

(T) Welcome to Discipleship training On The Air. In this teaching series, you will have an opportunity to learn about the practical life of the Christian community. Two teachers will teach from the Bible about the Christian festivals. As you listen to this programme, make notes in a notebook or record the programme. Today's teaching is: PENTECOST, the Christian festival in which we commemorate the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

We will learn what the Bible teaches about the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and its effect on Christians. We will learn how the outpouring of the Holy Spirit has been prophesied, what happened when the Holy Spirit was poured out, and why the outpouring of the Holy Spirit is so important.

(S) **POINT 1. PROPHECIES CONCERNING THE OUTPOURING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.**

First, "The harvest festival" in the Old Testament is a type of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. In the Old Testament, in Exodus 23:16, Pentecost was a harvest festival, marking the official end of the harvest, 50 days after Easter. In Leviticus 23 and Deuteronomy 16 it is called "the festival of weeks". The Israelites had to bring a part of their harvest in proportion to how God has blessed them, to the temple. There they had to celebrate a joyful feast together with their families, servants, the Levites, the aliens and the poor of their town. Thus, Pentecost was a thanksgiving festival to God for the harvest.

In the New Testament, in Acts 2, the Holy Spirit was poured out on this harvest festival. The apostles preached the gospel, 3 000 people turned to Jesus Christ and the first local church was founded in Jerusalem! The Old Testament agricultural harvest festival pointed to the New Testament harvest of new Christians and new local churches everywhere in the world!

(T) Second, Prophecies concerning the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament. Some Old Testament prophecies concerning the outpouring of the Holy Spirit are the following: In Isaiah 32:15 and 44:3, God said that he would pour out his Spirit on his people. Like the rain poured out from heaven on the thirsty land and dry ground turns the desert into a fertile field and forest, so the Spirit poured out from heaven on his people would result in blessings! In Ezekiel 36:25-28, God said that he would sprinkle clean water on his people and cleanse them from all their impurities and idols. He would remove their heart of stone and put his Spirit in them and in this way they would follow and obey God's Word. In Joel 2:28-32, God said that he would pour out his Spirit on all his people. They would prophesy, dream dreams and see visions. Everyone who called on the name of the Lord would be saved. In Zechariah 4:6, God said that he would accomplish his work not by human might and power, but by his Spirit. Thus, in the Old Testament, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all God's people would result in a cleansed and transformed heart, in obedience to God's Word, in serving God through proclaiming his Word, in creatively turning dreams and visions into a purposeful life that glorifies God and in the salvation of everyone who calls on the name of the Lord.

(S) Third, Prophecies concerning the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament. In the Gospel of John, Jesus Christ promised many times the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on his people. In John 7:37-39 he said that believers in him had to wait for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit until after he had been glorified, that is, until after his resurrection, ascension and enthronement in heaven. But when that happens, Jesus said, the Holy Spirit would be like streams of living water flowing from their lives. In Acts 1:5, just before he ascended into heaven, Jesus said that in a few days his people would be "baptised with the Holy Spirit". This happened on the Day of Pentecost, which is described in Acts 2. Thus, "the baptism with the Holy Spirit" is nothing other than "the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on new believers".

(T) **POINT 2. THE EVENTS AROUND THE OUTPOURING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.**

First, The outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2. Ten days after Jesus Christ ascended into heaven to sit as King of kings and Lord of lords at God's right hand, he poured out the Holy Spirit on all his people, that is, on all believers in Jesus Christ. That day was the harvest festival and Jews from all over the world had come to Jerusalem to celebrate. There were some unique signs associated with the Day of Pentecost. According to John 3:3-8, "the sound like the blowing of a violent wind" symbolised the mighty unseen power of the Holy Spirit that regenerates people and works wherever he pleases. According to Acts 1 and 2, "what seemed like tongues of fire coming to rest on the believers" symbolised his gift of proclaiming the gospel with burning zeal and love and courage and conviction. First, the Holy Spirit was poured out on the first disciples of Jesus Christ, about 120 in number. They could not receive the Holy Spirit earlier, because Jesus had not yet been glorified. Now that Jesus had been resurrected, ascended and crowned as king, they received the Holy Spirit. After the apostles preached the gospel, about 3 000 Jews became believers and they all received the Holy Spirit. Acts 2:42 says that these new Christians devoted themselves to

the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. The Bible *relates* that the normal and most common sign of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on people is the coming into existence of a *functioning church*. The Bible *teaches* that in every Christian's salvation history, the visible manifestation of the Holy Spirit after the baptism with the Holy Spirit should be *the fruit of the Spirit, especially love!*

(S) Second. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit after the Day of Pentecost. In Acts 8:12-17, the Holy Spirit was poured out on the first Samaritan believers in Jesus Christ. They did not receive the Holy Spirit immediately, because they had to wait for the apostles of Jesus Christ to unlock the door of God's kingdom for them. According to Matthew 16:18-19 and 18:18, Jesus Christ had given the keys to unlock the kingdom for believers only to his own disciples, who became *the apostles*. Thus, *the apostles* preached the gospel to Jews in Acts 2, and they unlocked the door of God's kingdom for the first Jews to enter. *The apostles* prayed for the first Samaritans in Acts 8 and they unlocked the door of God's kingdom for the first Samaritans to enter. *The apostles* preached the gospel to the first Gentiles in Acts 10 and they unlocked the door of God's kingdom for the first Gentiles to enter. After this beginning of the Christian Church among the Jews, the Samaritans and the Gentiles, according to Ephesians 1:13, people receive the Holy Spirit or are "sealed" or "baptised" with the Holy Spirit whenever they hear the gospel and believe in Jesus Christ.

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

During his last week before his 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 himself, to the world and to the Christians. Let us consider these three functions more closely.

First. The Holy Spirit represents Christ. He leads people to Jesus 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, that is, the Holy Spirit is everything Jesus Christ would be if he were still among us.

The word "Counsellor" may also be translated with the word "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 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 "*Jesus' other self*" and 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 in the Christian, Christ is our Advocate in heaven with the Father. In heaven, Christ speaks to the Father in our defence when we have committed sin and he also continually intercedes for us (1 John 2:1, Hebrews 7:25, 9:24).

(S) Second. The Holy Spirit convicts the world. He leads people to deep convictions. 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 their sin or bringing to light their true character and conduct as sinners. It also includes bringing a deep conviction of guilt and shame and refuting all their excuses and arguments against God. The Holy Spirit convicts sinners of the possibility of becoming righteous if they believe in Jesus Christ. And he convicts them of the certainty of judgement if they reject Jesus Christ.

(T) Third. The Holy Spirit works in believers. He leads people to change and transformation. Since Pentecost, the Holy Spirit *makes available* to Christians what Christ *made possible* on the cross. 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 from the enslaving *power* 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 Cor 3:18). Sanctification is both instantaneous and complete (1 Cor 1:30) as well as a progressive experience (Heb 10:10, 14). The Holy Spirit witnesses in the Christian's heart that he is a child of God (Gal 4:6-7) and that the Christian is living in God and that God is living in the Christian (1 Jn 4:13).

**(S) POINT 4. 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 Messiahship of Jesus Christ (Act 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.

First. The Holy Spirit gives Jesus Christ the central place in the Christian Church. The primary function of the Holy Spirit is to glorify Jesus Christ in the experience of people (Jn 16:14).

The Holy Spirit reveals Christ. In John 15:26, Jesus said, "The Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, will *testify* about me." According to 2 Corinthians 3:18 and 4:6, 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. He does this by using the Bible, which he inspired and which records the external revelation of Christ (2 Pet 1:21). Therefore, John 16:13-15 teaches that the Holy Spirit takes the words of Jesus and makes them known to Christians!

The Holy Spirit confesses Christ. 1 Corinthians 12:3 teaches that the Holy Spirit causes Christians to acknowledge "Jesus Christ as Lord" and also causes them to show in their daily behaviour that Jesus Christ is their Lord (2 Cor 3:18).

The Holy Spirit glorifies Christ. John 16:14 teaches that the Holy Spirit *glorifies* Jesus Christ. The test of any professed movement of the Spirit, whether in personal or corporate experience, is the place it gives to Jesus 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)!

**(T) Second. The Holy Spirit is the Administrator of the Christian Church.** The Holy Spirit directs the life and administration of the Church.

The Holy Spirit brings Christians to form a church or house church. Ephesians 2:21-22 teaches that the Holy Spirit makes the members of the Church into a spiritual dwelling in which God himself lives. 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".

The Holy Spirit makes a Christian a real member of the Church. 1 Corinthians 12:13 says, "We were all baptised by one Spirit into one body." New believers are always a genuine member of the Christian Church, that is, of the Body of Christ, whether they are registered on a local church list or not.

The Holy Spirit selects the best leaders of the Christian Church. Acts 20:28 teaches that the Holy Spirit appointed the elders of a local church to function as overseers and shepherds. Acts 6:4 teaches that the church leaders are required to be Spirit-filled.

The Holy Spirit guides the Christian Church in sound Christian doctrines and practices. Acts 15:28 teaches that the Holy Spirit is in charge of the doctrines and practices in the Church. He guides matters that are under discussion until a unanimous decision can be reached. The practice of voting in modern churches may never displace the will of the Holy Spirit. All church leaders must submit themselves to all the teachings of the Bible, which is the sword of the Holy Spirit (Eph 6:17). Revelation 2:7 says that the churches must listen to what the Spirit says.

The Holy Spirit creates the great variety within the Christian Church. 1 Corinthians 12:11 teaches that it is the prerogative of the Holy Spirit to bestow different spiritual gifts to Christians in the Church in order to equip them for their different ministries. The great variety of spiritual gifts shows that God does not want all Christians to be uniform, but pluriform! The Church of Christ does not consist of a mass of people who are identical in the way they dress, talk, behave, or in the way they worship and serve God. No, just like a body, the Church of Christ consists of a great variety of people, personalities, spiritual gifts, and spiritual activities. Some Christians are like "the mouth" in the Body of Christ and have spiritual gifts like preaching, teaching and encouraging. They are very suitable in services like being a pastor, evangelist, Bible teacher or youth leader. Other Christians are more like "the heart" in the Body of Christ and have spiritual gifts like mercy, helping and serving. They are very suitable in services like helping the sick, the poor and the oppressed. Ephesians 5:18-19 teaches that the Holy Spirit directs the ministries of witnessing (Act 1:8), preaching (1 Cor 2:4), worship (Phil 3:3), praise and singing (Eph 5:18-19) and prayer (Eph 6:18).

**(S) Third. The Holy Spirit is the Executor of Missions.** The Holy Spirit is the director of the Great Commission.

The Holy Spirit assigns to each Christian his particular task in the Body of Christ. Mark 13:34 and 1 Corinthians 12:4-6 and 11 teaches that Jesus Christ through his Spirit assigns to each Christian his or her own task. This may be a particular task in the local church or another special task in the world. Only the Holy Spirit knows which task or service is best

suited for each individual. Therefore, the Holy Spirit gives to Christians spiritual gifts that are best suited to help them to accomplish their tasks.

The Holy Spirit selects and calls some Christians to be missionaries. Acts 13:1-4 teaches that the Holy Spirit selected and called Paul and Barnabas to become missionaries to new countries. The local Christian church should let them go and, if possible, support them. 1 Corinthians 3:5-11 teaches that the Holy Spirit assigns to each missionary his specific task. Some missionaries are called to plant and lay foundations, while other missionaries are called to water or build further on that foundation.

The Holy Spirit chooses the places where missionaries and other Christians should work. Acts 16:6-10 He will call some Christians to be missionaries within their own countries and call other Christians to be missionaries in countries other than their own. Only the Holy Spirit knows which are strategic centres to spread the good news and who are the people that are best fitted to serve there. That is why Acts 16:6-10 relates that the Holy Spirit sovereignly opened and closed doors of opportunity for missionaries. He leads the missionaries to strategic converts, like the Ethiopian official (Acts 8:29,35) and the Roman military officer, Cornelius (Acts 10). And he gives missionaries the ability to discern for example the evil intentions of satanic forces and the power to authoritatively deal with their opposition (Act 13:9-11).

The Holy Spirit encourages new Christian converts amidst the persecution they face (Acts 13:49-52).

**(T) ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT WEEK**

First. Teach new believers the meaning of Pentecost - the festival commemorating the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

Second. See the workbooks "Go and build Christ's Church" and Internet on [www.dota.net](http://www.dota.net)

Third. Listen every SATURDAY to WEDNESDAY on the radio to "Discipleship training on the air".