

Mark A. Finley

10 Days
in the
UPPER ROOM



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Welcome

Welcome to an incredible spiritual journey to the Upper Room. Let me assure you that you are poised to make some of the most thrilling biblical discoveries of your life. During these studies, we will explore the preparation necessary to receive the Holy Spirit's power in all of its fullness. Together we will survey Inspiration's instructions on the reception of the Holy Spirit and on how to live daily in the power of the Spirit.

Have you ever wondered why the disciples had such death-defying faith? What gave them the courage to proclaim the gospel to the ends of the earth in spite of such overwhelming odds? Why were they so different after Pentecost? Peter's boastful claims were turned into submissive obedience and powerful proclamation. Thomas's doubts were transformed into rock-solid faith. James and John, the Sons of Thunder, were totally changed; they became humble servants of the Lord Jesus. Matthew, the cunning tax collector, became a faithful chronicler of the gospel; and Mary, a woman of ill repute, became a secure, loving champion of the Cross. Pentecost made a dramatic difference in their lives—and it can make a difference in our lives too. Filled with the power of the Holy Spirit, they changed the world. In just a few decades, the gospel was carried to the ends of the Roman Empire.

Is Jesus' promise of the Holy Spirit for these disciples alone? Is the outpouring of Heaven's power limited to them? Or, perhaps, does God have more for us, too, than we can possibly imagine? Speaking of Pentecost's promise, Peter declares, "The promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call" (Acts 2:39).

Ellen White reaffirms that the gift is for us as well.

The lapse of time has wrought no change in Christ's parting promise to send the Holy

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Spirit as His representative. It is not because of any restriction on the part of God that the riches of His grace do not flow earthward to men. If the fulfillment of the promise is

God longs to pour out the Holy Spirit upon His church today.

not seen as it might be, it is because the promise is not appreciated as it should be. If all were willing, all would be filled with the Spirit. Wherever the need of the Holy Spirit is a matter little thought of, there is seen spiritual drought, spiritual darkness, spiritual declension and death. Whenever minor matters occupy the attention, the divine power which is necessary for the growth and

prosperity of the church, and which would bring all other blessings in its train, is lacking, though offered in infinite plenitude (*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 50).

Both the Bible and the writings of the modern-day gift of prophecy clearly reveal that the promise of the Holy Spirit is for each one of us. God longs to pour out the Holy Spirit upon His church today. It is not because of any reluctance on the part of God that the Holy Spirit has not been poured out in latter-rain power for the finishing of God's work. All of Heaven waits for God's people to take the steps necessary to receive the power of the Holy Spirit to complete the gospel commission.

In this workbook, we will revisit the Upper Room and specifically study the preparation necessary to receive the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at the end time. Each chapter contains three distinct sections: Examining Divine Counsel, Reflecting on Divine Counsel, and Applying Divine Counsel. We will examine the disciples' heartfelt preparation before they received the Holy Spirit, reflect on the writings of both the Bible and Ellen White about the ministry of the Holy

Spirit, and relate what we are learning from Inspiration to our lives as we fill out sections in the workbook. It is my prayer that as you study this material, you will be filled with the Holy Spirit in a life-transforming experience. I pray that God will empower you to be a mighty witness for Him at this decisive moment of earth's history.

There in that Upper Room in Jerusalem, they prayed, repented of their sins, confessed their lack of faith, humbled their hearts, and surrendered their lives anew to the Holy Spirit's working.

Why Pentecost is significant

The Day of Pentecost was extremely significant in Jewish history. Following fifty days after the Passover celebration, it commemorated both the spring harvest in Palestine's agricultural cycle and the giving of the law on Mount Sinai fifty days after the Exodus. For Christians,

it commemorates the descent of the Holy Spirit. Some have called Pentecost "the birth of the Christian church." After His death and resurrection, Jesus appeared to the disciples for forty days (Acts 1:3). He commanded them to wait in Jerusalem to receive the promise of the mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit as predicted in Joel 2:28. "It shall come to pass afterward that I shall pour out My Spirit on all flesh," the Savior declared. "You shall receive power when the

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Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

Recognizing the significance of Christ’s command, the disciples obeyed His instructions. There in that Upper Room in Jerusalem, they prayed, repented of their sins, confessed their lack of faith, humbled their hearts, and surrendered their lives anew to the Holy Spirit’s working. With divine insight, Ellen White describes what happened during their ten days together. “After Christ’s ascension, the disciples were gathered together in one place to make humble supplication to God. And after ten days of heart searching and self-examination, the way was prepared for the Holy Spirit to enter the cleansed, consecrated soul temples” (*Evangelism*, p. 698).

The Christian church began its existence by praying for the Holy Spirit.

The Christian church began its existence by praying for the Holy Spirit. It was in its infancy, without the personal presence of Christ. Just before His ascension Christ had commissioned the disciples to preach the gospel to the world. . . .

In obedience to the word of their Master the disciples returned to Jerusalem, and for ten days they prayed for the fulfillment of God’s promise. These ten days were days of deep heart searching. The disciples put away all difference that had existed among them, and drew close together in Christian fellowship. . . . At the end of the ten days the Lord fulfilled His promise by a wonderful outpouring of His Spirit. When they were “all with one accord in one place” in prayer and supplication, the promised blessing came. . . .

What was the result of the outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost? The glad tidings of a risen Saviour were carried to the utmost bounds of the inhabited world. The hearts of the disciples were surcharged with benevolence so full, so deep, so far reaching, that it impelled them to go to the ends of the earth.

By the grace of Christ the apostles were made what they were. It was sincere devotion and humble, earnest prayer that brought them into close communion with Him. They sat together with Him in heavenly places. They realized the greatness of their debt to Him. By earnest, persevering prayer they obtained the endowment of the Holy Spirit, and then they went forth, weighted with the burden of saving souls, filled with zeal to extend the triumphs of the cross. . . .

Shall we be less earnest than were the apostles? Shall we not by living faith claim the promises that moved them to the depths of their being to call upon the Lord Jesus for the fulfillment of His word: “Ask, and ye shall receive” (John 16:24)? Is not the Spirit of God to come today in answer to earnest, persevering prayer, and fill men with power? (*In Heavenly Places*, p. 333).

10 Days in the Upper Room has been prepared in response

The Great Commission is accompanied by the great promise. The task of preaching the gospel to the entire world in this generation may seem impossible, but God is the God of the impossible.

to this divine counsel. The Great Commission is accompanied by the great promise. The task of preaching the gospel to the entire world in this generation may seem impossible, but God is the God of the impossible. When the Holy Spirit is poured out in the fullness of His power, hearts will be touched, lives will be changed, and God's last-day message of truth will spread like wildfire. Our sons and daughters who have drifted from Jesus will come home. Backsliders will return to the God of their childhood. Hard hearts will be softened and closed minds opened. Countries resistant to the gospel will become fertile fields for the reception of God's truth. The earth will be "illuminated with . . . glory" (Revelation 18:1). The work of God on earth will be finished, and Jesus will come.

Why God unleashed Heaven's power

Heaven's power was unleashed on Pentecost for two main reasons. First, the time was right. The Holy Spirit was poured out on the disciples as confirmation that Christ's sacrifice was accepted in heaven. He was now exalted as our Savior and Lord. Peter explained this in his sermon on

The descent of the Holy Spirit was the divine signal that the disciples had a Friend at the throne of God who would daily empower them to accomplish His mission.

Pentecost when he proclaimed, "Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear" (Acts 2:33). The descent of the Holy Spirit was the divine signal that the disciples had a Friend at the throne of God who would daily empower them to accomplish His mission. The clock struck the hour in the divine timetable of heaven, and the Spirit was poured out with all power. "Christ determined to bestow a gift on those who had been with Him and on those who should believe on Him, because this was the occasion of His ascension and inauguration, a jubilee in heaven. What gift could

Christ bestow rich enough to signalize and grace His ascension to the mediatorial throne? It must be worthy of His greatness and His royalty. Christ gave His representative, the third person of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit. This Gift could not be excelled" (*Christ Triumphant*, p. 301).

The second reason the Holy Spirit was poured out was that the disciples met the conditions. Something miraculous happened during those ten days in the Upper Room that prepared them to receive the Spirit in all of its fullness. In the first century, the disciples received the power of the Holy Spirit to launch the gospel message. God's end-time church will receive the fullness of the Spirit's power to complete the task of proclaiming the gospel to the world.

The time is right. The hour has come. Our Lord is appealing to His church today to meet the conditions. A careful study of both the Bible and the writings of Ellen White reveal the experience of the disciples during those ten days in the Upper Room. They sought for a renewed experience with God through the following activities:

1. Earnest intercession
2. Deeper faith
3. Heartfelt repentance

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4. Honest confession
5. Loving unity
6. Self-examination
7. Sacrificial humility
8. Obedient surrender
9. Joyful thanksgiving
10. Passionate witness

In the section “Examining Divine Counsel,” we will study one of these character qualities in each chapter and ask these basic questions:

1. How can I prepare my heart to receive the fullness of the Holy Spirit’s power?
2. Is there anything in my life that hinders the outpouring of the Holy Spirit?
3. Can God safely trust me with the power of His Holy Spirit?
4. Is my heart prepared to receive the promised latter rain?

As we study these topics together, you will sense yourself being drawn even closer to the Savior. As you daily open your heart to the Holy Spirit’s influence, you will experience an even more intimate experience with Jesus. The power of the Spirit will fill your life anew. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is not something we seek once, nor is it some glorious experience we longingly wait for in the future. The infilling of the Holy Spirit is an experience we seek every day. “For the daily baptism of the Spirit every worker should offer his petition to God. Companies of Christian workers should gather to ask for special help, for heavenly wisdom, that they may know how to plan and execute wisely” (*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 50).

May you experience the power of the Holy Spirit afresh in your life as you study these pages, and may your heart be open to receive everything that God has for His church today.



Day 1

Earnest Intercession

Payer is the heartbeat of the disciples' ministry throughout their exploits of faith in the book of Acts. They gathered together for ten days and earnestly sought the promised Holy Spirit. After the Holy Spirit was poured out, in only one day three thousand new converts were added. "They continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2:42). When facing overwhelming obstacles, the disciples appealed to their best Friend, Jesus, who stood at the right hand of God's throne, and "the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the Word of God with boldness" (Acts 4:31). Soon the early church chose deacons so the apostles could give themselves "continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word" (Acts 6:4). When Herod imprisoned Peter, the entire church interceded, and the apostle was miraculously released from prison (Acts 12).

The prayer experience in the Upper Room launched a life of prayer for the disciples' entire ministry. Through prayer they developed trusting hearts. Through prayer they established an attitude of dependence on the Almighty. Through prayer they acknowledged their weakness and sought His strength. Through prayer they admitted their ignorance and sought His wisdom. The disciples openly recognized their limitations and cried out for His all-sufficient power. They recognized they could never reach the world with the gospel without the presence and power of the Holy Spirit working through them. Pentecost was the result of heartfelt intercession.

Prayer: The channel of blessing

Through prayer we, too, open our hearts to everything Jesus has for us. We lay our souls bare to receive the fullness of His power. “Prayer is the opening of the heart to God as to a friend. Not that it is necessary in order to make known to God what we are, but in order to enable us to receive Him. Prayer does not bring God down to us, but brings us up to Him” (*Steps to Christ*, p. 93). In all healthy relationships there is the desire to communicate with the person we care about. Prayer opens our hearts to speak with God just like we would a close friend or companion. The Upper Room was a place of communion with God, a place where the disciples prayed individually and united in corporate prayer. They “met together to present their requests to

the Father in the name of Jesus. They knew that they had a Representative in heaven, an Advocate at the throne of God. In solemn awe they bowed in prayer, repeating the assurance, ‘Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name, He will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in My name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.’ John 16:23, 24. Higher and still higher they extended the hand of faith, with the mighty argument, ‘It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also

*P*rayer opens our hearts to speak with God just like we would a close friend or companion.

maketh intercession for us.’ Romans 8:24” (*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 35, 36).

We, too, have a Representative in heaven who invites us to bring our burdens to Him. We have a Friend at the throne of God who urges us to present the longings of our hearts to Him. We, too, can claim His promises. We, too, can extend our hands of faith higher and higher. We, too, can ask Him to bestow Heaven’s most priceless gift of the Holy Spirit upon us. He invites us to come to the throne now to claim these precious promises.

In the great controversy between good and evil, prayer is a mighty weapon to defeat the enemy. One of the fundamental principles in God’s universe is freedom of choice. God will never coerce our will. He will never manipulate us into serving Him. Although He daily works in our lives, impressing us by His spirit to make right choices, His involvement in our lives is limited by our choices. When we kneel before Him in prayer, He respects our choice for Him to intervene in our lives more fully. His Spirit impresses and convicts us before we pray, but His Spirit will never fill us and empower us until we pray.

Prayerfully read the Scripture and Ellen G. White passages below. Claim them as your own. Present these divine promises to the Lord, believing that He will fulfill His Word.

Divine promises

- “If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!” (Luke 11:13).
- “I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever” (John 14:16).
- “The Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all the things that I said to you” (John 14:26).

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- “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened” (Matthew 7:7, 8).
- “Heaven is full of light and strength, and we can draw from it if we will. God is waiting to pour his blessing upon us as soon as we draw nigh to him and by living faith grasp his promises. He says that he is more willing to give his Holy Spirit to those that ask him than earthly parents are to give good gifts unto their children. Shall we take him at his word?” (*Historical Sketches*, p. 152).
- “The lapse of time has wrought no change in Christ’s parting promise to send the Holy Spirit as His representative. It is not because of any restriction on the part of God that the riches of His grace do not flow earthward to men. If the fulfillment of the promise is not seen as it might be, it is because the promise is not appreciated as it should be. If all were willing, all would be filled with the Spirit. Wherever the need of the Holy Spirit is a matter little thought of, there is seen spiritual drought, spiritual darkness, spiritual declension and death. Whenever minor matters occupy the attention, the divine power which is necessary for the growth and prosperity of the church, and which would bring all other blessings in its train, is lacking, though offered in infinite plenitude” (*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 50).
- “Morning by morning, as the heralds of the gospel kneel before the Lord and renew their vows of consecration to Him, He will grant them the presence of His Spirit, with its reviving, sanctifying power. As they go forth to the day’s duties, they have the assurance that the unseen agency of the Holy Spirit enables them to be ‘laborers together with God’ ” (*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 56).
- “Near the close of earth’s harvest, a special bestowal of spiritual grace is promised to prepare the church for the coming of the Son of man. This outpouring of the Spirit is likened to the falling of the latter rain; and it is for this added power that Christians are to send their petitions to the Lord of the harvest ‘in the time of the latter rain.’ In response, ‘the Lord shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain.’ ‘He will cause to come down . . . the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain,’ Zechariah 10:1; Joel 2:23” (*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 55).

We are living at a special time in human history.

All of Heaven invites us to grasp the promises of the Almighty.

God longs to do something special for His church now.

We are living at a special time in human history. All of Heaven invites us to grasp the promises of the Almighty. God longs to do something special for His church now. He invites us to seek Him with all of our hearts to receive the power of His Holy Spirit in the latter rain for the finishing of His work on earth. Will you prayerfully claim His promises? Will you encourage others to join you in praying for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit? Will you now reorder your priorities to spend more time with Jesus in prayer?



Section 2: Reflecting on Divine Counsel

Thoughtfully read the following excerpt from *The Desire of Ages*, pages 668–671.

Before offering Himself as the sacrificial victim, Christ sought for the most essential and complete gift to bestow upon His followers, a gift that [page 669] would bring within their reach the boundless resources of grace. “I will pray the Father,” He said, “and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him; but ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you orphans: I will come to you.” John 14:16–18, margin.

Before this the Spirit had been in the world; from the very beginning of the work of redemption He had been moving upon men’s hearts. But while Christ was on earth, the disciples had desired no other helper. Not until they were deprived of His presence would they feel their need of the Spirit, and then He would come.

The Holy Spirit is Christ’s representative, but divested of the personality of humanity, and independent thereof. Cumbered with humanity, Christ could not be in every place personally. Therefore it was for their interest that He should go to the Father, and send the Spirit to be His successor on earth. No one could then have any advantage because of his location or his personal contact with Christ. By the Spirit the Saviour would be accessible to all. In this sense He would be nearer to them than if He had not ascended on high.

“He that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him.” Jesus read the future of His disciples. He saw one brought to the scaffold, one to the

cross, one to exile among the lonely rocks of the sea, others to persecution and death. He encouraged them with the promise that in every trial He would be with them. That promise has lost none of its force. The Lord knows all about His faithful servants who for His sake are lying in prison or who are banished to lonely islands. He comforts them with His own presence. When for the truth’s sake the believer stands at the bar of unrighteous tribunals, Christ stands by his side. All the reproaches

that fall upon him, fall upon Christ. Christ is condemned over again in the person of His disciple. When one is incarcerated in prison walls, Christ ravishes the heart with His love. When one suffers death for His sake, Christ says, “I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive forevermore, . . . and have the keys of hell and of death.” Revelation 1:18. The life that is sacrificed for Me is preserved unto eternal glory.

At all times and in all places, in all sorrows and in all afflictions, when the outlook seems dark and the future perplexing, and we feel helpless and alone, the Comforter will be sent in answer to the prayer of [page 670] faith. Circumstances may separate us from every earthly friend; but no circumstance, no distance, can separate us from the heavenly Comforter. Wherever we are,

The Holy Spirit is Christ’s representative, but divested of the personality of humanity, and independent thereof.

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wherever we may go, He is always at our right hand to support, sustain, uphold, and cheer.

The disciples still failed to understand Christ's words in their spiritual sense, and again He explained His meaning. By the Spirit, He said, He would manifest Himself to them. "The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things." No more will you say, I cannot comprehend. No longer will you see through a glass, darkly. You shall "be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge." Ephesians 3:18, 19.

The disciples were to bear witness to the life and work of Christ. Through their word He was to speak to all the people on the face of the earth. But in the humiliation and death of Christ they were to suffer great trial and disappointment. That after this experience their word might be accurate, Jesus promised that the Comforter should "bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

"I have yet many things to say unto you," He continued, "but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will show you things to come. He shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you." Jesus had opened before His disciples a vast tract of truth. But it was most difficult for them to keep His lessons distinct from the traditions and maxims of the scribes and Pharisees. They had been educated to accept the teaching of the rabbis as the voice of God, and it still held a power over their minds, and molded their sentiments. Earthly ideas, temporal things, still had a large place in their thoughts. They did not understand the spiritual nature of Christ's kingdom, though He had so often explained it to them. Their minds had become confused. They did not comprehend the value of the scriptures Christ presented. Many of His lessons seemed almost lost upon them. Jesus saw that they did not lay hold of the real meaning of His words. He compassionately promised that the Holy Spirit should recall these sayings to their minds. And He had left unsaid many things that could not be comprehended by the disciples. These also would be opened to them by the Spirit. The Spirit was to quicken their [page 671] understanding, that they might have an appreciation of heavenly things. "When He, the Spirit of truth, is come," said Jesus, "He will guide you into all truth."

The Comforter is called "the Spirit of truth." His work is to define and maintain the truth. He first dwells in the heart as the Spirit of truth, and thus He becomes the Comforter. There is comfort and peace in the truth, but no real peace or comfort can be found in falsehood. It is through false theories and traditions that Satan gains his power over the mind. By directing men to false standards, he misshapes the character. Through the Scriptures the Holy Spirit speaks to the mind, and impresses truth upon the heart. Thus He exposes error, and expels it from the soul. It is by the Spirit of truth, working through the word of God, that Christ subdues His chosen people to Himself.

In describing to His disciples the office work of the Holy Spirit, Jesus sought to inspire them

At all times and in all places,
in all sorrows and in all
afflictions, when the outlook
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with the joy and hope that inspired His own heart. He rejoiced because of the abundant help He had provided for His church. The Holy Spirit was the highest of all gifts that He could solicit from His Father for the exaltation of His people. The Spirit was to be given as a regenerating agent, and without this the sacrifice of Christ would have been of no avail. The power of evil had been strengthening for centuries, and the submission of men to this satanic captivity was amazing. Sin could be resisted and overcome only through the mighty agency of the Third Person of the Godhead, who would come with no modified energy, but in the fullness of divine power. It is the Spirit that makes effectual what has been wrought out by the world's Redeemer. It is by the Spirit that the heart is made pure. Through the Spirit the believer becomes a partaker of the divine nature. Christ has given His Spirit as a divine power to overcome all hereditary and cultivated tendencies to evil, and to impress His own character upon His church.

Of the Spirit Jesus said, "He shall glorify Me." The Saviour came to glorify the Father by the demonstration of His love; so the Spirit was to glorify Christ by revealing His grace to the world. The very image of God is to be reproduced in humanity. The honor of God, the honor of Christ, is involved in the perfection of the character of His people.

"When He [the Spirit of truth] is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." The preaching of the word will be of no avail without the continual presence and aid of the Holy Spirit. This is the only effectual teacher of divine truth. Only [page 672] when the truth is accompanied to the heart by the Spirit will it quicken the conscience or transform the life. One might be able to present the letter of the word of God, he might be familiar with all its commands and promises; but unless the Holy Spirit sets home the truth, no souls will fall on the Rock and be broken. No amount of education, no advantages, however great, can make one a channel of light without the co-operation of the Spirit of God. The sowing of the gospel seed will not be a success unless the seed is quickened into life by the dew of heaven. Before one book of the New Testament was written, before one gospel sermon had been preached after Christ's ascension, the Holy Spirit came upon the praying apostles. Then the testimony of their enemies was, "Ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine." Acts 5:28.

Only when the truth is accompanied to the heart by the Spirit will it quicken the conscience or transform the life.

Christ has promised the gift of the Holy Spirit to His church, and the promise belongs to us as much as to the first disciples. But like every other promise, it is given on conditions. There are many who believe and profess to claim the Lord's promise; they talk about Christ and about the Holy Spirit, yet receive no benefit. They do not surrender the soul to be guided and controlled by the divine agencies. We cannot use the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is to use us. Through the Spirit God works in His

people "to will and to do of His good pleasure." Philippians 2:13. But many will not submit to this. They want to manage themselves. This is why they do not receive the heavenly gift. Only to those who wait humbly upon God, who watch for His guidance and grace, is the Spirit given. The power of God awaits their demand and reception. This promised blessing, claimed by faith, brings all other blessings in its train. It is given according to the riches of the grace of Christ, and He is ready to supply every soul according to the capacity to receive.



Section 3: Applying Divine Counsel

Meeting the Conditions

Just before He ascended to heaven, Jesus promised to send His disciples the gift of the Holy Spirit. Believing His promise, they entered into earnest intercession for the power of the Spirit in their own lives. They sought God in prayer for the promised gift.

For many Christians, the Holy Spirit is some sort of vague, indefinable force. He is the most misunderstood Member of the Godhead. In today's lesson, we will study Jesus' promise of the Spirit, the work of the Spirit, and the ministry of the Spirit in our lives.

As we understand the Holy Spirit's ministry more fully, we will long for the power of His presence in our lives. Understanding the Holy Spirit's ministry more clearly, we appreciate Him more, and more diligently seek for His powerful presence.

As we understand the Spirit's work better, our spiritual experience will deepen, and we will cry out for the infilling of the Spirit in the power of the latter rain.

1. What practical limitation did Jesus have while He was here on earth that the Holy Spirit would not have? What significant statement did Jesus make to His disciples about "going away"?

Summarize Jesus' words recorded in John 16:7.

Read *The Desire of Ages*, page 669, paragraphs 2 and 3, to complete the sentences below.

"Cumbered with humanity, Christ _____

"By the Spirit _____

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“He would be _____

_____.”

2. How does the Holy Spirit enable us to face the trials, challenges, and disappointments of life? (See John 14:18, 26, 27; *The Desire of Ages*, page 699, last paragraph, and page 670, paragraph 1.)

The Holy Spirit is our ever-present Companion, Friend, and Helper. He strengthens us in trials, encourages us in disappointment, guides us in making decisions, and empowers us in resisting temptation.

The Holy Spirit is not limited by time or space. He can be in all places at all times. We cannot fully comprehend this divine mystery, but nevertheless it is true. Praise God! His presence through His Spirit is with us always.

3. List three reasons why Jesus describes the Holy Spirit as the “Spirit of truth” (See *The Desire of Ages*, page 670, and paragraph 1 of page 671.)

4. What is the role (function of) the Holy Spirit in character development? (See *The Desire of Ages*, page 671, paragraph 2.)

Day 1: Earnest Intercession

5. What is the chief work of the Holy Spirit? (See John 16:13, 14; *The Desire of Ages*, page 671, last paragraph.)

The Holy Spirit is Jesus' special gift to His church. Without the presence of Jesus in our lives through the Holy Spirit, we are powerless to face the enemy. The presence of the Holy Spirit brings joy, peace, power, and victory in our walk with God. Without the infilling of the Holy Spirit, our Christian lives are joyless and powerless. We live lives of frustrated defeat rather than confident hope. Will you, right now, open your heart to the ministry of the Holy Spirit and pray this simple prayer?

Dear Jesus,

Today, I thank You for Your promise of the Holy Spirit. Too often, I have neglected thinking about and asking for His infilling in my own life. Too often, I have attempted to live the Christian life in my own strength rather than trusting in the power of the Holy Spirit for victory.

Just now I open my heart to You. I claim the promise of Your Holy Spirit. I repent of my lack of spiritual focus at times and of trusting in my own strength.

Believing that You will honor Your word right now, I accept the gift of the Holy Spirit. Thank You, Lord, for giving me Heaven's most precious gift.

In Jesus' name, amen.