

GLOBAL SCHOOL OF MINISTRY

COURSE 103

THE HOLY SPIRIT AND HUMANITY

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LESSON 1

Introduction

In order to properly understand who the Holy Spirit is and how to relate with Him we need to go back to our ground breaking study on God. The reason is that the Holy Spirit is God. The scriptures call Him by various names which define His attributes or activities. He is called the Holy Spirit, the Holy Ghost, Spirit of the Living God and various other titles. Let us therefore begin our study with the general exposition on God before we focus in on the Holy Spirit.

Limitation

This study of God is severely limited because of inherent constraints. How can a finite mind fully comprehend and reduce infinity to a study? How can we, in words of mere mortals, frame the nature, essence and characteristics of Him who created and sustains everything by the word of His power? The way out is to rely on the degree of light which God chooses to shed on Himself by the agency of the Holy Spirit who alone is the proclaimed agent of revelation. According to **Deuteronomy 29:29** we shall therefore learn whatever the Lord chooses to reveal to us. If therefore you locate any inadequacies in this presentation, please bear with us. Fill in the details with the extra light He reveals to you. May this caveat therefore occasion understanding.

Definition of God

God is the supreme and eternal Spirit personality or being who created heaven and earth, mankind, other creatures and the things that fill the earth with form - **Genesis Chapter 1; Hebrews 1:3**. He sustains them all by His own will and power as He alone rules and reigns over the affairs of mankind - **Daniel 4:34-35**.

Essence and nature of God

Certain things constitute His essential nature and attributes. By essence we mean what He is by His very nature. These are but a human attempt to grasp the reality of the Almighty God:

1. **He is Love.** God is love is a theme that resonates in His creation, redemption and providential dealings with man. Love is the root of creation. God wanted to bring into being human kind to be the recipients of His fatherly affection. It is His love that draws us to Himself - **1 John 4:7-12; John 3:16**. It is because of His love and mercy that we are sustained, even through the valley of the shadow of death. The more we know Him, the more this essence envelopes and transforms us until any contrary nature and quality is expunged and we become like Him. John the beloved was a man with a hot temper and an unforgiving spirit who even sought permission to wipe off a whole community because they differed from him. He was also so ambitious that he and James his brother conspired with their mother to appropriate the highest places of honour for themselves in the Kingdom of God. This same brother was so zealous for Christ that the spirit of intolerance and sectarianism crept in and he tried to forbid other people from working miracles in the name of Jesus. By the time Jesus was through with John there was no room for any nature or message other than love in Him. As it was with John, so shall it be with us before we complete the one year program of the Global School of Ministry, *in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, Amen* - **Mark 9:38-41; Matthew 20:20-28, 1 John 3:10-23; 1 John 4:7-21**.
2. **Holy.** God is holy, pure, undefiled with sin or corruption of any sort. All the thoughts of His heart are pure and so are His acts - **1 Peter 1:15-16. James 1:13-16** warns therefore that no one should ever purport to be tempted by God.
3. **Transcendent.** He is beyond the limitations of time and space. Time proceeded from His eternal being. Space came into being from the depths of His imagination and He spoke it into being. For this reason God can do anything, anywhere, all at the same time.
4. **Just and True.** Everything about God is just and true. God is fair, equitable, right and true in all His decisions and actions. Within God is the ultimate standard of judgment of what is right or wrong. This qualifies Him to be the judge of all the earth - **Genesis 18:26; 1 Peter 1:17; Daniel 4:37**.

5. **Immortal.** God is eternal, without beginning and cannot die or expire. Life proceeds from Him and returns to Him for judgment - **1 Timothy 6:15-16; Revelation 20:11-12; Daniel 4:34.**
6. **Infinite.** God is limitless in thought and knowledge. The depths and heights of His mind cannot be fathomed. This presents us with the reality that what we know or can ever imagine is but a speck of who He truly is.
7. **Personal.** God has a definite personality and will act as it pleases Him. As a person God thinks, has a preference of what He likes, dislikes and hates. He can feel, touch, guide and walk with His own. If you want to walk acceptably with God be ready to please Him and He will supply the grace for this dream to be translated into reality - **Genesis 1:26; Genesis 6:1-10.**
8. **Intelligent.** God is the spring and source of all wisdom and intelligence. He is the master designer of human life and all of the creation - **Psalms 139:13-16; 1 Timothy 1:17; Jeremiah 29:11.**
9. **Supreme.** God is the supreme being who has ultimate authority over everything in all of creation; visible and invisible. All power belongs to Him and He causes who He desires to receive and exercise power on earth - **Romans 13:1-7; 1 Timothy 6:15.** No one can ever dream of being a leader outside of Him otherwise certain judgment follows as Belshazzar discovered in **Daniel 5:1-31**, like his father Nebuchadnezzar before him - **Daniel 4:1-37.**
10. **Creator.** God created all things in heaven and on earth. **Genesis Chapter 1** shows in clear detail the process whereby He spoke this world into being out of nothing – **Hebrews 1:3.**
11. **Compassionate and Merciful.** The God we worship is compassionate and full of mercy. He knows the weakness of our frame and makes provision for them through His heart of mercy - **Psalms 103:1-18.** This nature of God cannot be a license for His people to remain in bondage to Satan and sin. If any saint despises the blood that bought them, the door will be open to a reprobate heart condition - **Hebrews 6:1-9.**

Immutable attributes of God

There are four immutable attributes which define the essence of God. Each of them equally applies to the Holy Spirit:

1. **Omnipotent.** By this we mean for God to be God He is and will remain all powerful with inherent ability to do whatever He wants, experiencing no external limitations to exercise His power. In other words God can do all things which He desires to do. The only limitations, so to speak, are that in exercise of His own omnipotence, God cannot and will not function contrary to His nature, will and plan. No creature or power in all realms of existence can intimidate Him or stampede Him to do what is contrary to His nature or will. However, the Omnipotent God can allow or permit mankind or angels to exercise a unique facility He put in them – freedom to act or respond to Him according to their own will or choice. If in exercise of their will mankind incurs the just recompense for their decision, God cannot be blamed. It was in exercise of His omnipotence that God created heaven and earth by His spoken word - **Genesis 1; Psalms 33:8-9.** See also **Genesis 18:14; Jeremiah 32:27; Ephesians 3:20; 1 Timothy 6:15-16.**
2. **Omniscient.** This is the ability of God to know all things concerning all of His creation. Omniscience is a function of the infinite or limitless capacity of the mind of God. He alone knows and sees all things, simultaneously happening in the mind of all mankind. God in effect knows the thoughts of all mankind without the need to consult them. All things are naked to Him who created them - **Jeremiah 17:9-10; 1 Corinthians 3:20; Hebrews 4:12-13.**
3. **Omnipresent.** Consistent with His omnipotence and omniscience, God is omnipresent. This means that the presence of God pervades all of His creation. He is everywhere, all the time. God is transcendent and therefore beyond all forms of limitation of space or time. This attribute of God does not confer on Him responsibility for the wilful actions of people or fallen angels in exercise of their free will - **Psalms 139:7-12.**
4. **Omni benevolent.** God is merciful, loving and caring to all. He has made ample provision for all of His creation. This is made possible by the essential nature of God which is love - **Jeremiah 9:23-24; Matthew 5:45; Hebrews 12:4-11.**

The Triune God: Unravelling the mystery of unity in trinity

One of the most contentious issues of all time is the subject of the concept of a triune God. The contentions arise mainly because humans tend to use natural reasoning and logic to apprehend one of the deepest and most profound mysteries of God. Even among those who purport to accept the truth of one God expressed in three personalities, there are so many emotions attached to what they believe to the degree that they are unable to communicate their faith with other people. It pays therefore for us to humble ourselves before the Holy Spirit to receive light from Him on this essential issue on which our entire faith and life rest – the issue of a triune God.

Pentecostals and the wariness with Nicaea

Pentecostals are wary of the Council of Nicaea of AD 325 when men huddled together and under the watchful eyes of a patronising State articulated some of the dogmas that eventually shaped Christianity as a religion. This was based on creeds and rituals rather than a personal relationship with God based on a definite life changing encounter with Jesus Christ. For that reason the basic attitude of Pentecostals and Charismatics has been to ignore or side step some of the intricate issues of the faith, especially those that have to do with who God is. The tendency is to focus on the more certain issues such as manifestation of the gifts and power of the Holy Spirit and take them as indications of divine approval. This approach is largely unhelpful because it is escapist. Space is thus given to cults and pseudo-christian groups to set the agenda of the debate of who the God we serve is.

As we receive of the Lord we are not going to belabour ourselves with the soulish ways in which the doctrine of the trinity was developed by early scholars of the already backslidden fourth century AD Church when it missed the road of spirituality and went the way of Babylon even the behemoth of organised religion. We therefore will not be quoting the works of Tertullian, an early third century theologian credited with articulating the doctrine of the trinity which ultimately shaped the outcome of the First Council of Nicaea in AD 325, nor shall we be concerned with the contributions of people like Augustine of Hippo or Athanasius. The reason is simple: there is enough original light in the Holy Writ and enough illumination from the Holy Spirit in His present day ministry of teaching us all things.

The Word and the Holy Spirit are therefore more reliable sources for accessing the mind of God rather than the words of men. We must also admit that because of who He is, the Lord always has a way of working out all things to His glory. While Nicaea was designed to take the Kingdom life out of the Church and turn it into a religion and ruthless political machine and arrowhead of an earthly kingdom, God still laid hold of the minds and hands of men. What came out as the Nicene Creed, is substantially a useful bulwark against apostasy. If only those who wrote and subscribed to that document lived by some of its core postulations rather than simply memorise and recite them. Let us therefore take our eyes off what men planned to achieve and celebrate what God made out of it because He makes all things to work together for the good of His own elect and according to His own agenda.

A settled issue: There is only one God

One of the most contentious issues of all time is the subject of the concept of the Trinity. The contentions arise mainly because people tend to use human reasoning and logic to apprehend the things of God.

It is a settled issue that there is only one God:

Deuteronomy 4:35, Deuteronomy 6:4, Deuteronomy 32:39; 2 Samuel 7:22; 1 Chronicles 17:20; Psalm 83:18; Psalm 86:10; Isaiah 43:10, Isaiah 44:6, Isaiah 45:18; Mark 12:29; 1 Corinthians 8:4; Ephesians 4:6; 1 Timothy 2:5; 1 John 5:7.

This God we speak of is without comparison. As the scriptures affirm, there is none like Him:

Exodus 8:10, Exodus 15:11; Deuteronomy 33:26; 2 Samuel 7:22; 1 Kings 8:23; 1 Chronicles 17:20; Psalm 89:6; Isaiah 40:18.

Our source is the Father of Lights and His Word, illuminated by the Holy Spirit

We therefore need go straight to He who gave us right to call Him Abba to ask Him “Who are you?” “How did you manifest yourself in times past to your elect?” “What do we make of the mass of information on yourself in

your Holy Book?" Beloved, this is the way to go if we must avoid the tendency of falling into the booby traps the enemy laid for those whose pilgrimage he cannot stop. God has opened the heavens and by the illumination of the Holy Spirit provided a clear basis on how to ascertain who He is.

It is significant that as early as the creation morning the peculiar personality of God is presented. Hear God speak on the morning of creation: "**And God said, let us make man in our image, after our likeness...**" - **Genesis 1:26**. The concept of a divine being with distinct personalities is clearly presented at this critical juncture when time was being birthed out of eternity.

Also presented is a direct allusion to the triune nature of man – spirit, soul and body which is brought forth in bolder relief in **Genesis 2:7**.

In **Genesis 1:2** we see mention of the Spirit of God hovering upon the void.

At the fall of man we see a compound phrase when God declared in **Genesis 3:22** "**behold the man is become as one of us...**". Clearly implied is a collective in perfect harmony.

This picture was again stated in **Genesis 11:7** when God decided to scatter the Tower of Babel project "**Go to, let us go down and there confound their language...**".

The scriptures are filled with various references which we will be articulating in this study. God wants us to take our time and understand Him because our entire destiny rests on a proper knowledge of Him and we can only function according to the degree of light He gives us.

When all the distinct scriptural references to Father God; Jesus as His only begotten Son and the Holy Spirit are put together, we can only come to one of these conclusions:

1. This particular God in the bible is a unique mystery/divine being with three distinct personalities who are still one in essence and collectively constitute the single Godhead. The three persons identified variously as the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are one in essence, equal and sustained in perfect unity by the love that binds them together. Individually they possess the essential nature and immutable attributes of God. Their relationship to each other is not exclusive but peculiarly distinct from any other relationships we may know in a human sense. Our finite minds cannot fully comprehend how this relationship fully works out in every detail.
2. There are 3 different Gods in operation each of which exercises unique power. Each of these Gods are able to stand independently without any real need for the other in order to be complete. In this case the Hebrew God will be Jehovah, YHWH. The Evangelicals would then have Jesus Christ as God while the Pentecostals will claim the Holy Spirit. This will be an absurdity of epic proportions.
3. There is only one divine personality that is recognisable. In this case the Holy Spirit will be merely treated as God's influence at work and Jesus Christ will be treated as a messenger of God just like any other prophet. This was basically the position of the infamous priest of Alexandria, Arius, whose doctrine rocked the early church in what is now known as the Arian controversy. As a matter of fact, it was the reaction to Arianism that produced the chain of events which led to the Council of Nicaea where the doctrine of the trinity was adopted as the official dogma of Christianity. Arius claimed that God's first creation, before all things, was Jesus Christ. For this reason, Arius stated Jesus, though a supernatural being, was not quite human and not quite divine. Arianism is the root of many neo-Christian religious movements and cults, including celebrity preachers who refuse to take a definite public stand on the subject.

There is no doubt that options 2 and 3 above do not in any way fit into the full revealed counsel of God in the Holy Bible. We are therefore left with option 1. What we need to do therefore is to explore this option in detail with a clear survey which presents, in bold relief, the unity of the Godhead as well as the distinctness of the personalities therein in the walk of divinity with mankind.

It must be borne in mind that all the controversies may well be ultimately unnecessary because we only, as Paul the Apostle puts it, "know in part", in this realm of mortality - **1 Corinthians 13:12**. When mortality passes away and we enter the realm of the saints triumphant, we will be permitted to know all things including the nuances of why God chose to reveal Himself to man in the three distinct personalities that appear in the Holy Scriptures. For now, we will rely on the limitation statute in **Deuteronomy 29:29** to put a leash on our imaginations lest they run riot and lead to confusion. Let us therefore do a brief survey of the walk of divinity with humanity to locate the peculiar character of our God.

LESSON 2

The Holy Spirit: God in Action

The first mention of the Holy Spirit is right at the dawn of creation in **Genesis 1:2**. There we see Him on assignment, brooding over the deep darkness to incubate the ordinance of heaven on earth. The next reference to His work is in **Genesis 2:7** when a measure of Him was imparted into the moulded piece of clay which then came alive to be the man Adam. Until today, the dual primary work of the Holy Spirit is to bring illumination where darkness once existed and to breathe life into dead things.

The uniform testimony of scripture presents the Holy Spirit as God in action. His divinity is without any shadow of doubt. Contrary to what cults teach, He is not a mere force or impersonal being; He is also not a mere influence. The Holy Spirit is God in action.

The Holy Spirit or Holy Ghost has two essential natures that combine to give meaning to His name:

1. He is a Spirit means He is not of material substance. He is thus able to be omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent simultaneously in every realm of creation. David spoke of his pervasive presence when he penned the immortal words of **Psalms 139:7-12**. He therefore is able to search and know our hearts and our thoughts - **Jeremiah 17:9-10**. Any attempt therefore to flee from His penetrating searchlight is nothing more than emulating Adam who tried to flee from the presence of God - **Genesis 3:8-10**.
2. He is Holy. The Holy Spirit is what His name implies: Holy. His entire nature and manner of life is holy, pure and undefiled. Purporting to be filled with Him and yet living an unholy life is a contradiction of epic proportions. Knowing that He is everywhere, seeing, knowing and recording every act of obedience or disobedience will cause the saints to walk in soberness and holiness every minute of every day. This knowledge is critical in birthing the Church of the end times that is without spot or wrinkle or any such thing - **Ephesians 5:25-27**.

To walk profitably with the Holy Spirit, we must bear these two special attributes of Him in mind always. Otherwise occasion can be made for Him to be grieved (offended) - **Ephesians 4:30** or quenched (stifled to the point of departing) - **1 Thessalonians 5:19**.

Speaking of the divinity of the Holy Spirit, Jesus made a startling statement in **Matthew 12:22-32** when He cautioned that any sin against Him would not be forgiven in time and eternity. Taken in context, the Lord is warning His saints to desist from attributing to the devil miraculous manifestations arising from definite work of the Holy Spirit. In these last days when there will be increased Satanic activity to deceive the elect it becomes needful that we covet and receive the gift of discernment of spirits (**1 Corinthians 12:10**) so that we do not get caught up in the spirit of suspicion or intolerance. Where you are not sure of the source of a miracle, please keep quiet and pray. It is more profitable and less risky to heed this counsel than to question the source of power with which any minister operates. Every hidden thing will be revealed in due course of time.

The Holy Spirit in the two Covenant dispensations

The Old Covenant

Under the old covenant the Holy Spirit was made manifest through the measure of Him that was released on selected vessels for the purpose of empowering them to fulfil their assignments. All the great deeds of heroes and heroines of faith were essentially based on the coming of the Holy Spirit upon them for the purpose of fulfilling the ordinance of the Most High. In effect, the Spirit of the Lord came upon such vessels as Moses, Joshua, Miriam, Deborah, Samson, Jephthah, David and indeed all the faith worthies through who exploits were done. When the Holy Spirit came upon them they acted with uncommon insight and boldness to do exploits. Thereafter they lived ordinary lives. That is why some vessels like Samson and Jephthah relapsed into ordinariness in spite of the great exploits the Holy Spirit used them to do - **Judges 14:6,19; Judges 11:29**.

The New Covenant

Under the new covenant the Holy Spirit is the announcer, empowerer and revealer of Jesus Christ and His saints. It was His responsibility to perform the intricate operation of planting the Holy seed who would become Jesus in the womb of the virgin named Mary who was betrothed to Joseph the carpenter of Nazareth - **Luke 1:35**. When the exact date came due for manifestation of Jesus Christ to the world at the age of 30, the lot fell on the Holy Spirit to partner with the Father to make the crucial endorsement in order to take away any doubt whatsoever as to the divinity of the 30 year old carpenter of Nazareth - **Luke 3:21-23**.

Speaking of this infilling of the Holy Spirit, here is the testimony of John the Baptist: it was given without measure - **John 3:34**. In other words the great deeds which the man Jesus did were because at the onset of His public ministry, He received a limitless measure of the anointing of the Holy Spirit through which and with which He functioned. If Jesus needed the Holy Spirit to function on earth, how much more do we mortals need Him? This explains why not much was known about the first 30 years of Jesus' life except His birth and the incident where at the age of 12 He stayed behind in Jerusalem after the Passover feast - **Luke 2:41-52**.

After Jesus was baptised by John, the Holy Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil - **Luke 4:1**. On successful completion of the test Jesus went in the strength of the anointing of the Holy Spirit to do all the miraculous deeds that are recorded for our learning in all the gospels - **Luke 4:14**. What is evident from this is that the man Jesus, in the flesh, needed the Holy Spirit to successfully fulfil His assignment on earth. In the flesh He had emptied Himself of His majesty and splendour. Like all human beings He was a vessel whose life and power would be dependent on who or what he was filled with. He was filled with the Holy Spirit who conceived Him in the womb, announced at the baptism of John, empowered and strengthened at critical junctures on His journey of the journey of redemption.

In His great exposition of the things to come, Jesus took time to explain the person, character and assignment of the Holy Spirit which we will discuss in great detail. Some salient points are these:

1. He is the personality in the Godhead who would stay among the redeemed following glorification of Christ after the cross, His resurrection and ascension into heaven.
2. In this capacity He would be the principal instrument of comfort, care and empowerment. This is why Jesus urged His disciples to cease from sorrow over His imminent departure. There and then Jesus revealed a mystery of the ages: in the body that was prepared for Him, He was limited to function in one place at a time. His exit would usher in the era when the Holy Spirit – who has no corporeal body - would indwell the physical bodies of all true believers and through them manifest all that Christ is in terms of His nature and power. For this reason Jesus commanded His disciples not to depart from Jerusalem until they were endued with the person and power of the Holy Spirit **Acts 1:8**. With this vital divine equipment, humanity was guaranteed a measure of divinity and the ability to effectively represent Jesus Christ anywhere as His witnesses and ambassadors of His eternal Kingdom – **John 14:15-18; John 16:7-14**.

Oh, what a glorious plan that we, who were dead in sins and trespasses would have the privilege of being called sons of God.

Only 120 of the thousands who heard Jesus obeyed the instruction to wait for the infilling of the Holy Spirit - **Acts 1:15, Acts 2:1-18**. One of those who went forth without the experience of the baptism of the Holy Spirit was only able to produce partial results in the quality of Christians he raised, including the eloquent but powerless Apollos. It took an insignificant but spirit filled couple with a marketplace calling, Priscilla and Aquila, to teach Apollos the full truth. It took a visit by Paul to Ephesus before the church there could receive the Holy Spirit - **Acts 18:24-28; Acts 19:1-6**.

3. In the divine economy each of the three personalities of the Godhead is preoccupied in drawing attention to the other. Jesus came to show us the Father and model how we should live in total obedience and submission to the supreme will of the Father - **John 4:23-26, 34; John 5:24-30; John 6:38**. In the same measure the Holy Spirit does not speak of Himself nor does He draw attention to Himself. His chief work is to point people to Christ as the only solution to sin, death and sickness, to convict such people of sin, righteousness and judgment and to magnify the ministry and office of Jesus Christ. He is given to provide illumination and remind saints of what Christ would have done if He was in their stead. Anywhere where there is an undue exaltation of the Holy Spirit over and above Christ there must be something foundationally wrong - **John 14:15-18, 25-26; John 16:5-15**.

Some salient aspects of the personality of the Holy Spirit

Let us recap here, a self evident fact: truly the Holy Spirit has two fundamental natures that combine to make up His personality. These are:

1. He is Holy – His nature and essence is wholly holy and pure with no shadow of corruption in Him.
2. He is a Spirit – He is a spirit being who is everywhere. He has no human body. The Holy Spirit is omniscient, omnipresent and omnipotent, able to be everywhere all the time with all of His divine powers.

The Holy Spirit is extremely gentle and does not strive with humans - **Genesis 6:3**. He will by every means reveal, convict, counsel but will never force anyone to act. As can be deduced from this teaching, the Holy Spirit is the personality in the Godhead who took over from Jesus Christ to walk among mankind. Because He is a Spirit, He is everywhere, all the time. Because of His divinity, He has no need of rest and is at work 24/7 in the hearts of the redeemed and sinners alike as well as in every living, animate unit of creation.

Assignment of the Holy Spirit within the individual Saints, the Body of Christ and the World

The Lord Jesus spoke extensively of the ministry of the Holy Spirit. These are some of the specific scriptures where He outlined the assignment of the divine personality who would replace Him:

1. **John 7:37-39**. Source of spiritual refreshment for the truly thirsty. This applies to His ministry of creating a deep hunger and passion for the Lord.
2. **John 14:15-16**. The Helper that will be there for the saints all through their lives.
3. **John 14:17**. The Spirit of truth who will dwell within the saint and guide them into all truth so that they do not err or stumble. The Holy Spirit also grants the saints an understanding of what error is. See also **John 14:25-26; John 15:13; 1 John 2:18-27**.
4. **John 16:5-11**. The Holy Spirit is best qualified to reveal to people the actual state of their hearts and pierce through every layer of self righteousness to convict man of sin, righteousness and judgment.
5. **John 16:13-15**. The Holy Spirit glorifies Christ and reveals Him to all sincere seekers as the only solution to all their needs.
6. **1 Corinthians Chapter 12**. The Holy Spirit imparts spiritual gifts to all saints so that each is empowered to function as a functional cell of a living organism rather than a statistic on the membership register of a denomination.

While in the flesh as a human Jesus needed a full measure of the Holy Spirit in order to live out the transparent holy life He lived. He also needed the Holy Spirit to function optimally as an instrument of doing well and advancing the abundant life - **John 3:34; John 10:10; Acts 10:38**. If it was so with Him who is God made flesh how much more do we need the Holy Spirit to function and occupy for God everywhere we are planted?

How to relate well with the Holy Spirit

Knowing how critical the presence of the Holy Spirit is to the saints it makes good sense for us to cultivate an intimate loving relationship with Him. Here are some of the ways we can develop intimacy with Him:

1. Childlike sincerity, transparency and openness to Him for guidance and correction.
2. Willing submission and yieldedness to His leadership over our lives - **Romans 8:14**.
3. A hunger and quest for more of Him - **Psalms 42:1-2**. We should come to a point where we just need more of Him every day.
4. Purity of heart and holy living - **Psalms 15:1-5**.

5. Prompt obedience to His instructions. He is released to us as a result of obedience to the instructions of Christ and we develop a stronger bond of relationship with Him as we remain in a state of obedience - **John 14:15-18**.
6. Sensitivity to His feelings. As we grow in grace and in our walk with the Holy Spirit we come to understand that He has feelings. If we understand those things that touch Him and respect them, we in effect give Him right of stay in our lives. In this regard we need to be conscious of the fact that the Holy Spirit can be grieved.

Critical issues regarding relationship with the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is not a mere force or influence. He is a person who can hear, see, feel and touch lives. Because He is a person, the Holy Spirit can suffer the indignities mentioned below.

1. Grieving the Holy Spirit

The things that grieve Him include having an unforgiving spirit (which is contrary to His nature), a critical spirit, strife, quarrelling, lying, gossip, party spirit, rebellion, anger, wrath, pride, carnality, worldliness, lack of faith, inability to trust God, talkativeness, self-righteousness, rebellion, lack of submission to godly authority, lone ranging and a host of other lifestyles which are contrary to the Body and dishonour God before unbelievers. Most of the sins that grieve the Holy Spirit are sins of the tongue involving wrong use the power of speech. The reason is that the fullness and power of the Holy Spirit are best expressed within the context of speech. No wonder that one of the clearest evidence of baptism in the Holy Spirit is found when the tongue begins to utter an unlearned language - **Ephesians 4:25-32; James 3:1-16; Acts 2:1-7**.

2. Quenching the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit can be "quenched" - **1 Thessalonians 5:19**. This happens when the people of God do not give Him room to manifest Himself. This can happen when saints subscribe to these:

- Dogmas of men which deny that the Holy Spirit is God.
- Dogmas of men which say that the Holy Spirit is God who birthed the Church on the day of Pentecost but no longer fills up or uses human beings nor has he any role in the Church today.
- When a spirit filled believer refuses to discover and exercise the spiritual gifts they have been blessed with.
- Where saints accept the lie of the devil that the professional clergy are to do the work of God while the majority of saints are merely the "laity" who warm the pews and contribute money and play church politics.
- Where strict organisational structures put the Holy Spirit in a box to be turned on and off at our own will.
- Where the leader of a group of Christians is not spirit filled and detests those who are.
- Where the church programs and activities are done without consulting Him and without His express approval.

3. Lying to the Holy Spirit

This happens when believers deliberately commit the grievous sin of using the same lips they use to utter the mysteries of the Holy Spirit to lie. In so doing they deny Him His divinity and the attribute of omniscience. It is like they are suggesting that He is a toy they can switch on and off at will. This was the sin that cost Ananias and his wife Sapphira their lives and instilled awe in the early church. Peter was used of the Lord to bring swift judgment in order to save the Body of Christ the corruption of a little leaven of a lying spirit - **Acts 5:1-11**.

4. **Merchandising the Holy Spirit**

The countless number of ministers who are seeking to merchandise the Holy Spirit by putting a price on their spiritual gifts is alarming. It is obvious they are no longer reading the account of Simon the Sorcerer in **Acts 8:14-24**. When Jesus sent out His disciples they were given an underlying charge: “freely you have received, freely give” - **Matthew 10:8**. The idea is that as far as this faith and Kingdom life is concerned we cannot validly claim intellectual property rights over any of His gifts and graces. We are but stewards who God has entrusted certain gifts and graces and we must be conscious that account will be required on the last day for every way they were diverted to service the belly rather than build up the Kingdom.

5. **The sin against the Holy Spirit**

The sin against the Holy Spirit is attributing to Satan, the work of the Holy Spirit. Jesus Himself warned against this sin in **Matthew 12:22-32**, see especially **verses 31-32**.

The idea is to warn Christians to be careful about passing judgment on the source of a miracle. When we are not sure, we are advised to keep silent.

We can judge a prophet by their fruits or their lifestyle. If they are not bearing the fruit of the Spirit, we can beware of relating closely with them - **Galatians 5:22-23**; **Matthew 7:15-23**. We should however avoid judging the source of the utterance.

LESSON 3

Four dimensions of the work of the Holy Spirit in the Church

Let us examine a critical topic which many stumble at. It is the issue of the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers. This topic is critical because the issues herein lie at the heart of the unnecessary rift between so called “Evangelicals” and so called “Pentecostals”.

Evangelicals are those who have accepted aspects of the ministry and work of the Holy Spirit in their lives such as His refining and transformative work and rejected other aspects. They accept the first three of the four dimensions that we will look into. The result is that most evangelicals live better Christian lives than their pentecostal brethren. Unfortunately, because they dogmatically refuse the fourth dimension, they are unable to demonstrate the power of the Gospel in signs, wonders and miracles.

On the other hand, pentecostals tend to put a high premium on the power to the extent that they literally devalue two critical dimensions of the work of the Holy Spirit, the transforming and uniting operation, causing the Lord Jesus Christ so much grief and pain with less than noble character and extreme divisiveness. While they operate in signs, wonders and the miraculous, pentecostals tend to display lack in depth of character, divisiveness and dis-unity. Everyone thus becomes his own lord, accountable to no one.

God is calling on His elect remnant to shun this unnecessary hair spitting. The Holy Spirit was given to perfect us in the nature and character of Christ, unite the Body of believers in the Faith and make us instruments of demonstrating the power of God. We are to be both evangelical and pentecostal, receiving all the Lord has for us through the Holy Spirit who is the divinely given Teacher, Advocate, Guide, Comforter and Anointer.

1. **Seal of our redemption**

When the Holy Spirit convicts a sinner of sin and shows Jesus as the only solution, such a one repents and becomes saved. At that point of salvation, a measure of the Holy Spirit is given to the believer. It is a “seal” that says: “God owns this one” and a clear guarantee that he or she will be taken up by Christ at His return. As the seal, the Holy Spirit takes His office as the Peace, Comforter, Advocate of the redeemed of the Lord as Jesus Himself promised in - **John 14:16-18**.

To understand the Holy Spirit as seal of the redeemed, please study: **Ephesians 1:13-14**; **Ephesians 4:30**; **Romans 8:9**; **1 Corinthians 6:17**; **Romans 8:14-16**; **Galatians 4:6-7**.

The seal measure is when the root/basic spiritual gift is imparted to define the new believers spiritual identity.

On the day of that the sinner is sealed into or joined to the Body of Christ, His root spiritual gift is also imparted. This gift – which may be evident or dormant – defines his or her spiritual identity. It is also known as basic or general service gifts, a phrase popularised by the International President of International Ministers Fellowship, Dr. Cosmas Ilechukwu. Basic spiritual gifts are what the Lord, in exercise of His sovereignty makes you to be in the Body of Christ. In other words these are the gifts that the Holy Spirit imparts in you to be for the local congregation or indeed any other unit of the Body. Your duty is not to yearn for what others have. It is to discover what you are wired to be, accept the same and yield to the Holy Spirit to use you to manifest them to meet the needs of others and the entirety of the congregation of God's people. These root gifts are found in **Romans 12:4-8**.

- **Prophecy** - Ability to prophesy to edify, exhort and comfort the saints; capacity to be a vessel through which God brings forth His counsel to His people.
- **Ministry/Service** - Ability to serve others joyfully with the right spirit.
- **Teaching** - Ability to use the Word of God to teach others and instruct in righteousness.
- **Exhortation** - Ability to encourage and stir up the spirits of brethren.
- **Generosity** - Ability to cheerfully share and distribute finances and materials to the needy.
- **Leadership** - Ability to lead the people of God to fulfil purpose of the mission.
- **Compassion** - Ability to empathise with those who are grieving or suffering pain.

2. **Transform**

The Holy Spirit is the divine instrument for transforming our lives so that we are progressively made to be like Christ, while yet on earth. He is the sap that runs through our lives as we are attached to Christ like a branch. So we do not need to struggle carnally to be holy. Nothing done by human effort is pleasing to God - **Jeremiah 17:5-6**. Our job is to cling to Christ like a branch while the Holy Spirit works within us as we yield to Him to produce a Christ-like character.

For the transforming ministry of the Holy Spirit to be effective He takes His place as the Great Teacher Jesus promised who will guide us into all truth - **John 14:26; John 16:13**. When we receive sound, anointed teaching of the Word, this is the outcome:

- We are rapidly built up by the fivefold leadership to mature quickly into able ministers of the New Testament who are able to do the work of the ministry without struggle - **Ephesians 4:7, 11-12**.
- We mature to such a degree that we become strong and stable in Christ and therefore can no longer be victims of every wind of doctrine - **Ephesians 4:13-14**.
- The anointing we receive from sound teaching safeguards us from the pervasive presence of false prophets and teachers of heresies - **Ephesians 4:23-24; 1 John 2:18-23, 26-27**. Now that Satan has played his very last card which is to cause many so called Kingdom citizens to deny the divinity of Christ, we need this anointing in a great measure lest we lose eternal life. No one who denies the deity of Christ has a part in the Lamb's Book of Life. The preaching of the Cross, that God was incarnated as man to die for the sins of whole world, is foolishness to those who perish - **1 Corinthians 1:18**.
- We are able to contribute maximally to building up other brethren so that as they do likewise to us the whole body is held together by mutual love, edification and enablement - **Ephesians 4:15-16**.

Scriptures on the transforming power of the Holy Spirit are: **John 15:1-7; Philippians 1:6; Philippians 2:13; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; Galatians 5:16-24; Ephesians 4:23; Romans 12:2; Romans 8:28-39; Hebrews 12:1-15**.

It is the transformative ministry of the Holy Spirit that produces the fruit of the Spirit, which is the character of Christ that will enable the believer to be His witness and personal representative. It is

wrong for the people of God to chase after signs and wonders, especially for the wrong motives of using them to earn fame, wealth or acceptance and honour. Signs are to follow true saints while they are to chase after the fruit of the Spirit with never ending quest. As they allow the Holy Spirit to use circumstances and issues like trials, tests, pain, rejection and suffering to lead them to experience holiness, these difficulties often drive them to Him in prayers. See **Mark 16:17-18** and **2 Peter 1:5-11**. Interestingly, all the attributes listed here are but various qualities which combine to create a Christian character. We should not therefore pick and choose which of them we like or desire. We need the whole bunch of fruit to make a whole new man. Articulated in **Galatians 5:22-23** the fruit of the spirit is the aggregation of all these virtues:

- **Love** – supernatural capacity to act in the best interest of other people – in thought, word or deed.
- **Joy** – the spirit of divine excitement from the Lord which enables us to overcome every challenge and issue of life.
- **Peace** – the state of stability of the heart which is anchored in Christ and is not agitated by challenges or difficulties that are encountered. A peaceful heart refuses to function in anxiety or worry - **Philippians 4:6-7**.
- **Longsuffering** – the grace to bear and forbear with people who are difficult or whose lifestyle and choices tax our patience.
- **Kindness** – the grace to be considerate and tender with other people.
- **Goodness** – the willing provision of material and emotional support which will enable others to move on in life.
- **Faithfulness** – the grace to be loyal to God and fellow humans and to be dependable, even in the face of challenges. It is also the grace to trust God in an absolute way.
- **Gentleness** – the grace to treat people with honour and in respect.
- **Self-control** – the grace to restrain from consumption of whatever is more than necessary. The grace to desist from any course of action which can cause offence. It also applies to use of money. Another word for this is moderation - **Philippians 4:5**.

3. **Unite**

When we get saved the Holy Spirit automatically grafts us into the Body of Christ and unites us with other believers world-wide. We are united with each other in the Spirit as one people and members of the same family of God irrespective of gender, age, socio-economic status, race, tribe or countries where we live. The various churches we belong to are to disciple us and teach us these truths so that we will enjoy unity of the Faith - **Ephesians 4:1-7**. Unfortunately many people allow the churches to divide. That is what is called the spirit of denomination. It is not of God and works against the interests of God and frustrates the prayer that Jesus prayed for His Church in John 17. We are one in the Spirit and whatever God has given me is for you and vice versa for all of God's children. We are not to commercialise or withhold any gift or grace.

Scriptures dealing with the uniting work of the Holy Spirit are as follows: **Ephesians 4:1-7, 11-16; Ephesians 2:19-22; 1 Corinthians 12:7, 11-27**. When we realise this uniting work of the Holy Spirit we will have only one acceptable response: love/charity - **1 Corinthians 13**.

4. **Demonstrate**

The Holy Spirit empowers believers to demonstrate the power of Jesus Christ so that they can fulfil the Great Commission effectively with signs and wonders following. That is why He told His disciples to wait in Jerusalem until they were endued with power from above - **Acts 1:4-8**. It is the power we receive that is manifested as spiritual gifts with which God confirms the ministry He is calling us into.

True ministry therefore is the “**expression or bringing forth of what we are impressed with by the holy spirit**”. When we bring forth what He put in us, we are engaged in ministry. Every believer is equipped by God to be a conveyor of the power of the risen Christ through the particular gifts of the

Holy Spirit we receive. We are not just to be satisfied with merely speaking in tongues and fleshly induced disorderly behaviour done supposedly in the name of the Holy Spirit. Tongues are a sign of what is stored inside. **Romans 12:3-8** and **1 Corinthians 12** analyse the gifts we receive. **1 Peter 4:10-11** tells us that we have a duty to exercise the gifts of the Holy Spirit we receive as an obligation to the Body.

Scriptures which confirm this are: **Mark 16:15-18**; **Acts 1:4-8**; **Acts 2:1-39**; **Joel 2:28-29**; **Romans 12:3-8**; **1 Corinthians Chapter 12** (especially verses 1-11, 28-30); **Ephesians 4:7-12**.

How the power gifts are activated

As we saw earlier when the Holy Spirit convicts a hitherto sinner and seals them into the Body of Christ a gift or collection of gifts are automatically imparted to define that person as a functional part of the living organism which is the Church. That is not the end of His work in the area of spiritual gifts. The Lord expects the saint to yearn for the fullness of the Holy Spirit with zeal in earnest prayer. In response the Lord Jesus releases the Holy Spirit to fill up the saint in what is called the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit simply fills up the willing and ready saint to the degree of effervescent effusion that translates into speaking in unknown and unlearned tongues. This blessed experience can be had in a revival meeting, a regular church service, in a home or indeed anywhere as God; the Holy Spirit is not bound to fit into neat religious boxes built by us. The model we have is the walk of Jesus with His disciples. In a sense, the disciples were products of two dispensations – the Old and the New. After 33½ years Jesus died on the cross and rose from the dead to finally seal His claim to Messiahship.

In **John 20:22**, Jesus sealed their faith in him with a measure of the Holy Spirit. Yet He charged them to tarry in Jerusalem to receive the promise of the Father. **Acts 1:1-8**. This is consistent with the words Jesus spoke in **John 14:17** “*He dwells with you and will be in you*”.

The 120 who obeyed Him and spent an extra 10 days after His ascension were rewarded when on the day of Pentecost; they were filled to overflow with the Holy Spirit - **Acts 2:1-4**. His presence and power transformed timid men and added new zest to their lives. Moving in that strength and power the disciples were able to turn the then world upside down in spite of the limitations of their intellect and finances. Saints today need the Holy Spirit even much more as we are now in the close of the age. Our grand need is Him and not more money, better buildings, more exciting programmes or radio/television publicity. All these things without Him and His power produce religion and spiritual death.

How to receive the Holy Spirit in the demonstrative dimension

1. Repentance and brokenness – clean up your spiritual act and deal with besetting sins that plague your life - **Hebrews 12:1-3**; **1 John 2:1-2**; **Acts 2:38**
2. Ask in prayer – God is more than willing to release the Holy Spirit to overwhelm and drive us. We need to ask and remain in prayer until we receive - **Matthew 7:7-9**; **Luke 11:3**; **Matthew 5:6**.
3. Receive by faith and do not depend on feelings - **Galatians 3:1-9**. It is not about emotions. The Holy Spirit is received first by faith.
4. The Holy Spirit is God and reserves the right to fill up any saint or group of saints in the way He deems expedient. On the day of Pentecost He filled everybody in the Upper Room prayer meeting as they waiting on the Lord for the promise of the Father - **Acts 2:1-4**. At the revival of Samaria in the case of Saul of Tarsus and in Ephesus, the Holy Spirit was released by the laying on of hands - **Acts 8:14-17**; **Acts 9:17-18**; **Acts 19:1-6**). At the home of Cornelius however, a simple preaching of Jesus Christ by Peter was all that the Holy Spirit needed to fill the man and his household - **Acts 10:34-46**.

There is no set formula because mortal man cannot confine God to a set of dogmatic practices and expect Him to follow them. The safest course for us therefore is to take a complete view of how the early Church lived out their Kingdom mandate in the strength of the power of the Holy Spirit.

It is significant that in the Acts of the Apostles an interesting scenario presents itself. When a congregation faced challenges from authorities they did not engage in agitation propaganda in the name of social action. Their response was to retreat to “their own company”, so to say, to receive a

fresh infilling of the Holy Spirit so that they could continue to live out their life in which signs and wonders were the norm rather than the exception. See **Acts 4:23-31**.

5. Demonstrate the Holy Spirit in you by making yourself available as a vessel through which He will show Himself forth. These are in the form of spiritual gifts that are the outcome of the visitation of the Holy Spirit. Unlike the seal dimension which causes certain gifts to be wired into your new nature, the Baptism in the Holy Spirit ushers you into the demonstration dimension. You will receive any of these baskets of gifts when He comes:

Enabling Gifts - 1 Corinthians 12:4-11

These are gifts which enable our basic or root gifts (obtained with the sealing) to function with greater effectiveness. They include: word of wisdom; word of knowledge; faith; gifts of healing; working of miracles; prophecy; discerning of spirits; speaking in unknown tongues; ability to interpret tongues.

Helps

Supernatural grace to play a supportive role and uphold another person in the ministry. It is a compound gift that can be applied to those serving in intercession, the diaconate and other roles.

Administration

This is the supernatural grace to plan, organise and administer the business affairs of the Household of Faith.

Five fold leadership/Office gifts - Ephesians 4:11-16

The key to the emergence of the glorious church of the end times is restoration of the work of the five fold office gifts working together, in synergy, to equip the saints for the work of the ministry. Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers are not titles to be hung on the neck in the quest for honour and vain glory.

These are the gifts which Christ has released specifically to guide His Church into full maturity so that it can mature rapidly to manifest the power of the Kingdom and the world to come. The world is in earnest expectation for the Church to shake off the shackles of religion, heresy and worldliness so that it can be clothed with the righteousness of its head, Jesus Church - **Ephesians 5:27; Romans 8:18-25**.

Praying in the Spirit - Romans 8:26-27; 1 Corinthians 14:2 Ephesians 6:18

God has ordained that His saints can rest their mental faculty with its severe limitation and stress so that the Holy Spirit will take over and intercede for them:

- The Holy Spirit takes over from our burdened hearts and through deep groaning utters prayers on our behalf - **Romans 8:26-27**. His intercession is accurate because He knows the will of God for us. This is why praying in the spirit is always very effective both in the intercessory ministry as well as in spiritual warfare. When the Holy Spirit prays through a believer, He simply "borrows" the vocal cords of the individual through which He expresses, in prayer, the very will of God which He is already privy to. The result is that the person praying in the Spirit hardly gets wearied. You are not struggling with words to form. There is no exertion.
- Praying in the Spirit is not always accompanied with speaking in tongues. At times praying in the Spirit simply occurs when we do not approach God with our own agendas. As we wait on Him, He inspires us to bring forth what He desires of us to ask for in prayer. **Matthew 6:10** reveals that the ultimate purpose of all prayer is simply to midwife delivery of the will of God on earth as it is done in heaven.

When the truth sinks in

1. We will stop playing games with this supernatural indwelling God in us. The Holy Spirit is not for show or building selfish human religious corporations for making money or enjoying fame and power.
2. We will realise that we are the Church. Our bodies individually are the living temple of the Holy Spirit. Two significant events happened in order to allow this superior temple to emerge. The first was the rending of the great veil which separated the Holy of Holies in the temple when Christ gave up the ghost. This signified the end of the old covenant where God dwelt in a particular building (the Temple)

in a particular city (Jerusalem). The second was when Roman General Titus led his legionaries in AD 70 to completely demolish the magnificent temple in fulfilment of the prophecy of **Matthew 24:1-2**.

3. We will realise the emphasis of God has conclusively shifted from buildings to people. Jesus Himself said emphatically that He would be found where two or three saints are gathered in His name - **Matthew 18:20**. For the Great Commission to be fulfilled we must realise that the place of action will not be large, expensive cathedrals in which men seek to assume popish postures. The ground zero operation will be how many spontaneous fellowship of saints we allow the Holy Spirit to spawn in cities and villages using unlikely vessels – neither male nor female, Jew or Gentile, bond or free. There breaking of bread, worship, diligent study of scriptures, mutual edification and support for one another will keep us bonded together to occupy for Him while awaiting the sound of the trumpet - **Acts 2:44-47; Acts 4:32-37**.
4. We will realise the need for order in public meetings. Our bigger gatherings become places for receiving the synergistic ministry of the five fold and to continue in the Apostles Doctrine which is rooted on the divinity of Christ and centrality of preaching the Kingdom of God. Interestingly, **1 Corinthians Chapter 14** was written to guide the Church concerning use of the gifts of the Holy Spirit in public worship settings. Unfortunately, all but few ministers function in breach of clear instructions for order in the house of God. The result is that the people of God now equate confusion, disorder and noise as key evidence of the presence of the Holy Spirit.
4. We will not discriminate against any saint on the basis of age or gender or socio-economic status. We will not struggle with such religious issues as whether women or youths can minister. Whoever God anoints with the Holy Spirit and power and whoever He endows with spiritual gifts and His grace is eminently qualified to use those same endowments to minister to God and His people. **Galatians 3:13-14, 26-29**.
5. We will realise and accept the divine perspective of ministry rather than the religious concept of work which a few people with ecclesiastical titles do as a special class of people. It is the Holy Spirit who makes us the redeemed of the blood, priests and kings unto our God, functioning according to our divine identities marked by the spiritual gifts we receive. Ministry therefore is simply the “*expression of what we are impressed with*”. According to **1 Corinthians 12:11** the Holy Spirit uses our vessels to show forth His power, at His will. **Romans 12:1-8; 1 Corinthians Chapters 12 and 14; Ephesians 4:7-16 and 1 Peter 4:10-11**.
6. We will settle for nothing less than a life and ministry lived and based on the fullness of the Holy Spirit who takes full residency as our comforter, teacher, guide; helper in prayer and indeed our everything.

Please my beloved brethren, pray through, meditate on and prepare your heart to receive the full ministrations of the Holy Spirit within the context of these four dimensions. The Holy Spirit is the principal divine agent for bringing forth the present dimension of our manifestation - **Romans 8:19**. The Lord beckons on us therefore to cease from our own works, enter into His rest while the Holy Spirit uses our mortal beings as a conduit to manifest the risen Christ in all His holiness and power - **Hebrews 4:1-9**

Further reading: All students are encouraged to do a complete study of **Acts Chapters 1 – 28; Romans Chapter 12; 1 Corinthians Chapters 12, 13, 14; Ephesians Chapter 4:1-16; 1 Peter 4:8-11**.