

Receive the Holy Spirit

The Fruit and Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Wednesday 10 November 2021

6:30 PM-8:00 PM

Opening Prayer

Background

In our first conversation about the Holy Spirit, we acknowledged that we profess that we believe in the Holy Spirit in our Creeds. But what does that mean for each of us personally? Some of us believe we have received the Holy Spirit into our lives. Some are not certain. Paul has advised us to become friends with the Holy Spirit. How does that work? How do we become her friend, and what will that friendship do for us and for her?

In this conversation, we will explore the Holy Spirit more deeply, and perhaps determine if there is a possibility of friendship.

So, what do the New Testament writers tell us about the Holy Spirit and the anointing of the Holy Spirit? That is a good place to start.

“And you know that God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. Then Jesus went around doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.” *Acts 10:38 NLT*

“I am writing these things to warn you about those who want to lead you astray. But you have received the Holy Spirit, and she lives within you, so you don’t need anyone to teach you what is true. For the Spirit teaches you everything you need

to know, and what she teaches is true—it is not a lie. So just as she has taught you, remain in fellowship with Christ.” *1 John 2:26-27 NLT*

“It is God who enables us, along with you, to stand firm for Christ. He has commissioned us, and he has identified us as his own by placing the Holy Spirit in our hearts...” *2 Corinthians 1:21-22 NLT*

The English word “anoint,” from Latin *inungere*, has the same meaning as the Greek word *chriō*, to rub or smear with oil. The use of the oil in the Hebrew tradition was an act of consecration (to set apart) and empowerment ordained by God. Our word chrism, the holy oil used for anointing at baptism, healing services and other occasions, comes from this Greek root word. In receiving the Holy Spirit, one is anointed, empowered (e.g., *2 Corinthians 1:21-22 NLT, NRSV*). We all are anointed. And how do we receive the Holy Spirit? We confess Jesus Christ as Lord.

If one is anointed, then one can receive the Gifts of the Holy Spirit for the common good of the community of faith. Examples of these gifts include: the ability to give wise advice; special knowledge; great faith; the gift of healing; the power to perform miracles; the ability to prophesy; the ability to discern whether a message is from the Spirit of God or from another spirit; the ability to speak in unknown languages; the ability to interpret what is being said (*1 Corinthians 12: 8-10*). Each individual has a gift from the Holy Spirit, but no person has every gift. And we are given gifts for the benefit of the church, not for personal benefit or personal glory.

Now, the Holy Spirit also blesses us with fruits. And they are: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (*Galatians 5:22-23*). We are fortunate because all these are meant for each of us. We are not each blessed with only one.

So, by using the gift that She has given us and growing in the blessings of the fruit that She shares with us, we may come to know the Holy Spirit better and hopefully become Her friend over time. Regular prayer and reading of the Scriptures will also be very useful in growing to know the Spirit as our friend.

Questions to Consider

1. How did you understand the Anointing of the Holy Spirit before we began this discussion? How do you understand it now?
2. Do you believe you have a Gift from the Holy Spirit? Can you share what that gift is and how you use it for the good of the church?
3. Which two Fruit of the Holy Spirit do you enjoy most and why? Which two Fruit of the Holy Spirit do you enjoy least and why? Do you think you will ever enjoy all of them?
4. What are the characteristics of friendship for you?
5. How are you forming a friendship with the Holy Spirit?

Closing Prayer