

## HOLY SPIRIT AND OUR INITIATIVE

When we first receive the Holy Spirit, His working within us seems to be at our initiative. Our spirit becomes willing, but we have to learn how to draw from God and walk with God, how to depend totally upon Him, how to maintain the flow of the Holy Spirit within our lives.

The Holy Spirit comes to dwell within our spirit, but our will is pretty much a part of our soul, so that the Holy Spirit's working in us is pretty much at our own initiative. We can still pretty much follow our own way in many areas of our life.

As the word is being written upon our heart, Christ starts being formed in us so that our very desires, the things we do and say begin to change. The word of God begins to take over our thinking, and this is how Jesus becomes the lord of our lives.

Receiving the Holy Spirit is not just an experience, but the entrance into a spiritual state of grace that we are to draw from and live in. It is a partnership with the Holy Spirit where we become co-laborers with Him.

Many people have prayed through and received the Holy Spirit as an experience. The problem is that for many of them it had such finality that they did not continue to grow in the experience. We have to learn how to maintain it as a state of grace that we are to walk in. They accepted it as an experience that became an historical event in their lives, which is not what God intended. He was opening the door for them to learn how to walk in the spirit.

To walk in the spirit we have to learn how to be continually filled with the Spirit, so that the life of the Lord is continually flowing through us, then God can be seen in the things that we do and say.

Being filled with the Spirit and maintaining a walk in the fullness of the Holy Spirit will bring us into what the Father had in mind when He sent His promise of the Spirit. The Father's plan was that He Himself was going to indwell His people. "My Father and I will come and take up our abode within you," Jesus said in [John 14:23](#).

There is a progressive indwelling of God within our lives. We receive the Holy Spirit and through the Holy Spirit we keep God's word so that Christ is formed within us and then the Father can make His home within us.

When the Holy Spirit comes within, His working is still at our initiative, we have to invite His working in our lives. We have to partner with Him. When Christ begins to take over, it is more under His Lordship. When the Father comes in, everything must be surrendered completely and absolutely to Him. When we receive the Holy Spirit, we don't understand that we can still follow our own way in many areas. This is why we need to get all our spirit, soul and body gates open and flowing in the life of God.

Nearly everyone has this problem of having received an experience in the Holy Spirit without maintaining the fullness that God wants them to have in the experience. It is that fullness which makes the difference in everything that we do. For it is...*Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.* Zechariah 4:6. To the degree to which the Holy Spirit fills every word, every act, and

everything we are, determines the effectiveness of our whole life and ministry.

God has opened the way for us to be a temple of the Holy Spirit and for Him to come within us. Then, if we will yield our will and our initiative to the fullness of the Holy Spirit and to legitimate Scriptural use of the Holy Spirit, we can literally turn God loose in our heart. Almost at our own initiative we can have a fire within us continually.

Ephesians 5:18 says, *And be not drunken with wine, where in is riot, but be filled with the Spirit.* Paul didn't say, "Wait upon God and pray that He will come down and fill you with His Spirit."

He commanded, "Be filled with the Spirit" as though it were something anyone could do almost at their own initiative, according to their hunger and desire.

When we simplify things as they ought to be, we will see that we have made the indwelling and the fullness of the Holy Spirit more complex and difficult than we should. God says "Be filled with the Spirit"; therefore we can just open the door and say, "Holy Spirit, fill me," and He will.

Speaking forth in tongues to edify ourselves is a practice outlined in I Corinthians 14. We are building a house for God to live in.

Not only can we listen to Him and follow His leading, but we have the initiative to use Him for certain purposes. Although the gifts and ministries are largely at the initiative of the Holy Spirit, much of our own initiative is also involved.

Probably no person on the face of the earth is completely led by the Spirit of God. The more ambitious and carnal a person is in using the Spirit to accomplish his end, the more it grieves God

Because we have the initiative of using the Holy Spirit, we can constantly call upon Him to fill our lives, ever in a greater measure. We can constantly employ Him to give praise to God, for he that speaks in tongues gives thanks well (I Corinthians 14:17). We can use the Holy Spirit at our initiative for praise, for worship, for magnifying the Lord, carefully assuming our responsibility to follow the order laid out in the Scripture.

With the Spirit so filling our lives, we do not grieve Him, but we let Him fill the whole of our being. When we hear His whispers, the suggestions of His leadings, we make haste to follow them.

What began as our initiative suddenly becomes the Spirit's initiative—and then we are led by the Spirit. No one will be led by the Spirit they have moved into that place of submission to God.

Can we use the Holy Spirit? Yes, but only to accomplish God's purposes and ends in our lives. If we use Him to promote our own ambitions and desires, before long we will have grieved the Holy Spirit and we will lose the gift.

This sounds so simple. Is it really that easy to be yielded to the Spirit, to be filled with the Spirit? Yes it is. We get into it at our own initiative. We can decide, "I am Spirit-baptized and I am going to be filled with the Spirit." It doesn't take a certain amount of fasting and prayer for God to move in us. When the day of Pentecost was fully come, it was opened up; but now God has added to it a set time in the

end in which we can have it in greater measure. *Ask ye of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain...Zechariah 10:1.*

If God says, “Be filled with the Spirit,” we can be filled with the Spirit, for He doesn’t command the impossible. If God lays before us the direction to walk in the Spirit, we can walk in the Spirit and call upon the Lord to give us that guidance and anointing. More and more we can be aware of this great treasure dwelling within us and call Him forth into His mighty ministry within us and through us.

If we can learn how to drink of the Spirit, then we can be filled with the Spirit. John 7:37–39 tells us, *...Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, from within him shall flow rivers of living water.*

One of the things which keeps people going on with the Lord is not that they know so much about the grace of God in their lives; but they do know that if they seek the Lord earnestly, crying out and believing Him, soon there will be a refilling of the Spirit in their lives.

Receiving the Holy Spirit and maintaining the fullness of the Spirit is as simple as breathing. A ministry is as simple as a flow from a spring, or water gushing out of a faucet. You drink, and rivers of living water flow forth. Ministry should be that simple—drink until you are filled, and out of the fullness, ministry will flow forth.

If there is something missing in our worship and we are not making the contact—if the flow and communication with the Lord is not there—it is because we are not doing it in the Spirit. Be filled with the Spirit; then begin to worship the Lord.

Some of us haven't been watching our spiritual level and there is a diminishing presence of the Spirit in our life. You may say, "I'll always have Him with me." Yes, but you'll have Him buried under so much rubbish, so much self-life, that you will scarcely ever be able to call Him forth unto His full office work in your life.

When we walk along half-discouraged and half-defeated under a cloud, often it is because our spiritual level is too low. The Lord is coming for a Church without spot or wrinkle. If we walk in the Spirit we will not fulfill the lusts of the flesh, and we can't walk in the Spirit unless we are filled with the Spirit. It should be a walk, a state of grace that we maintain continually.

Its one thing to hear someone prophesy who has been baptized in the Holy Spirit, but when a person who has been filled with the Spirit prophesies, there is an overflow.

The process is as simple as taking a drink of water—*if any man thirst, let him...drink*—and the ministry that flows is as simple as a flowing stream—*from within him shall flow rivers of living water*. John 7:37, 38b. If there is any strain or struggle it is because people are not yielded to God and not filled with God.

We need to be filled with the Spirit. To determine to be so anointed, so overflowing, that everyone around us will be refreshed and blessed. We need to meditate upon how the Holy Spirit dwells within us. Stir Him up to possess us completely, every part of us. Every moment of every day we desire Him to make us aware of Himself. We Call Him forth in His full ministry.