

How the Holy Spirit Empowers Believers

His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness . . .

2 Peter 1:3 (New International Version)

“And now I will send the Holy Spirit, just as my Father promised. But stay here in the city until the Holy Spirit comes and fills you with power from heaven.”

Luke 24:49 (New Living Translation)

• Question #1: FOR WHAT PURPOSE DOES THE SPIRIT EMPOWER BELIEVERS?

The Spirit Empowers Believers for Two Purposes

- To enable believers to glorify Christ

*“But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come.”*¹⁴*He will glorify Me, . . .*

John 16:13, 14 (New American Standard Bible)

To “glorify God” means to bring praise or worship to God.

- To build God’s Kingdom

Then a demon-possessed man, who was both blind and unable to talk, was brought to Jesus. He healed the man so that he could both speak and see.

²³*The crowd was amazed. “Could it be that Jesus is the Son of David, the Messiah?” they wondered out loud. ²⁴But when the Pharisees heard about the miracle, they said, “No wonder he can cast out demons. He gets his power from Satan, the prince of demons.”* Matthew 12:22-24 (NLT)

But if I am casting out demons by the Spirit of God, then the Kingdom of God has arrived among you. Matthew 12:28 (NLT)

For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power.

1 Corinthians 4:20 (NIV)

- Greek word for “Kingdom” = rule or authority
- God’s Kingdom = the sphere of His rule and authority

During the forty days after his crucifixion, he appeared to the apostles from time to time and proved to them in many ways that he was actually alive.

On these occasions he talked to them about the Kingdom of God.

Acts 1:3 (NLT)

. . . “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?”

Acts 1:6 (NIV)

He said to them: “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. ⁸But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” Acts 1:7, 8 (NIV)

- When the Spirit of God works in power, the Kingdom of God gains ground in our lives and in the world.

• Question #2: IN WHAT AREAS DOES THE SPIRIT EMPOWER BELIEVERS?

- Power for control

But when the Holy Spirit controls our lives, he will produce this kind of fruit in us: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³gentleness, and self-control. . . . Galatians 5:22, 23 (NLT)

- His power is the power to say “no” to sinful desires and “yes” to the Spirit’s godly alternative.

For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith . . . ⁶. . . self-control . . . 2 Peter 1:5-6 (NIV)

What I say is this: let the Spirit direct your lives, and you will not satisfy the desires of the human nature. Galatians 5:16 (Good News Translation)

- Power for witnessing

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

- Power for service

*Now there are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but it is the same Holy Spirit who is the source of them all. ⁵There are different kinds of service in the church, but it is the same Lord we are serving. ⁶There are different ways God works in our lives, but it is the same God who does the work through all of us. ⁷A spiritual gift is given to each of us as a means of helping the entire church.
1 Corinthians 12:4-7 (NLT)*

. . . If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ . . . 1 Peter 4:11 (NIV)

So everywhere we go, we tell everyone about Christ. We warn them and teach them with all the wisdom God has given us, for we want to present them to God, perfect in their relationship to Christ. ²⁹I work very hard at this, as I depend on Christ's mighty power that works within me. Colossians 1:28, 29 (NLT)

- Power for suffering

Dear brothers and sisters, whenever trouble comes your way, let it be an opportunity for joy. ³For when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. James 1:2, 3 (NLT)

But I am telling you the truth: it is better for you that I go away, because if I do not go, the Helper will not come to you. But if I do go away, then I will send him to you. John 16:7 (GNT)

*May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.
Romans 15:13 (NIV)*

For the Spirit that God has given us does not make us timid; instead, His Spirit fills us with power, love and self-control. 2 Timothy 1:7 (GNT)

● Question #3: HOW DO BELIEVERS EXPERIENCE THE SPIRIT'S POWER?

Two Keys in Experiencing His Power

- Choose dependence upon the Holy Spirit.

To this end I labor, struggling with all his energy, which so powerfully works in me. Colossians 1:29 (NIV)

I work very hard at this, as I depend on Christ's mighty power that works within me. Colossians 1:29 (Paraphrase)

*But to keep me from being puffed up with pride because of the many wonderful things I saw, I was given a painful physical ailment . . . ⁸Three times I prayed to the Lord about this and asked him to take it away. ⁹But his answer was: "My grace is all you need, for my power is greatest when you are weak." I am most happy, then, to be proud of my weaknesses, in order to feel the protection of Christ's power over me. ¹⁰I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and difficulties for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.
2 Corinthians 12:7-10 (GNT)*

- Choose obedience to the Holy Spirit.

My thanks to the authors of the following books used as resources in this sermon series:

Surprised by the Power of the Spirit by Jack Deere; The Promise by Tony Evans;
God's Empowering Presence by Gordon Fee; The Holy Spirit by Billy Graham;
Those Controversial Gifts by George Mallone