



GOOD NEWS

for the unsaved WORLD!

(#128)

Other terms related to the Holy Spirit's presence. (2)

So far, we've looked at being "BAPTIZED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT" and being "FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT."

Neither concept suggests that there are two types of Christians – "super-spiritual" ones and "normal" ones.

Are there any other terms that *do* suggest there are two different types of Christians?

ACTUALLY, NO.

Concepts may refer to Christians who are accomplishing something, or who have a greater degree of spiritual maturity, or a more visible spiritual gift.

But NONE of them suggest anything about two different types or "classes" of Christians.

We can look at more examples.

But I think we will discover...

- All such terms are mentioned just a few times each. And there are many godly people mentioned in Scripture who were *never* described by such terms.
- Nothing will suggest two "categories" of Christians, or that some are "super-spiritual" and others aren't.
- In some cases, the terms may even be used in reference to *unsaved* people.

Let's look at the concept of the Spirit "coming upon" someone.

THE SPIRIT/GOD/THE LORD "COMING UPON" SOMEONE.

(Or "coming upon" someone "mightily.")

This phrase occurs about 25 times, mainly in the Old Testament; and is used to describe God's influence on a person for a special purpose.
**** It does NOT prove that the person was saved! ****

① God empowered people to DO things.

Most of these verses focus on military accomplishments (and most are found in the book of Judges). Some typical examples:

- Othniel defeated the king of Mesopotamia – Judges 3:10.
- Gideon called the people together to fight Midian – Judges 6:34.
- Amasai (a military leader) volunteered to fight for David – 1 Chronicles 12:18.

As we read about these people, we discover that "being super-spiritual" was NOT a prerequisite for the Spirit coming upon them!

- Jephthah defeated the Ammonites – Judges 11:29-33.
- Samson was given power to accomplish several feats of strength – Judges 14:6, 19; 15:14.

HOWEVER...

The Spirit empowered imperfect people!

- Jephthah made a rash vow, which he later regretted – Judges 11:30-31, 34+.
- Samson had many weaknesses and would have been considered a failure most of his life – Judges, chapters 14-16.

② God empowered people to SAY things.

Most of the verses focus on prophets saying things. EXAMPLES:

- Azariah encouraged King Asa – 2 Chronicles 15:1.
- Jahaziel encouraged King Jehoshaphat – 2 Chronicles 20:14.
- Zechariah warned the people about disobeying the Lord – 2 Chronicles 24:20.
- Ezekiel had to speak to Israel about their sins – Ezekiel 11:5.
- Ezekiel also saw a vision, which he communicated to the nation – Ezekiel 37:1.

But the next example shows us that sometimes God even used unsaved people!

God even used an unsaved false prophet!

- **Balaam**, a *false prophet* was enabled to prophecy about Israel (God overpowered him) - Numbers 24:2.

The Spirit could even empower unsaved people!

God might choose to overpower them, to prevent them from doing evil. **EXAMPLE:**

- Balaam was a "prophet for hire," willing to work for any god of any religion – if the people were willing to pay him enough. To him, the God of Israel was merely one god among *many* – and he was willing to "work" for (or against) them all.
- This time, God overpowered Balaam's efforts, and Balaam did not get paid.

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③ This empowering ... a temporary matter, or permanent?

In the Old Testament:

In the Old Testament, there is only one instance in which the Spirit's empowering appeared to be ongoing.

- Normally, God (or the Spirit) would come upon a person for a specific purpose, and be there until that purpose was accomplished.
- But when **David** was anointed to be king, it was said that the Spirit came upon him "from that day forward" – 1 Samuel 16:13.

THE ONLY RECORDED
INSTANCE IN THE OLD
TESTAMENT.

... and the Spirit of the LORD
came powerfully on David
from that day forward.

1 Samuel 16:13b (CSB)

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In the New Testament:

In the New Testament, it was sometimes a temporary matter. The Spirit sometimes "came upon" a person for a specific purpose.

- When **Mary** was to give birth to Jesus – Luke 1:35.
- When the (former) **disciples of John** spoke in tongues – Acts 19:6.

It seems that there were times when the Spirit came upon Jesus in a special way, for a special purpose.

- The Holy Spirit came down upon **Jesus**... and then led him into the desert, to be tempted by the devil – Matthew 3:16-17; 4:1.
- (We could safely say that he was never without the Spirit; but there were also these special situations.)

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Under the New Covenant, there appears to be an increased emphasis on the Spirit coming with permanence.

- Jesus told **the apostles** that the Holy Spirit would come upon them and guide them into all truth (about Jesus and the future) – John 15:26; 16:13. [The results are now written down in Scripture.]
- He told them that the Holy Spirit would give them power* to proclaim the Good News to the ends of the earth – Acts 1:8.
- *This task is still in the process of being accomplished* – which means this empowering* has been on-going for nearly 2000 years!

"But you will receive power **when the Holy Spirit has come on you**, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and **to the ends of the earth**."

Acts 1:8 (CSB)

* (This empowering is mentioned throughout the New Testament.)

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④ This empowering is no guarantee that the person is saved.

[① We've already seen Balaam's example.]

② EVENTS DURING KING SAUL'S LIFE ALSO ILLUSTRATE THIS.

When Saul was following the Lord, the Spirit of God came upon him at least twice.

- ✓ The first time occurred under the influence of Spirit-filled prophets. It made him a "different person" (apparently referring to increased leadership qualities) - 1 Samuel 10:6, 10. (Unfortunately, it does NOT mean he was saved.)
- ✓ At another time, the Spirit of God empowered him to summon Israel to fight the Ammonites – 1 Samuel 11:6.

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When Saul turned away from the Lord, the Spirit of God ceased to come upon him. *An evil spirit came, instead.*

- ✓ When this happened, David would play the harp and the evil spirit would leave – 1 Samuel 16:23.
- ✓ But eventually Saul began trying to kill David while David was playing the harp – 1 Samuel 18:10; 19:9.

Merely being in the presence of others who had the Spirit could result in the Spirit coming upon a person who wanted to do evil!

- ✓ When Saul wanted to kill David, it happened to three groups of men who were sent to capture David... and to Saul himself – 1 Samuel 19:19-24.

The Spirit came upon people because of their location!

- They were near prophets who were under the Spirit's control. In doing this, the Spirit kept them from killing David.

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⑤ What can we conclude?

When the Spirit "came upon" someone...

- It did not prove anything about that person's spiritual condition (although the *context* might tell us a lot).
- It was for accomplishing a special purpose – and sometimes it was against the will of person who experienced it!
- **The greater focus is that God was involved, not that the person was "spiritual."**

We could look at a few other concepts. But none of them promote the idea that there are two types of Christians.

Here are some examples (just the conclusions).

13

BEING "LED BY" THE SPIRIT.

- This is mainly in the New Testament, and occurs just a few times.
- Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness – Matthew 4:1; Luke 4:1.
- Saved people are characterized as being led by the Spirit (Romans 8:14), and therefore, not under the control of the law of Moses (Galatians 5:18). [Since we are under the New Covenant, the moral law is embedded in our hearts, rather than being an external force that pushes us in the way we should go.]

THE SPIRIT "FALLING" ON SOMEONE.

- Some translations use this phrase to refer to the Spirit "coming upon" a person – the concept we've already looked at.

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"THE HAND OF THE LORD/GOD" (BEING ON SOMEONE).

- This term focuses on God's involvement in the world.
- Some verses emphasize God's sovereign control. Others focus on God accomplishing his purposes through someone or through nature and circumstances.
- The emphasis is on God, not on the people who might (or might not) be involved.

We have to conclude...

- ✓ Many terms can be used to describe God (or the Holy Spirit) being at work in a person, or using a person to accomplish something (sometimes in unexpected ways).
- ✓ None of them teach us that there are two different "classes" of Christians – "normal" ones and "super-spiritual" ones.

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!!!
ONE MORE THING WE ALMOST FORGOT TO MENTION!
!!!

WHEN PEOPLE START DESCRIBING OTHERS IN TERMS OF "DIFFERENT LEVELS OF SPIRITUALITY," THEY AREN'T EVEN USING THAT WORD THE WAY THE BIBLE DOES!

- When the Bible describes something as "spiritual," it normally means "it's from the Holy Spirit."
- When describing people, it can refer to "the invisible part of a person" – in contrast to the visible part (the body).
- A "spiritual" person is one who has the Holy Spirit in him, and is living consistently with his new nature – in contrast to a "sinful" person.
- Also, Scripture tells us that we fight against "spiritual forces of darkness" – meaning "we can't see them," but they're there.

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HE'S MORE SPIRITUAL THAN ME!

I'M JUST A NORMAL CHRISTIAN! NOTHING SUPER-SPIRITUAL.

THIS IS A TOTALLY WRONG PERSPECTIVE!

I WISH I COULD BE THAT SPIRITUAL!

YOU JUST CAN'T EXPECT NORMAL PEOPLE TO BE SO SPIRITUAL!

10 STEPS TO GREATER SPIRITUALITY

Spiritual Exercises
for becoming a **SPIRITUAL GIANT!**

17

NO MATTER HOW THE WORD IS USED IN THE BIBLE, IT IS NOT USED TO SUGGEST THAT THERE ARE TWO TYPES OF CHRISTIANS!

In the Bible, the opposite of being "spiritual" is being "controlled by the flesh" (or sinful nature).

PEOPLE WHO CHOOSE TO STAY CONTROLLED BY THE FLESH ARE NOT SAVED.

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VERSES THAT MENTION "SPIRITUAL" PEOPLE ARE CONTRASTING:

- Those who are **SAVED** (vs. **UNSAVED**).
- Those who are **OBEYING** Jesus (vs. those who are **SINNING**).
- Those who are **GROWN-UP** in the faith (vs. those who are **NEW-BORN** and have barely started learning what it means to "follow Jesus.") *

... I could not speak to you as **spiritual** people, but instead as people **of the flesh**, as **infants** in Christ.

1 Corinthians 3:1b (NET)

... if a person is discovered **in some sin**, you who are **spiritual** restore such a person in a spirit of gentleness. Pay close attention to yourselves, so that you are not tempted too.

Galatians 6:1b (NET)

* (We may start this way, but staying this way is NOT an option.)

If there are not two types of Christians in Scripture, what do we find?

- ✓ There are **FAKES**; but they aren't really "Christians," except in name.
- ✓ There are **GENUINE** Christians. Some may be more grown-up than others; some may have more visible gifts than others. **But they all belong to the one group called: "Christians."**

If God uses someone for a special purpose... it's for US – for our good, so that we can do our part in God's kingdom!

(It's NOT because they are "spiritual"!)

Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. Their responsibility is **to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ.**

Ephesians 4:11-12 (NLT)

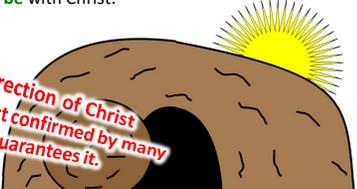
Ultimately, all of us who belong to God's family share in common the most important things:

ALL the saved are united in **CHRIST! Therefore ...**

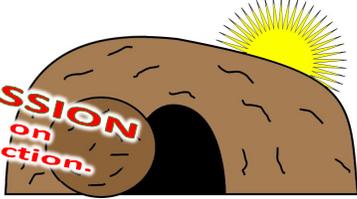
- ⇒ We **all** **died** with Christ.
- ⇒ We were **all** **raised to life** with Christ.

And in eternity ...

- ⇒ We will **all** **be** with Christ.



And the resurrection of Christ – a historical fact confirmed by many eyewitnesses – guarantees it.



YOUR MISSION is based on the resurrection.

Jesus died and rose again ...

- ⇒ To make us what we should be.
- ⇒ To empower us to do it.

I want to know Christ and the **power** of his resurrection ...

Philippians 3:10a (NIV)

Therefore ...

- ⇒ **PURSUE THAT GOAL!**

Credits (1)

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