

## discipleship



**Satisfaction: (n.) fulfillment of one's needs, longing or desires**

What words would you use to describe your current experience as a Christian?

<b>Growing</b>	<b>Empty</b>
<b>Frustrated</b>	<b>Discouraged</b>
<b>Disappointing</b>	<b>Duty</b>
<b>Fulfilled</b>	<b>Intimate</b>
<b>Forgiven</b>	<b>Mediocre</b>
<b>Stuck</b>	<b>Painful</b>
<b>Struggling</b>	<b>Dynamic</b>
<b>Joyful</b>	<b>Guilty</b>
<b>Defeated</b>	<b>Vital</b>
<b>Exciting</b>	<b>So-so</b>
<b>Up and down</b>	<b>Others?</b>

Do you desire more? Jesus said, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him." (John 7:37-38).

What did Jesus mean? John, the biblical author, went on to explain, "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 7:39).

Jesus promised that God's Holy Spirit would satisfy the thirst, or deepest longings, of all who believe in Jesus Christ. However, many Christians do not understand the Holy Spirit or how to experience Him in their daily lives.

**The following principles will help you understand and enjoy God's Holy Spirit.**

The Divine Gift

**Divine: (adj) given by God**

**God has given us His Spirit so that we can experience intimacy with Him and enjoy all He has for us.**

The Holy Spirit is the source of our deepest satisfaction.

**The Holy Spirit is God's permanent presence with us.**

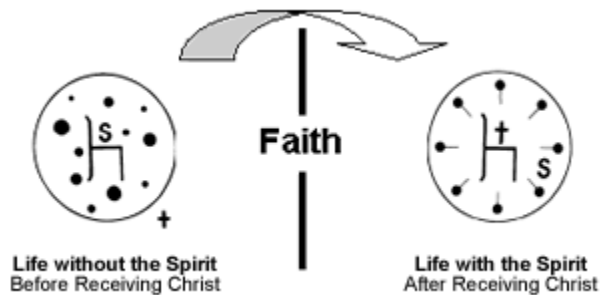
Jesus said, "And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever— the Spirit of truth (John 14:16,17).

**The Holy Spirit enables us to understand and experience all God has given us.**

" We 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" (1 Corinthians 2:12).

The Holy Spirit enables us to experience many things:

- **A genuine new spiritual life** (John 3:1-8).
- **The assurance of being a child of God** (Romans 8:15-16).
- **The infinite love of God** (Romans 5:5; Ephesians 3:18-19).



The 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. (1 Corinthians 2:14)

The spiritual man makes judgements about all things,... We have the mind of Christ. (1 Corinthians 2:15-16)

But those who are controlled by the Holy Spirit think about things that please the Spirit. (Romans 8:5, NLT)

**Why are many Christians not satisfied in their experience with God?**

The Present Danger

**Danger: (n.) a thing that may cause injury, loss or pain**

**We cannot experience intimacy with God and enjoy all he has for us if we fail to depend on His Spirit.**

People who trust our their own efforts and strength to live the Christian life will experience failure and frustration, as will those who live to please themselves rather than God.

**We cannot live the Christian life in our own strength.**

"Are you so foolish? After beginning with the Spirit, are you now trying to attain your goal by human effort?" (Galatians 3:3)

**We cannot enjoy all God desires for us if we live by our self-centered desires.**

"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" (Galatians 5:17).



Brothers, I could not address you as spiritual but as worldly—mere infants in Christ. I gave you

milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready. You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere men? (1 Corinthians 3:1-3)

### How can we develop a lifestyle of depending on the Spirit?

The Intimate Journey

**Journey: (n.) any course from one experience to another**

**By walking in the Spirit, we increasingly experience intimacy with God and enjoy all He has for us.**

**As we walk in the Spirit, we have the ability to live a life pleasing to God.**

" So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit" (Galatians 5:16, 25).

**As we walk in the Spirit, we experience intimacy with God and all he has for us.**

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control" (Galatians 5:22,23).



Faith (trust in God and His promises) is the only way a Christian can live by the Spirit.

**Spiritual breathing** is a powerful word picture which can help you experience moment-by-moment dependence upon the Spirit.

**Exhale:** Confess your sin the moment you become aware of it - agree with God concerning it and thank Him for His forgiveness, according to 1 John 1:9 and Hebrews 10:1-25. Confession requires repentance - a change in attitude and action.

**Inhale:** Surrender control of your life to Christ, and rely upon the Holy Spirit to fill you with His presence and power by faith, according to His **command** (Ephesians 5:18) and **promise** (1 John 5:14-15).

### How does the Holy Spirit fill us with His power?

The Empowering Presence

**Empower: (v.) to give ability to**

**We are filled with the Spirit by faith, enabling us to experience intimacy with God and enjoy all he has for us.**

The essence of the Christian life is what God does in and through us, not what we do for God. Christ's life is reproduced in the believer by the power of the Holy Spirit. To be filled with the Spirit is to be directed and empowered by Him.

**By faith, we experience God's power through the Spirit.**

"I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith" (Ephesians 3:16,17).

Three important questions to ask yourself:

1. Am I ready to surrender control of my life to our Lord Jesus Christ?
2. Am I ready now to confess my sins? (1 John 1:9) Sin grieves God's Spirit (Ephesians 4:30). But God in His love has forgiven all of your sins - past, present, and future - because Christ died for you.
3. Do I sincerely desire to be directed and empowered by the Holy Spirit? (John 7:37-39)

By faith claim the fullness of the Spirit according to His command and promise:

God **COMMANDS** us to be filled with the Spirit.  
"... be filled with the Spirit" (Ephesians 5:18)

God **PROMISED** He will always answer when we pray according to His will.  
"This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know he hears us - whatever we ask - we know that we have what we ask of him" (1 John 5:14-15).

### **How to pray to be filled with the Holy Spirit..**

The Turning Point

**Turning point: time when a decisive change occurs**

**We are filled with the Holy Spirit by faith alone.**

Sincere prayer is one way of expressing our faith. The following is a suggested prayer:

Dear Father, I need you. I acknowledge that I have sinned against You by directing my own life. I thank You that You have forgiven my sins through Christ's death on the cross for me. I now invite Christ to again take His place on the throne of my life. Fill me with the Holy Spirit as you **commanded** me to be filled, and as You **promised** in Your Word that You would do if I asked in faith. I pray this in the name of Jesus. I now thank you for filling me with the Holy Spirit and directing my life.

Does this prayer express the desire of your heart? If so, you can pray right now and trust God to fill you with His Holy Spirit.

### **How to know that you are filled by the Holy Spirit**

- Did you ask God to fill you with the Holy Spirit?
- Do you know that you are now filled with Holy Spirit?
- On what authority? (On the trustworthiness of God Himself and His Word: Hebrews 11:6; Romans 14:22-23.)

As you continue to depend on God's Spirit moment by moment you will experience and enjoy intimacy with God all He has for you - a truly rich and satisfying life.

An important reminder ...

#### **Do not Depend on Feelings**

The promise of God's Word, the Bible - not our feelings - is our authority. The Christian lives by faith (trust) in the trustworthiness of God Himself and His Word. Flying a jet can illustrate the relationship among fact (God and His Word), faith (our trust in God and His Word), and feeling (The result of our faith and obedience) (John 14:21).



To be transported by a jet, we must place our faith in the trustworthiness of the aircraft and the pilot who flies it. Our feelings of confidence or fear do not affect the ability of the jet to transport us, they they do affect how much we enjoy the trip. In the same way, we as Christians do not depend on feelings or emotions, but we place our faith (trust) in the trustworthiness of God and the promises of His Word.

Now That You are Filled With the Holy Spirit

Thank God that the Spirit will enable you:

- **To glorify Christ with your life** (John 16:14)
- **To grow in your understanding of God and His Word** (1 Corinthians 2:14,15)
- **To live a life pleasing to God** (Galatians 5:16-23).

**Remember the promise of Jesus:**

"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 1:8).

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