

(T) Welcome to **Discipleship training On The Air**. In this teaching series you may learn to become a disciple of Jesus Christ. Two teachers will teach from the Bible what is a disciple of Jesus Christ. As you listen to this programme, make notes in a notebook or record the programme. Today's teaching is: A DISCIPLE IS A PERSON COMPLETELY DEPENDENT ON THE HOLY SPIRIT.

The Bible asks, "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you?" (1 Corinthians 6:19). The Holy Spirit is no one less than God or the Spirit of God living in a Christian! The Bible also says, "Live by the Spirit and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature" (Galatians 5:16). Because the Holy Spirit is the most important and most precious possession that a Christian can have, we will study the Person and functions of the Holy Spirit.

(S) **POINT 1. THE NATURE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.**

First. The personality of the Holy Spirit. Who is the Holy Spirit?

The Holy Spirit is not a power or influence, but a Person. He knows, wills, feels, speaks and acts. Only a Person can execute such functions! The fact that he is a Person is very important for how we experience him. If the Holy Spirit were merely a power or influence, then our dominant aim would have been, "How can I obtain more power and influence of the Holy Spirit?" However, because he is a divine Person, our consistent attitude should be, "How can I relate better to the Holy Spirit and submit myself more to his guidance?"

(T) **Second. The deity of the Holy Spirit. Is the Holy Spirit God?**

Christians believe in One God who manifests himself in three Persons. The term "Person" expresses the idea of an inner distinction, which exists within the unity of the Divine Nature. When we are baptised, we are baptised into "the one Name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19). The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit have one and the same divine nature. In Romans 8:9-10, the Holy Spirit is called "the Spirit of God", "the Spirit of Christ", Christ in you" and in Acts 5:3-4, the Holy Spirit is even called "God". The Holy Spirit has the inherent attributes of God, like eternity, life, truth, love and holiness. The Holy Spirit also has the attributes of God in relation to the universe, namely, omnipresence, omnipotence and omniscience.

(S) **Third. The names of the Holy Spirit.**

The Old Testament refers 90 times directly to the Holy Spirit and gives him 18 different names. Some names describe his relationship to God, like "Spirit of God" (Isaiah 11:2). Some names describe his character, like "Holy Spirit" (Psalm 57:11). Some names describe his work in people, like "Spirit of wisdom" (Isaiah 11:2). The New Testament refers 254 times directly to the Holy Spirit and gives him 39 different names. Some names express his relationship to the Father and the Son, like "the Spirit of your Father" (Matthew 10:20). Some names affirm his own essential deity, like "The Lord is the Spirit" in 2 Corinthians 3:18. Some names describe his relationship to Christians and the work he does in them, like "Spirit of truth" (John 14:17) and "Spirit of grace" (Hebrews 10:29).

(T) **Fourth. The symbols of the Holy Spirit.**

"Fire", "wind" and "water", for example, are symbols of the Holy Spirit. In Acts 2:3, "the tongues of fire" was the symbol of his gift of power to proclaim the gospel with burning zeal and love. In John 3:3-8 he is "the wind that blows wherever it pleases" and symbolises his unpredictable and irresistible work of rebirth and renewal. In Acts 2:1-4 the wind symbolised his mighty yet unseen power. In John 7:37-39 the water symbolises the Holy Spirit as the Source of the complete salvation and lasting satisfaction of Christians as well as the Source of making Christians a channel of abundant blessings to other people.

In 2 Corinthians 1:21-22, "oil", "seal" and "deposit" are three more symbols of the Holy Spirit. "God ... *anointed* us, set his *seal* of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a *deposit*, guaranteeing what is to come."

(S) **POINT 2. THE FUNCTIONS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE CHURCH.**

At Pentecost, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit signifies three events. First, Pentecost was God's seal on the fact that Jesus Christ was the long expected Messiah (Acts 2:32-36). Second, Pentecost was the occasion of the institution of the Church. Third, Pentecost empowered the disciples to do their tasks. Let us consider these three functions of the Holy Spirit more closely.

(T) **First. The Holy Spirit is the Revealer of Jesus Christ.** His primary function is to glorify Jesus Christ in the experience of people (John 16:14). In John 15:26, Jesus said, "The Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, will testify about me." The Holy Spirit reveals and explains Christ. He gives knowledge of the glorious characteristics of God, as revealed in Christ, directly into the hearts of people (2 Corinthians 4:6). He does this by using the Bible, which he inspired and which records the external revelation of Christ (2 Peter 1:21). The Holy Spirit causes Christians to acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord (1 Corinthians 12:3) and also causes them to show in their daily behaviour that Jesus Christ is their Lord (2 Corinthians 3:18). The test of any professed

movement of the Spirit, whether in personal or corporate experience, is the place it gives to Christ. If a Christian or church glorifies man or magnifies some spiritual experience, then it lacks the hallmark of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit cannot bear to see a cooling of love for Jesus Christ (James 4:5).

(S) Second. The Holy Spirit is the Administrator of the Church. The Holy Spirit directs the life and administration of the Church. Before Pentecost, the disciples were a band of individuals. At Pentecost, they were made into one Body of Christ, which is not merely an organisation, but an organism. In 1 Corinthians 12:13 is written, “We were all baptised by one Spirit into one body.” Only the Holy Spirit makes a person a real member of the Church, which is the Body of Christ. The Holy Spirit is also responsible for the effective functioning of the Church, by selecting its leaders, called elders (Acts 20:28), and by requiring the church leaders to be Spirit-filled (Acts 6:4). He is in charge of the doctrines and practices in the Church. In Acts 15:28 he guides matters that are under discussion to become a unanimous decision. Voting in modern churches may not displace the will of the Holy Spirit. Churches must listen to what the Spirit says (Revelation 2:7). In 1 Corinthians 12:11 is written that it is the prerogative of the Holy Spirit to bestow spiritual gifts to Christians in the Church in order to equip them for their ministries. The Holy Spirit directs the ministries of witnessing (Acts 1:8), preaching (1 Corinthians 2:4), worship (Philippians 3:3), prayer (Ephesians 6:18), praise and singing (Ephesians 5:18-19).

(T) Third. The Holy Spirit is the Executor of Missions. The Holy Spirit is the director of the Great Commission. He selects and calls Christians to be missionaries (Acts 13:1-4). The church must let them go and, if possible, support them. He chooses the places of missionary work (Acts 16:6-10) and he assigns to each worker his specific task (1 Corinthians 3:5-6). He alone knows which are the strategic centres and who is best fitted to serve there. He leads the Christian workers to strategic converts, like the Ethiopian official (Acts 8:29,35) and the Roman military officer, Cornelius (Acts 10). He empowers the Christian workers against satanic opposition and gives them discernment and authority to deal with it (Acts 13:9-11). Finally, the Holy Spirit encourages the new converts amidst persecution (Acts 13:49-52).

(S) POINT 3. THE FUNCTIONS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN PEOPLE.

During his last week before the crucifixion, Jesus taught his disciples about the coming of the Holy Spirit, whom he called “the Counsellor”. Jesus Christ clearly taught the functions of the Holy Spirit in relationship to the world, to himself and to Christians. Let us consider these three functions more closely.

(T) First. The Holy Spirit convicts the world. In John 16:8 Jesus says about the Holy Spirit, “When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgement.” The Holy Spirit convicts the people of the world of the seriousness of their sins, of their independence from God and rebellion against God. The word “convicts” includes exposing the sin of people or bringing their true character and conduct to light. It also includes bringing a deep conviction of guilt and shame and refuting all their excuses and arguments against God. He convicts them of the possibility of becoming righteous if they believe in Christ. And he convicts them of the certainty of judgement if they reject Christ.

(S) Second. The Holy Spirit represents Christ. In John 14:16-18 Jesus says about the Holy Spirit, “I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counsellor to be with you forever - the Spirit of truth. ... He lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.” Jesus promised his disciples that he would not leave them behind as orphans, but that he himself would come to them in the Person of the Counsellor. The word “Counsellor” can best be translated with the word “Representative” or “Advocate”, that is, someone called to one’s side to help, especially against an accuser or judge. The Holy Spirit is not *our* Advocate, but *Christ’s* Advocate. He is not our Representative with Christ, but Christ’s Representative with us! He represents Christ, pleads Christ’s cause, defends Christ’s name, protects Christ’s interests and manages Christ’s possessions. Christ promises to send “another Advocate”. He does not mean a *different* Advocate, but *another* Advocate of the same kind as he himself is, one who would take his place and do his work. The Holy Spirit is “the other self of Jesus”. The Holy Spirit is given to be to us on earth all that Jesus Christ would be if he were personally present. While the Holy Spirit is Christ’s Advocate on earth and Christ’s Representative in the Christian, Christ himself is our Advocate in heaven with God the Father. In heaven, Christ speaks to the Father in our defence when we have committed sin and he also intercedes for us continually (1 John 2:1, Hebrews 7:25, 9:24).

(T) Third. The Holy Spirit works in believers. Since Pentecost, the Holy Spirit makes available to Christians what Christ made possible on the cross. The Holy Spirit applies the completed work of salvation of Christ in the lives of Christians! The Holy Spirit regenerates the Christian, making him a partaker of the divine nature (John 2:5, 2 Peter 1:4). He frees the Christian from the guilt of sin and more and more frees him from the power and presence of sin. Romans 8:13 says, “If by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live.” He sanctifies the Christian, making him more and more Christlike (2 Corinthians 3:18). Sanctification is both instantaneous and complete as well as a progressive experience (Hebrews 10:10,14). The Holy Spirit witnesses in the Christian’s heart that he is a child of God (Galatians 4:6-7) and that the Christian is living in God and that God is living in the Christian (1 John 4:13).

(S) **POINT 4. THE BAPTISM WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT**

First. The historical fulfilment of the baptism with the Holy Spirit. “The baptism with the Holy Spirit” was predicted in Joel 2:28-32, Matthew 3:10-12, John 7:37-39 and Acts 1:5. These prophecies were fulfilled as follows: **One.** The first 120 disciples of Jesus Christ (Acts 1:15) had to wait for the resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ (John 7:37-39; Luke 24:49), before they could be baptised with the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:5; 2:1-4). **Two.** The first Samaritan believers had to wait for the apostles of Jesus Christ to unlock the door of God’s kingdom for them (Matthew 16:18-19; 18:18), before they could be baptised with the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:12-17). **Three.** The first Gentile believers also had to wait for the apostle Peter to preach the gospel to them and admit them into the kingdom of God (Acts 10). After this historical beginning of the Christian Church among the Jews, Samaritans and Gentiles, people receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit whenever they hear the gospel and believe in Jesus Christ. This is taught in Ephesians 1:13.

(T) **Second. The results of the baptism with the Holy Spirit.** “The baptism with the Holy Spirit” is receiving the Holy Spirit when a person believes for the first time in Jesus Christ. According to John 7:37-39, Ephesians 2:22 and 1 Corinthians 3:16, at the baptism with the Holy Spirit, God himself comes to dwell in the believer. According to Acts 11:14-18, 15:7-11 and Titus 3:3-7, the believer is born again and saved in this way. According to 1 Corinthians 12:12-13; Ephesians 1:13-14 and Romans 8:9-10 the believer belongs to Christ and to Christ’s Body or Church in this way. And according to 1 Corinthians 12:4-13, the believer receives at least one spiritual gift in this way.

(S) **Third. The manifestation of the baptism with the Holy Spirit.** The Bible relates that in God’s salvation history, the signs of the wind and the fire were unique to the first Day of Pentecost. The speaking in other known or unknown languages or tongues *may* happen in a new Christian’s history (Acts 10:46), but the Bible does not teach that it *will* happen or *should* happen (1 Corinthians 12:30)! The normal and most common sign for the baptism with the Holy Spirit is the coming into existence of a functioning church (Acts 2:37-47)! Another normal and common sign for the baptism with the Spirit is the manifestation of the fruit of the Spirit, especially love (Galatians 5:22-23; 1 Corinthians 13:1-8). Moreover many or all Christians may receive one or more of the many different kinds of spiritual gifts, like teaching, preaching, counselling, etc (1 Corinthians 12:4-11; Romans 12:3-8). The time when such spiritual gifts will be manifested in a Christian’s life, is not specified.

(T) **POINT 5. THE FILLING WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT.**

“The filling with the Holy Spirit” is not the same as receiving the Holy Spirit or more of the Holy Spirit, but is living under the control and leadership of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:16-18) and serving in the power of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8). According to Ephesians 5:15-21, the filling with the Holy Spirit manifests itself particularly in the believer’s speech and songs, attitudes, like thankfulness and humility, and in wise behaviour. According to Galatians 5:22-23, it manifests itself particularly in Christian character, like love, righteousness and self-control. According to the book of Acts, it manifests itself in courage, boldness and words to speak God’s message (Acts 4:31), in bringing a great number of people to the Lord (Acts 11:24) and in rejoicing in the midst of persecution (Acts 13:51). According to Ephesians 5:18, the Spirit-filled life is the normal Christian life!

(S) **POINT 6. THE FRUIT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.**

When you belong to Christ, you live by the Spirit, are led by the Spirit and bear the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:16-26). The Spirit becomes the controlling influence in your life and you freely, voluntarily and gratefully respond and co-operate with the Spirit. Only by the fruit, which the Spirit works in you, can you overcome the manifestations of the sinful nature in you. This sinful nature expresses itself in physical sins like immorality and excess, in spiritual sins like idolatry and occultism, and in social sins like selfish ambition and quarrelling. The work of the Spirit expresses itself in self-giving love, character, faithfulness to God, gentleness to people and self-control in yourself.

(T) **POINT 7. ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT WEEK**

First. Make it your goal to live the Spirit-filled life every day of your life.

Second. See the workbooks “Go and make disciples” and Internet on www. Etc.

Third. Listen on short wave radio every SATURDAY to WEDNESDAY to “Discipleship training on the air”.