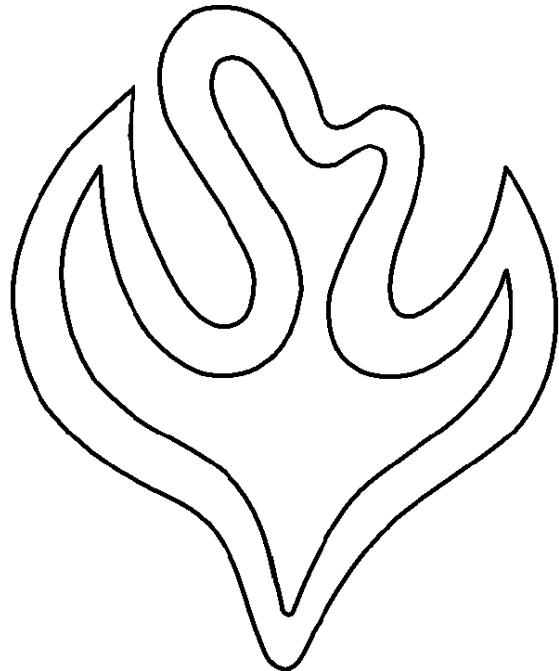


We believe
in the



Holy Spirit

A reader for grasping
The person and work
of the Holy Spirit

We Believe in the Holy Spirit

Since the early church fathers, Christians have declared together their praise for the Holy Spirit through the creeds:

"We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the Prophets...."

To be a Christian is to be a person of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit's ministry is crucial to all believers and is not an added extra for the super spiritual. It is important then for us to appreciate the ministry of the Spirit.

The Holy Spirit has a number of critical but behind the scenes ministries. It is the ministry of the Spirit to reveal Christ to us through his Word. It is the ministry of the Spirit to unite Christ with us. It is the ministry of the Spirit to form Christ in us. It is the ministry of the Spirit to equip us for service as members of the Body of Christ. These readings will take us to different aspects of the Holy Spirit's ministry.

Some people are insecure, or even suspicious, about the role of the Holy Spirit in their lives, some people are over zealous in their interest in the Holy Spirit to the expense of the Father and the Son. This reader allows the bible to teach us about the ministry of the Holy Spirit so we might have a Biblical view and a biblical framework to approach these questions. These notes are not a full blown Bible Study but rather are set of readings on different aspects of the Spirit's ministry with a couple of comments and questions to stir further thinking.

J.I. Packer describes the Spirit's ministry as a floodlight ministry: "It is as if the Spirit stands behind us, throwing light over on Jesus, who stands facing us. The Spirit's message to us is never, "look at me; listen to me; come to me; get to know me,' but always "look at him (Jesus), and see him, see his glory; get to know him, and hear his word; go to him., and have life; get to know him and tastes his gift of joy and peace"

We believe in the Holy Spirit
Walk in Step with the Spirit!

Gavin

1. How to Spot the Holy Spirit

⁴Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.⁵ Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. ⁶These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. ⁷Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. **Deut 6:4-5**

⁵ Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. ⁶Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. ⁷You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.' ⁸The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit." **John 3**

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. ²Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. **Genesis 1:1-2**

A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. ²The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him—the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD—³ and he will delight in the fear of the LORD. **Isaiah 11**

³¹ You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. ³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, ³³ and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end." ³⁴"How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?" ³⁵The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. **Luke 1**

⁹ At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰ As Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. ¹¹ And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased." ¹² At once the Spirit sent him out into the desert, ¹³ and he was in the desert forty days, being tempted by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and angels attended him. **Mark 1 (See Luke 4)**

²¹ At that time Jesus, full of joy through the Holy Spirit, said, “I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure. **Luke 10**

²⁶ “When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me. ²⁷ And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning. **John 15**

¹⁶ Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. ¹⁷ When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. ¹⁸ Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in^a the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” **Matthew 28**

²³ Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. ²⁴ God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.” **John 4**

¹⁷ Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. ¹⁸ And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit. **2 Corinthians 2**

Theologians ask two broad questions about the Holy Spirit:

1. Who is the Holy Spirit?: A person? God? A Ghost? A thing?
2. What does the Holy Spirit do ?

How do you answer these questions?

What help do these passages give us in answering these questions ?
What more information do you need?

What are your expectations of who the Holy Spirit is?

What are your expectations of what the Holy Spirit does ? Are these biblical expectations?

Christians tend to either overemphasize the role of the Spirit or underemphasize the role of the Spirit. Which way do you go? Where is the right balance?

2. How to mission with the Holy Spirit

The LORD had said to Abram, “Leave your country, your people and your father’s household and go to the land I will show you. ² “I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. ³ I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.” **Genesis 12**

Then the LORD said to Moses, ² “See, I have chosen Bezalel son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, ³ and I have filled him with the Spirit of God, with skill, ability and knowledge in all kinds of crafts—⁴ to make artistic designs for work in gold, silver and bronze, ⁵ to cut and set stones, to work in wood, and to engage in all kinds of craftsmanship. **Exodus 31**

Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon Gideon, and he blew a trumpet, summoning the Abiezrites to follow him. ³⁵ He sent messengers throughout Manasseh, calling them to arms, and also into Asher, Zebulun and Naphtali, so that they too went up to meet them. **Judges 6**

Samuel said, “Send for him; we will not sit down until he arrives.” ¹² So he sent and had him brought in. He was ruddy, with a fine appearance and handsome features. Then the LORD said, “Rise and anoint him; he is the one.” ¹³ So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on the Spirit of the LORD came upon David in power. **1 Samuel 16**

⁷ Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? ⁸ If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. **Psalm 139 7-8**

The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, ² to proclaim the year of the LORD’s favour and the day of vengeance of our God. **Isaiah 61**

¹⁴ Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside. ¹⁵ He taught in their synagogues, and everyone praised him. ¹⁶ He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. And he stood up to read. ¹⁷ The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written: ¹⁸ “The Spirit of the Lord is on me, be-

cause he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed,¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour.”²⁰ Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him,²¹ and he began by saying to them, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.” **Luke 4**

¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” **Matthew 28**

“Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about.⁵ For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.”⁶ So when they met together, they asked him, “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?”⁷ He said to them: “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority.⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” **Acts 1**

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place.² Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting.³ They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them.⁴ All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. **Acts 2**

¹⁰ Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care,¹¹ trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow.¹² It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Even angels long to look into these things. **1 Peter 1**

⁸ “I tell you, whoever acknowledges me before men, the Son of Man will also acknowledge him before the angels of God.⁹ But he who disowns me before men will be disowned before the angels of God.¹⁰ And everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven.¹¹ “When you are brought before synagogues, rulers and authorities, do not worry about how you will defend

yourselves or what you will say,¹² for the Holy Spirit will teach you at that time what you should say.” **Luke 12**

¹² Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you.¹³ But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed.¹⁴ If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. **1 Peter 4**

¹⁷ The Spirit and the bride say, “Come!” And let him who hears say, “Come!” Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life. **Rev 22:17**

The Holy Spirit is a Spirit of Mission. This aspect of the Holy Spirit's ministry is often underestimated. Genesis 12 gives us the blueprint for God's rescue plan. The Book of Acts has sometimes been called “The book of Acts of the Holy Spirit” to highlight the particular way Luke emphasizes the work of the Holy Spirit in advancing the mission of God and ensure the Good news of Jesus is taken to the ends of the earth. In Acts, and the whole Bible for that matter we see the Spirit on mission. “The Holy Spirit is a missionary Spirit. So a Spirit-filled church is a missionary church” John Stott

How do the readings give us a glimpse of the Holy Spirit on mission?
What do we see the Spirit's role is in the unfolding story of God's mission ?
What does it mean for God's people that the Holy Spirit is a spirit of mission?

3. How to be baptised by the Holy Spirit

²⁸ ‘And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions.²⁹ Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days. **Joel 2**

John wore clothing made of camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey.⁷ And this was his message: “After me will come one more powerful than I, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I baptise you with water, but he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit.” **Mark 1**

⁵ Jesus answered, “I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit.⁶ Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit-

gives birth to spirit.⁷ You should not be surprised at my saying, ‘You must be born again.’⁸ **John 3**

³⁷ On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink.”³⁸ Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.”³⁹ By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified. **John 7**

³² God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact.³³ Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear. **Acts 2**

³⁶ “Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.”³⁷ When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?”³⁸ Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.³⁹ The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.” **Acts 2**

⁹ You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ. **Romans 8**

⁵ And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us. **Romans 5**

³ Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.⁴ There is one body and one Spirit— just as you were called to one hope when you were called—⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism;⁶ one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. **Ephesians 3**

You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? Before your very eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed as crucified.² I would like to learn just one thing from you: Did you receive the Spirit by observing the law, or by believing what you heard?³ Are you so foolish? After beginning with the Spirit, are you now trying to attain your goal by human effort?⁴ Have you suffered so much for nothing—if it really was for nothing?⁵ Does God give you his Spirit and work miracles among you because you observe the law, or because you believe what you heard? **Galatians 3**

¹³ For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live,¹⁴ because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.¹⁵ For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, “Abba , Father.”¹⁶ The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children.¹⁷ Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ **Romans 8**

⁴ But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law,⁵ to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons.⁶ Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, “Abba, Father.”⁷ So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir. **Galatians 4**

And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit,¹⁴ who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God’s possession—to the praise of his glory. **Ephesians 1**

Baptism of the Spirit is Bible language to describe *the beginning* of the Christian Life. There are a cluster of ideas especially in the New Testament to describe this: regeneration, new birth, adoption, sonship, unity of the Spirit, Baptism of the Spirit. **Baptism of the Spirit describes the moment of rebirth when a person becomes a Christian.** This is the experience of all Christians. **This is a crucial ministry of the Holy Spirit is to unite us to Christ.**

How do the readings help us understand baptism of the Holy Spirit?
Who baptises believers with the Holy Spirit?

How does a person receive baptism of the Holy Spirit ?

When does a person receive baptism of the Holy Spirit?

From the readings when does this happen ?

Traps for unwary players: In Acts, Pentecost describes a unique moment in history when Old Testament believers are brought into the new age of the Spirit. This is for those first followers of Jesus gathered around the Apostles. It is two staged for them. It is different for us, for when we respond to the Gospel, we are born straight into the family of Christ, and the new age of the Spirit. Acts 2:37-39 is prescriptive for us. If it is not two-staged for us how do the readings show that?

4. How to listen to the Holy Spirit

¹⁷Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. ¹⁸And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints. **Ephesians 6**

¹⁹And we have the word of the prophets made more certain, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. ²⁰Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. ²¹For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. **2 Peter 1**

The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. ¹¹For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man's spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. ¹²We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. ¹³This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words. ¹⁴The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned. ¹⁵The spiritual man makes judgments about all things, but he himself is not subject to any man's judgment: ¹⁶"For who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct him?" But we have the mind of Christ. **1 Corinthians 2**

¹³And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is at work in you who believe. **1 Thess 2**

¹⁹Do not put out the Spirit's fire; ²⁰do not treat prophecies with contempt. ²¹Test everything. Hold on to the good. ²²Avoid every kind of evil. **1 Thess 5**

Therefore I tell you that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus be cursed," and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit. **1 Corinthians 12**

⁷So, as the Holy Spirit says: "Today, if you hear his voice, ⁸do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion, during the time of testing in the de-

sert,⁹ where your fathers tested and tried me and for forty years saw what I did. ¹⁰That is why I was angry with that generation, and I said, 'Their hearts are always going astray, and they have not known my ways.'"¹¹ So I declared on oath in my anger, 'They shall never enter my rest.'"¹² See to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. ¹³But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness. **Hebrews 3**

³³"This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time," declares the LORD. "I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. **Jeremiah 31**

⁷He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God. **Rev 2**

¹²For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. ¹³Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account. **Hebrews 4**

⁵For we do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. ⁶For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness,"⁷ made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. ⁷But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. **2 Cor 4**

For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles—² Surely you have heard about the administration of God's grace that was given to me for you,³ that is, the mystery made known to me by revelation, as I have already written briefly.⁴ In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ,⁵ which was not made known to men in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God's holy apostles and prophets.⁶ This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus. **Ephesians 2**

¹⁵For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints,¹⁶ I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers.¹⁷ I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that

you may know him better.¹⁸ I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints,¹⁹ and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength,²⁰ which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms,²¹ far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. **Ephesians 1**

I kneel before the Father,¹⁵ from whom his whole family in heaven and on earth derives its name.¹⁶ I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being,¹⁷ so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love,¹⁸ may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ,¹⁹ and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.²⁰ Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us,²¹ to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen. **Ephesians 3**

But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it,¹⁵ and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.¹⁶ All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,¹⁷ so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. **2 Timothy 3:16**

As the Spirit of mission, a further critical ministry of the Holy Spirit is to reveal Christ to us. Theologians have a cluster of terms to describe the partnership in mission between the written Word and the Holy Spirit: Revelation, God making himself known to us; Inspiration, God causing his Word and witness to be written for us; Illumination, God opening our eyes to truth of the written Word. “The Word without the Spirit is dead, The Spirit without the Word is blunt, The Word with the Spirit is living and active sharper than a two edged sword”

How do these passages help us to understand the relationship between the Word of God and the Holy Spirit. How are they connected?

How does the Sword of the Spirit imagery help us grasp the relationship between the Word of God and the Spirit of God?

How do these readings impact on the way we think about reading the Bible?

How does the Holy Spirit help us read the Bible?

5. How to be filled with the Holy Spirit

⁵ Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. ⁶ The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace; ⁷ the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God’s law, nor can it do so. ⁸ Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God. ⁹ You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ. **Romans 8**

⁶ So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him,⁷ rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness. ⁸ See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ. ⁹ For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form,¹⁰ and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority. **Colossians 2**

¹⁵ Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise,¹⁶ making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.¹⁷ Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is.¹⁸ Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, **be filled with the Spirit.**¹⁹ Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord,²⁰ always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.²¹ Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. **Ephesians 5**

For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life.⁸ Therefore, whoever rejects this instruction does not reject man but God, who gives you his Holy Spirit. **1 Thessalonians 4**

²⁹ Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.³⁰ And **do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God**, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.³¹ Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice.³² Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. **Ephesians 4**

¹⁵ Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. ¹⁶ Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. ¹⁷ And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. **Colossians 3**

²⁰ Then Jesus entered a house, and again a crowd gathered, so that he and his disciples were not even able to eat. ²¹ When his family heard about this, they went to take charge of him, for they said, “He is out of his mind.” ²² And the teachers of the law who came down from Jerusalem said, “He is possessed by Beelzebub! By the prince of demons he is driving out demons.” stand. ²⁶ And if Satan opposes himself and is divided, he cannot stand; his end has come. ²⁷ In fact, no one can enter a strong man’s house and carry off his possessions unless he first ties up the strong man. Then he can rob his house. ²⁸ I tell you the truth, all the sins and blasphemies of men will be forgiven them. ²⁹ But whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven; he is guilty of an eternal sin.” ³⁰ He said this because they were saying, “He has an evil spirit.” **Mark 3**

There are a cluster of ideas in the Bible to describe the ministry of the Holy Spirit to form Christ in us. If baptism of the Spirit is the beginning of the Christian life then being filled with the Spirit, and bearing fruit of the Spirit are speaking to the same reality of the Spirit’s ministry in the ongoing life of the believer. By the Spirit, God is making for himself a people who will walk in his ways. To grieve the Holy Spirit is to not walk in his ways.

Eph 5 has the only command in the New Testament to “be filled with the Spirit.” In the context of the readings what does that mean?

What is the Spirit’s role in the ongoing Christian life?

What does it mean to grieve the Holy Spirit? When do you do that?

What encouragement is there for a believer in these readings?

6. How to grow the fruit of the Spirit

¹⁵ “Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. ¹⁶ By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? ¹⁷ Likewise every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. ¹⁸ A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. ¹⁹ Every tree that does not

bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰ Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them. ²¹ “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. ²² Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?’ ²³ Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’ **Matthew 7**

³¹ And so I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. ³² Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come. ³³ “Make a tree good and its fruit will be good, or make a tree bad and its fruit will be bad, for a tree is recognized by its fruit. ³⁴ You brood of vipers, how can you who are evil say anything good? For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks. ³⁵ The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him. **Matthew 12**

⁴³ “No good tree bears bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. ⁴⁴ Each tree is recognized by its own fruit. People do not pick figs from thornbushes, or grapes from briars. ⁴⁵ The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks. **Luke 6**

⁵ “I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶ If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. ⁷ If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. ⁸ This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples. **John 15**

⁷ Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. ⁸ The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. ⁹ Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. ¹⁰ Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers. **Galatians 6**

¹⁶ So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. ¹⁷ For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want. ¹⁸ But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law. ¹⁹ The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impu-

rity and debauchery;²⁰ idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions²¹ and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,²³ gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.²⁴ Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires.²⁵ Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.²⁶ Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other. **Galatians 5**

⁹ And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight,¹⁰ so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ,¹¹ filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God. **Philippians 1**

¹⁶ Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you?¹⁷ If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him; for God's temple is sacred, and you are that temple. **1 Cor 3**

¹⁸ Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body.¹⁹ Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own;²⁰ you were bought at a price. Therefore honour God with your body. **1 Cor 6**

¹² Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.¹³ Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.¹⁴ And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. **Colossians 3**

The fruit of the Spirit is a word picture to describe work of the Spirit in the ongoing life of the believer.

What do the readings teach us about this ministry of the Spirit?

How does the word picture of bearing fruit help us to appreciate the ministry of the Spirit ?

What helps this fruit grow? What hinders this fruit from growing ?

How is the fruit of the Spirit contrast with the acts of the sinful nature ?

What expectations do you have of the Spirit's work in you ?

What fruit is evident in you ?

7. How to receive the gifts of the Spirit

⁴ There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. ⁵ There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. ⁶ There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men. ⁷ Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. ⁸ To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit,⁹ to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit,¹⁰ to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues.¹¹ All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines. **1 Corinthians 12**

Follow the way of love and eagerly desire spiritual gifts, especially the gift of prophecy. ² For anyone who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God. Indeed, no one understands him; he utters mysteries with his spirit ³ But everyone who prophesies speaks to men for their strengthening, encouragement and comfort. ⁴ He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church. ⁵ I would like every one of you to speak in tongues, but I would rather have you prophesy. He who prophesies is greater than one who speaks in tongues, unless he interprets, so that the church may be edified. **1 Cor 14**

As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. ² Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. ³ Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. ⁴ There is one body and one Spirit— just as you were called to one hope when you were called— ⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism; ⁶ one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. ⁷ But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. ⁸ This is why it says: “When he ascended on high, he led captives in his train and gave gifts to men.” ⁹ (What does “he ascended” mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions?^c? ¹⁰ He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.) ¹¹ It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers,¹² to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up¹³ until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. **Ephesians 4**

⁸ Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. ⁹ Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. ¹⁰ Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. ¹¹ If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen. **1 Peter 4**

³ For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you. ⁴ Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, ⁵ so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. ⁶ We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. ⁷ If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; ⁸ if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully. **Romans 12**

¹² The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ. ¹³ For we were all baptized by^a one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.

¹⁴ Now the body is not made up of one part but of many. ¹⁵ If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. ¹⁶ And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. ¹⁷ If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? ¹⁸ But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. ¹⁹ If they were all one part, where would the body be? ²⁰ As it is, there are many parts, but one body.

²¹ The eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you!" And the head cannot say to the feet, "I don't need you!" ²² On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, ²³ and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honour. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty, ²⁴ while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has combined the members of the body and has given greater honor to the parts that lacked it, ²⁵ so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. ²⁶ If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honoured, every part rejoices

with it. ²⁷ Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. ²⁸ And in the church God has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, also those having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with gifts of administration, and those speaking in different kinds of tongues. ²⁹ Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? ³⁰ Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues^b? Do all interpret? ³¹ But eagerly desire the greater gifts. **1 Corinthians 12**

The final ministry of the Spirit is to equip God's people for service, corporate as well as individual. Amongst Christians, gifts of the Spirit gets a disproportionate degree of attention compared to other ministries of the Holy Spirit?

What do the readings teach us about the gifts of the Spirit?

What is a gift of the Spirit?

What are the gifts of the Spirit for?

Who gets a gift of the Spirit ?

How could you abuse your gift ?

What gifts should you expect to receive?

Should speaking in tongues be in our church meetings?

"Spiritual gifts are God empowering His people through the Holy Spirit for kingdom life and service, enabling them in attitude and action to live and minister in a manner which glorifies Christ" Boyd Hunt

