

3 | FULL OF THE HOLY SPIRIT



The Holy Spirit loves unity and being together

Why does the Holy Spirit visit certain places and what can stop Him? A major blockage appears to be 'religion'. By this we mean a faith in which tradition and forms are more important than a living relationship with God.

In religion there is little growth, little life. In religion there are rituals and fixed patterns, in the hope of serving God.

As we saw earlier, God wants to be with us because He is a God of relationship. It is about being with Him and with each other. Jesus is the Word of God that brings life to a group of people who are together in unity. That is an important start and that is where people are formed. But something else is needed: the work of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit in the Bible

There are many times in the Bible when we read about the Holy Spirit, but there is a difference between how the Holy Spirit works in the Old and New Testaments.

Old Testament - New Testament

In the Old Testament, it is striking that the Holy Spirit in almost all the stories is limited to people from the nation of Israel. Although prophets or kings speak God's words through the filling of the Spirit, this does not result in lasting change in the people of Israel. God's Spirit fills people and is present in the tent of meeting and temple, but this is not enough to convey to other nations their experience that God wants to bless.

In the New Testament we frequently see that **the coming of the Holy Spirit does bring change in people**. The Good News will finally be preached all over the world and the promise once given to Abraham that all nations will be blessed in him will be fulfilled. (*Acts 10:1-16, 44-46*)

All nations will be blessed in Jesus

The Holy Spirit gives power for spreading the good news, and moreover, it appears that a spirit-filled person changes himself. Repentance is part of the Holy Spirit, then and now. He gives people conviction of sin and invites them to renounce sin. When the Holy Spirit comes, we also see in the New Testament that family or friends of this person are touched, come to faith and are filled with the Holy Spirit. (*Acts 16:15,33-34*)

We see in Acts that the Holy Spirit can be poured out anywhere and on anyone, Jew or not. Especially where there is unity, where there is expectation in prayer and perseverance, the Holy Spirit comes.

Where does the Holy Spirit like to visit?

What places does the Holy Spirit visit? These are primarily the places where people gather as living stones. We find such groups of people in the New Testament in the colonnades of the temple, but also in the homes, in the new church communities, in the Ekklesia. Here, people are filled with the Holy Spirit, with the intention of sharing that new life, that power, that love with others, so that more Ekklesias are formed.

EXERCISE:

1. Have you ever experienced such an Ekklesia as I have described?
2. Do you long for others to hear through you and your Ekklesia about King Jesus and about the Kingdom that has come closer to those others in you?
3. How do you experience the presence of the Holy Spirit in your life?
4. Ask the Holy Spirit if there are places in your life where tradition or rituals have more place than a relationship with God, and ask Him to help you have a relationship here.
5. How is the Holy Spirit leading you to share Him out to your family, your friends, your environment?
Does this require you to take steps to become fruitful?

LESSON LEARNED:

Not I, but the Word of Jesus and the Holy Spirit bring new life, I must be in the right place as His channel for that.

