

**To Be Filled with the Holy Spirit**

Passages: Acts 2:2–4; 7:57–58; 8:3; 8:14–24; 9:1–2, 17–20; 10:44–46; 19:1–7

*Memory Verse*

“If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.” (John 7:37–38)

<b>Knowledge of God’s Will [God’s Word]</b>	<b>Knowledge of God [God’s Divine Nature]</b>	<b>Good Works [Behavior]</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. The Holy Spirit came down on the Day of Pentecost.</li><li>2. The Holy Spirit transformed many lives, as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles.</li><li>3. Speaking in tongues is evidence of receiving the Holy Spirit.</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. God is Spirit.</li><li>2. The Holy Spirit is like living water.</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Determine to pray for the fullness of the Holy Spirit.</li><li>2. Devote yourself to a Spirit-filled life by allowing the Holy Spirit to transform you.</li></ol>

*Overview*

**Events and Spiritual Teachings**

- A. Filled with the Holy Spirit
  1. During Pentecost (Acts 2:2–4)
  2. In Samaria (Acts 8:14–24)
  3. Paul (Acts 7:57–58; 8:3; 9:1–2, 17–20)
  4. In Ephesus (Acts 19:1–7)
  5. Cornelius (Acts 10:44–46)
- B. Receiving the Holy Spirit
- C. Filling Ourselves with the Holy Spirit

**Life Application**

1. A Spirit-Filled Christian
2. Am I Transformed?

**Memory Verse**

**Conclusion:** After we have received God’s Spirit, we need to strive to be like Him by having the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

## *Spiritual Teachings*

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### **Introduction: Bleach Experiment**

*(Teachers: This introduction calls for the use of bleach. Work in a well-ventilated area and avoid inhalation of fumes. Exercise **extreme caution** when handling bleach. Do not get it on your hands, in your eyes, or on your clothing. Immediately after the experiment, pour the bleach into a sink carefully to avoid splashing and flush thoroughly with cold water.)*

### **Before Class**

#### **Materials**

- Small basin
- Bleach
- A piece of brightly-colored cloth, or bleachable cloth
- Rags
- Forceps
- Gloves

### **Preparation**

*Prepare a table in a safe location where all the students can see. Line the table with rags in case a spill occurs. Place the basin on the table. Set the cloth and the forceps next to the basin. Put on protective gloves. Slowly pour enough bleach into the basin to allow the cloth to be immersed. Wait until class begins to demonstrate the experiment. Do not immerse the cloth until the students have arrived and class is ready to begin.*

### **During Class**

*When everyone is ready, use the forceps to pick up the cloth and immerse it into the bleach. Wait a few minutes for the bleach to take effect. Ask the students to share what they are observing.*

Why do you think this change occurred? *(Due to a chemical reaction.)*

This is a very dramatic change. People often want to change themselves, but it's not easy to change yourself. When we want to change our habits, personality, or character, it has to be done gradually, bit by bit. But sometimes a person's life is thrown into a dramatic turn of events similar to this bleach, forcing the person to change themselves entirely. They may become very sick, a loved one may pass away, their financial situation may change abruptly, or some other life-changing event may occur.

Has anything dramatic happened in your life before, where things suddenly changed and became very different? *(Allow time for students to respond.)* In today's lesson, we're going to study how some people's lives were changed quite dramatically, all because they received and were filled with the Holy Spirit. Let's learn what it feels like to be a Spirit-filled Christian.

*(Teacher's Note: Pour out the bleach immediately after the demonstration is finished to prevent any accidents from occurring during class.)*

### **A. Filled with the Holy Spirit**

Many denominations believe that people receive the Holy Spirit upon conversion. In other words, they believe that the moment they confess that God is their Savior, repent of their sins, and receive baptism, God's Spirit will be with them. But if that were truly the case, why did Jesus command His disciples to wait in Jerusalem for the Holy Spirit? And besides, what really happens when someone is filled with the

Holy Spirit? These are a few of the questions we will address in this lesson. Let us begin by examining the Holy Spirit in the Acts of the Apostles.

**1. During Pentecost (Acts 2:2–4)**

- a. Where were the disciples, and what were they doing? *(They were praying together in a house in Jerusalem.)*
- b. Describe what the Holy Spirit was like. *(A sound “as of a rushing mighty wind” came from heaven and divided tongues, “as of fire,” rested upon each of them. Then they began to speak “with other tongues.”)*

**2. In Samaria (Acts 8:14–24)**

- a. The believers in Samaria had been baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, but they had yet to receive the Holy Spirit (v. 16). What did Peter and John do for them? *(They laid hands on them and prayed, and then the Samaritans received the Holy Spirit.)*
- b. Simon the magician offered money for the power to lay hands and allow others to receive the Holy Spirit. After rebuking Simon, how did Peter refer to the Spirit? *(Peter said that the Holy Spirit was “the gift of God,” not something that could be purchased with money. God gives us the Holy Spirit by grace, not based on our wealth or how hard we work for Him. The only thing God asks of us is to repent and believe.)*

**3. Paul (Acts 7:57–58; 8:3; 9:1–2, 17–20)**

- a. Describe what Saul was like before he received the Holy Spirit. *(He persecuted Christians, personally seeking out believers and imprisoning them. He threatened to murder them.)*
- b. Read Acts 9:17–18 again. Paul received the Holy Spirit when Ananias laid his hands on him. It is clear from this passage that Paul received the Holy Spirit around the same time he was baptized. How can we be sure he was filled with the Spirit? *(We can tell based on his changed behavior. Before, he threatened to kill Christians. Now, he preached the name of Jesus Christ. Therefore, while speaking in tongues is evidence of the Holy Spirit’s presence, our changed lifestyle is a reflection of the fullness of the Holy Spirit.)*

**4. In Ephesus (Acts 19:1–7)**

- a. What is the difference between the baptism of John and baptism in the name of Jesus Christ? *(John’s was a baptism of repentance; it did not remove sin. However, when we are baptized in the name of Lord Jesus Christ, we believe He died for us on the cross and resurrected for the sins of mankind. When we emerge, we become a completely new person, clothed in the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ.)*
- b. This passage shows that a person must be baptized in a manner according to the Bible in order to receive the Holy Spirit. What were outward signs that the believers in Ephesus had received the Spirit of God? *(Once they received the Holy Spirit, they spoke in tongues and prophesied, which is a special gift from God.)*

**5. Cornelius (Acts 10:44–46)**

The Acts of the Apostles, chapter 10, relates the experience of a centurion named Cornelius and his family and friends when they experienced the power of the Holy Spirit. “[The] Holy Spirit fell

upon all those who heard the word. And those of the circumcision [...] were astonished” (vv. 44–45). Why were “those of the circumcision,” or the Jews, astonished? (*Because Cornelius was a Gentile. They did not expect him to receive the Holy Spirit. But through this significant incident, everyone, including the Jews, understood that God’s plan of salvation was for all people.*)

As we can see from these five examples, people experienced the Holy Spirit in many ways. Some received the Spirit while praying in a small space. One even experienced God’s Spirit before he was baptized. All spoke in tongues and a few prophesied. Others praised God with joy (Acts 10:46). But the greatest joy of the Holy Spirit is that He brings all believers together in one accord. When we all understand the love and sacrifice of the Lord, we become united in Spirit and in truth (Rom 5:5; Eph 3:14–20).

### **B. Receiving the Holy Spirit**

We can see that each person had a slightly different experience when they received the Holy Spirit. However, the road to that joyous moment was exactly the same. That path has not changed today. In order to receive the Holy Spirit, there are four steps we must take. They are: believe in God and His word; repent of our sins; be baptized for the remission of sins; pray earnestly and persistently to God to fill us with His Spirit.<sup>1</sup> So, how do we pray for the Holy Spirit?

*(Teachers: If you have students who are truthseekers, or who are newly baptized, you may want to spend a minute or two reviewing this portion. However, if all of your students are familiar with prayer, feel free to skip it.)*

#### **How Do I Pray?<sup>2</sup>**

1. Kneel with humility.
2. Close your eyes to concentrate.
3. Begin by saying, “In the name of Lord Jesus, I pray.”
4. Praise the Lord by saying, “Hallelujah!”
5. Speak to God from your heart and ask Him to fill you with the Holy Spirit.
6. Conclude your prayer with “Amen.”

No matter how long we have been praying for the Holy Spirit, we need to keep praying earnestly, diligently, and with a repentant heart (Lk 11:5–13). God will never grow tired of hearing our prayers, and He is always listening to us. But we must also recognize that we are sinners in His eyes. Every day, we fall short of His glory, so it is important to examine ourselves and see if there is anything blocking His Spirit from entering our hearts. To receive the Holy Spirit, we must remember that our body is a temple, so we must be pure and holy before God will rest within us.

### **C. Filling Ourselves with the Holy Spirit**

Receiving the Holy Spirit does not guarantee that we will be filled by the Spirit. We see this from the situation in the Corinthian church. Paul referred to the believers in Corinth as “the temple of God” and “the temple of the Holy Spirit” (1 Cor 3:16; 6:19) because the members had already received the baptism of the Holy Spirit and had become one in Christ’s body (1 Cor 12:13). But they did not allow the

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<sup>1</sup> TJC Department of Literary Ministry, “The Promised Holy Spirit”, *Our Basic Beliefs: An Introductory Brochure* (Malaysia: True Jesus Church, 2013), 12.

Spirit to lead them. Instead, they exhibited behaviors of the flesh, including jealousy and contention. Paul, therefore, reprimanded them (*Our Basic Beliefs*, 12)<sup>2</sup>:

*And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ. I fed you with milk and not with solid food; for until now you were not able to receive it, and even now you are still not able; for you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men?*

(1 Cor 3:1–3)

As we can see from this example, baptism in the Holy Spirit is only the first step. We need to pursue the constant filling of the Holy Spirit. In this way, we allow the Spirit to work in us to renew us (Tit 3:5), to sanctify us (2 Thess 2:13), and to help us to live a godly life that manifests the fruit of the Holy Spirit (Gal 5:22–25). Being filled with the Holy Spirit means manifesting God’s character in a life that is obedient to His word. But this is not an easy task.

Pursuing the fullness of the Holy Spirit means fully submitting to His guidance, allowing God to rule in us, and living a life that is pleasing to Him. This means actively thirsting for the Spirit and making the choice to offer ourselves to God, just as Jesus offered Himself to be crucified on the cross. Let’s read Galatians 2:20: “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.”

It takes time and persistence to offer our submission to God, and the Bible teaches us that the inward filling of the Holy Spirit is a life-long process. It occurs when our lives are completely directed by the Holy Spirit, so that we continually “walk in the Spirit” (Gal 5:16) and are led by the Spirit (Rom 8:1–14). He becomes our source of spiritual power. With the strength that He offers, we can put off the deeds of the flesh (*Doctrine*, 352–353)<sup>2</sup>:

*Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.*

(Gal 5:19–21)

Jesus Christ gave us a wonderful description of what will happen when the Holy Spirit fills us. He said, “[Whoever] drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life” (Jn 4:14). He also said, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water” (Jn 7:37–38). Here, Jesus speaks of an inward filling, which is clearly more than a one-off experience. It is a constant transformation of our lives, just like a never-ending river of living water.

### **Check for Understanding**

- 1. Describe what the Holy Spirit was like on the Day of Pentecost.** A sound “as of a rushing mighty wind” came from heaven and divided tongues, “as of fire,” rested upon each of the disciples. Then they began to speak “with other tongues.”

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<sup>2</sup> Shun Dao Hsieh, *The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit* (Taiwan: True Jesus Church, 2014), 352–353.

2. **What happened to the believers in Samaria (Acts 8)?** *They had been baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, but they had yet to receive the Holy Spirit.*
3. **How did Saul receive the Holy Spirit?** *Saul received the Holy Spirit when Ananias laid his hands on him when he was still blind.*
4. **What is the difference between the baptism of John and the baptism in the name of Jesus Christ?** *John's is a baptism of repentance; it does not rid us of our sins. However, when we are baptized in the name of Lord Jesus Christ, we believe He died for us on the cross and resurrected for the sins of mankind. When we come out of the water, we become a completely new person, clothed in the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ.*
5. **Cornelius and his family and friends all received the Holy Spirit. Why were "those of the circumcision" astonished?** *Because Cornelius was a Gentile. They did not expect him to receive the Holy Spirit. But through this significant incident, everyone, including the Jews, understood that God's plan of salvation was for all people.*
6. **What are the steps to receive the Holy Spirit?** *Believe in God and His word; repent of all your sins; be baptized for the remission of sins; pray earnestly and persistently for God to fill you with His Spirit.*
7. **How did the Corinthian church believers show that receiving the Holy Spirit does not guarantee that we will be filled by the Spirit?** *The believers had already received the Holy Spirit, but they did not allow the Spirit to lead them.*

### Life Application

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#### 1. A Spirit-Filled Christian

*(Teachers: Take the time to look up the verses with your students. It is important that you discuss the significance of each verse and spiritual teaching with them. Note that these are also a part of their homework.)*

For many of us, praying for the Holy Spirit can be a long journey. But that is actually not the most difficult part of the process. When we receive the Holy Spirit, we must learn to let Him work in our lives. Not every believer who has the Holy Spirit is filled with the fullness of Him. How do we know? We know that Paul was full of God's Spirit because of his life and his actions. Just like Paul's example, a Spirit-filled Christian should reflect God's character in all that they do and say. Let's examine this kind of life in closer detail.

a. **A Spirit-filled Christian is devoted to...**

- *study*: We must hide God's word in our hearts (Ps 119:11).
- *prayer* (1 Tim 2:8): There are personal prayers (Mt 6:6), powerful prayers (Jas 5:16), patient prayers (Lk 24:49), and persistent prayers (1 Thess 5:17).
- *surrender*: Our bodies belong to God. Therefore, we should bring honor and glory to God (Rom 12:1–2).
- *separation*: We must keep ourselves pure (1 Tim 5:22).

b. **A Spirit-filled Christian is dedicated to...**

- *loving God*: God's love caused Paul to dedicate himself and accept all suffering (2 Cor 11:24–27).
- *longing for God*: Paul had one desire—to know God. This longing will not only draw us nearer to God, but also make us like Him (Phil 3:10).

c. **A Spirit-filled Christian is determined to...**

- *testify*: Paul said that none of his suffering or tribulation could move or discourage him from testifying (Acts 20:24).
- *stand strong in trials*: Face trials with joy and patience (Jas 1:2–4).

- *resist temptation* (Jas 1:12): The person who endures temptation is blessed by God.

Review the list again. Pick the top three areas you need the strength and guidance of the Holy Spirit in. Now let's fill in the following list:

In order to be a Spirit-filled Christian, I need the Holy Spirit to help me with:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

Explain your answers and share your thoughts with the rest of the class.

## 2. Am I Transformed?

When we receive the Holy Spirit, we have evidence of the Holy Spirit within us, which is praying in tongues. However, have our lives been transformed by the Holy Spirit? Before receiving the Holy Spirit, many disciples of Jesus Christ were impulsive, hot-tempered, fearful, and timid. But after receiving Him, they transformed entirely. They preached boldly and became deeply committed to bringing people to Jesus Christ. Many eventually suffered and died as martyrs because of their refusal to compromise their belief in Jesus Christ and their obedience to God. However, it was not their deaths that made them stand out. Rather, it was how each of them changed so dramatically.

### Reflection Activity: Instructions

- a. Give each student a sheet of paper. Ask them to draw a timeline of their lives and write down their significant spiritual milestones (e.g., when they received baptism, began reading the Bible on their own, received the Holy Spirit, helped with church ministry, suffered through a trial and came out a stronger Christian, etc.). If they have not received the Holy Spirit yet, they can pinpoint the time when they realized the importance of God in their lives.*
- b. Ask them to compare their life before and after receiving the Holy Spirit, or before and after the significant realization. Do they see a noticeable change after?*
- c. If the students do not see much of a change, ask them to reflect on their lifestyles and think about ways they can become a truly Spirit-filled Christian. Encourage them to think about their future timeline, and what the next year or so should look like with regard to their spiritual lives. Challenge them to strive to make it their goal.*

### Memory Verse

"If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." (John 7:37–38)

### Meaning

Here, Jesus speaks of receiving the Holy Spirit. It is like the welling up of a spring within us, a never-ending flow of living water. When we ask God to fill us with the Holy Spirit, we will experience the constant transformation of the Holy Spirit. Our lives will reflect God's character, and our actions will affect those around us as a testimony of the Spirit's power within us.

### Conclusion

Believing in the Lord Jesus Christ and receiving the Holy Spirit are two different matters (Acts 19:1–2). In the same way, receiving the Holy Spirit and being filled with the Spirit are two different matters. After we have received God's Spirit, we need to submit to God and reflect the fullness of the Spirit in our lives by striving to be more like Him.

Lesson 4 Homework Assignment Answer Key

1. In what way is the filling of the Spirit like a river of living water?  
*He will constantly transform us, making us more like God and affecting those around us.*
  
2. “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, \_\_\_\_\_, peace, longsuffering, \_\_\_\_\_, goodness, \_\_\_\_\_, gentleness, \_\_\_\_\_. Against such there is no law. And those who are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its passions and desire. If we live in the Spirit, let us also \_\_\_\_\_ in the Spirit.” (Galatians 5:22–25)  
*joy, kindness, faithfulness, self-control, walk*
  
3. Give three examples from the New Testament of how the apostles received the Holy Spirit.  
*On the Day of Pentecost, in Samaria, Paul, in Ephesus, Cornelius.*
  
4. How do we pray for the fullness of the Holy Spirit?  
*We need to thirst for it, put God first, and offer ourselves up as one being crucified on the cross.*
  
5. A Spirit-filled Christian is:
  - a. Devoted to \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.  
*(study, prayer, surrender, separation)*
  - b. Dedicated to \_\_\_\_\_ God and \_\_\_\_\_ for God.  
*(loving, longing)*
  - c. And is determined to \_\_\_\_\_, to \_\_\_\_\_, and to \_\_\_\_\_.  
*(testify, stand strong in trials, resist temptation)*