

To Whom Does God Give His Spirit?

Sermon in a Sentence: If you are ready to do God's will, God is ready to give you His Spirit.

Sermon Purpose: That believers will commit themselves to God's mission and be filled with His Spirit.

Texts: Acts 5:25-32 (stress v. 32)

Introduction:

1. As Pentecostals we believe that God fills and empowers believers to serve Him do His work (Ac 1:8).
2. With the Holy Spirit comes He gives to us ...
 - a. ... *power for mission!*
 - b. ... *passion for the lost!*
3. This power of the Spirit is promised to all...
 - a. However, there are certain conditions we must meet.
 - b. An important question: "Who does God fill with the Holy Spirit?"
4. Three preconditions to receiving the Spirit:

I. GOD GIVES HIS SPIRIT TO THOSE WHO ARE EARNESTLY SEEKING HIS FACE.

- A. Jesus gives us three promises concerning the Spirit:
 1. Mt 5:6: "Blessed are those who hunger ..."
 2. Lk 11:9-10: "Ask ... seek ... knock ..."
 3. Jn 7:37-39 "If anyone thirsts ..."
 4. Note how, each time, He promises the Spirit to those who are hungry for God and seeking His face.
- B. Let's look at three examples in the book of Acts:
 1. Before Pentecost:
 - a. Lk 24:53: The disciples "were continually ..."
 - b. Ac 1:14: "They all continued ..."
 - c. Then ... (Ac 2:1-4)
 2. Before the outpouring at Cornelius' household:
 - a. Cornelius was "A devout man ... who prayed to God continually" (Ac 10:2).
 - b. Peter was also seeking God's face (Ac 10:9ff)
 - a. Then ... "While Peter yet . . . (Ac 10:44-46)
 3. Before Saul (Paul) was filled with the Spirit:
 - a. Ananias was seeking God's face (Ac 9:10)
 - b. Paul was in prayer (Ac 9:11)

- c. Then ... (Acts 9:17-18)
- 4. Note how in each case those who were filled were earnestly seeking God's face.
- C. How do these things apply to us today?
 - 1. We too must hunger and thirst for God.
 - 2. We must earnestly seek His face.
 - 3. If we will do these things He will give us His Spirit.
(Read Luke 11:9 emphasizing the word *will*.)

II. GOD GIVES HIS SPIRIT TO THOSE WHO ASK AND ACT IN BOLD FAITH.

- A. When offering His Spirit, God looks for faith:
 - 1. Jesus' promised the Spirit to those who believe (Jn 7:37)
 - 2. Paul taught that the Spirit is received by faith (Ga 3:2, 5, 14).
- B. Before Pentecost the disciples exercised faith:
 - 1. Their faith caused them to wait patiently for seven days.
 - 2. They knew Jesus would keep His word!
- C. Paul equated walking in the Spirit with walking in faith.
 - 1. We receive the Spirit "...through the Spirit, by faith" (Ga 5:5).
- D. Will you believe the promise of Jesus?
 - 1. "Ask and it will be given you..." (Lk 11:9; ref. v. 13)
 - 2. "... believe that you have received ..." (Mk 11:24)

III. GOD GIVES HIS SPIRIT TO THOSE WHO ARE PREPARED TO OBEY HIM AND DO HIS WILL.

- A. In our text Peter said that God gives the Holy Spirit to those who obey God (Ac 5:32)
- B. Before Pentecost the disciples were obeying Christ:
 - 1. They were obeying His command to "wait" (Lk 24:49; Ac 1:4-5).
 - 2. They were ready to obey His command to "go" (Mt. 28:18; Mk 16:16; Ac 1:8).
- C. After Pentecost the disciples obeyed Christ's command to proclaim the gospel:
 - 1. They connected the command to "wait" with the command to "go."

2. Jesus made the connection in Acts 1:4-8 (see also, Lk 24:46-49)
- D. Now, let's look again at Acts 5:32.
 1. The context of Peter's pronouncement was fulfilling the mission of Christ. (Tell the story...)
 - a. After the miracle at the Beautiful Gate ... captured ... imprisoned ... threatened.
 - b. The angel commanded them to "go, speak, stand" (v. 20)
 - c. Next morning they obeyed ... they preached ... they were challenged ...
 2. Their answer: "We must obey God rather than men." (v. 29)
 3. Then ... "God gives His Spirit "to those who obey Him" (v. 32).
- E. Conclusion: God will give the Spirit to everyone who is ready to obey Christ's command to take the gospel to the lost (Ac 1:8).
 1. Commit yourself to telling others about Christ.
 2. If you will, God has committed Himself to empower you by His Holy Spirit.

Conclusion:

1. Come now, commit yourself to God will and be filled with His Spirit.
2. How?
 - a. Ask in faith (Lk 9:10)
 - b. Receive by faith (Lk 9:11; Mk 11:24)
 - c. Speak in faith (Ac 2:4)

Dr. Denny Miller—March 2012