



WORD OF FAITH CHURCH

REFRESHING  
OF THE  
HOLY SPIRIT

PENTECOST CONSECRATION:

May 10 - May 23 , 2021

# 2021 PENTECOST CONSECRATION

## The Importance of Fasting

Some have exalted religious fasting beyond all Scripture and reason, and others have utterly disregarded it. A lot of Christians think fasting belongs to the Old Covenant, and neglect the practice. They do not see the need for or the benefit of a Christian fast. The assumption is that faith and belief are sufficient enough to get things done. Thus, fasting is confined to the occasional, whenever. In the pages of the New Testament, you will find that there is more teaching on fasting than repentance. Jesus taught more on fasting than He did teaching on Baptism or the Lord's Supper!!! Fasting joined with prayer and confession will accomplish things which normal faith may not!!!! "However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting." (Matthew 17:20-21) "...So He said to them, "This kind can come out by nothing but prayer and fasting", (Mark 9:29). Jesus concluded that there is a higher level of operation, which demands the combined tools of prayer and fasting.

In other words, some demonic problems can only be resolved when we fast and pray. Adam and Eve fell from the Grace of God through eating; we can conquer through fasting and prayer. A very direct way of attacking the devil is to show your devotion to God by denying your flesh of whatever food is needed. If the devil cannot use food to tempt you, he has lost control over your life. Fasting, therefore, becomes a tool to fight the flesh and the devil. It is a very potent weapon of both attack and defense. You can unleash on the enemy of your soul. Food is always an area the devil will tempt you. He did that to Jesus. It was not surprising that the devil tempted Him in three areas: The lust of the flesh (eating), the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.

## Fasting is Sacrificial

Most sacrifices performed under the Old Covenant required the burning of fat. To appease God, the blood of the sacrifice and the fat were forbidden to be eaten by anyone. The fat belongs to God:

"And the Priest shall sprinkle the blood on the Altar, of the Lord, at the door of the Tabernacle of Meeting, and burn the fat, for a sweet aroma, unto the Lord." (Leviticus 17:6)

"And the Priest shall burn them, of the Altar as food, an offering made by the fire for a sweet aroma." All the fat is the Lord's. "This shall be a perpetual statute throughout your generation in all your dwellings; you shall eat neither fat nor blood."

It is a known scientific and medical fact that once the body has used up its reserve of glucose, it burns fat for energy. So, when we fast, we are burning fat as a sacrifice unto God. When we fast, we become fragile and feeble, especially with our knees. This is awesome; we truly do become the sacrificial lambs. Fasting is powerful, Glory to God. "My knees are weak through fasting, and my flesh is feeble from lack of fatness." (Psalms 109:24)

## The Actual Meaning of Fasting

Biblical fasting is going without food. The noun “fast” translates to “tsom” in the Hebrew and “nesteia” in the Greek. It means to volunteer to abstain from food and to cover your mouth!! In the Greek it means to abstain. The Spiritual meaning is “to do without food.”

“Go, gather all the Jews who are present Shushan, and fast for me; neither eat nor drink for three nights or days. My maids and I will go to the king, which is against the law; if I perish, I perish.” (Esther 4:16) Fasting relates only to food. Many people have recommended a fast from sex, cigarettes, television, social media, etc. This refrain is defined as self-denial and works very well with fasting. It is a definite aid in blocking voices other than God. Cutting these activities and other activities to focus on God will only assist, but will not take the place of fasting from food. When you fast from food, it will have a noticeable effect on your body, putting your soul under subjection. Fasting this way allows you to align your spirit with the Spirit of God, so that His Omnipotence can overshadow your impotence.

“But those who wait upon the Lord (who accept, look for and hope in Him), shall renew their strength and power; they shall lift their wings and mount up close to God. As eagles (mount up to the sun); they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint or become tired.” (Isa 40:31).

Fasting/Consecration is not a requirement. It is a choice. Fasting/Consecration brings you closer to God. Whenever a Believer chooses to begin a spiritual fast for one day or for several days, he or she makes a choice to break out of the routine, desiring to draw closer to God.

## You Will See Results

When you take time for Fasting/Consecration and Prayer, you will see amazing results in your life. Fasting/Consecration gives you back your sharpness and spiritual sensitivity. The first thing you need to do is to make up your mind that you are going to regain your edge. Fasting/Consecration gives you an opportunity to get the toxins out of the body, to become renewed and restored. Many medical doctors support the healing benefits of fasting. However, Fasting/Consecration without prayer is just dieting. Fasting/Consecration makes you sensitive to the trash that tries to invade your life. Fasting/Consecration is the “Drano” of the soul. Seasons of Fasting/Consecration and Prayer helps you get the sensitivity of the Spirit back for the things of God. When you become dull by the constant bombardment of ungodly influences all around you, Fasting/Consecration helps you regain the edge: “Glorify God in your Body.” (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)

## Fasting/Consecration Builds Confidence

Time spent in Fasting/Consecration and Prayer builds confidence and helps you develop the determination necessary to run your race with endurance. Fasting/Consecration and Prayer prepares and conditions your spirit to go the distance in life’s battles. Remember, Fasting/Consecration is not a requirement – again, it is a choice. Fasting/Consecration does not guarantee your salvation. Choosing to Fast/Consecrate is choosing to come away from the routine and wait upon the Lord with greater intensity, seeking His Face and His Presence in a

deeper way. You must have a made-up mind. Hebrews 3:6,14; 10:35; Philippians 3:3-4; 1 John 2:28, 3:21, 5:14; Proverbs 3:26; 14:26; Psalm 71:5.

### Do Not Compromise

Don't compromise. Stick to the Fasting/Consecration Plan given to you by the Pastor. As you set your mind that you will not compromise during a fast, you build confidence and endurance that can carry you through the trials and battles that come. Keep a journal. The moment you determine you have come too far with God on a fast to turn back, you will see the hand of God working in your life. At the completion of the fast, begin to make Prayer and Fasting/Consecration a regular part of your life. If Fasting/Consecration is the gateway through which God releases His supernatural power into our lives, why is it such an overlooked opportunity? All the greats of the Bible fasted: Moses, David, Nehemiah, Daniel, Elijah, Paul, Peter, even Jesus Himself. Fasting/Consecration is feeding your spirit by neglecting your flesh. Fasting/Consecration will stir-up the Power of God within you. 1 Thessalonians 2:3-4; Matthew 6:24; 1 Samuel 15:9 (compromised obedience, incomplete faithfulness to God); 1 Kings 22:43 (doing right before God); 2 Chronicles 19:2 (calling evil good); Isaiah 5:20 (desire to be like others); Ezekiel 20:32-38.

### Fasting in the Old Testament/Fast for Affliction and Mercy

Lev 29:7            "...You shall afflict you souls." Afflicting one's soul in the Bible refers to chastening one's soul, to strike.  
Psalms 69:10       "...When I wept and chastened my soul with fasting, that became my reproach."  
2 Sam 15:15-23    David sought Mercy from Sin.

### Protection Against A More Powerful Enemy

"...And Jehoshaphat feared and set himself to seek the Lord and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah." (2 Chronicles 20:3) Three powerful nations gathered against God's people. But King Jehoshaphat decided to seek God. He proclaimed a fast. The fast only lasted a single day, but the effects were amazing. The gathering of the spoil lasted three days. There are three elements to this story: Fasting, Prayer, and Praise. When we turn to God in Fasting, He will move. Another very important point we must focus on and understand is that the people praised God before the Victory. That is Faith speaking. 2 Chronicles 20:1-25.

### The First Order of Business for Jesus Was to Fast/His Teaching on Fasting

There is nowhere in the Scripture that Jesus commands people to fast, but He expects men everywhere to fast. There were three exercises that were very traditional to Jews: giving (Matt 6:3); praying (Matt 6:6); fasting (Matt 6:18-19). Jesus did not have to command fasting, because it was standard practice everywhere. He only corrected the practice and motive behind the fasting.

### Benefits

Earthly reward versus Heavenly Reward – Father will reward you. The word reward in Greeks means wages, a gift.

Fasting should not be hypocritical, but to fast in secret, private and personal, God will reward you openly.

Before Jesus began His earthly Ministry, He fasted (Matthew 4:1-3). Fasting/Consecration and Prayer were the biggest parts of the Life of Jesus Christ. Fasting/Consecration gives you a deep thirst for God (Psalm 63:1, "... early will I seek thee, my flesh longeth for thee..."). Notice, while in the desert, David thirsted for God rather than water. God is saying to us today, "You will seek Me and find Me, when you seek Me, with all your heart." (Jeremiah 29:13-14)

There is a price that must be paid for hearing from God and walking in His Will. There is a work going on in us right now that we may not be fully aware of, but without Fasting/Consecration, prayer and wilderness experiences, you will never be qualified to handle what God has for you in the future. Fasting/Consecration prepares you for what is yet to come!!! Deuteronomy 9:11-18 (during national crisis); 2 Samuel 1:12 (humbled); Psalms 35:13; Joel 1:13-14; Luke 4:1-2; Mark 8:1-3 (four thousand people fasted three days), Jonah 3:7 (Animals and people fasting together).

#### Fasting/Consecration Brings Brokenness

Fasting/Consecration bring brokenness. Brokenness is so precious in the eyes of the Lord (1 Samuel 16:7). God sent Samuel to anoint a new king to replace Saul as leader of Israel. He guided Samuel past all the older, stronger, more experienced sons of Jesse, young men who by all appearances seemed well-suited to be King. But God told Samuel not to look at the boys' outer appearance or their physical strength. Brokenness makes room for God to release His strength through our weakness, in order to accomplish His plans. Psalm 51:17; Proverbs 15:13; 17:22.

#### Fasting/Consecration Restores

There is nothing that has been wasted in your life (i.e., drugs, alcohol, troubled episodes, abuse, etc.). Fasting/Consecration can restore and break the yoke of the waster (Satan). Through Fasting/Consecration, God will remove the burden and repair what seemingly has been wasted. God will pick up all the fragments of your life. (John 6:12, He said, "Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing will be lost.") He is a "Repairer of the Breach, the Restorer of Streets to Dwell In." (Isaiah 58:12) Regular Fasting/Consecrating will keep your spirit strong. Joshua 14:11-12.

#### "Then Will I Hear from Heaven..."

"If my people who are called by My Name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from Heaven, and will forgive their sin" (2 Chronicles 7:14). Fasting/Consecration is self-humbling. "He who humbles himself will be exalted" (Luke 18:9-14). Fasting/Consecration is our body language to God. When we Fast/Consecrate, we are expressing our hunger for Him. We always ask from a place of humility.

## Unforgiveness

Fasting/Consecration will loosen the grip of unforgiveness. (Matthew 18:32-33, 35; Luke 6:37; 7:45-50; Mark 11:25-26). If these scriptures pertain to you, the Spirit will identify the individuals in question.

## No Expiration Date on Prayers – Persistence Breaks Resistance

As soon as you pray, God hears you, as in Daniel 10:12-14. Daniel fasted and prayed for weeks. Satan does everything in his power to stop you from receiving your answer. Your prayers will not be discarded. Believe God!!!!!!!!!! Stack up your prayers as you are Fasting/Consecrating. Pray, Pray, Pray!!!!!!!!!! Pray all night as Jesus did. “Pray without ceasing.” (1 Thessalonians 5:17)

## God Needs a Clean Vessel

God needs empty vessels, not ones so full of themselves that He cannot pour Himself out through or into them. Fasting/Consecration can cleanse the DIRT and prepare us for God’s use!!!

- D** Disobedience
- I** Ignorance (zeal without knowledge)
- R** Rebellion
- T** The Tongue (words of doubt and unbelief)

Spending time in Fasting/Consecration and prayer, regardless of your circumstance, will help you to be rooted and grounded in your faith, ready to weather any storm, the economy, your health, your family, or your job, etc... These are Satan’s attention-getters. NOTE: Remember, the focus of the enemy is always to cause the Work of God to cease!!!!

There are several elements we can glean from and be strengthened by during the Consecration:

- Assemble – Unity, Buddy System, Find a Friend
- Separate – Turn off the TV, computer and entertainment!!!
- Confess – Nehemiah 9:1-2, Repent!! God will bring things to your mind!!!
- The Word – Hear and Read the Word. Nehemiah 9:1-3
- Worship – Nehemiah 9:1-3

## Fasting/Consecration Brings the Glory of God

His Glory is upon the earth through you as you fast before Him (Habakkuk 2:14). “Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the Glory of the Lord is thy rereward. Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shall cry, and He shall say, Here I Am ... The Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought ... then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob, thy father, for the Mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.” (Isaiah 58:8-14).

### No-Quit Option/The Power of a Made-Up Mind

Never make decisions based on temporary circumstances. 2 Corinthians 11:23-29. Quitting is not an option!!!! When you think about quitting, you talk about quitting. Be assured, you will then quit!! Hebrews 10:39, "We are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul." Jesus never quit!!!!!! Remove the quit option!!!! When you do that the battle is won!!! Hebrews 10:35-36, "Therefore, do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the Will of God, you may receive the promise." "We are more than Conquerors." (Romans 8:37-39)

# THE CONSECRATED FAST

## ***How long is the consecration?***

14 days. We will begin Monday, May 10 and conclude Sunday, May 23, **after Morning Prayer.**

## ***What about medications?***

Please continue to take all medications as prescribed. It is vitally important that you do not stop taking your medications.

## ***May I take vitamins and sports drinks (protein drinks)?***

Yes, you may take a good multivitamin and a meal substitute drink. We discourage sports drinks due to the high sugar and sodium contents.

## ***What is the key to a successful consecration or fast?***

Prayer and study of the Scriptures. You are encouraged to spend time in private devotion (Prayer and Bible reading). ***See the attached scripture readings.*** You may also want to share in a time of corporate prayer with your spouse, family members or other believers.

## ***What are the Corporate Prayer Days and Times?***

- **Morning Prayer:** Sundays, Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays at 5:00 a.m. **in person and also through the conference line: Dial-in: +1 717-275-8940 or +1 712-832-8330. Access code: 343 9463**
- **Noon Prayer:** Tuesdays at 12:00 p.m.
- **Evening Prayer:** Fridays at 7:30 p.m.

## ***What are the dietary restrictions being observed?***

**ONE MEAL PER DAY**

## ***What about Marital Intimacy during Times of Consecration?***

According to 1 Corinthians 7:5, those that are married should limit physical intimacy. However, this does not mean abstain from emotional intimacy that is expressed in various appropriate ways (daily). After the season of consecration, Paul states that the married couple should resume their physical intimacy.

## ***What about Unmarried or Pre-Marital Physical Intimacy?***

If this question is being considered, stop the activity and schedule an appointment with the Pastor.

## THE CONSECRATED FAST

***"I beseech you therefore brethren, by the Mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be confirmed to this world, but be***

***transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and the perfect Will of God.” (Romans 12:1-2)***

## **PRAYER FOCUS FOR FAST**

**DAY 1 – Monday, May 10<sup>th</sup>**

**Scripture Reading: Isaiah 28:11-12, Joel 2:28-32; John 14:16-21; Luke 11:13; Acts 1:8, 2:4, 32, 33, 39, 8:12-17, 10:44-46, 19:2, 5-6; Romans 10:9-10; 1 Corinthians 14:2-15, 18, 27; Ephesians 6:18; Jude 1:20**

***Prayer: To Receive the Infilling of the Holy Spirit***

My Heavenly Father, I am Your child, for I believe in my heart that Jesus has been raised from the dead, and I have confessed Him as my Lord.

Jesus said, “How much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him.” I ask You now in the Name of Jesus to fill me with the Holy Spirit. I step into the fullness and power that I desire in the Name of Jesus. I confess that I am a Spirit-filled Christian. As I yield my vocal organs, I expect to speak in tongues, for the Spirit gives me utterance. And I will continue each day to speak in my heavenly language in the Name of Jesus. Praise the Lord! Amen.”

**DAY 2 – Tuesday, May 11<sup>th</sup>**

**Scripture Reading: John 14:16-17; Acts 1-8; Ephesians 1:22-23, 4:15-16; Colossians 3:12-15; Hebrews 10: 23-25; Ephesians 4:4-6, 6:18-19**

***Prayer: The Body of Christ***

Father, You put all things under the feet of Jesus and gave Him to be Head over all things to the Church, which is His Body, the fullness of Him, who fills all in all. We were dead in trespasses and sins, but You made us alive! Christ is our Peace, and we are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God. Jesus is our Cornerstone.

Father, You want us to grow up, to know the whole truth and tell it in love – like Christ in everything. We take our lead from Christ, who is the Source of everything we do. He keeps us in step with each other. His very Breath and Blood flows through us, nourishing us, so that we will grow up healthy in God, robust in love.

May we be filled with the knowledge of Your will in all Wisdom and Spiritual understanding. As the elect of God, holy and beloved, we put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another and forgiving one another. If we have a complaint against another, even as Christ forgave us, so we also must do. Above all things, we put on love, which is the bond of perfection, and let the Peace of God rule in our hearts, to which we were called in one Body, and we are thankful.

Full of belief, confident that we’re presentable inside and out, we keep a firm grip on the promises that keep us going - Your Word. Father, You always keep Your Word. Now we will

see how inventive we can be in encouraging love and helping out, not avoiding Worshiping together as some do, but spurring each other on, especially as we see the big Day approaching.

Since we are all called to travel on the same road and in the same direction, we will stay together, both outwardly and inwardly. We have one Master, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all, Who rules over all, works through all, and is present in all. Everything we are and think and do is permeated with oneness.

Father, we commit to pray for one another, keeping our eyes open and keeping each other's spirits up, so that no one falls behind or drops out. Also, we pray for our spiritual leaders that they will know what to say and have the courage to say it at the right time. We are one in the bond of love, in Name of Jesus.

### **DAY 3 – Wednesday, May 12<sup>th</sup>**

**Scripture Reading: 1 John 5:14-15; 1 Corinthians 1:10; Matthew 18:19; Ephesians 4:2-3; 1 Peter 3:8-9; John 17: 22-23; Matthew 6:10**

#### ***Prayer: Unity and Harmony***

Father, in the Name of Jesus, this is the confidence that we have in You: that, if we ask anything according to Your will, You hear us; and since we know that You hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desire of You.

Holy Spirit, teach us how to agree (harmonize together, together make a symphony) – about anything and everything – so that whatever we ask will come to pass and be done for us, by our Father in Heaven.

We pray that as members of the Body of Christ we will live as becomes us – with complete lowliness of mind (humility) and meekness (unselfishness, gentleness, mildness), with patience, bearing with one another and making allowances because, we love one another. In the Name of Jesus, we are eager and strive to earnestly guard and keep the harmony and oneness of [produced by] the Spirit in the binding power of peace.

We commit, in the Name of Jesus, and according to the Power of God at work in us, to be of one and the same mind (united in spirit), sympathizing [with one another], loving [each other] as brethren (of one household), compassionate and courteous – tenderhearted and humble-minded. We will never return evil for evil or insult for insult – scolding, tongue-lashing, berating; but, on the contrary, we will bless – pray for their welfare, happiness, and protection and truly pitying and loving one another. For we know that to this we have been called, that we may ourselves inherit a blessing [from God] – obtaining a blessing as heirs, bringing welfare and happiness and protection.

Father, thank You that Jesus has given to us the glory and honor that You gave Him, that we may be one, [even] as You and Jesus are one; Jesus in us and You in Jesus, in order that we may become one and perfectly united, that the world may know and [definitely] recognize that You sent Jesus and that You have loved them [even] as You have loved Jesus.

Father, Thy Will be done in earth, as it is in Heaven. Amen, and so be it.

## **DAY 4 – Thursday, May 13<sup>th</sup>**

**Scripture Reading: Acts 8:5-12, 14-17; Acts 10:1-48, 4:24; Romans 4:17; 1 Corinthians 1:10; Acts 4:29; Mark 16:20; Exodus 35: 33; Ephesians 4:11-15; Philemon 4:19; Romans 5:5; 1 Corinthians 3:9; Psalm 63:4**

### *Prayer: Vision for a Church*

Father, in the Name of Jesus, we come into Your presence thanking You for Word of Faith Church. You have called us to be saints in Word of Faith and around the world. As we lift our voices in one accord, we recognize that You are God and everything was made by and for You. We call into being those things that be not as though they were.

We thank You that we all speak the same thing: There is no division among us; we are perfectly joined together in the same mind. Grant unto us, Your representatives here, a boldness to speak Your Word, which You will confirm with signs following. We thank You that we have workmen in abundance and all manner of cunning people for every manner of work. Each ministry operates in the excellence of Ministry and Intercessions. We have in our Church Ministry gifts for the edifying of this Body till we all come into the unity of faith and knowledge of the Son of God unto a mature person. None of our people will be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine. We speak the truth in love.

We are a growing and witnessing Body of believers. We have every need met. Therefore, we meet the needs of people who come – spirit, soul and body. We ask for the Wisdom of God in meeting these needs. Father, we thank You for the ministry facilities that will more than meet the needs of the ministry You have called us to. Our church is prospering financially, and we have more than enough to meet every situation. We have everything we need to carry out Your Great Commission and reach the Bay Area for Jesus. We are a people of love as love is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. We thank You that Word of God is living big in all of us and Jesus is Lord!

We are a supernatural church, composed of supernatural people doing supernatural things, for we are laborers together with God. We thank You for Your presence among us, and we lift our hands and praise Your holy Name. Amen.

## **DAY 5 – Friday, May 14<sup>th</sup>**

**Scripture Reading: Acts 19:1-41; Psalm 85:6-7, 51:10,12,13, 119:9-11; 2 Corinthians 7:1; John 15:3; Psalm 119:16-17; James 1:22; Psalm 119:25, 37, 40, 50; Ephesians 4:22-24; 2 Corinthians 4:16**

### *Prayer: Revival*

Father, in the Name of Jesus, You have revived us again that Your people may rejoice in You. Thank You for showing us Your Mercy and Loving-kindness, O Lord, and for granting us Your Salvation. You have created in us a clean heart, O God, and renewed a right, preserving, and steadfast spirit within us. You have restored unto us the Joy of Your Salvation, and You

are upholding us with a willing spirit. Now we will teach transgressors Your ways, and sinners shall be converted and return to You.

We therefore cleanse our ways by taking heed and keeping watch [on ourselves] according to Your Word [conforming our lives to it]. Since Your [great] promises are ours, we cleanse ourselves from everything that contaminates and defiles our bodies and spirits and bring [our] consecration to completeness in the (reverential) fear of God. With our whole hearts have we sought You, inquiring for You and of You and yearning for You; O let us not wander or step aside [either in ignorance or willfully] from Your commandments. Your Word have we laid up in our hearts, that we might not sin against You.

Jesus, thank You for cleansing us through the Word – teachings – which You have given us. We delight ourselves in Your statutes; we will not forget Your Word. Deal bountifully with Your servants, that we may live; and will observe Your Word [hearing, receiving, loving and obeying it].

Father, in the Name of Jesus, we are doers of the Word and not merely listeners to it. It is You, O Most High, Who has revived and stimulated us according to Your Word! Thank You for turning away our eyes from beholding vanity [idols and idolatry] and restoring us to vigorous life and health in Your ways. Behold, we long for Your precepts; in Your righteousness, give us renewed life. This is our comfort and consolation in our affliction: that Your Word has revived us and given us life.

We strip ourselves of our former natures- put off and discard our old unrenewed selves – which characterized our previous manner of life. We are constantly renewed in the spirit of our minds – having a fresh mental and spiritual attitude; and we put on the new nature (the regenerate self), created in God’s image, (Godlike) in true righteousness and holiness. Though our outer man is (progressively) decaying and wasting away, our inner self is being (progressively) renewed day after day. Hallelujah! Amen.

## **DAY 6 – Saturday, May 15<sup>th</sup>**

**Scripture Reading: 1 Corinthians 14:1-4, 15-17; 1 Timothy 2:1-2; 2 Corinthians 10:3-5; Matthew 9:38; Romans 2:4, 15:21; 2 Timothy 2:26**

### ***Prayer: Salvation of the Lost***

Father, it is written in Your Word, “First of all, then, I admonish and urge that petitions, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be offered on behalf of all men.” (1 Tim. 2:1 AMP)

Therefore, Father, we bring the lost of the world this day – every man, woman, and child from here to the farthest corner of the earth – before You. As we intercede, we use our faith, believing that thousands this day have the opportunity to make Jesus their Lord.

Father, we know that Satan would prevent these from hearing truth, if possible. We human, but we don’t wage war with human plans and methods. We use God’s mighty weapons to knock down the devil’s strongholds. With these weapons we break down every proud argument that keeps people from knowing God. With these weapons we conquer their rebellious ideas and teach them to obey Christ.

We ask the Lord of the harvest to thrust the perfect laborers across these lives this day to share the good news of the Gospel in a special way so that they will listen and understand it.

We believe that they will not be able to resist the wooing of the Holy Spirit, for You, Father, bring them to repentance by Your goodness and love.

We confess that they shall see who have never been told of Jesus. They shall understand who have never heard of Jesus. And they shall come out of the snare of the devil who has held them captive. They shall open their eyes and turn from darkness to Light – from the power of Satan to You, God!

In Jesus' Name, Amen.

## **DAY 7 – Sunday, May 16<sup>th</sup>**

**Scripture Reading: Jude 20; Romans 8:2, 4, 9, 14, 31, 37, 12:21, 13:12, 14; James 1:22, 4:7-8, 8:12; Hebrews 13:5; Ephesians 6:10; Colossians 2: 10**

### ***Prayer: Spirit-Controlled Life***

Father, I pray for all saints everywhere. Help us remain teachable that we may receive instruction from the Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, and Teachers. We will be Your children equipped for the work of Ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ. Bring us to the unity of faith and knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

Father, there is now no condemnation to those who walk according to the Spirit, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life sets us free from the law of sin and death. Grant us the Grace to live the life of the Spirit. Father, You condemned sin in the flesh [subdued, overcame, deprived it] of its power over us. Now the righteous and just requirement of the Law is fully met in us who live and move in the ways of the Spirit – our lives governed and controlled by the Holy Spirit.

We purpose to live according to the Spirit, and we are controlled by the desires of the Spirit. We set our minds on and seek those things which gratify the Holy Spirit. We no longer live the life of the flesh; we live the life of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit of God really dwells with us, directing and controlling us.

On the authority of Your Word, we declare that we are more than conquerors and are gaining a surpassing victory through Jesus Who loves us. We refuse to let ourselves be overcome with evil, but we will overcome and master evil with good. We have on the full armor of light, clothed with the Lord Jesus Christ, the Messiah, and make no provision for indulging the flesh.

May we always be doers of God's Word. We have God's wisdom, and we draw it forth with prayer. We are peace-loving, full of compassion and good fruits. We are free from doubts, wavering and insincerity. We are subject to God, our Father.

We are strong in the Lord and the power of His might. Therefore, we take our stand against the devil and resist him; he flees from us. We draw close to God, and God draws close to us. We do not fear, for God never leaves us. Jesus is our Lord!

## DAY 8 – Monday, May 17<sup>th</sup>

**Scripture Reading: Romans 11:19; 1 Corinthians 13; Galatians 5:17–25; James 3:17–18**

### *Prayer: The Holy Spirit Manifests Through Various Fruit*

The Fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control” (Gal. 5:22–23). I think it is possible for one to have the gifts of the Spirit without the fruit of the Spirit. I think too one can have the fruit of the Spirit without the gifts of the Spirit. Charismatics and Pentecostals tend to emphasize the gifts; conservative evangelicals and Reformed Christians tend to stress the fruits.

A brief synopsis of the Prologue in *Holy Fire* is perhaps in order: there has been a silent divorce in the church, speaking generally, between the Word and the Spirit. When there is a divorce, sometimes the children stay with the mother, sometimes with the father. In this divorce there are those on the Word side emphasizing sound doctrine, especially Romans, and those on the Spirit side emphasizing the Holy Spirit, especially the Book of Acts. Sadly it seems to be one or the other almost wherever I go in the world. The need is for both. I believe the simultaneous combination will result in spontaneous combustion. The Word and Spirit coming together will bring about the next move of the Holy Spirit, in my opinion.

I will briefly mention each of the fruit of the Spirit as found in Galatians 5:22–23.

*Love.* This is the first fruit of the Spirit that Paul lists and is actually the sum total of all the fruit of the Holy Spirit. If indeed we fulfilled all that is described by Paul in 1 Corinthians 13, I am pretty sure we would experience all the fruit that follow—joy, peace, patience, and so forth. Paul means *agape* love (selfless love), not *philia* (brotherly love) or *eros* (physical love). Read 1 Corinthians 13, noting that “love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs” (vv. 4–5). Why do we keep records? To prove we have paid. Why do we keep a record of wrongs? To remind another of their faults. Love tears up all records of wrong—whether it be your friend or enemy, your spouse or neighbor. Total forgiveness means that all the fruit of the Spirit follow.

*Joy.* This is an inward state when the absence of any condemnation allows you to experience the Lord’s own joy. Happiness comes from outward things; joy is internal and comes by the ungrieved Spirit.

*Peace.* This something that Satan cannot produce. The flesh cannot produce it. It is a fruit of the Spirit that witnesses to your eternal salvation and your pleasing the Lord.

*Patience.* This is a supernatural ability to *wait*, not merely to wait upon the Lord but also upon people! Instead of snapping your finger and expecting others to jump, you let them be themselves without your moralizing them.

*Kindness.* This means being nice. Considerate. Friendly. It is what makes people want to be around you. Does it surprise you that being nice to people is a fruit of the Holy Spirit?

*Goodness.* This is perhaps the hardest of the fruit of the Spirit to define. It is the combination of honesty and generosity. It can be used interchangeably with virtue. I think transparent integrity best defines goodness.

*Faithfulness.* God is faithful; He will never let us down. He keeps His word. If we are faithful, we will be consistent in keeping our word and demonstrating *agape* love.

*Gentleness.* This means the willingness to yield; it's the opposite of being harsh. It is being unruffled when your plans suddenly fall through. One thinks of the dove, a symbol of the Holy Spirit, as opposed to a pigeon, which is boisterous and a symbol of the counterfeit.

*Self-control.* This means having self-discipline regarding your temper, appetite, handling money, ambition, lifestyle, or coping with disappointment with ease.

Whereas the gifts of the Spirit are granted without repentance, the fruit emerge in proportion to our obedience. The gifts are sovereignly bestowed and irrevocable; they do not prove how spiritual a person is, whereas the fruit of the Spirit do indicate one's spirituality. As I said above, Word people, speaking generally, tend to focus on the fruit; Spirit people focus more on the gifts.

generally, tend to focus on the fruit; Spirit people focus more on the gifts.

Why not both?

*Gracious Holy Spirit, I am ashamed that I do not manifest Your fruit as I should, and I ask for Your forgiveness. I pray that my life will be one that shows Your power in spiritual gifts as well as graces that demonstrate Your fruit. In Jesus's name, Amen.*

## **DAY 9 – Tuesday, May 18<sup>th</sup>**

**Scripture Reading: Matthew 25:1–13; Luke 12:35–40; Ephesians 5:8–21; Revelation 3:14–22**

### ***The Holy Spirit Will Awaken The Church***

In the parable of the ten virgins (Matt. 25:1–13) Jesus describes what the state of the church will be like in the very last days: asleep. This parable is based upon an ancient Middle Eastern wedding—very unlike our weddings today. The wedding took place not in a church or synagogue but in the bridegroom's home. It could last over a period of several days. The procedure was this: the groom would go to the bride's home and bring her back to his home where the wedding took place, but the bride never knew when he would arrive. Strange as it may seem to us, sometimes he would come in the middle of the night! The bride had young maidens around her who carried lamps. They would need flasks of oil in order to keep the lamps lit in case the groom came at night.

In the parable there were five "wise" virgins; they took oil with them so their lamps would never go out. The wise represent those who were pursuing their inheritance. You will recall from an earlier chapter that every Christian is called to enter into his or her inheritance. Some do; some don't. The five "foolish" virgins took no oil; they represent those who did not pursue their inheritance. In the parable there was a cry at midnight—not 12:00 p.m.; the Greek word means "middle of the night." The cry went out, "Here's the bridegroom! Come out to

meet him!” (v. 6). All ten virgins were awakened; even the wise had been asleep. But the foolish virgins’ lamps had gone out, having run out of oil. They pleaded with the wise, “Give us some of your oil” (v. 8), but the wise were unable to help. Those who had the oil in their lamps went in to enjoy the wedding banquet. An important thing to note is this: a great awakening precedes the Second Coming. It will be the greatest move of the Holy Spirit since Pentecost—when the Word and Spirit come together as was experienced in the earliest church. The entire church will be awakened, both those pursuing their inheritance and those not doing so. It will be an awakening that will go right around the world in a very short period of time. Three observations:

First, you don’t know you were asleep until you wake up! You also do things in your sleep you would never do if you were awake. It is my view that the church today—in this period of “silent divorce” between the Word and the Spirit—is in a deep sleep. We do things we would not dream of doing were we wide awake. The world does not respect the church, but it does not seem to bother us. There is little or no outrage over conditions around us.

Second, when the great awakening comes—the cry in the middle of the night—we will all wake up! But those who were not pursuing their inheritance will be dismayed and beg for help, but it will be too late. The foolish will not become wise but will remain as they were when the cry in the middle of the night takes place. They will be utterly unable to enjoy this great move of the Spirit; they will only observe it from a distance, from the sidelines. Those who were pursuing their inheritance, however, will be right in the middle of it, enjoying it to the hilt.

Third, this awakening will witness the remarriage between the Word and the Spirit. The gospel will be restored to its ancient power. At last the world will fear the people of God. Miracles such as in the Book of Acts will take place, including people being raised from the dead. The blindness on Israel will be lifted; many Jews will be saved. Many Muslims will be saved as well. But at the same time great persecution will take place. I’m sorry, but it won’t be all fun.

I asked a charismatic leader in England, “Which do you think the charismatic movement is, Ishmael or Isaac?” He replied, “Isaac.” I then asked him, “What would you think if I told you that the charismatic movement is Ishmael?” He said, “I hope not.” In my final chapter in *Holy Fire*, “Isaac,” I suggest that all we have seen up to now is best described as Ishmael—for whom God had a great purpose. But Isaac is coming! And as the promise to Isaac was a hundred times greater than the promise to Ishmael, so what is coming will be a hundred times greater than anything we have seen! When I first made this declaration at Wembley Conference Center in London in 1992, it was not well received. “You call us Ishmael,” charismatic leaders said to me. But some of these same people have come around and have since endorsed what I said. And yet I had no idea that Smith Wigglesworth prophesied the same thing three months before he died in 1947. You can google him and read it for yourself. In a word, he predicted that the greatest move of the Holy Spirit ever seen—eclipsing the Welsh and Wesleyan revivals—will take place; the Word and Spirit will come together!

I close this book with a comforting yet sobering word: the great awakening is at hand, even at the doors. But not all will enjoy it—only those who have faithfully pursued their inheritance. The Holy Spirit will awaken the church. You can count on that. The call will come when we are in a deep sleep—not expecting it. When that moment comes, it will be too late for those who were not pursuing an intimacy with the Holy Spirit to enjoy the next great move of

God. I would like this book to be a mini wake-up call to the reader before the great wake-up call comes. It will be too late for the foolish to become wise then. But it is not too late now.

May the blessing of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be with you all.

Amen.

***Prayer:***

*Most gracious Holy Spirit, I welcome any wake-up call that will bring me to my senses. Grant me not to miss the joy and glory of what is coming. Wake me up now that I may know I am truly pursuing my inheritance. And glorify Jesus to the greatest degree. In His name, Amen.*

**DAY 10 – Wednesday, May 19<sup>th</sup>**

**Scripture Reading: 2 Samuel 12:11–14; Psalm 139; Lamentations 3:19–26; 1 John 1:7–2:2**

***The Holy Spirit Does Not Forsake Us***

We have seen that each person in the Trinity is truly and fully God. This has relevance with regard to our relationship to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. For example, it is written of God the Father that He “will never leave you nor forsake you” (Deut. 31:6). Jesus said before His ascension to heaven, “Surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matt. 28:20). Can we expect the same faithfulness with regard to the Holy Spirit? Yes. Jesus said of the Holy Spirit that He would be with us “forever” (John 14:16). But even if Jesus had not said that of the Holy Spirit, I would believe it is true.

We mentioned earlier that David, though a man after God’s own heart and Israel’s greatest king, was not perfect. His sins of adultery and murder rank at the top of the list in grievous and disgraceful sins in the Old Testament. Unlike Saul, David repented as soon as the prophet Nathan reproved him, and afterward he wrote down his prayer. It is Psalm 51. The first thing David asked for was mercy: “Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions. Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from me sin” (vv. 1–2). But I want to focus on these words: “Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me” (v. 11). Some think this shows that the Holy Spirit leaves us when we sin because David prayed as he did—that God would not take the Holy Spirit from him. He did not pray that because the Holy Spirit leaves us when we sin; David prayed this because he *feared* this and was conscious of what he deserved. He prayed this way because the presence of God was so precious to him. To him the presence of God and the Holy Spirit came to the same thing. David was horrified at the thought he might forfeit this.

He need not have worried. “Great is your faithfulness” (Lam. 3:23). The God of the Old Testament does not leave us; Jesus the Son of God does not leave us; the Holy Spirit does not leave us. And yet the proof that the Holy Spirit had not left David is the fact that he prayed as he did. Only a person who was motivated by the Holy Spirit could pray like that! His prayer for mercy shows the Holy Spirit was with him! Praying for mercy showed his repentance. Also, pleading for mercy shows you have no bargaining power; David recognized that God could give or withhold mercy and be just either way. The entire Psalm 51 can be described with one word:

repentance. That is what David was showing. The Holy Spirit was at work in him, enabling David to pray as he did. Indeed, Psalm 51 is a part of Scripture—of which the Holy Spirit is the Author! All Scripture is “God-breathed,” which means inspired by the Holy Spirit (2 Tim. 3:16).

David also wrote the amazing Psalm 139. Whether he wrote this before or after his horrible sin, I don’t know. In any case, David wrote: “Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there” (vv. 7–8). The King James translates the latter part of verse 8, “If I make my bed in hell.” The ESV leaves the Hebrew untranslated: “If I make my bed in *Sheol*”—death, the grave. David certainly had made his bed in hell when he sinned with a high hand as he did. (*Hades* is the New Testament equivalent of *Sheol*.) If he wrote that psalm after his sin it is a testimony that God indeed had not left him.

We are all sinners. “I am a sinner—great as any, worse than many.”<sup>1</sup> “If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:8–9). It is by the grace of God that I have not sinned as David did. I am just encouraged to know that the God of the Bible is full of mercy. Jesus said to the woman found in adultery, “Neither do I condemn you . . . Go now and leave your life of sin” (John 8:11). The Holy Spirit is the same; He will never leave us, but He will tell us to leave our life of sin.

***Prayer:***

*O Holy Spirit, I think of the phrase, “There go I but by the grace of God.” Forgive me for my sins, including my self-righteousness. Thank You for Your great mercy. In Jesus’ name, Amen.*

**DAY 11 – Thursday, May 20<sup>th</sup>**

**Scripture Reading: Matthew 11:25–30; John 6:61–65; Romans 8:28–30; Ephesians 2:1–9**

***The Holy Spirit Directs People To Jesus and Makes Him Real***

Have you considered how essential the work of the Holy Spirit is in evangelism? When Jesus said to Nicodemus, “You must be born again,” He immediately added something about the Holy Spirit: “The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit” (John 3:7–8). Jesus is saying that every conversion is a work of sovereign grace of the Holy Spirit. As we were passive in our natural birth, so too are we when born of the Holy Spirit. It is what the Holy Spirit does.

Does this surprise you? James said, “Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures” (James 1:18, ESV). This means no conversion is an accident. Our natural birth was not an accident. God gives each of us life and breath. “From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live” (Acts 17:26). God chose when and where we should be born. Why? “That men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him” (v. 27). We are born “dead” in transgressions and sins,

“but because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved” (Eph. 2:1, 4–5). This means we cannot take credit for being saved. “Where, then, is boasting?” asks Paul, who then answers: “It is excluded” (Rom. 3:27). Conversion is what the Holy Spirit does. It is not of works lest we boast (Eph. 2:9).

We saw earlier that Jesus said of the Holy Spirit, “He will testify about me” (John 15:26). What makes people want to turn to Jesus? The Holy Spirit. What makes Jesus real? The Holy Spirit. What makes what He did for us—dying on the cross and being raised from the dead—real? The Holy Spirit.

This is why Jesus said, “No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws them” (John 6:44). We are all born “dead”—“dead in your transgressions and sins” (Eph. 2:1). Can a dead man speak? Can a dead man hear? Can a dead man move? Can a dead man make a choice? Jesus’s statement in John 6:44 came in the midst of what Bible teachers call *the hard teachings of Jesus*. At the beginning of this discourse Jesus had a following of five thousand (v. 10). At the end, “Many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him” (v. 66). Jesus elaborated on His various *hard* sayings: “The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing . . . This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless the Father has enabled him” (vv. 63, 65).

What is the aim of the Holy Spirit’s witness? Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit directs people to Jesus. “He will testify about me.” It is the Spirit who makes people see *why* Jesus died and rose again. Remember that the Eleven (now that Judas Iscariot is out of the picture) did not know *why* Jesus died or rose from the dead even after they saw His resurrected body. It was not until the Holy Spirit fell on them on the Day of Pentecost that it all came together for them.

Charles Spurgeon once told how he himself was converted. He asked, “Why am I a Christian?” He concluded: it was because he heard the gospel. “But,” he asked, “why did I believe it?” Then, like a flash, “I saw that God was at the bottom of it all”; he owed his salvation to sheer grace alone. Dr. Lloyd-Jones used to say that a Christian is a person who is surprised that he is a Christian!

I was invited to meet the late Margaret Thatcher when she was prime minister of Great Britain. I was given several minutes of private time with her just before I gave the invocation at a lawyer’s convention in Royal Albert Hall. But lo and behold, who would be waiting to meet her, only to shake her hand? Chief Justice of the Supreme Court Warren Burger, Vice President Walter Mondale, and the American ambassador to St. James Court. Then it was announced that there would be a photograph of these dignitaries with the prime minister. At that point I stepped back to watch. “Come here, Dr. Kendall; you are to be in this photo,” I was told. I walked over self-consciously to be included, to be photographed with these important people. I felt like a fraud. I did not deserve to be there for one second. But I was invited, and I accepted the invitation. When we get to heaven, we will all have this in common: we don’t deserve to be there. But we were invited, and we accepted the invitation.

Martin Luther said he expects three surprises in heaven: (1) there will be those present he did not expect to be there, (2) there will be those missing he expected to be there, and (3) he is there himself!

**Prayer:**

*O sovereign Holy Spirit, I am so aware of my unworthiness before You. I so don't deserve to be Your child. Thank You for wooing me and giving me life. Save me from ever boasting that I am saved when I know it is all by Your grace. In Jesus's name, Amen.*

**DAY 12 – Friday, May 21<sup>st</sup>**

**Scripture Reading: Romans 12:3–12; 1 Corinthians 1:4–9; Ephesians 4:7–16; James 5:13–16**

***The Holy Spirit Manifests Through Various Spiritual Gifts***

You will recall that cessationism is the unbiblical theory that the gifts of the Holy Spirit “ceased” at some point in the early church. I don’t mean to be unfair, but I believe many conservative evangelicals are quick to embrace the teaching of cessationism not because of the gifts of the Spirit generally but the gift of speaking in tongues particularly. I doubt that many today would uphold cessationism were it not for the gift of tongues. That is where the offense is. It is the only gift that challenges your pride. Nobody whom I know of objects to gifts such as the gift of wisdom or healing. Some may well object to the prophetic gift or word of knowledge—but only because these have been so abused. The real offense is tongues.

“Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good,” these including: wisdom, words of knowledge, faith, healing, miraculous powers, prophecy, discernment of spirits, different kinds of tongues, and interpretation of tongues (1 Cor. 12:7–10). There are further gifts listed, such as the ability to “help others” and “gifts of administration” (v. 28). There are (what some call) motivational gifts in Romans 12:3–8. A recondite issue among some Christians—including Pentecostals and charismatics—is whether the evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit is always and necessarily speaking in tongues. Is the gift of tongues or praying in tongues (1 Cor. 14:2, 14) the same phenomenon as the one that the 120 received on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:4)? Possibly not. It may have been something different. The best scholars among Pentecostals and charismatics differ on this, and I see no need to make an issue here.

I have a chapter on spiritual gifts in *Holy Fire* in which the gifts are explained in somewhat more detail than below. Paul said we should all earnestly desire the greater gifts. He puts wisdom as first on the list. Perhaps he did so because he considers wisdom the most important. But surely the gifts of healing and of doing miracles would also be among the greater gifts. To those who point out that the gift of tongues is at the bottom of the list, and therefore the least important, I have an answer: if you really want the greater gifts, be willing to start at the bottom! They who humble themselves will be exalted. It can be embarrassing and humbling to speak in tongues. That would show how much you “earnestly desire” the gifts of the Spirit. I will briefly mention each of those described in 1 Corinthians 12:8–10:

*Wisdom.* This is the presence of the mind of the Spirit, enabling you to know the next step forward in what you should say or do. Wisdom consists not in more education or a high IQ

but having the right word at the right time whether it be for yourself or others. Sadly it is the last gift so many seem to want and yet is the most needed.

*Message of knowledge.* Better known these days as “word [Gr. *logos*] of knowledge,” this gift *could* refer to theological and biblical knowledge, but it may also be understood as being a “special word” that a person needs urgently: a timely and relevant message from the Spirit that assures one that God and not man has spoken.

*Faith.* This is not saving or justifying faith but rather an amazing ability to trust God in a crisis. It is when you are amazed at your ability to cope when all things have gone wrong. It could be a permanent gift or something given for a needed moment.

*Healing.* This gift shows that Jesus’s ministry of healing did not end when He ascended to God’s right hand. God intended that healing the sick should continue until Jesus comes. What happened in the Book of Acts can happen today. Some people seem to have a special gift in this area.

*Miraculous powers.* It is not easy to determine the difference between healing of the sick and miracles (the Greek words are used interchangeably). However, it is possible that healing can be gradual and miracles may take place instantly. The forty-year-old lame man who never walked was suddenly enabled to walk—and leap—at the Gate Beautiful (although this miracle is called healing; Acts 3:1–16). This gift of miracles may also refer to casting out demons.

*Prophecy.* This is not a gift like Isaiah’s, but it is more like Agabus’s prophecies, as we have seen. There are levels of prophetic gifts. God *could* raise up an Elijah, and perhaps has, but the gift of prophecy Paul seems to be urging (1 Cor. 14:1) is mostly for the edification of the body of Christ.

*Distinguishing between spirits.* This important gift enables one to recognize the demonic but also the genuine Holy Spirit. Nothing is said here of casting out demons; the gift of the miraculous would apply to this. But never underestimate the importance of a person having the ability to recognize the Holy Spirit Himself in a day when there is so much of the counterfeit.

*Speaking in different kinds of tongues.* This is popularly known as a “prayer language,” and yet Paul here mentions “different kinds” of tongues, implying that one may not always speak in the same language each time—whether it is a known language on earth or an angelic tongue. Or it may mean one person speaks in one language and another person in an entirely different one.

*Interpretation of tongues.* Paul does not say *translation* but *interpretation*. It does not require a word-for-word translation but conveying the spirit of one’s message in tongues. If one speaks a tongue in the church, Paul required that someone interpret. I’m sure a lot of the counterfeit has been manifested here, but I have also seen the real, which can be beautiful.

It is debatable whether one has a gift permanently or as needed. In any case, the gifts are “irrevocable” (Rom. 11:29; “without repentance,” KJV), a sober reminder that we should not fancy ourselves to be spiritual because we exercise any of these gifts.

### ***Prayer:***

*Blessed Holy Spirit, thank You for granting gifts to the body of Christ. Grant that I myself will truly desire earnestly the greater gifts. Let me want them so much that I will seek the less spectacular or the more humbling in order that I might glorify the name of Jesus. We pray in*

*His name, Amen.*

**DAY 13 – Saturday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>**

**Scripture Reading: Matthew 7:15–27; Romans 11:29; 1 Timothy 4:1–5; 2 Timothy 4:1–5; Acts 21:10–14; Philippians 2:12–16; 1 Thessalonians 4:3–7; Hebrews 12:15–17; Samuel 24:1–7; 26:8–11; Psalms 23; 136; Isaiah 40:31; Matthew 20:20–28**

### *The Holy Spirit Empowers for Leadership*

One of the questions I will ask the Lord when we get to heaven is, “Why did You not raise up a successor to Joshua? You made Joshua successor to Moses but provided no successor to Joshua.” It is a mystery. Whatever the reason, Joshua was not succeeded by one man but by judges, or leaders sometimes called deliverers, during the time between Joshua and Samuel. Four of these men have in common that the “Spirit of the LORD came upon him” (Othniel, Judges 3:10; Gideon, Judges 6:34; Jephthah, Judges 11:29; and Samson, Judges 14:6, 19, 15:14). We know little about Othniel, but we know that in the case of the other three, each was characterized by a glaring weakness. Gideon was probably the best of the lot, but his stature diminished when toward the end of his life he requested that the people give him an earring. Gideon made the gold earrings into a gold ephod, which he placed in Ophrah, his town. “All Israel prostituted themselves by worshiping it there, and it became a snare to Gideon and his family” (Judg. 8:27).

John Calvin said that “in every saint there is something reprehensible.” He said this in his commentary on Jephthah, who delivered Israel in an amazing victory over the Ammonites but would always be known for his foolish vow. Jephthah vowed to God that if He delivered Israel in this major battle, he would sacrifice anyone who “comes out of the door of my house” (Judg. 11:31). But who should it be but his own daughter! (vv. 34–35). In the case of Samson, sometimes called the strongest man who ever lived, he had a fatal weakness—a weakness for women. This weakness led to his downfall. He fell for Delilah, but she accused him of not loving her because he would not reveal his secret to her. She accused him of not loving her because he would not reveal his secret to her. He surely knew she was a bad person, but his desire for her overruled common sense. He revealed his secret—he had never had a haircut. When he slept, she cut off his hair, and his strength immediately left him. He became as weak as any man. The Philistines seized him, gouged out his eyes, and bound him with shackles. But when his hair began to grow, his strength returned. He brought down the temple, and all the people in it, getting vengeance upon them. He killed many more when he died than while he lived (Judg. 16:30).

Leaders need more than empowerment. They need wisdom. Young Solomon had the presence of mind to ask God for wisdom: “Give your servant a discerning heart to govern your people and to distinguish between right and wrong” (1 Kings 3:9). Solomon’s wisdom was legendary in his own day and ever after. The Spirit of God gave power for leadership to these judges, but that was all. Why didn’t the Holy Spirit lead them to cleansing as well as power for

leadership? You tell me. The Book of Judges is summed up in the very last verse: “In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as he saw fit” (Judg. 21:15); or, in other words, “Everyone did what was right in his own eyes” (ESV).

There is a melancholy debate in some circles—which is more important, character or gifting? You would have thought that Christian leaders would have no difficulty answering a question like this, but—believe it or not—there are a lot of them who actually say that gifting is more important than character. In other words, if a person shows great leadership and oratory, and is able to prophesy or do miracles, a person’s personal and private life does not matter. Really? No wonder the sexual immorality among Christian leaders nowadays! The Holy Spirit is able to empower, yes. And He empowers for leadership. True. But power is not enough. We need purity too.

I fear that too many leaders want power only. Some of them have a vast following. Great charisma. But that’s about it. I don’t mean to be unfair, but Paul did say that in the last days people would easily be deceived. “For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth, and turn aside to myths” (2 Tim. 4:3–4). Jesus said, “Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles? Then I will tell you plainly, ‘I never knew you’” (Matt. 7:22–23).

Even though the Spirit of God still comes on some people—and they make a great show and wow the people—we should never follow them as our models, much less our mentors.

These things said, it may be surprise you that Gideon, Jephthah, and Samson all earned a place in the great faith chapter of the Bible—Hebrews 11. (See verse 32.) It goes to show that God is merciful. He knows our frame, remembering that we are dust (Ps. 103:14).

### ***Prayer:***

*O Holy Spirit, grant me the discernment to recognize the absence of wisdom and purity in leaders today. Let me not be among those who have itching ears and are not totally interested in the truth. In Jesus’s name, Amen.*

### ***The Holy Spirit Empowers For Prophecy***

Our devotional today is very similar to the previous one. The manner in which the Spirit of the Lord was referred to in the Book of Judges is repeated in 1 Samuel; that is, when it comes to King Saul.

We begin with Samuel—the first major prophet since Moses—and Israel’s request for a king. Samuel pleaded with them not to ask for a king, but he gave into them. From that moment Samuel did his best to find them a king. Saul, the son of Kish, from the tribe of Benjamin was chosen. Samuel prophesied to Saul, “The Spirit of the LORD will come upon you in power, and you will prophesy . . . and you will be changed into a different person” (1 Sam. 10:6). Shortly after that “the Spirit of God came upon him in power,” and he began prophesying (v. 10). Some of those who knew him asked, “What is this that has happened to the son of Kish? Is Saul among the prophets?” (v. 11).

King Saul had a brilliant beginning. He was given great authority. On one occasion “the Spirit of God came upon him in power, and he burned with anger. He took a pair of oxen, cut them into pieces, and sent the pieces by messengers throughout Israel, proclaiming, ‘This is what will be done to the oxen of anyone who does not follow Saul and Samuel.’ Then the terror of the LORD fell on the people, and they turned out as one man” (1 Sam. 11:6–7).

But in a short period of time Saul became “yesterday’s man,” as I put it in my book *The Anointing: Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow*. What went wrong? In a word, he took himself too seriously. Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones used to say to me, “The worst thing that can happen to a man is to succeed before he is ready.” That was Saul. The turning point came when Saul would not wait for Samuel to offer the burnt offerings. So Saul said, “Bring me the burnt offering and the fellowship offerings.” Saul then offered up the burnt offering—knowingly going against Scripture that stipulates only the priest called of God can do that. Saul did it anyway. Samuel then showed up and said to King Saul, “You acted foolishly.” Furthermore, “Your kingdom will not endure; the LORD has sought out a man after his own heart” (1 Sam. 13:9–14).

Things were never the same again—for Saul or for Israel. Saul was rejected by God. The people did not know this; only Samuel knew it. In the meantime Samuel anointed young David (1 Sam. 16:13)—the man after God’s own heart. David killed Goliath, making Saul insanely jealous. Moreover, “Saul was afraid of David, because the LORD was with David but had left Saul” (1 Sam. 18:12).

David had to go into hiding because of Saul’s jealousy and dogged determination to kill him. Saul was more concerned about the threat of David than he was the Philistines—the enemy of Israel. Saul was totally committed in his mind and heart to get rid of David. No persuading would change him, whether from his son Jonathan or daughter Michal.

And now we examine a surprising, truly extraordinary occurrence. On one of his expeditions to find David and kill him, King Saul began to prophesy. His prophetic gift had not left him. Strange as it may seem, “the Spirit of God came even upon him, and he walked along prophesying until he came to Naioth. He stripped of his robes and also prophesied in Samuel’s presence. He lay that way all that day and night. This is why people say, ‘Is Saul also among the prophets?’” (1 Sam. 19:23–24).

Think about this. Put these two things together: Saul prophesying and simultaneously planning to kill David. However can the two coincide? However could the *Spirit of God* come upon a man with such a wicked goal? If the Spirit of God fell on David when being anointed by Samuel, how could the same Spirit of God fall on the man whose sole obsession was to kill the man after God’s own heart?

You tell me. This goes to show some of the mysteries that surround the manifestations of the Holy Spirit. What is more, Saul prophesied in the presence of Samuel, who had just anointed David to be king. Why didn’t Samuel say something to Saul? He apparently remained silent.

There are some things that happen in the work of the Lord you cannot figure out. The Bible itself doesn’t try to explain some things. We are left to “work out” our salvation with fear and trembling (Phil. 2:12). I take “work out” to mean to sort out some dilemmas as best and honestly as you know how. God does not spoon-feed us with every detail we would gladly welcome. He apparently expects us to grow up and come to conclusions that give us peace of mind.

There is one verse that gives me a sense of sanity on this kind of issue: “God’s gifts and his call are irrevocable [‘without repentance,’ KJV]” (Rom. 11:29). Like it or not, God gives gifts—and lets us keep them—regardless of our character or conduct. This is why some people think that gifting has priority over character. I don’t agree. I do not believe it is glorifying to God to live private lives that ignore holy living even though our gift may flourish.

What say you?

***Prayer:***

*Dear Holy Spirit, there is so much in Your word that I do not understand. Please give me grace to leave things with You but, at the same time, walk in a manner that brings great honor and glory to Your name. In Jesus’s name, Amen.*

***The Holy Spirit Prepares Us For Service***

Then Samuel poured oil upon young David, anointing him to be the next king, the Spirit of the Lord came upon him in power (1 Sam. 16:13). But there is one thing that did not happen, namely, a further prophetic word from Samuel. If only Samuel had said, “David, it will be another twenty years before you will become king.” No. Nor did Samuel prophesy, “You will be spending the next twenty years running from King Saul just to stay alive.” And Samuel might have added, “Don’t worry, David, this is part of your preparation.” God did not lead Samuel to say anything like that.

When God commits us to service for Him, He often tells us *nothing* regarding pitfalls and disappointments along the way. We just fall into all sorts of trials and tribulations. No warning. They just come. We learn by experience. God does not lead us directly from A to Z but from A to B, B to C, *etc.* “One Day at a Time,” as the title of a popular gospel song goes. (I am told that is the most requested song in hospitals.)

Some might ask, “Since the Spirit of the Lord came upon David in power, was he not then fit to be king?” No. His anointing needed to be refined. Success came too soon for Saul. God was going to ensure that the man after His own heart did not succeed before he was ready.

Perhaps you feel God has given you a definite anointing. You have thought that the Spirit of the Lord coming on you in power means you are “ready to go.” Not necessarily. Everyone’s anointing needs to be refined. Victor Hugo said, “Like the trampling of a mighty army, so is the force of an idea whose time has come.” I would paraphrase that: “Like the trampling of a mighty army, so is the force of one’s *anointing* whose time has come.” We all tend to think we are ready merely because of a touch of God on us. The twelve disciples foolishly said to Jesus, “We are able” (Matt. 20:22, KJV). God knows the truth about us. We all need more preparation.

The evidence of David’s anointing came when he killed Goliath (1 Sam. 17). It was the best thing that happened to David; it won Saul’s favor. It was equally the worst thing that happened to David; it incurred Saul’s wrath. But David was being prepared to be the next king. Charles Spurgeon is often quoted as saying, “If I knew I had twenty years left to live, I would spend twenty of it in preparation.” If your time has not yet come, it is because you need further preparation.

In 1956 I returned to Ashland, Kentucky, from my alma mater, Trevecca Nazarene College (now Trevecca Nazarene University), with an undoubted anointing. I knew that God was going to use me one day. I knew it beyond doubt. But my father was puzzled. Why had I abandoned the theology of my old denomination if God was truly with me? I assured my father that within a year I would be totally vindicated and in a great ministry that he would be proud of. A year later I wasn't in the ministry at all. Five years later I was working as a door-to-door vacuum cleaner salesman. It wasn't until 1978—some twenty-two years later, on a train from Edinburgh, Scotland, to King's Cross station in London—that my father looked at me and said, "Son, you were right; I was wrong. I am proud of you." I'm not sure I could have coped in 1956 if I had known I would have to wait so long.

God knows our frame, always remembering we are dust (Ps. 103:14). He knows how much we can bear and therefore leads us exactly according to our need, our measure of strength, and what will be needed down the road.

I don't think David could have coped had he known in advance he would be running for his life for twenty years. One year was hard enough! But all he would go through truly was part of his preparation. He learned a lot. He learned the meaning of *mercy* in those years. How many times did God spare David's life when a vengeful King Saul was so close to killing him? God was so merciful. This comes out in the psalms he was also writing. David could not have known that those psalms he was writing during those twenty years would be a part of the canon of Holy Scripture. He learned to be a grateful man. This too comes out in the psalms. He learned how not to grieve the Holy Spirit and that he must not try to hasten his becoming king before God's time had come. He learned also to fight and survive. He was being trained to be like a general in the military. He learned leadership and how to govern his faithful warriors. Most of all, he learned to trust God when all was utterly bleak. David was indeed a man after God's own heart.

God made sure that David would be *ready* when his time came. The day came. He turned out to be the greatest king Israel ever had. It was all worth waiting for.

Are you waiting for your time to come? God is ensuring that you do not embark on any opportunity until you are ready.

***Prayer:***

*Gracious Holy Spirit, thank You for the way You refine us. Forgive me for trying to rush You. I know that time belongs to You and is in your hands. Make me patient and grateful until my time comes. In Jesus's name, Amen.*

**DAY 14 – Sunday, May 23<sup>rd</sup>**

**Scripture Reading: Luke 24:45–49; Acts 2:37–41; 3:6–16; 13:8–12**

***The Holy Spirit Gives Power***

In this book we have seen that God is omnipresent (present everywhere) and omniscient (all knowing). The Holy Spirit is also omnipotent—all powerful. After all, when you consider that the Holy Spirit was involved in Creation, that is proof of His power. It was the Holy Spirit who divided the Red Sea when the Israelites crossed it. It was the Holy Spirit who caused fire to fall on Mount Carmel. It was the Holy Spirit who enabled Elijah and Elisha to raise people

from the dead. It was the Holy Spirit who converted three thousand people on the Day of Pentecost. It was the Holy Spirit who caused the place to be shaken when the disciples prayed (Acts 4:31).

Moments before Jesus ascended to heaven, He said (probably His final words on this earth), “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 1:8). I don’t think this promise about the Spirit interested the disciples as much as it should have. They had something else on their minds. They really wanted to know if Jesus would at long last be restoring the kingdom to Israel (v. 6). Jesus evaded the question and promised them power that would come when the Spirit came on them. This promise was fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost.

The power of the Holy Spirit was experienced basically in three areas. First, there came a demonstration of supernatural power—that which defied a natural explanation. Mind you, not a high level of faith was needed for what they heard, saw, and felt. It was heard by their ears, seen with their eyes, and felt in their bodies. Although Jesus said the kingdom of God would not be visible (meaning an earthly government), ironically the initial evidences of the Holy Spirit were physical! The first sensation was hearing. Suddenly there came from heaven a *sound* like a “mighty rushing wind.” The 120 disciples sitting (not standing, not kneeling) inside the house were given power to hear and see and feel what was unprecedented in Israel’s history. They looked at each other and saw “tongues as of fire” resting upon each one’s head! It was a visible display of holy fire. This came with their being “filled with the Holy Spirit.” They began to speak “in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance” (Acts 2:1–4, ESV). Although Mark 16:17 [a passage in dispute by some scholars since it was not apparently in the earliest manuscripts we have] indicated that Jesus’s followers would speak “in new tongues,” I don’t believe the 120 disciples were prepared for this. They were enabled to do this as the Spirit gave them “utterance.” They didn’t work it up. The tongues on the Day of Pentecost were recognizable languages. The multitude that had gathered heard each one speaking “in his own language” (Acts 2:6).

Second, they were given inner power to grasp what had previously been dark or mysterious. It was not until the Holy Spirit came on them that the disciples came to see the real purpose of Jesus coming to the earth. They now understood that (1) the falling of the Spirit was a fulfillment of Joel (Joel 2:28–32); (2) Jesus’s death on the cross was no accident but was purposed for our salvation; (3) His resurrection demonstrated who Jesus was—that He was the Son of God; (4) Jesus was now at the right hand of God; (5) that the ascension took place to make way for the Holy Spirit; (6) people needed to be forgiven of their sins; and (7) all those who heard Peter’s sermon could be forgiven and could receive the Holy Spirit if they repented and were baptized (Acts 2:14–39). It all fell in place for Peter and those who had been filled with the Spirit.

Third, this power meant power to witness. Acts 1:8 connects two things, making them virtually inseparable—power and witnessing. The power was not merely for their enjoyment—although it must have been thrilling for them all. It is what enabled Peter to confront thousands of Jews with utter fearlessness. The same Peter who cowardly denied knowing Jesus to a Galilean servant girl only seven weeks before was now telling the powerful Jews of the day what *they* needed to do. In fact, Peter’s preaching was so effective that the hearers were “cut to

the heart”—something that only the Holy Spirit can do—and asked, “What shall we do?” (Acts 2:37). They were scoffing at first, dismissing the 120 who were filled with the Spirit as having “too much wine” (v. 13). I personally doubt that they were poking fun at them over the tongues—hearing what was said but understood in their own language would have sobered them. When we get to heaven and see a DVD of the entire episode, I predict we will see that many of these Spirit-filled disciples were laughing their heads off with extreme joy. But after hearing Peter, the scoffers were now begging to know what to do next! The explanation: power, a supernatural energy that defies a natural explanation.

Paul said that the kingdom of God consists not in talk but in “power” (1 Cor. 4:20). I have no doubt that the power of the Holy Spirit is relevant and available not only for insight and witnessing but also for holy living and other demonstrations of the supernatural.

***Prayer:***

*Omnipotent Holy Spirit, please hasten the day when our own generation might see Your mighty power. Forgive me for having so little of Your power. Please apply Jesus’s blood to me for my cleansing and being used. Grant that I may have an increased power to witness and to see many saved. In Jesus’s name, Amen.*