something like tongues that had the appearance of fire sitting above each disciple and all of them began to speak in languages they did not previously know (Acts 2:1–4).



From that time forward, the moment someone puts their trust in Jesus for salvation, the Holy Spirit enters that new believer. The Holy Spirit does at least six works for the believer.

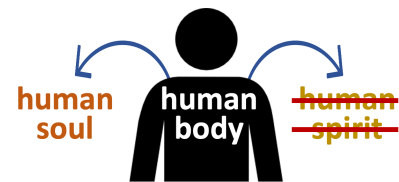
1. New Life	2. Indwelling	3. Baptism	4. Sealing	5. Intercession	6. Spiritual Gifts
					



## 1. New Life

Since the Fall, every person is born spiritually dead. They have a physical body and human soul, but no human spirit. They are unable to have a relationship with God.

When a person comes to faith in Christ, the Holy Spirit creates, or births, a new human spirit in the new believer. This is often called being “born again”, “new birth”, “new life”, “born from above” or “born of the Spirit”. The believer now has spiritual life.



### John 3:3–7

<sup>3</sup> Jesus replied, “I tell you the truth, unless you are born again, you cannot see the Kingdom of God.”

<sup>4</sup> “What do you mean?” exclaimed Nicodemus. “How can an old man go back into his mother’s womb and be born again?”

<sup>5</sup> Jesus replied, “I assure you, no one can enter the Kingdom of God without being born of water and the Spirit. <sup>6</sup> Humans can reproduce only human life, but the Holy Spirit gives birth to spiritual life. <sup>7</sup> So don’t be surprised when I say, ‘You must be born again.’

How does the Holy Spirit create spiritual life in believers? What does it mean to be “born of water and the Spirit”? This is how the apostle Paul explained it.

### Titus 3:4–7

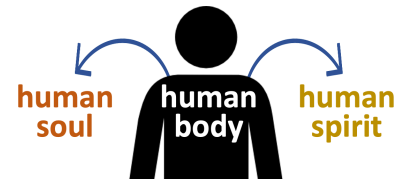
<sup>4</sup> But—When God our Savior revealed his kindness and love, <sup>5</sup> he saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He washed away our sins, giving us a new birth and new life through the Holy Spirit. <sup>6</sup> He generously poured out the Spirit upon us through Jesus Christ our Savior. <sup>7</sup> Because of his grace he made us right in his sight and gave us confidence that we will inherit eternal life.

In the Old Testament, water is often used as a picture of spiritual cleansing and renewal (see for example, Numbers 19:17–19; Psalm 51:1–2, 7,10; Jeremiah 17:13). Paul explained that when a person puts their faith in Christ, God the Holy Spirit washes away, or takes away, that person’s sins, and at the same time pours in new spiritual life. The believer now has a human spirit.

Paul stated that the believer has three parts.

### 1 Thessalonians 5:23

Now may the God of peace make you holy in every way, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ comes again.



And the writer of Hebrews also referred to the human soul and human spirit of believers.

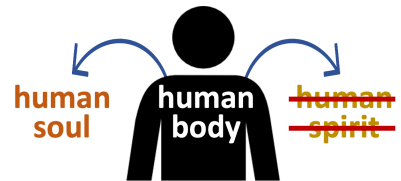
### Hebrews 4:12

For the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires.

In contrast, unbelievers do not have a human spirit. For example, Jude mentioned that scoffers (who are unbelievers in the context of the passage) lack a human spirit.

### Jude 17–19 (NIV)

<sup>17</sup> But, dear friends, remember what the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ foretold. <sup>18</sup> They said to you, “In the last times there will be scoffers who will follow their own ungodly desires.” <sup>19</sup> These are the people who divide you, who follow mere natural instincts and do not have the Spirit [Greek: *pneuma*].



(Note: the Greek word *pneuma* is correctly translated as “Spirit”. But in the Greek text, there are no capital letters. So the capital letter S of Spirit is an interpretation, rather than just a translation.)

So, to enter the Kingdom of God, people need to trust in Christ. When that happens, the Holy Spirit removes their sins and gives them new spiritual life.

This new birth is a one-time miracle, not a continuing process. In addition, the Holy Spirit places the nature of Christ into believers.

### Colossians 1:27

For God wanted them to know that the riches and glory of Christ are for you Gentiles, too. And this is the secret: Christ lives in you. This gives you assurance of sharing his glory.



Believers instantly become a new creation and this “Christ nature” in us is eternal and unchangeable.

**2 Corinthians 5:17**

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

This “Christ nature” is sinless. It cannot sin and cannot be corrupted. This “Christ nature” in us is called “God’s seed”.

**1 John 3:9 (NKJV)**

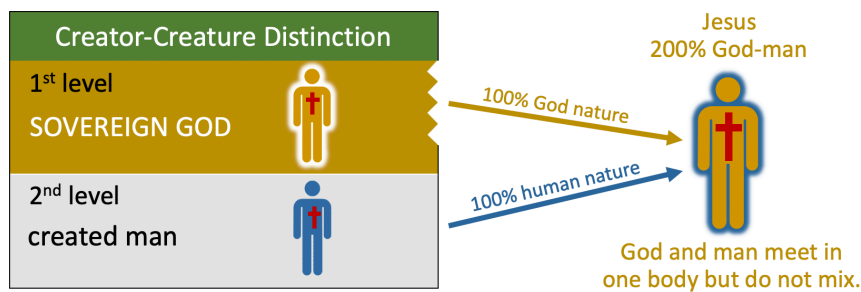
Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God.



Does this mean that all believers cannot sin at present? No.

Why? Because two natures are living in the same person.

For example, Jesus has His divine nature and human nature together in one body without mixing.



Similarly, believers have Christ’s nature and their sin nature together in one body without mixing.



However while Christ’s nature in a believer cannot sin, the sin nature in the believer still causes them to sin (Romans 7:14–20).

## Having “new life and Christ’s nature” is something we need to be thankful for

While the New Testament makes it clear that it is the Holy Spirit who births the human spirit, this birthing of spiritual life is true for every believer, whether living in Old Testament times or New Testament times. A person needs a human spirit in order to have a relationship with God. A believer is a complete person again, having body, soul and spirit.

In the Old Testament, God described this with different vocabulary. Moses said this to the Jewish nation:

### Deuteronomy 10:12–16 (NIV)

<sup>12</sup> And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God ask of you but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in obedience to him, to love him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, <sup>13</sup> and to observe the LORD's commands and decrees that I am giving you today for your own good?

<sup>14</sup> To the LORD your God belong the heavens, even the highest heavens, the earth and everything in it. <sup>15</sup> Yet the LORD set his affection on your ancestors and loved them, and he chose you, their descendants, above all the nations—as it is today. <sup>16</sup> Circumcise your hearts, therefore, and do not be stiff-necked any longer.

This circumcision of the heart is the internal change done by the Holy Spirit that would produce spiritual life and allow a believer to have a relationship with God.

This is how Paul explained it.

### Romans 2:29

No, a true Jew is one whose heart is right with God. And true circumcision is not merely obeying the letter of the law; rather, it is a change of heart produced by the Spirit. And a person with a changed heart seeks praise from God, not from people.



However, in Old Testament times, though the Holy Spirit birthed a human spirit in a believer, He did not put Christ’s nature into them at that time.

Why? Because Jesus had not yet finished His work of living a perfectly righteous life as a human and then dying on the cross and rising again. This means eternal life could not yet be given to Old Testament believers at that point.

#### Old Testament Times: Circumcision of the heart



But in New Testament times, after Jesus' work at His first coming, the Holy Spirit is able to put Jesus' life into believers. It is Jesus living in believers that gives us eternal life.

#### 1 John 5:12

Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have God's Son does not have life.

#### New Testament Times: New Life



How privileged and blessed New Testament believers are to be “born again” and receive not just spiritual life but also Christ's nature the moment we believe! There is no waiting involved! (Old Testament believers had to wait in Sheol for Christ to accomplish His work on the cross before receiving Christ's nature. This is why they could only go to heaven after Christ's work on the cross.)



## 2. Indwelling

After we receive new spiritual life and Christ's nature, the Holy Spirit can now live or dwell inside us. This is known as the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The Old Testament gives a picture of how God indwells.

### The Temple is a picture of God's indwelling

When King Solomon built the temple and dedicated it, God's Shekinah glory physically filled the temple (see 1 Kings 8).

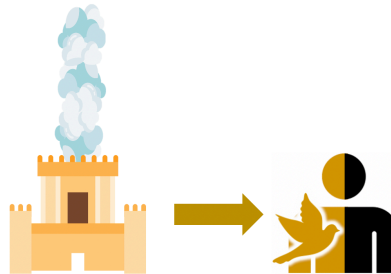
#### 2 Chronicles 7:1

When Solomon finished praying, fire flashed down from heaven and burned up the burnt offerings and sacrifices, and the glorious presence of the LORD filled the Temple.



Yahweh's glory could be seen from within the Holy of Holies. God had fellowship and communication with people there. That is the picture of God dwelling **among** believers.

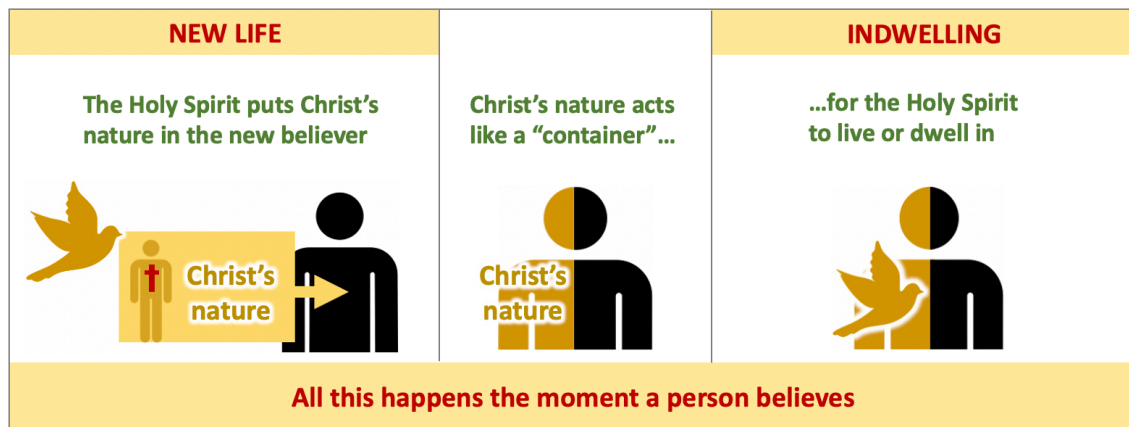
But now, something more remarkable has happened. God now indwells believers! He has moved from dwelling in a building to dwelling **in** believers! He has direct communication and fellowship with us from inside us!



### 1 Corinthians 6:19–20

<sup>19</sup> Don't you realize that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself, <sup>20</sup> for God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your body.

How does this happen?



Unlike Old Testament times where the Holy Spirit only came upon **some** believers, in the New Testament, the Holy Spirit indwells **all** believers the moment they get new life.

### Romans 8:9

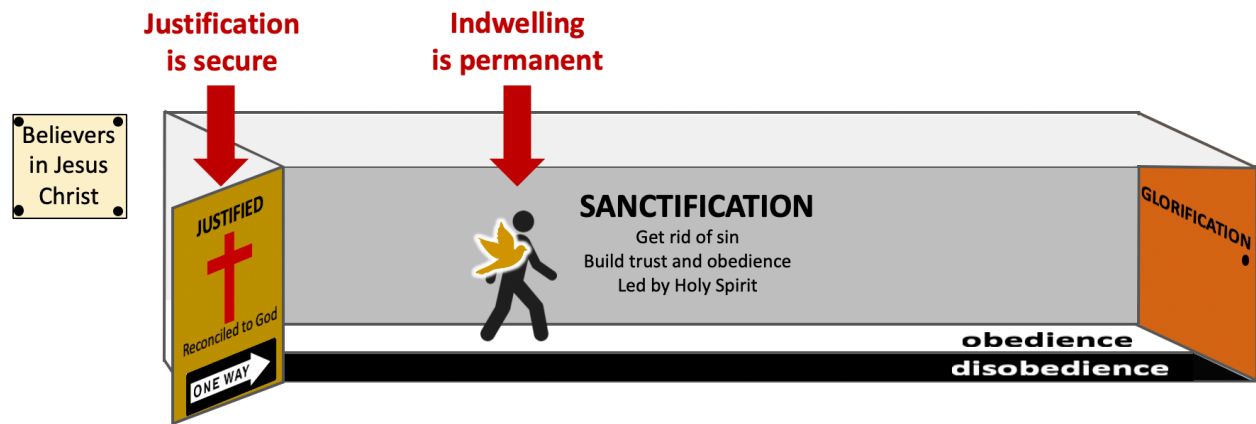
But you are not controlled by your sinful nature. You are controlled by the Spirit if you have the Spirit of God living in you. (And remember that those who do not have the Spirit of Christ living in them do not belong to him at all.)

And the Spirit's indwelling is permanent. He never goes away or leaves us.

We can make bad choices and bring Him grief but the Bible doesn't talk about undoing our "new life" or undoing our "indwelling". Instead, the Bible encourages us to live good lives **because** our justification is guaranteed.

**Ephesians 4:30**

And do not bring sorrow to God's Holy Spirit by the way you live. Remember, he has identified you as his own, guaranteeing that you will be saved on the day of redemption.



The Holy Spirit comes to dwell in us the moment we believe in Jesus. He comes in on His own, automatically. We don't need to ask or pray for this.

So, how the Holy Spirit works in believers in Old and New Testament times is different.



God the Holy Spirit came upon people to <b>PROVIDE</b> skills, leadership abilities, courage, God's Word and guidance to build up the nation of Israel.	God the Holy Spirit gives <b>ETERNAL LIFE</b> to believers through Jesus' work. He makes eternal fellowship with God an immediate reality. (John 16:13-15)
His presence was <b>LIMITED</b> only to some believers and even some unbelievers!	His presence is <b>UNIVERSAL!</b> All believers are indwelt by the Holy Spirit. (Romans 8:9)
His presence in a person's life was <b>TEMPORARY</b> .	His presence is <b>PERMANENT</b> . (Ephesians 4:30)
His presence could be <b>ASKED</b> for.	His presence comes into believers instantly and <b>AUTOMATICALLY</b> when they believe. There are no instructions to ask for indwelling.

## Do believers have to keep asking for the Holy Spirit to fill them?

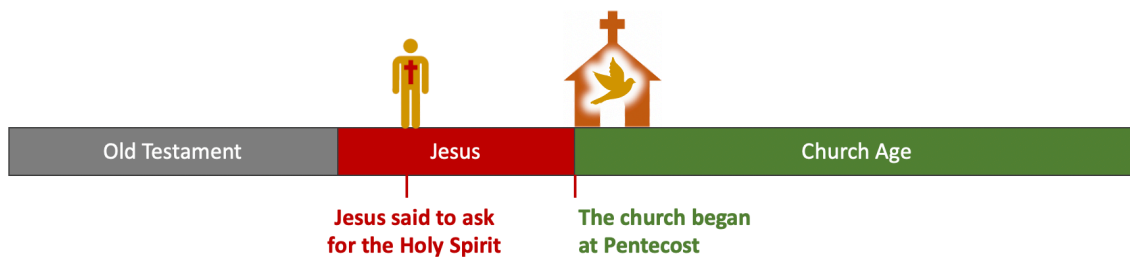
If the Holy Spirit indwells New Testament believers instantly, automatically and permanently when they believe, then why does Jesus say to ask for the Holy Spirit?

### Luke 11:13

So if you sinful people know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him."

So are we supposed to ask or not?

Well, Jesus said this before Pentecost happened, meaning before the church began.



So, they were still operating under the “old” way, the way the Holy Spirit worked in Old Testament times.

But after Jesus’ first coming and after Pentecost, the Holy Spirit indwells believers without being asked.

Then what about Paul’s command in Ephesians to be **filled with the Holy Spirit**?

### Ephesians 5:18–19

<sup>18</sup> Don’t be drunk with wine, because that will ruin your life. Instead, be filled with the Holy Spirit, <sup>19</sup> singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, and making music to the Lord in your hearts.

What does being “filled with the Holy Spirit” mean?

- Does it mean to pray for the Holy Spirit to fill us again and again?
- Does it mean some supernatural experience?

If we’re not sure, it is helpful to look at other passages in the Bible because Scripture often explains itself.

Compare Paul’s writing in Ephesians with what he wrote in Colossians.



**Ephesians 5:18–19**

<sup>18</sup> Don't be drunk with wine, because that will ruin your life. Instead, **be filled with the Holy Spirit**, <sup>19</sup> singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, and making music to the Lord in your hearts.

**Colossians 3:16 (ESV)**

<sup>16</sup> **Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly**, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

Paul's words in Ephesians and Colossians are very similar. In both passages, Paul is saying to let the Holy Spirit direct our thoughts, words, praise and actions. How?

**In Ephesians,  
Paul says**

"be filled with the Holy Spirit"

=

**In Colossians,  
Paul says**

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly"

**So, Paul is saying that to be "filled with the Spirit" is to keep filling ourselves with what the Holy Spirit wrote: God's Word!**



This means "be filled with the Holy Spirit" is **not some special request to God for more and more of the Spirit**. The Spirit comes into believers the moment we believe and He never leaves. The Holy Spirit is a person. Once He is in us, He is fully in us already. He is not 10% in us, half in us, or asleep in us. He is fully present and alert.

Neither does being "filled with the Holy Spirit" refer to a **supernatural experience**.

Rather, it is to fill ourselves up with Scripture that the Holy Spirit has written so that He can take that Scripture and work it into our lives.

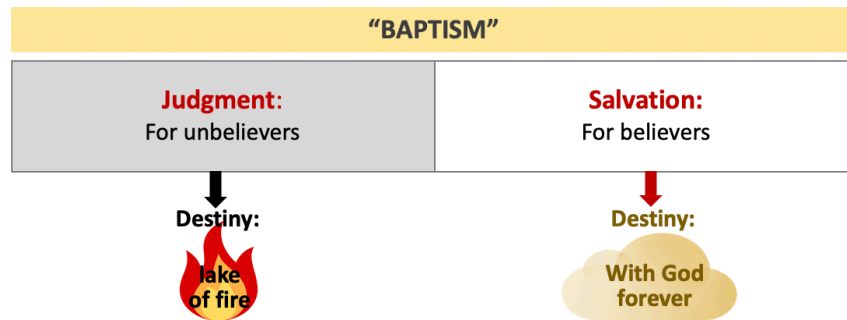


### 3. Baptism

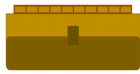







The third work that the Holy Spirit does in us is the **baptism of the Holy Spirit**. But what exactly does “baptism of the Holy Spirit” mean? To answer this, we first need to understand the meaning of the word “baptism”.

Baptism is a difficult word to explain because Bible translators brought the word into English without translating it.

But when we study the use of this word throughout the Bible, we see that when the word “baptism” is used, God is separating believers and unbelievers. **“Baptism” therefore actually refers to God’s act of judgment and salvation.**



The Bible records eight baptisms: five are “dry” and three are wet.

Real Baptisms (“Dry”)	Ritual Baptisms (Wet)
Dry Baptism 1: The Global Flood 	Wet Baptism 1: John’s Water Baptism 
Dry Baptism 2: The Exodus 	Wet Baptism 2: Jesus’ Water Baptism 
Dry Baptism 3: Jesus’ Cross 	Wet Baptism 3: Believer’s Water Baptism 
Dry Baptism 4: Baptism of the Holy Spirit 	
Dry Baptism 5: Baptism of Fire 	

We will start by looking at the first three real (dry) baptisms and the first three ritual (wet) baptisms. The first three dry baptisms are historical events.



## Dry Baptism 1 — The Global Flood

The apostle Peter said the global Flood was a picture of baptism.

### 1 Peter 3:20–21

<sup>20</sup> those who disobeyed God long ago when God waited patiently while Noah was building his boat. Only eight people were saved from drowning in that terrible flood.

<sup>21</sup> And that water is a picture of baptism, which now saves you, not by removing dirt from your body, but as a response to God from a clean conscience. It is effective because of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Noah's family "passed through the judgment waters" but God kept them dry and safe. Noah's baptism was an act of judgment/salvation! It separated two groups of people.



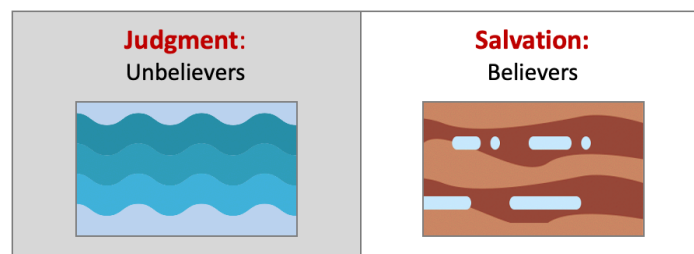
## Dry Baptism 2 — The Exodus

The apostle Paul called the crossing of the Red Sea on dry ground, a baptism.

### 1 Corinthians 10:1–2

<sup>1</sup> I don't want you to forget, dear brothers and sisters, about our ancestors in the wilderness long ago. All of them were guided by a cloud that moved ahead of them, and all of them walked through the sea on dry ground. <sup>2</sup> In the cloud and in the sea, all of them were baptized as followers of Moses.

God saved Israel by making them "pass through the judgment waters" on dry ground. Just as Moses believed in God, so all who followed Moses, also believed in God. So again, this baptism was an act of judgment/salvation. The unbelievers were judged and died. The believers were saved and lived.





### Dry Baptism 3 – Jesus’ Cross

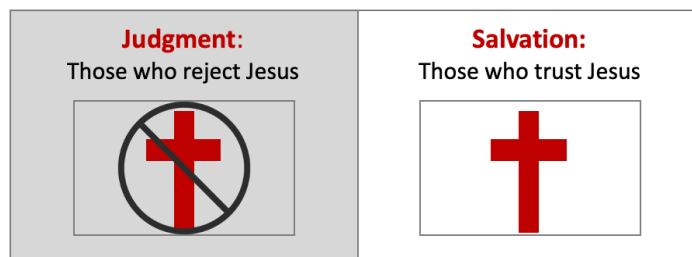
Jesus called His death on the cross His baptism when speaking to His disciples.

**Mark 10:38**

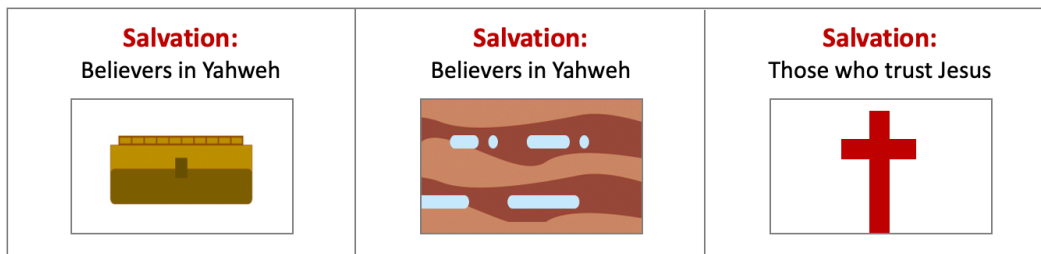
But Jesus said to them, “You don’t know what you are asking! Are you able to drink from the bitter cup of suffering I am about to drink? Are you able to be baptized with the baptism of suffering I must be baptized with?”

(See also Luke 12:50.)

The cross is an act of judgment/salvation. The cross also separates two groups of people. People who trust in what Jesus did on the cross are saved while those who reject the cross are judged.



These three real baptisms were “dry”: the people who were saved remained “dry”.



However, in the New Testament, we see three ritual “wet” baptisms.

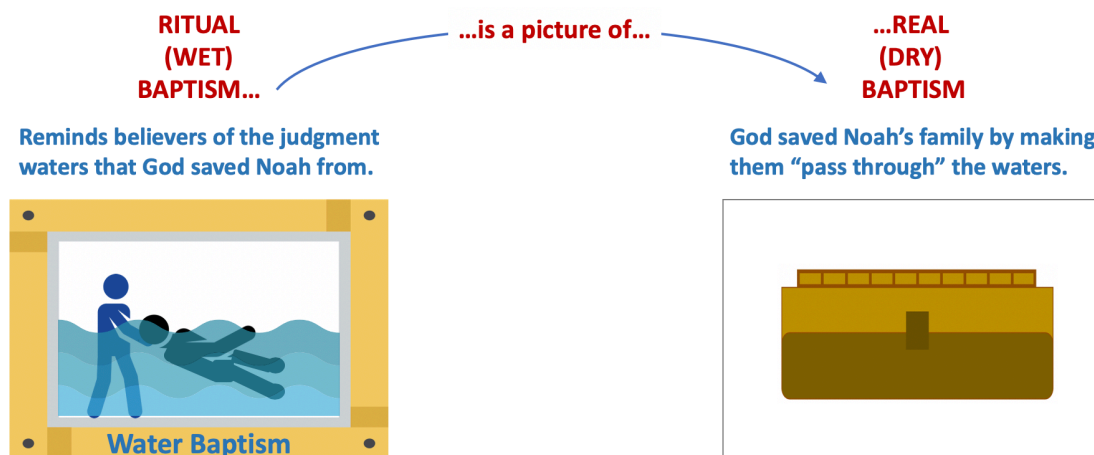
## Wet Baptisms

Of all the possible types of ritual ceremonies, why did God choose water for baptisms? This is what Peter explained.

### 1 Peter 3:20b–21

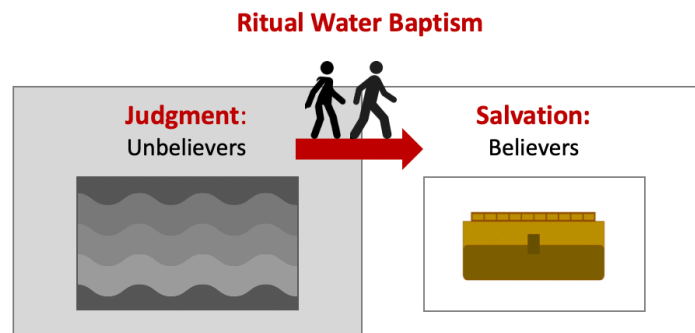
<sup>20</sup> Only eight people were saved from drowning in that terrible flood. <sup>21</sup> And that water is a picture of baptism, which now saves you, not by removing dirt from your body, but as a response to God from a clean conscience. It is effective because of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

- In the real, dry baptism, God saved Noah’s family from the judgment waters.
- The “wet” water baptisms are therefore supposed to remind people of God’s salvation: how God also saved them from the “waters of judgment”.



- This is how the ritual water baptisms are a picture of judgment/salvation: God saving believers but judging unbelievers.

So Peter is saying that the ritual water baptism represents breaking away from the old life of sin. And it represents entering new life in Christ.



(Note: Some people misunderstand this verse to say that the act of baptism itself justifies a person. This is incorrect and goes against what the rest of the Bible teaches. The word “save” here is not about justification. It is about sanctification. Peter writes to encourage believers to get baptised, to publicly declare that they are now Christians. Doing this will give the believer a “clean conscience” [they are publicly telling everyone what they really are: they are Christians]. In this way, they are “saved” from having a “bad conscience” which they would have if they do not want people to know they are Christians.)

So, the wet baptism ceremonies were to show a person’s belief or trust in God’s act of salvation.

Here are three wet baptisms.

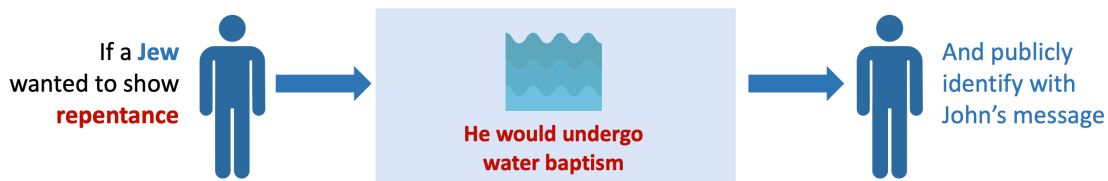


### Wet Baptism 1 — John’s water baptism

John told the Jews to repent of their sins and trust God to save them. He baptised those who agreed with his message. Those who believed were saved from judgment to enjoy the future Kingdom of God.

#### Matthew 3:5–6

<sup>5</sup> People from Jerusalem and from all of Judea and all over the Jordan Valley went out to see and hear John. <sup>6</sup> And when they confessed their sins, he baptized them in the Jordan River.



### Wet Baptism 2 — Jesus’ baptism at the Jordan River

Jesus agreed with John’s message and asked to be baptised. He was the Messiah who would bring about the final judgment and salvation.

#### Matthew 3:13–15

<sup>13</sup> Then Jesus went from Galilee to the Jordan River to be baptized by John. <sup>14</sup> But John tried to talk him out of it. “I am the one who needs to be baptized by you,” he said, “so why are you coming to me?” <sup>15</sup> But Jesus said, “It should be done, for we must carry out all that God requires.” So John agreed to baptize him.

Anointing prophet:  
John the Baptist





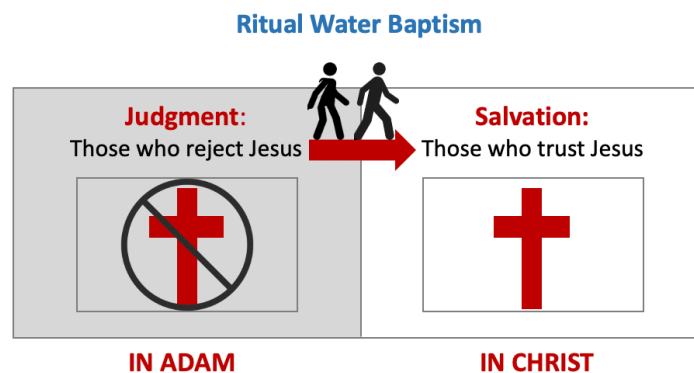
### Wet Baptism 3 — Believer's water baptism

This baptism is for believers who want to publicly announce their faith in Jesus. It is a picture of judgment/salvation where a person is saved from God's judgment because of their faith. The believer is separated from the evil world ("in Adam") and placed into the body of believers ("in Christ"). The ritual water baptism does not justify a person. It is meant for those who have already been justified to outwardly declare what has happened inwardly.

#### Matthew 28:19

Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

(See also Acts 2:38, 8:36–39, 9:18, 10:47–48.)



While the three “dry” baptisms are historical events where Yahweh separated believers and unbelievers through judgment/salvation, the three “wet” baptisms are pictures or symbols of judgment/salvation.

With that understanding, we can now look at what it means to be “baptised in the Holy Spirit”—it is also an act of judgment/salvation. John the Baptist talks about them.

### Dry Baptism 4 — Baptism of the Holy Spirit and Dry Baptism 5 — Baptism of Fire

#### Matthew 3:1–2, 11–12

<sup>1</sup> In those days John the Baptist came to the Judean wilderness and began preaching. His message was, <sup>2</sup> “Repent of your sins and turn to God, for the Kingdom of Heaven is near.”

<sup>11</sup> “I baptize with water those who repent of their sins and turn to God. But someone is coming soon who is greater than I am—so much greater that I’m not worthy even to be his slave and carry his sandals.

He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. <sup>12</sup> He is ready to separate the chaff from the wheat with his winnowing fork. Then he will clean up the threshing area, gathering the wheat into his barn but burning the chaff with never-ending fire.”

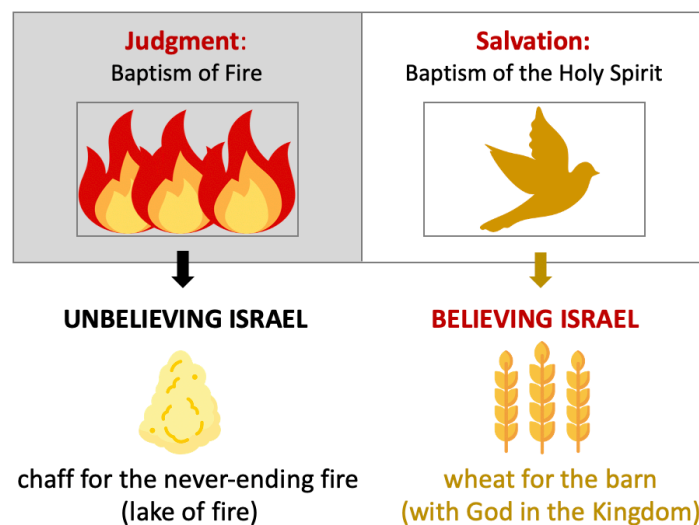
These two baptisms together are also an act of judgment/salvation:

- Baptism of the Holy Spirit emphasises salvation while
- Baptism of fire emphasises judgment.

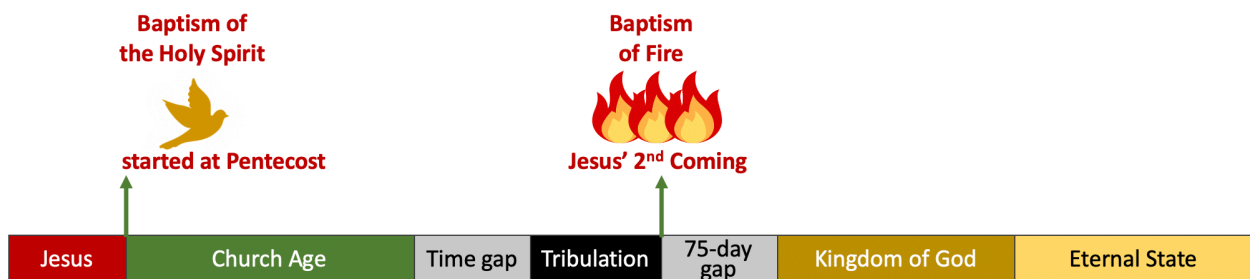
How do we know this?

Because John explained that these two baptisms are linked to Jesus’ work of bringing in the Kingdom of God. Jesus will separate Israel into two groups:

- Believers are “wheat” who will be kept for the Kingdom through the baptism of the Spirit and
- Unbelievers are “chaff” who will be removed by the baptism of fire just before the Kingdom returns.







Other passages in the Bible also tell us that these two baptisms will not happen together but will occur at different times.





With Jesus, His work on earth was split into two parts. This included the two baptisms He would perform.

	1 <sup>st</sup> Coming	2 <sup>nd</sup> Coming
<b>JESUS COMES TO BE:</b>	 <b>Suffering Messiah</b> (brings salvation)	 <b>Conquering Messiah</b> (brings judgment)
<b>JESUS' WORK OF BAPTISM:</b>	 <b>Baptism of the Holy Spirit</b> (started at Pentecost for believers)	 <b>Baptism of fire</b> (at the 2 <sup>nd</sup> Coming for unbelievers)

We will look at both parts in turn.



## Baptism of the Holy Spirit

The first part, the baptism of the Holy Spirit, began at Pentecost (Acts 1:5). But what exactly does it mean to be baptised by the Holy Spirit? Two things.

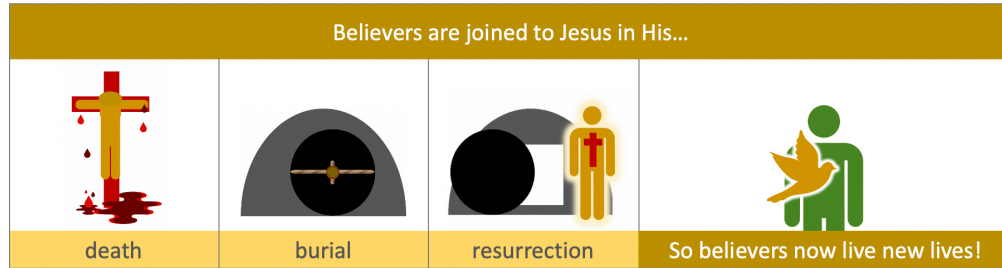


**First, Jesus uses the Holy Spirit to join believers to Himself** in a supernatural way:

- Jesus' death on the cross becomes our death payment for sin and
- Jesus' resurrection gives us new spiritual life.

### Romans 6:3–4

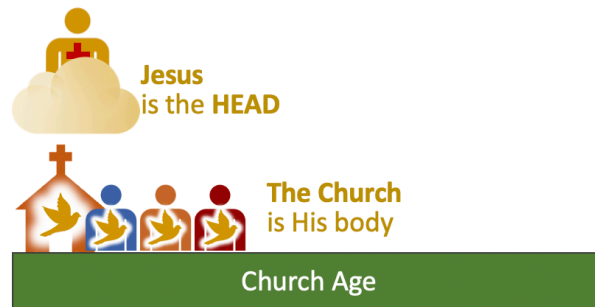
<sup>3</sup> Or have you forgotten that when we were joined with Christ Jesus in baptism, we joined him in his death? <sup>4</sup> For we died and were buried with Christ by baptism. And just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glorious power of the Father, now we also may live new lives.



**Second, Jesus uses the Holy Spirit to also join believers to other believers.** All believers are brought together as the body of Christ, or the church.

### 1 Corinthians 12:12–13

<sup>12</sup> The human body has many parts, but the many parts make up one whole body. So it is with the body of Christ. <sup>13</sup> Some of us are Jews, some are Gentiles, some are slaves, and some are free. But we have all been baptized into one body by one Spirit, and we all share the same Spirit.



**This two-part work of Jesus is called the baptism of the Holy Spirit. All believers receive this baptism immediately when they believe. It is part of God's act of saving us.**

We don't need to ask for it. Jesus, through The Holy Spirit, does it automatically.

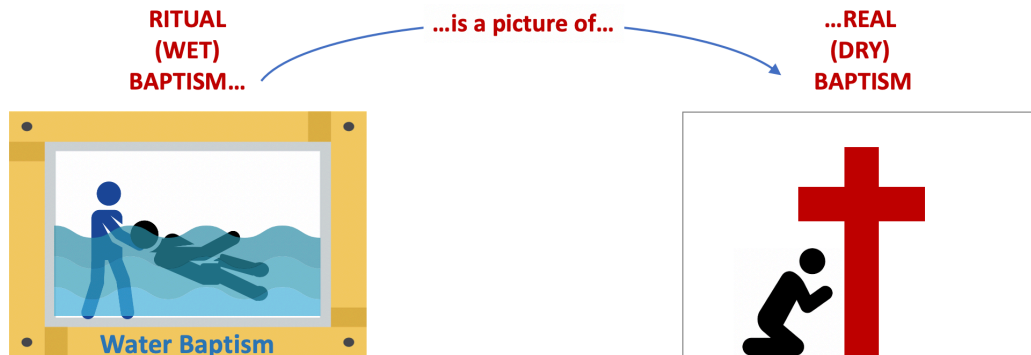
And there is only one real ("dry") baptism of the Holy Spirit for each believer. It does not happen more than once because the Holy Spirit does not leave.

### Ephesians 4:4–6

<sup>4</sup> For there is one body and one Spirit, just as you have been called to one glorious hope for the future. <sup>5</sup> There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, <sup>6</sup> one God and Father of all, who is over all, in all, and living through all.

However, believers are then instructed by Jesus to go through the ritual (wet) believer's baptism.

This is a picture of the real (dry) baptism of the Holy Spirit that had already happened.



## Baptism of Fire

The baptism of fire for judging unbelievers will come much later, at the second coming of Jesus.

However, the Holy Spirit sent a warning about this baptism of fire at Pentecost.

### Acts 2:1–4

<sup>1</sup> On the day of Pentecost all the believers were meeting together in one place. <sup>2</sup> Suddenly, there was a sound from heaven like the roaring of a mighty windstorm, and it filled the house where they were sitting. <sup>3</sup> Then, what looked like flames or tongues of fire appeared and settled on each of them. <sup>4</sup> And everyone present was filled with the Holy Spirit and began speaking in other languages, as the Holy Spirit gave them this ability.



Above the heads of the disciples, there was the image of the tongues that looked like flames and then they started speaking in foreign languages.

Why foreign languages?

We had studied in the previous lesson how 3,000 Jews who heard different languages came to faith on Pentecost morning.

- For these **believing Jews**, the sound of their language announced good news.
- But for **unbelieving Jews**, the sound of foreign languages was a reminder of God's disciplinary cursings!



During the time of the Kingdom of Israel, the final stage of cursing (discipline) in the Mosaic Law was exile. The Jews would be forced out of their land to live among people who spoke in foreign languages.

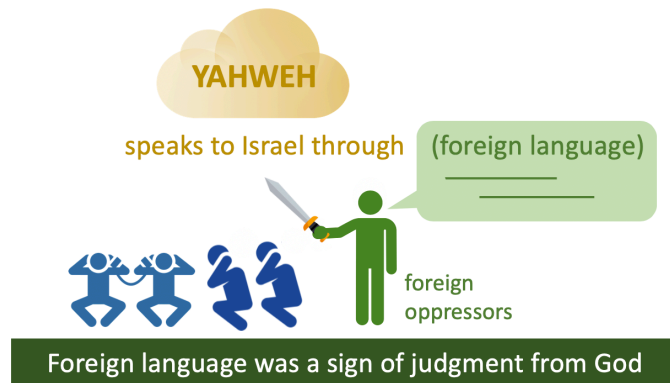
✓ Blessings for keeping the covenant	✗ Cursings for breaking the covenant
Leviticus 26:1–13 (also Deuteronomy 28:1–14)	Leviticus 26:14–46 (also Deuteronomy 28:15–68)
<p><b>Blessings include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic prosperity, good weather and cooperative nature (v4–5)</li> <li>• Military success and peace (v6–8)</li> <li>• Population growth (v9)</li> <li>• God's continued presence with them (v11–12)</li> </ul>	<p><b>5 Stages of disciplines or cursings:</b></p> <p><b>Stage 1:</b> Disease and sickness (physical and psychological), military defeat, economic disaster (v14–17)</p> <p><b>Stage 2:</b> Famine (v18–20)</p> <p><b>Stage 3:</b> Death of children and livestock, population decrease (v21–22)</p> <p><b>Stage 4:</b> Starvation, epidemics, crushing military defeat (v23–26)</p> <p><b>Stage 5:</b> Cannibalism, death, enemy invasion, <b>exile</b>, terror and psychological problems, God's presence removed from them (v27–39)</p>

God warned about this through the prophet Isaiah.

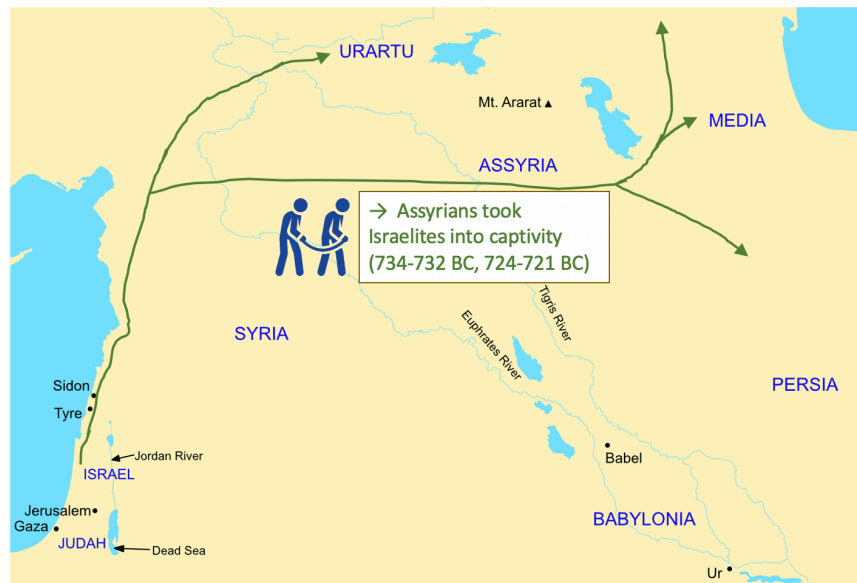
**Isaiah 28:11–12**

<sup>11</sup> So now God will have to speak to his people through foreign oppressors who speak a strange language!

<sup>12</sup> God has told his people,  
 “Here is a place of rest;  
 let the weary rest here.  
 This is a place of quiet rest.”  
 But they would not listen.



Israel experienced this during exile in Assyria (2 Kings 17:22–23).



The apostle Paul used this to explain what was happening at Pentecost.

**1 Corinthians 14:21–22**

<sup>21</sup> It is written in the Scriptures:

“I will speak to my own people through strange languages and through the lips of foreigners.

But even then, they will not listen to me,” says the LORD.

<sup>22</sup> So you see that speaking in tongues is a sign, not for believers, but for unbelievers. Prophecy, however, is for the benefit of believers, not unbelievers.

**What does this mean? Hearing foreign languages was a sign of judgment for the unbelieving Jews. The Jews themselves were the unbelievers!**

At Pentecost, God was giving a gentle warning to the Jews to repent before Jesus uses the baptism of fire to judge all unbelievers, Jews and Gentiles.

When will the baptism of fire happen? Jesus says it will be at His second coming.

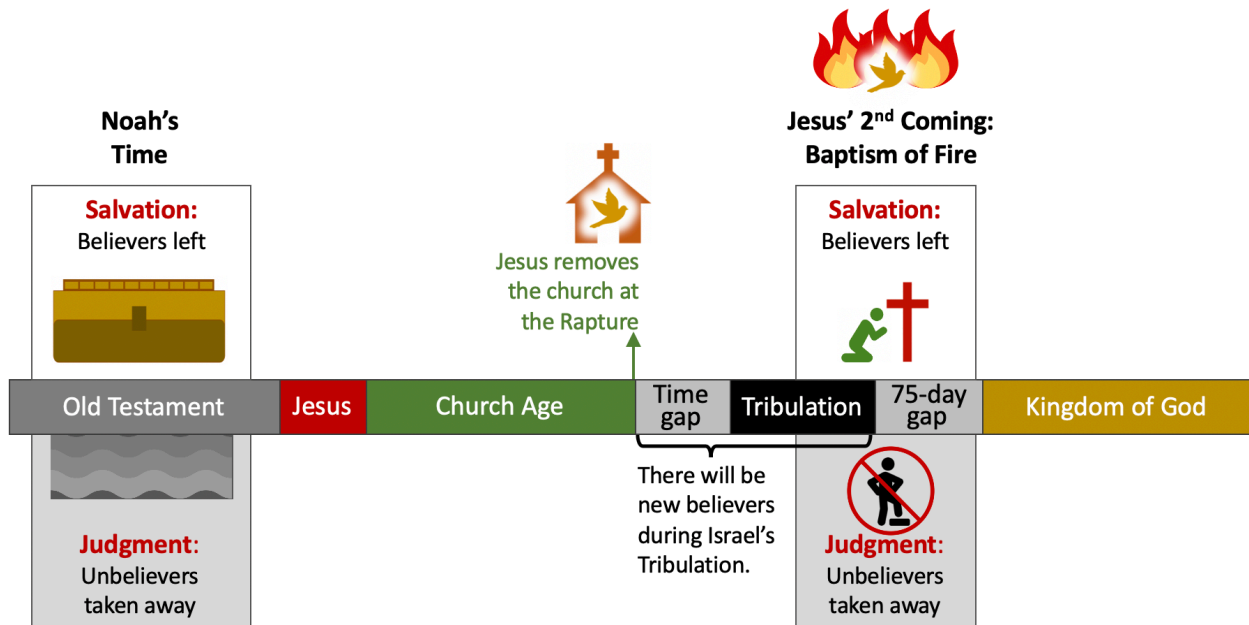
**Matthew 24:37–41**

<sup>37</sup> “When the Son of Man returns, it will be like it was in Noah’s day. <sup>38</sup> In those days before the flood, the people were enjoying banquets and parties and weddings right up to the time Noah entered his boat. <sup>39</sup> People didn’t realize what was going to happen until the flood came and swept them all away. That is the way it will be when the Son of Man comes.

<sup>40</sup> “Two men will be working together in the field; one will be taken, the other left.

<sup>41</sup> Two women will be grinding flour at the mill; one will be taken, the other left.

(Note: Matthew 24 is not talking about the rapture. The rapture happens before this and will remove church-age believers to safety.)



Jesus performs this judgment, the baptism of fire, before He restarts the Kingdom of God.

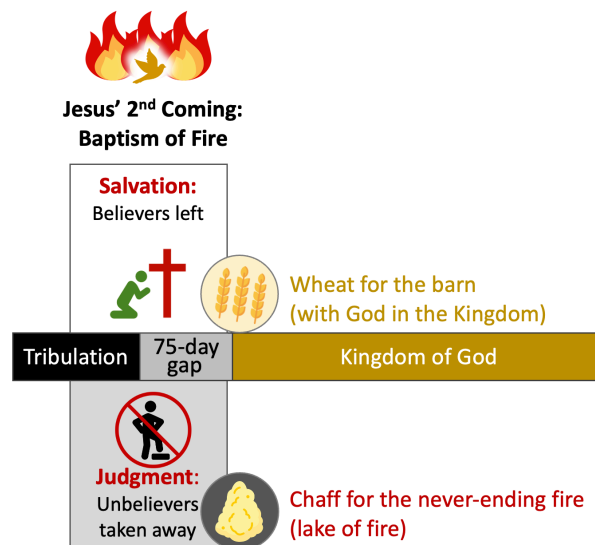
He will remove all unbelievers, the chaff, by fire. This clears the earth so that the Kingdom of God will start peacefully, filled only with believers.

When John the Baptist spoke about the baptism of fire, he was echoing the prophecy of Malachi who also explained that unbelievers (the arrogant and the evildoer) will be burnt up like stubble (or chaff) to make way for the Kingdom of God.

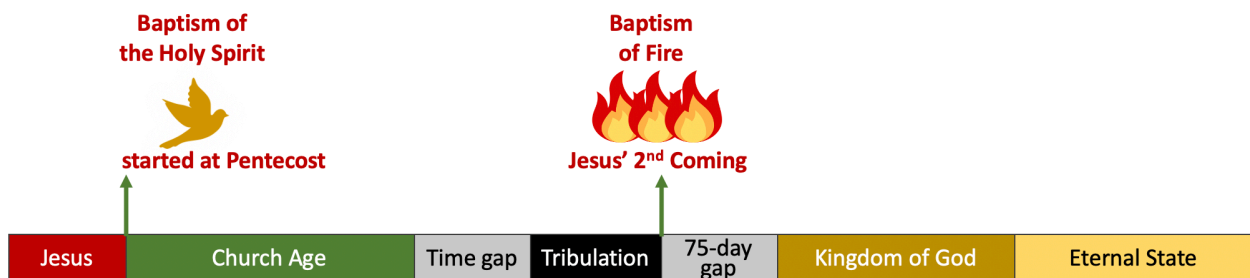
**Malachi 4:1–3 (NIV)**

<sup>1</sup> “Surely the day is coming; it will burn like a furnace. All the arrogant and every evildoer will be stubble, and the day that is coming will set them on fire,” says the LORD Almighty. “Not a root or a branch will be left to them.

<sup>2</sup> But for you who revere my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its rays. And you will go out and frolic like well-fed calves. <sup>3</sup> Then you will trample on the wicked; they will be ashes under the soles of your feet on the day when I act,” says the LORD Almighty.



As believers, we rejoice at the baptism of the Holy Spirit but tremble for unbelievers over the baptism of fire.



While baptism is important for us to understand, the Holy Spirit does even more work for believers.



## 4. Sealing

A fourth work that the Holy Spirit does is to put a seal or a mark of guarantee on believers to show that we belong to Yahweh forever. This seal guarantees that God will keep His promise of eternal life.

### 2 Corinthians 1:21–22 (NIV)

<sup>21</sup> Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, <sup>22</sup> set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.



## 5. Intercession

One of the jobs of the Holy Spirit is to make believers holy, to sanctify us. As part of that, He prays to God for us: He makes intercession for us.

Often, due to our sin nature, we don't even know what we need or how to pray about our needs to God. But the Holy Spirit who lives inside us, searches us thoroughly and He knows exactly what we need. And so He prays to God for us.

### Romans 8:26–27 (ESV)

<sup>26</sup> Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. <sup>27</sup> And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

This is a fascinating passage which we need to understand clearly.

First, who does the Holy Spirit pray to?

The Spirit prays to “he who searches hearts” (verse 27). But who is this? It is Jesus! How do we know? This is how Jesus describes Himself.

### Revelation 2:18a, 20a, 23

<sup>18</sup> “Write this letter to the angel of the church in Thyatira. This is the message from the Son of God... <sup>20</sup> “But I have this complaint against you...

<sup>23</sup> I will strike her children dead. Then all the churches will know that I am the one who searches out the thoughts and intentions of every person. And I will give to each of you whatever you deserve.



Next, what is the Spirit praying to Jesus about?

In the context of Romans 8, we see that believers are struggling with this present life in the fallen world, so the Holy Spirit helps with this weakness, including the sin in our lives.



Specifically:

- The Holy Spirit tells Jesus what needs to be done in our lives to make us fit perfectly into God's will for our lives.
- Jesus, together with the Father, then arranges events (trials, sufferings, blessings, etc.) for us so that we will be trained to become more like Jesus! Having the character of Jesus is God's goal for every believer.

### **Romans 8:28–29**

<sup>28</sup> And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them. <sup>29</sup> For God knew his people in advance, and he chose them to become like his Son, so that his Son would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.

The Holy Spirit works to make us holy and clean so that we can be presented to Christ in a glorious state.

### **Ephesians 5:25–27**

<sup>25</sup> For husbands, this means love your wives, just as Christ loved the church. He gave up his life for her <sup>26</sup> to make her holy and clean, washed by the cleansing of God's word.

<sup>27</sup> He did this to present her to himself as a glorious church without a spot or wrinkle or any other blemish. Instead, she will be holy and without fault.

Finally, what does “the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words” mean?

Where in the Bible can we find help in understanding this phrase? Paul gives us some help. After God brought the apostle into His presence, this is what Paul said.

### **2 Corinthians 12:4**

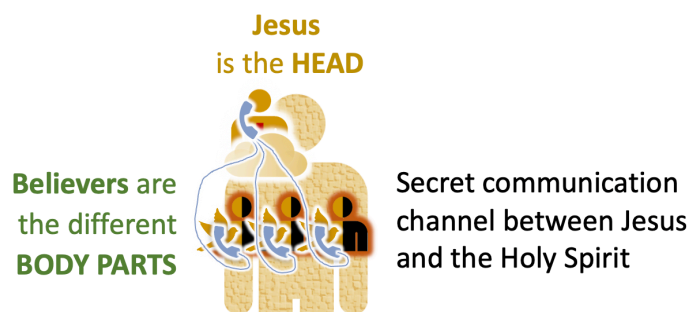
...that I was caught up to paradise and heard things so astounding that they cannot be expressed in words, things no human is allowed to tell.

Paul is saying that it is not lawful for him nor is he able to speak of what he heard in paradise. Why? Because it is too amazing and sacred. It is in a way, “too deep for words”.

Likewise, we then understand that the Spirit groans to Jesus, not with any form of words or any kind of language at all.

Instead, He connects straight from inside us (we being part of the body of Christ) to Jesus (who is the head).

It is like a secret communication that is encrypted that no one, including Satan, can intercept or eavesdrop on.





## 6. Spiritual Gifts

The Holy Spirit also provides every believer with at least one special skill that we are to use to help build up the church and other believers.

### 1 Corinthians 12:4–7, 11

<sup>4</sup> There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit is the source of them all. <sup>5</sup> There are different kinds of service, but we serve the same Lord. <sup>6</sup> God works in different ways, but it is the same God who does the work in all of us. <sup>7</sup> A spiritual gift is given to each of us so we can help each other. <sup>11</sup> It is the one and only Spirit who distributes all these gifts. He alone decides which gift each person should have.



### 1 Peter 4:10–11

<sup>10</sup> God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another. <sup>11</sup> Do you have the gift of speaking? Then speak as though God himself were speaking through you. Do you have the gift of helping others? Do it with all the strength and energy that God supplies. Then everything you do will bring glory to God through Jesus Christ. All glory and power to him forever and ever! Amen.

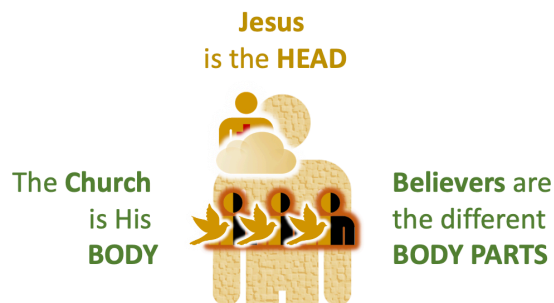
(See a sample list of gifts in 1 Corinthians 12–14 and Ephesians 4:7–16.)

Paul said the church is a body with Christ as the head. Just as each body part or organ has a different function not done by other body parts, each believer is equipped with specific gifts that work together with the gifts of other believers.

God does this because He wants believers to depend on each other. We are not supposed to be alone.

### Ephesians 4:16

He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.



God expects all of us to use our gifts to help each other build the church. We all have a part to play.

If we feel our church is lacking in some areas, perhaps it's because we have not made good use of our Holy Spirit-given skills and talents to build the church!

Importantly, no one person has all the gifts. The gifts are distributed across the church throughout history. This means, the Holy Spirit looks across the span of the universal church's history and gives gifts according to His wisdom.

**1 Corinthians 12:29–31a**

<sup>29</sup> Are we all apostles? Are we all prophets? Are we all teachers? Do we all have the power to do miracles? <sup>30</sup> Do we all have the gift of healing? Do we all have the ability to speak in unknown languages? Do we all have the ability to interpret unknown languages? Of course not! <sup>31</sup> So you should earnestly desire the most helpful gifts.

We will discuss the gifts of the Holy Spirit more in the next lesson.

**Summary**

The moment we put our faith in Jesus, the Holy Spirit gives us new life, indwells us, baptises us with the Spirit and seals us. All this happens in an instant.



<p>Will the Spirit ever undo any of these one-time works? No. The Bible does not talk about believers losing our new life, the Holy Spirit leaving us, being unbaptised or unsealed. All these works are done by God the Holy Spirit so we cannot undo them nor lose them!</p>	<p>These other two works are ongoing: the Holy Spirit intercedes for us in prayer and empowers us with spiritual gifts. These works continue for the rest of our lives.</p>
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What an amazing gift the Holy Spirit is! And how astounding that He lives in us and works from within us!

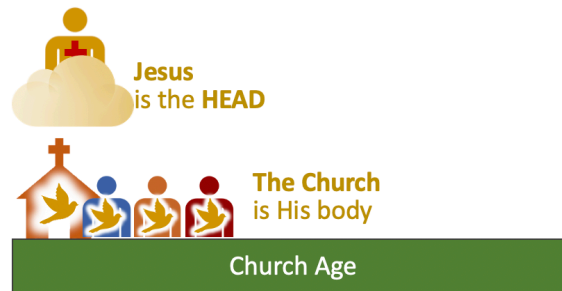
The Creator-God's character never changes. However, we have seen that the way He deals with mankind changes as history progresses. God doesn't just have one method or one plan to move history towards the perfect end He has in mind.

In this lesson, we have seen how God the Holy Spirit's way of working is different in the Old and New Testaments. Understanding timelines and where we are in history helps us understand the Bible better.

History isn't just a big jumbled lump where everything remains the same from start to finish. Rather, history is His Story. It is God carefully building a sovereign lesson plan to teach mankind all about Himself and His glorious character. Therefore, each step of history is a step closer to God fulfilling His final goal.

The Holy Spirit's work during this church age is now focused on indwelling believers and making each one a part of the body of Christ. The church is not a building. It is believers all around the world, linked together to Christ, by the Holy Spirit. We call this the universal and invisible church because there are no visible signs of memberships. Rather, we are all part of the body of Christ, joined together in bonds stronger than human family relationships.

God the Holy Spirit has truly made us all brothers and sisters in the family of God!



## Discussion Questions

Discuss the following questions as a group or use them for personal reflection.

1. How has learning that the Holy Spirit worked differently between the Old and New Testament times cause you to rethink your understanding of how He works in your life?
2. What has your involvement in the local church been like? What role or part do you think God expects you to play in the local church? If you're not sure, how can you find out?
3. Have you discovered what gift or gifts the Holy Spirit has given you? If not, how can you discover your gifts? If you know your gifts, what have you done with them?



Pre-reading for next lesson: Acts 6–8, 15–16, 21–28 (All full chapters.)