

Just as the Jewish people in the Old Testament were confused about the coming of the Messiah resulting in various sects and interpretations many Christians today are also confused about how the Holy Spirit comes upon a person. This confusion has led to diverse teachings and denominations, each claiming to understand the Spirit's work in their own way.

Messianic Prophecies and Their Fulfillment

The Old Testament contains prophecies about the coming Messiah (Hebrew: *Mashiach*), yet these prophecies sometimes appear contradictory. For example: Isaiah 53:5-6 describes the Messiah's suffering and death for humanity's sins:

"But he was wounded for our transgressions... and with his stripes we are healed." *Isaiah 9:6-7 foretells the Messiah's eternal kingship on David's throne:*

"Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end... upon the throne of David..."

This duality reflects the two comings of Christ: first in humility and

suffering (His first advent), then in glory and eternal reign (His second advent). The New Testament clarifies this fulfillment (cf. Acts 2:31, Revelation 19:16).

John 12:33–35 captures this tension:

“This he said, signifying what death he should die... We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth forever: and how sayest thou, The Son of man must be lifted up?”

The Holy Spirit's Multifaceted Role

Similarly, confusion arises today about how the Holy Spirit works in a believer's life. Scripture reveals the Spirit's diverse but unified work: Spiritual Gifts (Charismata): The Spirit imparts gifts for the common good.

“There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit” (1 Corinthians 12:4) *Guide into Truth: The Spirit illuminates God's Word and applies it to believers.*

“He will guide you into all truth...” (*John 16:13*) *Witness of Sonship:*

- The Spirit testifies inwardly that we are God’s children.

“The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God” (*Romans 8:16*). *Sanctification: The Spirit transforms believers to bear fruit reflecting Christlike holiness.*

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace...” (*Galatians 5:22–23*)

Each of these aspects is biblical and true; none alone fully describes the Spirit’s work. Many struggle to see this progression, much like the Old Testament believers who awaited the Messiah’s coming without full understanding.

The Spirit’s Drawing and Conviction

Jesus said:

“No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him” (*John 6:44*).

This “drawing” is the Spirit’s convicting work (cf. John 16:8) that awakens a person’s awareness of sin and need for repentance.

Not everyone experiences this drawing, as it is by God’s sovereign grace. If one resists the Spirit, there may come a point of no return (cf. Hebrews 6:4-6).

New Birth and Indwelling

When a person repents and is baptized in Jesus’ name, the Spirit permanently indwells them, marking their spiritual rebirth:

“Born of water and of the Spirit” (*John 3:5-6*).

The Spirit’s indwelling signifies adoption into God’s family:

“For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God” (*Romans 8:14*).

The Spirit's Progressive Work in the Believer

1. Regeneration and Renewal:

The Spirit cleanses and renews the heart, enabling holy living.

“Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy, he saved us... by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost” (*Titus 3:5*).

2. Guidance into Truth:

The Spirit teaches and leads believers into understanding God's Word.

“Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth” (*John 16:13*).

3. Assurance of Sonship:

The Spirit confirms our identity as God's children, producing peace and confidence.

"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God" (*Romans 8:16*).

4. Comfort and Strength:

The Spirit sustains believers through trials, renewing strength.

"But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength..." (*Isaiah 40:31*).

5. Empowerment for Witnessing:

The Spirit fills believers with power to testify for Christ.

"Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon

you: and ye shall be witnesses..." (Acts 1:8).

The Fullness of the Spirit and Spiritual Maturity

The fullness of the Spirit is progressive. Even Jesus was anointed at His baptism (cf. Luke 3:21-22). The apostles received the Spirit's empowering at Pentecost (cf. Acts 2). Similarly, believers grow in fullness as they walk faithfully with the Spirit (cf. Ephesians 5:18).

Many mistakenly expect the fullness instantly at conversion, but the Spirit often works gradually teaching, preparing, confirming, then empowering.

Self-Examination

Ask yourself: Is the Spirit producing holiness in me? (Romans 8:13) Is He leading me into all truth? (John 16:13) Does He assure me of my sonship? (Romans 8:16) Does He comfort and strengthen me? (Isaiah 40:31) Does He empower me to witness? (Acts 1:8)

If these are lacking, repent and seek renewed filling.

The Necessity of the Spirit

Without the Spirit, salvation is impossible:

“If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his” (*Romans 8:9*).

Repent, believe the gospel, and be baptized in Jesus’ name. Then the Spirit will come and begin His transforming work.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus.

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