

Seeking God's Spirit

DAY 1—OUR NEED OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8, NLT).

Testimony

“Since this is the means by which we are to receive power, why do we not hunger and thirst for the gift of the Spirit? Why do we not talk of it, pray for it, and preach concerning it? The Lord is more willing to give the Holy Spirit to those who serve Him than parents are to give good gifts to their children. For the daily baptism of the Spirit every worker should offer his petition to God” (Ellen White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 50).

Just before graduating from college with a theology degree, I read the book *They Found the Secret* by V. Raymond Edman. The book tells about 20 Christian men and women who reached a spiritual crisis in their lives that led to an authentic conversion experience. This was eventually followed by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in their lives. They became the people they became—and led millions to Christ—because they were filled with the Holy Spirit. As I considered my own life as a husband, new father, and soon-to-be pastor, I wrote a note in that book: “I need the Holy Spirit too.” Since then I have made it my top priority to maintain my conversion experience and seek the biblical baptism of the Holy Spirit through Bible study, obedience, sharing, and prayer. Within my first year of pastoring, I was called to visit our church treasurer, who had been diagnosed with cancer. We prayed and anointed him with oil as the Bible says to do. In a few days he joyfully shared that he was completely healed from his cancer! Right then I knew that God was hearing my prayers and that He accepted my efforts to live my life for Him. What about you? Do you need the Holy Spirit in your life?

Bible Texts to Pray About

Paul once asked 12 men from Ephesus, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?” (Acts 19:2, NLT). How would you answer? The Ephesian men said, “No, we have not even heard of the Holy Spirit.”

- Romans 8:16—When the Holy Spirit comes among us, we will confess our sins and receive the gift of salvation through Jesus. We will have assurance of salvation because we are children of God.
- Ezekiel 36:25-27—The presence of the Holy Spirit will give us a new mind and a new heart. We will have victory over our sins and see real character growth.
- John 7:38, 39 and Galatians 5:22, 23—When we are filled with the Holy Spirit, the fruit of the Spirit—the character of God—will flow from us like rivers of living water.
- Acts 4:13, 31—The abiding presence of the Holy Spirit will motivate and empower us to share the gospel with as many people as possible.
- John 16:13—As the Spirit dwells in us, we will have a hunger and love for the Bible, and He will lead us into all truth. This truth is not just a technical understanding of facts but the very character of Christ, who is the Truth.
- Romans 8:26, 27—As we pray in the Holy Spirit, we will have power in our prayers and will see many miraculous answers to prayer.

Jesus said there would be two groups of Christians just before His return (Matthew 25). “Then the Kingdom of Heaven will be like ten bridesmaids who took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom” (Matthew 25:1, NLT).

Five bridesmaids were foolish and had no oil (the presence of the Holy Spirit; see Zechariah 4:1-6) in reserve. These represent those who appear to be followers of Jesus but are not. They are religious but not spiritual. Thus Jesus said to them, "I don't know you!" The five wise bridesmaids had plenty of oil. They were filled with the Holy Spirit and had a genuine relationship with Jesus.

The disciples, in obedience to the command of Christ, remained in Jerusalem after His ascension. "They spent all of their time in the Temple, praising God" (Luke 24:53, NLT). When they were not in the temple, they were in the upper room. "They all met together and were constantly united in prayer, along with Mary the mother of Jesus, several other women, and the brothers of Jesus" (Acts 1:14, NLT). Ten days later they were all baptized in the power of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2), and 3,000 were converted in one day in that one place!

Suggested Prayers

- We come into Your presence with thanksgiving, and we enter Your courts with praise. We have no words that adequately describe how much we appreciate You and what You have done for us. We gladly and humbly add our human praise to that of the sinless angels, who ever delight to worship You!
- Please change my heart, O God, and make it ever true. Cleanse me from sin and prepare me to receive Your Spirit (Psalm 51:7, 10).
- Lord, please send a revival of true godliness among Your people, marked by the fruit of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22, 23).
- Baptize us with the Holy Spirit and give us power to proclaim the gospel to a world lost in darkness (Acts 1:5-8).
- Have mercy, O Lord, on my family, friends, coworkers, and classmates. Save them, and may I be Your helper to this end (Matthew 28:19, 20).
- Bless the pastors, teachers, evangelists, Bible workers, and administrators of our church with the power of the Holy Spirit (1 Timothy 2:1-4).
- Dear Lord, please show mercy to the abused and persecuted and give them Your protection and deliverance from the hands of those who seek to do them harm (Psalm 91).
- Please bless the hundreds of thousands of outreach activities around the world during 2020. We pray especially for Total Member Involvement evangelism efforts in Papua New Guinea in May 2020.
- We pray for a spiritual revival among Seventh-day Adventist young people who attend public colleges and universities worldwide. May they become vibrant ambassadors for Christ.
- We pray for the 69 percent of earth's population who have not received an unclouded presentation of Jesus.
- We pray for the 62 million people in the 28 least-reached cities of the former Soviet Union (Euro-Asia Division).
- We pray for youth leaders around the world who are faithfully passing our heritage to the next generation: *identity* in Christ, *mission* as Seventh-day Adventists, and *leadership* in the local church.
- Lord, we pray for the seven (or more) people on our individual prayer lists. May they let the Holy Spirit work in their lives.
- Local Prayer Requests:

Suggested Songs

I Love You, Lord; Change My Heart, O God; Baptize Us Anew (Hymn #258); Spirit of the Living God (Hymn #672); Surely the Presence of the Lord Is in This Place.