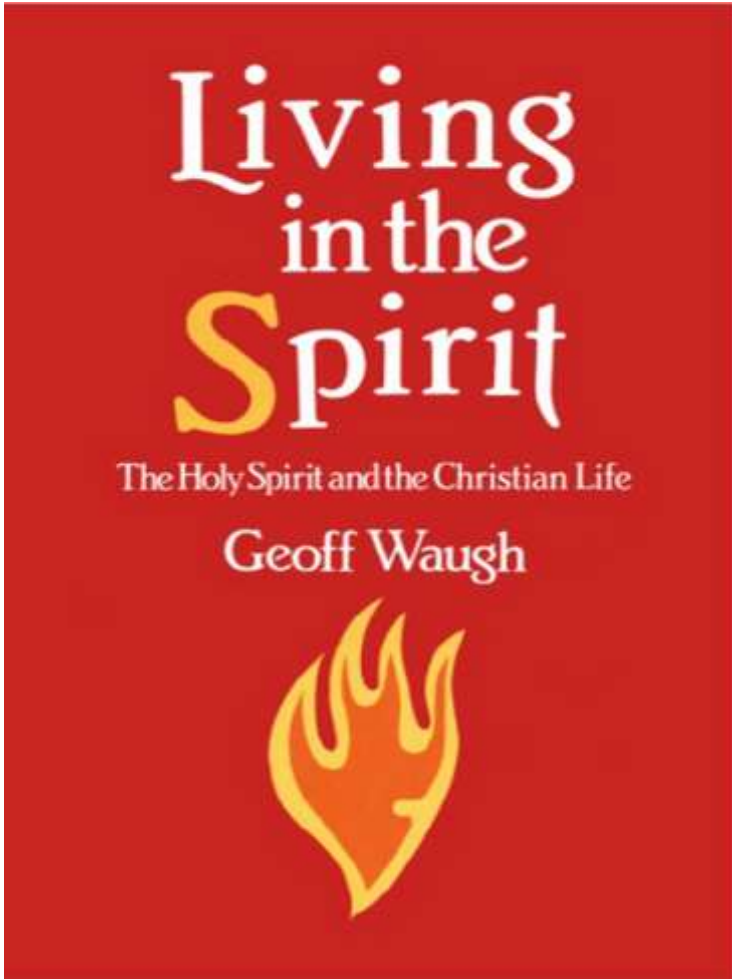


Living in the Spirit

The Holy Spirit and the Christian Life



Geoff Waugh

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NOTE

This book is written for both personal and group study.

You can use it for personal study and general reading.

You could note your responses in a journal or in notes in this book.

You can use it for group study and discussion, working through it at your own pace, such as skimming highlights, one topic a week, or taking a month for each topic.

Most Scripture quotations are from *Today's New International Version*, with some well known verses from the *New King James Version*.

[Photographs](#) in this book show international revival teams from the South Pacific, living in the Spirit together, involved in mission in the islands and in Australia.

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INTRODUCTION: New Perspectives



South Pacific mission team in Australia

The Spirit of Jesus

This book helps you to learn about living in the Spirit. Millions of Christians have discovered this adventure. They love God more, and live for Jesus in the power of his Spirit.

God has given us his Spirit so that we may know him personally: “God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts crying ‘Abba! Father!’” (Galatians 4:6).

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Jesus, and Jesus Christ is Lord. We know that truth and declare it in faith by the Holy Spirit who reveals and glorifies Jesus. So the more we know the Holy Spirit personally, the more we will know and love our Lord personally and serve him in the power of his Spirit.

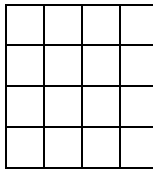
For many people, these studies on the Spirit of God open new dimensions in practical living. Those discoveries often involve a shift in perspective, an “*Aha! Now I see! Now I get it.*”

A change in perspective can help us see more than we saw before. As we climb a mountain, for example, the perspective changes and we may see more than we saw before. The following two exercises may help you gain new perspectives about these two simple tasks.

1. How many boxes?

How many boxes (squares or rectangles) can you see in this diagram?

Say aloud or write down the number you can see before reading further.



If you identified the number you can see, you are correct. That is how many that you have seen in that diagram.

However, with a fresh perspective you may see more. Many people see a total of 16. That is one perspective. There are 16 - 1x1. However, one is 4x4. So that makes 17, and opens up other perspectives to find more. The four 3x3 are easy to find. Hardest to find are all the ones 2x2. You may be able to find 9 of them! If you have trouble finding 9 that are 2x2 you could look for three rows of three all 2x2. So you could find 30 in that simple diagram.

This book may help you gain new perspectives on the Spirit of Jesus.

2. How many Fs?

How many times can you see the letter F in this statement?

FINISHED FILES ARE THE RESULT
OF YEARS OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH
COMBINED WITH THE EXPERIENCE OF YEARS

Write down, or say aloud, the number of times you can see the letter F in that statement.

If you identified the number of times you can see the letter F in that statement, you are correct. That is how many times you have seen the letter F there.

Some people see the letter F two or three times in that sentence. Others see F more than two or three times. The number of times you see the letter F in that sentence usually depends on your perspective. With a shift in perspective you may see the letter F more than 5 times in that sentence. It is there more than 5 times, but if you can't see them all someone else may help you find the missing ones! Sometimes other people can help us see things from a new perspective. Or sometimes it dawns on us as new perspectives open for us.

Reading the Bible often does that. God's Spirit who inspired it, illuminates it to us with fresh insights.

Bible Readings

The Bible readings listed at the beginning of each topic can be used as daily, devotional Bible readings. They give key passages for that topic.

If you take a few weeks to study a topic, then the daily readings can be revised each week so you get to know them well.

You can gain more from the Bible readings by writing down your personal responses to the following questions in a note book, journal or diary each day:

1. What is the main point of this verse or passage?
2. What does it mean for my life or relationship with God and others?
3. What is a motto or goal suggested by this reading?

Group studies, using this book, give you the opportunity to share these responses from time to time if you would like to do so. However, you are not required to do that. Remember that your personal study is your own response to God - not writing something to impress other people!

Guidelines

You can use these studies in many ways:

1. **Personal study:** Read these for yourself, including for your devotions, so that they are not just for information but also for inspiration and impartation of Spirit life.
2. **Family study:** Discuss these studies in your home, for family devotions, either as a married couple, or with interested family members.
3. **Group study:** Use these studies for cell group or home group studies, with someone summarising each section and the group discussing the response question.
4. **Church study:** Leaders can speak or preach on these topics and people can then study them, perhaps as part of a teaching series on the Holy Spirit.

The studies can help you personally to

- know God our Father intimately;
- start or deepen your relationship with Jesus Christ our Lord;
- understand the Holy Spirit more fully so that by yielding to the Spirit you can experience the Spirit's presence and power working in and through you;
- enter more fully into the life of the community of faith, the church, where you receive and give support and love; and
- learn to minister more effectively as part of the body of Christ reaching out in love to others in the world.

As you work through these studies you can expect

- a closer relationship with God – Father, Son and Spirit;
- growth and change in yourself including your relationships;
- renewal in prayer and in the Bible as the living Word of God;
- fuller life and enjoyment in worship;
- an awareness of areas in your life which hold you back; and
- a release of the Spirit in your life, including the discovery and use of the Spirit's gifts.

Each topic has four sections. So you can study one topic at a time, or one section at a time, or two sections at a time. Each section concludes with a **Response**. For *personal study* you could write down, your response to that section, as in a personal journal or brief notes made in this book. For *family or group study* you could discuss the response question and share your own testimonies or discoveries.

Your part in the studies, in a study group, includes these possibilities:

- to commit yourself to those in your group and to all the studies;
- to come open to God and expect God to work more deeply in your life by his Spirit;
- to be prepared to share your experience of faith, to witness;

- to talk about the issues either in the group or privately with your group leader;
- to spend time reading the studies between group sessions; and
- to talk with one another about the studies through the week.

Many groups meet for weekly sessions of about two hours, which may include worship and prayer as well as study. Each of the topics in this book may be divided into a few sessions, for example each topic could be studied in two or four sessions. You don't have to try to cram everything from one topic into one session. You can also just highlight parts of a topic and so cover the whole book in eight sessions.

Some groups will want to take about half an hour of more for worship so may study only one section each time. Selected studies could be used for a camp, or the whole book at a week's camp or conference. The studies can also be used for a preaching series along with weekly group sessions.

Each of the four sections in each topic can be used for a study session. So you can be very flexible in how you study this book. Those flexible options may open new perspectives for you also!

Sometimes a group session gets very interesting or powerful so you may want to go longer than usual at such times, or you may decide to continue the same topic next time.

Share what you want to share in the group. Anyone can 'pass' on any question or response. However, remember we are all learning. We all struggle. No one knows everything. We need one another. Each person's contribution is important. We can all learn from one another as the Spirit leads us. So share your thoughts and feelings without being dogmatic or rigid. The Lord especially blesses and uses humble people (1 Peter 5:5). You will often be surprised at the gifts of wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives to many people, particularly as we learn to listen to him and be led by him.

In group discussions it is usually better to make 'I' statements rather than 'You' or 'They' statements. 'I think...' or 'It seems to me that ...' is usually better than 'you' or 'they' statements, such as: 'You are wrong...' or 'They say...'. Often we don't really know if someone is wrong or not, and whoever 'they' may be, they usually cannot affirm or deny your claim, unless, of course, 'they' have put it in writing!

What *you* think and feel is important. Speak from your own experience. Each of us can receive God-given insight and understanding from the Spirit, continually.

These studies focus on a deeper relationship with God and with one another. Respond to one another, rather than reacting or merely debating or arguing. There is, for example, a big difference between making a brilliant speech about marriage and having a good, loving marriage. Good

relationships come from love and mutual sharing - in marriages, in families, and in the church.

If you use these studies in a group, enjoy your group. Relax and appreciate one another. Every person is valuable, made in God's image, with full access to God. Appreciate each person's comments and be open to God's Spirit in one another. Different perspectives that people bring to your group from different backgrounds can be very helpful and enriching.

Sing if you'd like to. A group session could begin (and/or end) with songs related to the topic or just expressing worship or love to God and love for one another. Conclude your singing with prayer for God's leading as you respond to the Spirit together.

Pray together. You will have many opportunities to relate together in prayer, for yourself, for one another, and for others.

Sometimes you may sense that it would be helpful to pray together in twos or threes as part of your response to one another and the discoveries you share together. You can respond to each other with brief personal prayers such as: "Thank you, Lord, for blessing Mary in that way, and help her to stay close to you," or "Lord, we ask that you will meet John's need in your love and grace. Thank you."

Remember that praying together is powerful. "God is able to do far more than all we ask or think by means of his great power at work within us. To him be glory" (Ephesians 3:20).

Great prayers often focus on others and God, such as this majestic prayer attributed to the thirteenth century monk St Francis of Assisi, first appearing in print anonymously in 1912 in French.

*Lord, make me an instrument of Your peace;
where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
and where there is sadness, joy.
O Divine Master,
grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console;
to be understood, as to understand;
to be loved, as to love;
for it is in giving that we receive,
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
and it is in dying that we are born to Eternal Life.
Amen.*

TOPIC 1: Father, Son and Holy Spirit

READINGS: God is One

1. Mark 12:28-34 (the great commandment)
2. Matthew 28:18-20 (the great commission)
3. Acts 1:1-8 (the great compulsion)
4. Galatians 4:1-7 (the Spirit of God's Son)
5. Romans 8:9-10 (the Spirit of Christ)
6. Luke 4:16-21 (the Spirit of the Lord)
7. 2 Corinthians 13:14 (the Trinitarian benediction)



Mele palm at place of martyrdom on Pentecost Island

South Pacific Martyr

Lulkon chose to die at the sacred mele palm tree (as in the photograph, at that site). He accompanied his friend Tomas Tumtum, from Pentecost Island, Vanuatu, in the South Pacific, when Tomas returned home to his village. Tomas had become a Christian in Queensland, Australia, when he was an indentured worker on the cane farms. He sailed back to his village on South Pentecost around 1901 with his young Christian friend, Lulkon, from a neighbouring island. They arrived when the village was taboo because a baby had died a few days earlier, so no one was allowed near the village. Ancient tradition dictated that anyone breaking taboo must be killed, so they were going to kill Tomas. His friend Lulkon asked Tomas to tell them to kill him instead so that Tomas could live and evangelise his own people. Just before he was clubbed to death at the sacred palm tree, Lulkon read from John 3:16, then closed his eyes and prayed for them. Tomas became the pioneer of the church in South Pentecost, now touched by revival (see www.renewaljournal.com).

God did more. He sacrificed his Son's life for us all. His Son chose to die for us. His Spirit now gives us his life, so that we too may live eternally.

God is one being in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Each eternal Person in the Godhead loves us and wants an eternal, wonderful relationship with us, freeing us to be all we were made to be. Our sin destroys that, but we can be forgiven and set free.

The Father is God. Jesus told amazing stories about him as Father, such as the loving father reaching out and going out to both the prodigal son and the elder brother, because both had gone wrong in different ways. Some human fathers are not like that, and all human fathers fail, but God our Father never fails. He is perfect love and goodness. Many people can relate personally to God as Father because that is how Jesus revealed him to us – not just a distant creator or absent landlord. We pray to God our Father because that is how Jesus taught his disciples to pray: “Our Father in heaven”.

The Son is God. Most people can relate personally to Jesus, even as the risen Lord, because he was here among us on planet earth. He chose to live and die for us, so that we can share in his eternal life. He perspired, grew weary, faced opposition and hatred, and even his closest friends deserted him in a crisis. His unique stature and amazing grace attract us still. He lived a life of perfect love, which challenges us all. He not only survived death, but conquered death. He lives. He is King of kings and Lord of lords, our Saviour.

The Holy Spirit is God. However, many people find it hard to relate personally to the Holy Spirit. Partly, that is due to the words we use.

Father and *Son* and *Jesus* are personal terms. *Spirit* seems impersonal, even though God the Father and God the Son are Spirit, because God is Spirit. And *Holy* seems way beyond us, even though God our Father is holy, and Jesus showed us how to be holy in a sinful, broken world. So does the Holy Spirit.

Even more, he wants to live his life in us and through us, regenerating, filling, guiding, and helping us and others. We can know him intimately. He knows us far more intimately, with nothing hidden from him. Everything is open and transparent with him, which provides us with wonderful opportunities of intimacy with him.

So these studies aim to help us know God the Holy Spirit more personally.

This topic includes studies on these themes:

1. God is One
2. The Father's heart shows God's love
3. Jesus reveals God's love
4. The Spirit imparts God's love

1. God is One

Christians believe in one God, not three. God is one being, in three Persons. That is hard to understand, and we need God's Spirit to reveal that to us. We understand God not by human wisdom alone, but by revelation from God.

Jesus emphasised that God is one being, quoting from the Old Testament. He summed up the whole of the Scriptures by reminding us that our God is One, and we are to love him totally, as well as to love one another (Mark 12:28-34).

Jesus explained that he and the Father are one being: "I and my Father are one" (John 10:30). On his last night with his disciples before he died he explained that whoever has seen him has seen the Father and that he was in the Father and the Father was in him (John 14:9-11).

In that same discussion Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth, would reveal truth to us (John 14:16-17, 26; 16:13-15). Without God's Spirit revealing him to us we cannot know God (John 14:17). We might know a little bit about God with our minds, but we can only know God by revelation – his revelation of himself to us and in us.

God has revealed himself perfectly in his Son Jesus and through his Spirit.

The Father is God, our creator, and creator of all things.

The Son is God, our Saviour and Lord, and supreme above all things.

The Holy Spirit is God, our Helper and Advocate, renewing all things.

Our Father made us and cares for us (1 Peter 5:7), our Lord died for us and prays for us (Hebrews 7:25), and God's Spirit lives in us to help us and also prays through us and for us (John 14:26; Romans 8:26-27).

Response: How can we get to know God more fully?

You could comment on how you came to know God.

2. The Father's heart shows God's love

The Father is God. God made us. He gave us life. In God we live and move and exist (Acts 17:28). God is our creator and sustains of all life. God is holy, almighty, transcendent - 'beyond all knowledge and all thought' - and yet he is also immanent, close, personal, and intimate.

Jesus' disciple John was intimate with Jesus, and has been called the Apostle of Love because he understood and wrote so much about God's love: God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son; God is love; we love him because he first loved us (John 3:16; 1 John 4:8, 16, 19).

The best known verse in the Bible is probably John 3:16. Jesus explained that God loves us so much he gave us his Son. That's the kind of Father he is.

Many people think about God as someone far away. He is the God who made the world, and us. But Jesus revealed God to us as our Father, and he talked a lot about his Father and our Father. Jesus taught us to talk to God as our Father. That is how we can think about God and talk to God (Matthew 6:9-13; Luke 11:2-4).

Jesus told stories describing our Father, such as the famous story of the prodigal son and the elder brother. That father deeply loved both his sons, and he had to go outside the house and reach out to both of them because both of them misunderstood his love (Luke 15:11-32). Both sons were wrong, in different ways. The father's love was so great he that forgave both his sons for their wrong attitudes and actions and wanted to celebrate with both his sons.

Human parents usually love their children, but our love is small and limited compared to God's love for us all and for each of us individually. However, we may get a glimpse of God's love through our own loving parents. But God our Father's love for us is far greater than any human love can be.

Response: How can we know our Father's heart, love and grace?
You could tell how you discovered more of God's love and grace.

3. Jesus reveals God's love

The Son is God. Jesus is God incarnate. He is Emmanuel, God with us (Matthew 1:23). The Son of God, the Word, became a human being, full of grace and truth (John 1:14). He died for our sin, and rose triumphant over death (John 3:16, 17). Now he reigns in glory and majesty (Matthew 28:18-20).

The Son of Man

Jesus described himself as the Son of Man. He was human. He identified with us in our wounded humanity, but he was free of the sin that destroys us. He learned obedience. He had to grow up. He became tired, sometimes exhausted. At times he was hungry. He felt emotions deeply and was constantly moved with compassion. He felt particularly glad or surprised whenever he found people with strong, childlike faith.

Jesus was often angry, even with his disciples. He chided them for their blindness, unbelief, and competitive attitudes. He strongly attacked injustice and oppression. He unmasked deception, pulled down the proud and lifted the lowly.

Jesus was and is amazing. Many people are impressed by his grace and truth, humility, honesty, courage, compassion, servant ministry, acceptance of all people, authority over evil, power to heal and forgive, or his pure love. You may like to think about the characteristics that are most significant for you in Jesus' life.

He forever stands as the perfect example of what God intended a human being to be. A few examples illustrate Jesus' attitude in identifying with us in our humanity:

The Son of Man had nowhere to rest (Matthew 8:20; Luke 9:58);

The Son of Man came eating and drinking (Matthew 11:19; Luke 7:34);

The Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost (Luke 19:10);

The Son of Man did not come to destroy lives but to save them (Luke 9:56);

The Son of Man must suffer (Luke 9:22, 26)

The Son of God

Jesus asked, “Who do people say that I, the Son of Man, am?” (Matthew 16:13).

The discussion between Jesus and his disciples about who he was dramatically links his humanity with his divinity (Matthew 16:13-20). The people acknowledged that Jesus was a great prophet. But Jesus asked his disciples who they thought he, the Son of Man, really was. Then Peter, by revelation from God the Father, declared that Jesus was the Messiah, the Christ, the Son of the living God.

That declaration may not shock us, but it was blasphemy to the Jews, and for that claim they eventually killed Jesus.

Jesus was a man. Yet he was more than a man, for he is the Son of God. He was born the Son of God (Luke 1:35). Jesus still shows his grace and love in forgiving us all our sin and failure and giving us his life and his Spirit as we trust in him (John 10:10; 1 John 2:20). No other person can do that for us.

Many writers indicate that Jesus was not just a great man. Not just a great teacher. Not just a great prophet. Not just a great human leader. As C. S. Lewis pointed out, he did not leave that option open to us, to just see him as a great teacher, prophet or leader.

For him to say what he said, and do what he did, he had to be either:
Deluded – thinking he was really more than he was;
Deceitful – deliberately fooling people; or
Divine – the God-man, the Son of God.

The consistent witness about Jesus is that he is the Son of God:
Jesus declared himself to be the Son of God (John 3:16-18; 10:36);
John the Baptist announced him as the Son of God (John 1:34);
His followers declared him to be the Son of God (Matthew 16:16-17; John 1:18, 49; Acts 8:37; 9:20; 1 John 5:13);
His biographers claimed he was the Son of God (Mark 1:1; John 20:31);
Demons acknowledged him as the Son of God (Matthew 8:29; Mark 3:11; Luke 4:41; 8:28);
His opponents declared that he said, “I am the son of God” (Matthew 27:43);
His executioner saw him as the Son of God (Mark 15:39; Mathew 27:34);
The risen Lord revealed himself as the Son of God (Revelation 2:18).

As Son of God he is a person in the Trinity, and yet is also God, sharing fully the divine nature and being (John 1:1; Colossians 1:15; Hebrews 1:1-3; 2 Peter 1:1).

Jesus’ life wonderfully displays his divinity. He touched people with

life and wholeness constantly. He revealed truth. He demonstrated God's holiness, purity, love, compassion, forgiveness and power. As a little girl once said, "He is God with a face on."

Response: What impresses you most about Jesus' life as a human being?

You could share what impresses you most about the life of Jesus on earth.

4. The Spirit imparts God's love

The Holy Spirit is God. God the Holy Spirit imparts God's love to us. "The love of God has been poured out into our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us" (Romans 5:5).

Scripture uses many titles and descriptions for the Holy Spirit, including:

the Spirit (John 3:5, 6, 8; Romans 8:1, 2, 4, 5, 9, 10, 11, 13, 16, 23, 26, 27);

the Holy Spirit (Psalm 51:11; Luke 11:13);

God's Holy Spirit (Ephesians 4:30);

my Spirit (Genesis 6:3; Matthew 12:18);

his Spirit (Isaiah 48:16; 1 John 2:27);

the spirit of God (Genesis 1:2);

the spirit of the Lord (Luke 4:18);

the Spirit of Christ (Romans 8:9);

the Spirit of truth (John 16:13);

the Counsellor, Helper, Comforter (John 14:15, 26; 16:7);

The term 'Spirit' is used far more than any other in the Bible to refer to the Holy Spirit, so we use that term most in these studies.

The Hebrew word *ruach* in the Old Testament and the Greek word *pneuma* in the New Testament can be translated spirit, wind, air, breath, power. Both words often refer to the Spirit of God as well as to the human spirit. In these studies, Spirit is always capitalised when referring to God.

Unfortunately many people think of the Father and the Son as personal beings and the Spirit of God as impersonal - like wind, air or breath. Those symbols give us vivid pictures of the Spirit's activity, unseen but vital and powerful, all about us and within us, giving and maintaining life. However, the Spirit is personal, not impersonal.

God is Spirit and the Holy Spirit is God within and around us - the person of the Godhead who imparts God's life and love to us. The Spirit is the third person of the Trinity, truly God, all loving, all powerful and splendid in glory - the Holy Spirit of God.

The Holy Spirit is God

God has given us the Spirit of his Son (Galatians 4:6). The Spirit of God is an equal part of the Trinity, not inferior. He is not just the messenger or servant of the Father and the Son, but co-equal. He delights in glorifying the Father and the Son.

Many Bible passages describe the Holy Spirit as co-equal in the Trinity, fully one with the Father and the Son in the triune Godhead:

Triune formula: baptised in the triune name (Matthew 28:19),

Triune speaking: the Son speaks from God in the Spirit, given without limit (John 3:34),

Triune promise: the Father gives the Spirit with the Son (John 14:16-18),

Triune gift: God gives the Spirit of his Son (Galatians 4:6),

Triune benediction: grace, love and fellowship (2 Corinthians 13:14).

Note the beautiful description of God's being in the benediction of 2 Corinthians 13:14. It includes the amazing grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal love of God our Father, and the intimate fellowship of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is a Person

The Holy Spirit has all the attributes of personality. He has *intellect*, he searches everything (1 Corinthians 2:10-11; Ephesians 1:17), *emotions*, he groans and grieves (Romans 8:26; Ephesians 4:30), and *will*, he leads and chooses (Acts 16:6-7; 1 Corinthians 12:11).

He is not just a force but a person who restrains (Genesis 6:3), regenerates (John 3:5), teaches (John 14:26), witnesses and testifies (John 15:26), guides (John 16:13; Romans 8:14), convicts (John 16:7-8), leads (Acts 8:29), directs (Acts 13:3; 10:19-21), sends (Acts 13:4), appoints (Acts 20:28), works (1 Corinthians 12:11), searches (1 Corinthians 2:10), speaks (Revelation 2:7), and prays and intercedes (Romans 8:26).

He can be: lied to (Acts 5:3), resisted (Acts 7:51), grieved (Ephesians 4:30), quenched (1 Thessalonians 5:19), and blasphemed (Matthew 12:31).

The Holy Spirit is the Father's promised gift (Acts 1:4) who reveals the Father and the Son to us (Galatians 4:6; Romans 8:9-10), empowers us (Acts 1:8), and works in and through us to meet the needs of people as happened fully in the life of Jesus on earth (Luke 4:16-21).

Response: How can we know the Holy Spirit personally?
You could describe your discoveries of the Holy Spirit.

TOPIC 2: Born of the Spirit

READINGS: The wind blows

1. Titus 3:1-7 (the Spirit renews)
2. Genesis 1:1-3; 2:4-9 (the Spirit creates)
3. Joel 2:28-32 (the Spirit for all)
4. Isaiah 11:1-9 (a new kingdom)
5. Ezekiel 37:1-14 (a new people)
6. Jeremiah 31:31-34 (a new covenant)
7. John 3:1-8 (a new birth)



Church at Pentecost Island near place of martyrdom

The Tree

A great prison warden, Kenyon Scudder, often told this story of a modern-day miracle. A friend of his happened to be sitting in a railway coach next to a young man who was obviously depressed. Finally the man revealed that he was a convict returning from a distant prison. His imprisonment had brought shame on his family and they had neither visited him nor written often. He hoped, however, that this was only because they were too poor to travel, too uneducated to write. He hoped, despite the evidence, that they had forgiven him.

To make it easy for them, however, he had written them to put up a signal for him when the train passed their little farm on the outskirts of town. If his family had forgiven him they were to put up a white ribbon in the big apple tree near the line. If they didn't want him back they were to do nothing, and he would stay on the train, go far away, probably become a hobo.

As the train neared his home town his suspense became so great he couldn't bear to look out the window. His companion changed places with him and said he would watch for the apple tree. In a minute, he put his hand on the young convict's arm. "There it is," he whispered, his eyes bright with sudden tears. "It's all right. *The whole tree is white with ribbons*" (*The Christian Herald*, January 1961).

It's all right. The whole tree is red with blood. "He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed" (1 Peter 2:24). We celebrate our eternal reunion, forgiven and clean.

You began physical life as an embryo growing into a baby in your mother's womb. Then you were born, amid blood.

We are born again by the power of the Spirit, made possible by Jesus' blood, his life given for us. Through the wonderful work of the Holy Spirit in our lives, we are born again into the kingdom of God. Jesus explained to Nicodemus in John 3:6, "Flesh gives birth to flesh, the Spirit gives birth to spirit." Christians and churches are born of the Spirit.

We can't even truly believe and declare that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:3). So an important perspective on being born again into the kingdom of God is that it happens by the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit. God's Spirit enables us to believe that Jesus is Lord of all, God's one and only Son.

Jesus is Lord. That was probably the first, shortest and most widely used creed of the church. When an early Christian heard the greeting, “Caesar is lord,” they would disagree and declare, “Jesus is Lord.” Many of them died declaring that radical truth.

Christians still make that claim. Why? Certainly, it sums up the heart of the good news that Jesus alone is Saviour and Lord. How do we know that? Scripture declares it, and Scripture was inspired by the Holy Spirit. Jesus said that the Holy Spirit, would teach us all things. He does. He inspired Scripture and is the one who reveals it us to. Without him we cannot know or understand that revelation.

This topic examines that re-creating, regenerating work of the Holy Spirit. God’s Spirit continues to create and re-create. That applies to the whole of creation as well as to communities and individuals. So this topic includes studies on these themes:

1. The Spirit creates
2. The Spirit re-creates
3. God acts
4. We respond

1. The Spirit creates

The first topic considered our triune God. He is not beyond our reach. We have a God who loves us and wants a personal, intimate relationship with us.

God desired and planned this intimate, personal relationship from the beginning. He made us for union with himself. The first picture we have of God’s Spirit in Scripture is one of creative power making harmony, beauty and life out of chaos or the void (Genesis 1:1-2).

All that God made was good. The creation story tells us that God was pleased, fulfilled, and satisfied. We still experience and enjoy much of that goodness in God’s creation.

Psalms 8 sings a song of the glory of God in creation. Many aspects of creation speak to us of the greatness, glory and love of God. These include the wonders of nature, like breathtaking scenery, glorious sunsets and sunrises, the beauty of trees or flowers, the mystery and uniqueness of animal or plant life, and the incredible variety of water: rain, creeks, rivers, ocean, ice, glaciers, and snow covered mountains. Each snowflake is different, as is each fingerprint.

God’s creative genius and grace made us - the complex mystery of spirit, soul (mind, emotions, will), and body (1 Thessalonians 5:23). Further, we have been created with the ability to enjoy life, achieve greatness and

also create beauty as in great music, literature, art, architecture, inventions, finding solutions to destructive forces like disease, or excelling in areas of our interests and abilities. We also find true greatness and creative work in loving service and caring for others, in selfless deeds and enriching relationships.

However, God's creation is marred. We experience brokenness, alienation from God and from one another and disharmony in our world and within ourselves. History reflects this. Our human story cries with the pain of suffering, the agony of paradise lost.

Evidence of creation's brokenness can be seen in ourselves (decay, disease, destructive behaviour), in society (wars, prejudice, selfishness), and in history (plagues, famine and starvation).

The Bible describes the brokenness and alienation of our human condition in many ways. Old Testament writers expressed it as separation from God and from one another (Genesis 3:8-9; 4:8), in the politics of international relations (Jeremiah 25) or in personal relationships (2 Samuel 11 and 12). It is seen in people (Psalm 140), in all-pervasive demonic forces (Psalm 14:1-3), and in evil power with its own personality and name (serpent, Satan: Genesis 3; Job 1).

New Testament writers told how Jesus took this state of being lost or separation and alienation very seriously. He identified with us in our humanity, resisted temptation, confronted Satan, cast out evil spirits, and healed the brokenness and destruction of our human condition in the power of the Spirit, ultimately dying for our salvation and rising victor over sin and death (Matthew 4:1-11; 16:23; 17:14-21; Luke 4:18-21). Many passages in the epistles portray the effects of sin, our alienation from our loving and holy God, and our separation from one another with all its destructive results (e.g. Romans 1:18-32; Galatians 5:19-21).

We persist in placing faith in things other than God. Our sin, rejecting God, plunges us into destruction. Instead of trusting in the Lord, we look for salvation in other ways. Some people trust in education, technology, dollars, democracy, family or leaders. When these become gods, or substitutes for God, they fail us.

Paul argues that because we have all sinned or turned away from God, we use what we have for destruction, to hurt and kill (Romans 3:9-18). Educate a thief and you have a smarter thief. Nuclear power threatens to annihilate us. We could feed the world, but thousands starve to death every day. Democracies offer hope yet the rich get richer and the poor get poorer. Even home and family, which could be full of love and support, often become battle grounds of competing wills.

Response: What are examples of creation revealed and also spoiled in your experience?

You could comment on the beauty of creation and also its destruction.

2. The Spirit Re-creates

God's Spirit continues to renew and re-create. We are not left as "children crying in the night, crying for a light, with nothing but a cry". We have hope. God still acts. The Spirit still moves upon creation, re-creating, renewing, restoring. We can be made whole. Relationships can be repaired. We can be set free from our destructive bias.

We can be saved. The Bible emphasises God's saving grace, without which we have no hope. The Spirit is God's agent of salvation. This includes our own personal salvation, but also the world's salvation, and even cosmic salvation (Colossians 1:20).

John. V. Taylor calls the Holy Spirit *The Go between God*. It is not that God provides a way for us to travel over a bridge across the gulf separating us from our Creator (such as by us doing something), but that God's Spirit himself is that bridge; or better still, that the Spirit abolishes the gulf and unites us with our God and with one another in the unity of the Spirit. Our Saviour, Jesus, made this possible through his death and resurrection, and unites us with God by his Spirit.

Titus 3:3 describes our brokenness and destruction: "For we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another." Then verses 4-8 describe how God saves us "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit."

The Bible gives many pictures of the Spirit's loving and powerful activity in drawing us back into relationship with God, in giving us life, and in renewing all creation.

Many biblical passages show God seeking to bring us back to himself. The Spirit of God is seen in the Old Testament, restoring life and order out of chaos and destruction. Salvation history can be seen from the beginning of the Bible. God is restoring wholeness to our broken humanity and to our broken world (see Ephesians 1:4, 9-10).

Consider these passages about the work of the Spirit in creation and re-creation:

Genesis 1:1-3; 2:1-7 tells of God's perfect creation through his Spirit.

Joel 2:28-32 tells of God pouring out his Spirit on everyone.

Isaiah 11:1-5 tells of the Spirit of the Lord establishing a new leader and people.

Ezekiel 37:1-14 describes God's Spirit bringing new life to his people.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life. The Spirit is the agent of both the Father and the Son, who creates and re-creates, who raises us up. If the Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from death, lives in you, then he who raised Christ from death will also give life to your mortal bodies by the presence of his Spirit in you (Romans 8:11).

God's creative and re-creative power continues to transform individuals, churches and communities. His Spirit, our Advocate and Helper, convicts people concerning sin, righteousness and judgement (John 16:8-11). He leads us all to repentance and life.

Response: How do you see God's Spirit recreating around you, or in your own life?

You could comment on discoveries of the Spirit renewing us and others.

3. God acts

God's plan of salvation for a lost, broken humanity can be traced through Scripture. We have looked at some of the Old Testament pictures of the Spirit of the Lord creating and re-creating. The Hebrew writers show God continually acting in grace to save his people.

Genesis 12:1-3 tells of God's covenant with Abraham the ancestor of the Israelites. God's promise included his blessing for everyone: "And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

God saved the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. Exodus recounts God's saving acts for the Israelites under Moses' leadership, and the renewing and development of God's covenant relationship with them.

That covenant relationship bound God and Israel together through the period of the judges and the kings. God's prophets and godly kings reminded God's people of his saving grace and their covenant obligations.

However, the prophets of Israel saw the inadequacies of the covenant. God was faithful but Israel was not. Hosea lived out a parable of Israel's unfaithfulness (see Hosea 11).

Jeremiah, living through the destruction of the nation of Judah leading to its captivity under Nebuchadnezzar, predicted a new order emerging with a new covenant relationship. Jeremiah 31:31-34 describes a new covenant between God and his people, not an external one written in stone, but an internal one written in our hearts by his Spirit. The Jeremiah passage

reminds us that we can all know the Lord personally. This watershed passage forms part of the thesis in Hebrews (see Hebrews 8:7-13). The new covenant supersedes the old.

Communion, the Eucharist, or the Lord's Supper proclaims the new covenant, written in the blood of Jesus (Matthew 25:26-29; 1 Corinthians 11:25). God saves us because of what Jesus has done, not because of what we have done.

Ezekiel wrote of renewed hearts and minds through the Spirit of God; of dry bones revived and restored as a great army of people (Ezekiel 37:1-14). Ezekiel saw God's action in terms of taking away a stubborn heart of stone and replacing it with an obedient heart by giving us the Spirit and the power to obey: "I will put my Spirit in you and see to it that you follow my laws and keep all the commands I have given you" (Ezekiel 36:26-27).

Isaiah gives graphic descriptions of a new order under a new leader, God's anointed Servant. Isaiah's prophecy leaps to new heights in describing God's saving action through the Servant of the Lord. The graphic pictures of God's anointed Servant mark the high water point of Old Testament prophecy. God's saving acts culminate in the coming Servant who will save God's people.

The Servant Songs in Isaiah tell how God's purposes for his people will be fulfilled in his anointed Servant. These messianic passages describe the characteristics of the Servant of the Lord who fulfils Israel's destiny:

Isaiah 42:1-9, God's servant will deliver and save.

Isaiah 49:1-6, God's servant will bring salvation to the ends of the earth.

Isaiah 52:13 to 53:12 (especially 53:1-9), God's servant dies to save us.

These passages provide a dramatic link with the New Testament. They find their supreme fulfilment in Jesus, Saviour and Lord, who served God and people in the power of the Spirit.

Many New Testament scriptures emphasise that Jesus' death and resurrection are the basis of our salvation. These include: John 3:16-17; Mark 10:45; Acts 4:12; 16:30-31; Romans 6:22-23; 10:9-10, 13; 2 Corinthians 5:17-18; Ephesians 2:8-9; Hebrews 2:9-10.

Some people, including church people, believe that a Christian is someone who is good, believes in God, helps other people, keeps moral rules, and goes to church.

However, we don't save ourselves by what we do. God saves us. It is God who initiates, acts, and moves toward us. God shows us grace and love even before we were interested in him, while we were still sinners (Romans 5:6-11).

Response: How might we try to add to God's salvation in Jesus?

You could comment on how we try to earn salvation or work for it.

4. We respond

We are free to choose, to accept or reject God's grace.

This topic covered how God made beauty and harmony through the Spirit's creative power, and how the Spirit re-creates or renews what is broken or ruined in our lives and in the world. We have a God who acts in love, mercy, justice and holiness to save us, especially through Jesus our Saviour and Lord.

2 Corinthians 5:17-21 beautifully describes God's desire and action to reconcile us or unite us with himself. We were separated from God, alienated. God initiates reconciliation. God made Jesus, who knew no sin, to "be sin" or to be a sin offering for us. In him we are a new creation. Then we become friends with God.

The New Testament calls for us to:

Acknowledge our sin; repent (turn and return to God);

Believe in Jesus; respond to his offer of life eternal;

Commit our lives to God; receive the Spirit.

See Mark 1:14-15; Acts 2:38; 17:30-31.

Jesus explained this to Nicodemus, the theologian. He used the concept of being born again (John 3:3, 7) or born of the Spirit (John 3:6). This is another way of seeing our union with God, and our spirits restored or renewed by the Spirit of God. We are made new. Jesus also used the figure of the wind blowing, probably a play on words; *ruach* (Hebrew) or *pneuma* (Greek) for spirit, wind, breath (John 3:8).

Jesus' comment on the wind blowing describes the way we are born again or become friends with God. It gives a vivid picture of the Spirit's work in us. It is unseen, unpredictable, may be gentle or dramatic, has results which may be seen or heard, cannot be limited to our concepts, and is not controlled by us.

What are some results of being born again or becoming friends with God?

We can know forgiveness and acceptance, purpose in life, a better life, an authentic Christianity, power to live the Christian life, peace and joy, better personal relationships, healing, genuine community, eternal life.

Response: What kind of prayer leads to our salvation?

You could comment on how you became a Christian.

TOPIC 3: Filled with the Spirit

READINGS: Baptised in the Spirit

1. John 1: 29-34 (the Spirit and Jesus)
(also Matthew 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-22)
2. Acts 1:1-9 (the Spirit promised)
3. Acts 2:1-4, 38-39 (the Spirit in Jerusalem)
4. Acts 8:4-17 (the Spirit in Samaria)
5. Acts 9:1-19 (the Spirit in Damascus)
6. Acts 10:30-33, 44-48 (the Spirit in Caesarea)
7. Acts 19:1-7 (the Spirit in Ephesus)



Leaders praying for one another in Pentecost Island

Filled with the Spirit and healed

We can always know more of God. I discovered a filling or empowering of the Spirit in a Baptist manse in Hobart, Tasmania, Australia, while on deputation as a missionary among Engas in Papua New Guinea (PNG).

I visited Doug and Grace who were part of the ministry team in Hobart. Grace told us how she had been healed from severe arthritis, delivered from a critical spirit, filled with the Spirit and spoke in tongues when people prayed for her in their previous church manse, their home.

That night I sat cross-legged on their lounge room floor, PNG style. So in the casual comfort of that lounge room I found myself flooded with the Holy Spirit and divine love when they prayed for me. I hoped for a sudden gift of an Enga dialect to use fluently in PNG, but no such luck! I still had to work on those Enga dialects when I returned to start the central Bible School, and teach village pastors and leaders. Yet, I sensed it was all related, a filling, a flooding, and an empowering for mission.

During our next furlough I returned for a month in Tasmania to speak at churches, including in Hobart, so again visited Doug and Grace who then lived in a renewal community. There I discovered more, once more. One night, after we shared our experiences, including our strengths and weaknesses, Doug and I prayed together and for each other. As Doug placed his hand on my head to pray for me, I felt power like liquid electricity run down my neck from my head into my back. I didn't understand it, but was curiously content and expectant.

The next day I discovered my skin had become well oiled, not dry, and some weeks later I realised that a skin fungal disease I caught in PNG had disappeared. After that prayer it stopped. We did not pray for healing, and at first I did not realise I had been healed.

What if all our perspectives are in fact too small, because our brains are too small to really understand such mysteries? What if our best insights are just small facets of the indescribably glorious diamond of God's being? That may sound like a cop out – another way of saying this topic is too hard to really understand. On the other hand, it may be the truth. Who can know the mind of the God? It is only the Spirit who can reveal that to us. We get glimpses. We don't see the whole picture.

Paul's reminds us that at present we only see partially, like seeing our blurred image in a bronze mirror (1 Corinthians 13:12). So if we hold one position too dogmatically, we can easily miss profound insights from other facets of the same truth. This topic explores some of those facets about being filled with in the Spirit, who is the Spirit of Jesus.

Jesus is the one who baptises in the Holy Spirit (John 1:33; Acts 1:5).

This topic includes studies on these themes:

1. The Spirit in God's people
2. The Spirit in Jesus
3. The Spirit in the early church
4. The Spirit in us

1. The Spirit in God's people

We saw in Topic 1 that our God is one: Father, Son and Spirit, who made us, loves us, and wants an intimate relationship with us. Then in Topic 2 we looked at the Spirit creating and re-creating or renewing and restoring, and our need to respond to God personally.

The Bible gives many different accounts of God's Spirit filling, transforming or empowering people. Now a growing number of people tell of this powerful reality in their lives. Both Scripture and experience show these important aspects of these encounters with the Spirit:

1. Each encounter is unique. We don't get duplicates or photo copies! God has dealt with people in the past, and with us, quite uniquely. What does this suggest about how the Spirit will work in your life now?

2. Words or terms used to describe these encounters with God's Spirit vary greatly. We have the problem of trying to express the inexpressible! Terms used in the Bible to describe the specific impact or filling of the Spirit include these:

the Spirit was given – Numbers 11:16; John 7:39;

the Spirit came upon -- Judges 3:10; Acts 19:5;

the Spirit took control -- Judges 6:34; 1 Samuel 11:6; 16:13;

the Spirit poured out -- Joel 2:28-28; Acts 10:45;

the Spirit came down -- Matthew 3:16; Luke 3:22; John 1:33;

the Spirit fell (or came down) -- Acts 10:44; 11:15;

the Spirit received -- Acts 8:15-17; 19:2;

baptised in or with the Spirit -- Luke 3:16; John 1:33; Acts 1:5;

filled with the Spirit -- Acts 2:4; 9:17; Ephesians 5:18.

Scripture uses the term 'filled with the Spirit' for:

an initial impact, release of, or baptism in the Spirit (Acts 2:4; 9:17);

specific encounters with or anointing by the Spirit (Acts 4:8, 31); and,

the ongoing Spirit-filled life (Ephesians 5:18).

Many people use the term "baptised in the Spirit" in different ways. Evangelical Christians usually apply it to conversion, because when we are in Christ we already have everything there is to have in him. Pentecostal Christians usually apply it to a specific encounter or in-filling of the Spirit

as happened to Jesus at his baptism and to his disciples at Pentecost. Liberal Christians usually apply it to God's renewing work in all of life.

Each of these positions has truth, like the brilliant facets of a diamond, through which light shines in beauty and splendour. We do have all there is to have Christ forever, however we may not live fully in what we have. There are specific encounters or in-fillings of the Spirit to empower us for ministry, however we may not live fully in that empowering either. God is constantly renewing all of life by his Spirit, however we may resist that and not live fully in that transforming grace.

In other words, we may own the cheque drawn on the inexhaustible riches of God, but we may not have drawn on it all. The gift of the Holy Spirit is the Father's promise, and Jesus promised that his followers would be baptised in the Holy Spirit (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:5, 8). It was his final promise on earth.

The question, "Did you receive the baptism (in the Spirit)?" is not found in the Bible! Where that term being baptised in the Spirit is used, it is always a verb - the Lord's action, flooding us with his Spirit or plunging us into his Spirit. Jesus said his followers would be baptised in the Spirit. They were. Generally it is better to talk about being baptised in the Spirit (Acts 1:5; 1 Corinthians 12:13), being filled with the Spirit (Acts 2:4; Ephesians 5:18), or receiving the Spirit (e.g. Acts 19:2; Galatians 3:2), rather than receiving 'the baptism'.

The New Testament uses these terms in many ways including receiving the Spirit when we believe and receiving a specific empowering or release of the Spirit as well as receiving on-going anointing for particular tasks.

Remember that each person's experience is different, and we can use the biblical terms in a wide variety of ways, as the Bible does. Many people report significant discoveries when they experience a baptism or infilling of the Spirit, such as:

- being closer to Christ;
- profound awareness of God's forgiveness;
- a deep experience of God's love and acceptance;
- great joy and desire to praise God;
- new enjoyment of faith and worship;
- life in old hymns and new songs;
- a new love for Scripture;
- prayer life charged with relevance;
- prayers being answered in new ways or more often;
- a prayer language giving new freedom;
- new enjoyment of God and of living for the Lord;

- emergence and developing of latent gifts;
- fruit of the Spirit evidenced more fully;
- greater desire and ability to serve the Lord;
- new involvement and fulfilment in Christ's church;
- deeper insight into Jesus' suffering for the world;
- greater compassion for people;
- new orientation towards others' wholeness;
- stronger faith to claim God's purposes;
- a deeper desire to serve God in the community;
- new spiritual power to live for God and others;

Note especially that we are filled with the Spirit so that we have the power to serve the Lord (e.g. Acts 1:8). The word 'power' in that verse is *dunamis* in Greek, from which we get the English words dynamic and dynamite. When we are filled with the Spirit a new dynamic explodes in our lives.

The Old Testament tells of people being filled with the Spirit:

Joseph: the Spirit gives ability (Genesis 41:38);

Moses and the 70: the Spirit resides and is given (Numbers 11:16-17);

Balaam: the Spirit inspires prophecy (Numbers 24:1-3a);

Joshua: the Spirit gives wisdom (Deuteronomy 34:9);

Othniel: the Spirit endows leadership (Judges 3:10);

Gideon: the Spirit takes control (Judges 6:34);

Saul: the Spirit provokes into action (1 Samuel 11:6);

David: the Spirit claims a man to rule (1 Samuel 16:13);

Isaiah: the Spirit confers power (Isaiah 42:1; 61:1);

Ezekiel: the Spirit gives prophetic insight (Ezekiel 37:1).

These Old Testament accounts speak of the Spirit given to particular people in a particular way at a particular time for a particular task. Note the contrast with the New Testament descriptions of the Spirit given fully and permanently (e.g. John 1:33; 7:39; Acts 1:4-5).

The Jewish view was that after the death of the last of the great prophets, God's Spirit was no longer found in Israel, but would be given when the new age came with the appearance of the great new prophet, the Messiah. With the coming of Jesus, the Messiah, the Son of God, we find a new era in the Spirit's work.

Response: How did the Spirit come on people in the Old Testament? You could comment on similar experiences in your life.

2. The Spirit in Jesus

Luke records how the angel Gabriel told Mary that she would conceive Jesus by the power of the Spirit: “The Holy Spirit will come on you, and God’s power will rest upon you. For this reason the holy child will be called the Son of God” (Luke 1:35).

The stories in Luke surrounding Jesus’ birth make frequent reference to the Spirit’s activity (see Luke 1:15, 35, 41, 67; 2:25-27).

For about thirty years, Jesus matured as a Jewish male, worked as a craftsman in the family business, and would have supported his family. Then a major turning point came during the prophetic ministry of John the Baptist. John saw his main task as announcing the coming of the Messiah and preparing the people for that great event (Matthew 3:1-17; Mark 1:1-8; Luke 3:1-22; John 1:19-34).

The Spirit of God coming on Jesus at his baptism transformed his life. It launched him into three years of powerful and controversial ministry culminating in his death, resurrection and ascension.

It did not make Jesus any more holy. He was already holy.

It did not make Jesus more obedient. He was already obedient.

It did not make Jesus more divine. He was already divine.

It did anoint and empower Jesus for his mission, as he explained in Nazareth, quoting from Isaiah: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor, he has sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord” (Luke 4:18-19; Isaiah 61:1-2).

Jesus’ experience of being filled with the Spirit was public and open, not a secret. God announced by his Spirit that Jesus was the Son of God, the Messiah, the one who would baptise us in the Spirit (John 1:31-33).

Jesus accepted baptism and he accepted the coming of the Spirit which affected him deeply and equipped him for his ministry and for empowering his followers for their ministries also. He was enabled to do the Father’s will in the power of the Spirit (see John 5:19, 30; 8:28; 9:4; 12:49;14:10). Note also that this encounter with the Spirit happened at a particular time and place, at a point of obedience and surrender to God’s will for his life. Jesus’ ministry then demonstrated the Spirit’s power to resist temptation, to teach and to meet people’s needs (Luke 4:1, 14 15; 18-19; 36-37).

Jesus, conceived by the power of the Spirit, living without sin, needed a specific infilling of the Spirit for his ministry. So do we.

Response: How does Jesus’ experience of the Spirit apply to us?

You could comment on your experiences of anointing for ministry or mission.

3. The Spirit in the Church

In Jesus, the Spirit inaugurates the new age. This is pivotal in salvation history because the Spirit does not descend on Jesus merely as he descended on former leaders and prophets. The Spirit descends and remains permanently and fully in Jesus.

Also, unlike Old Testament leaders, Jesus has power and authority to transmit his experience of the Spirit to his followers (John 1:33; Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:4-5).

These new dimensions of life in the Spirit are seen first and fully in Jesus, and made available to us:

1. The Spirit came upon Jesus permanently and fully;
2. Jesus imparts the Spirit to us; he baptises us in the Holy Spirit.

This new age of the Spirit is foretold by Jeremiah (Jeremiah 31:31-33), prophesied by Joel (Joel 2:28-29), confirmed by John the Baptist (John 1:33), proclaimed by Jesus (John 16:7; Luke 24:49), recorded in Acts (Acts 1:4-5, 8).

So we come to Pentecost and four other narratives in Acts that record the coming of the Spirit on persons or groups of people. These passages dramatically show how the new age of the Spirit had begun, and how it broke through previous boundaries.

The following Bible passages are very familiar to some people, but unfamiliar to others. They describe how the early church prayed for, received, and lived in the life and power of the Spirit:

Acts 2:1-4, 37-39 (the disciples and people in Jerusalem at Pentecost);

Acts 8:4-17 (the Samaritans when Peter and John prayed for them);

Acts 9:1-19 (Saul in Damascus when Ananias prayed for him);

Acts 10:30-33, 44-48 (and 11:12-18, Cornelius and Gentiles in Caesarea when Peter preached to them);

Acts 19:1-7 (the disciples in Ephesus when Paul prayed for them).

What led to these encounters with the Holy Spirit and what followed? None were accidental or automatic. All of them happened through prayer and seeking more from God.

Note the recurring themes of repentance toward God; believing in Jesus; and receiving the Spirit.

How did the Spirit come? He came then in many ways, and still does: with prayer, after repentance, usually in the company of other believers, with the laying on of hands, and with immediate results in the lives of people and in the community.

Demonstrations of the Spirit's presence and power accompanied the coming of the Spirit in the early church. These included tongues, powerful preaching, healings, prophecies, and manifestations of fire and the sound of a mighty wind. Those manifestations differed at different times.

The Spirit empowered the church for its mission in the world: to witness, evangelise, heal, and deliver people from bondage and oppression; to continue the ministry of Jesus in his church (Acts 1:8).

Response: What aspects of the Spirit coming in the early church still happen today?

You could comment on your experience of the Spirit coming.

4. The Spirit in us

The Spirit's empowering presence is creatively varied within us all. Helpful insights can be found in the symbols of the Spirit used in the gospels. The Spirit of our God comes in many ways for many purposes, for instance:

fire: refining and purifying, warming and glowing (Matthew 3:11; Luke 24:32);

dove: signifying gentleness, peace and purity (Matthew 3:16; compare 10:16);

wind: ceaseless action, freedom, and unpredictability (John 3:8; compare Acts 2:2);

breath: giving life, renewing, resuscitating, and reviving (John 20:22; compare Genesis 2:7);

water: giving life, satisfying, quenching thirst (John 7:37-39; compare 4:14).

Scripture clearly emphasises the need to be filled with the Spirit. The gospel story and the story of the church show the importance of being filled with the Spirit (Luke 4:1; Acts 6:3,5, 8; 7:55; 10:38; 11:24; 13:52). Yet we often avoid this reality for ourselves! Why?

Some common hesitations may be:

doubt: if I ask, will anything really happen?

unworthiness: I'm not good enough.

caution: yes, but! what of fanatics? what if ... ?

fear: I don't know what will happen.

control: I won't allow anything unusual.

pride: I don't need this. I'm okay.

doctrine: our branch of the church doesn't teach this.

past hurts: once bitten, twice shy! is it divisive?

Remember that God loves us and only gives good gifts to us including his Spirit. The Spirit is the Spirit of Jesus, full of compassion, forgiveness, grace, and beauty. It often helps to pray prayers binding the forces of evil that may keep us from responding to God's love. We have the authority to claim all God has for us in Jesus' name.

Other attitudes about being filled with God's Spirit can be:

faith: I trust God. The Lord will bless.

hope: there's more yet, for us all.

love: God is love, and I love my God.

anticipation: I look forward to what God will do.

expectation: good things will happen, as in Scripture.

enthusiasm: let's receive all the Lord has for us.

Jesus expected his followers to be filled with the Spirit, empowered by the Spirit, or baptised in the Spirit (Luke 24:49; Acts 1-4-5, 8). He taught that this is God's will for us. He wants to give us his Spirit to fill our lives.

We give good gifts to our children. Jesus used this fact to show us how God our Father wants us to have his Spirit fill our lives: "If you then, being evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!" (Luke 11:13).

Note that in verses 9 and 10 of Luke 11, six times Jesus promises that God will give what we need. We need to ask, seek and knock, and we will receive, find, and have the door opened for us.

How do we receive the gift of the Spirit? Whether we think of this as part of conversion, or as being empowered, or as living a fully Spirit-filled life, the answer is the same! We ask. We believe. We receive.

We may ask and believe on our own, knowing that God is with us, and pours out his love into our hearts by his Spirit.

We may ask and believe with others who pray for us.

We can receive as a child receives from a good and loving father, with trust and gratitude.

We receive in faith. Feelings vary. Often there is a sense of peace and calm. Sometimes we melt inside as God's love graciously fills us in a new

way. However, we may feel nothing at the time of praying together. That's okay. We trust God to answer our prayer and give his Spirit, whether we feel anything or not. And we go on trusting. Many people have asked in faith, felt nothing spectacular, and then later on discovered that God had indeed answered their prayer because they found more and more evidence of the Spirit's presence and power in their lives, especially as they prayed for others or helped others.

What about tongues? Some groups emphasise this evidence of the Spirit's infilling. When we pray for the fullness of the Spirit, we may experience this release, and some people in your group may have a prayer language which is very meaningful to them. That's beautiful, and biblical. This gift involves speaking mysteries to God (1 Corinthians 14:2) in worship, praise, adoration, and prayer beyond our limited conscious capacity. However, we ought to avoid pressing our experience onto others. People are converted and filled with the Spirit in many different ways.

The gift of tongues is an evidence of the Spirit's release. There are others. We can, of course, be open to this and all the gifts of the Spirit, ask for them, and expect them, but we should avoid pressing others into our mould. Our loving God gives the gracious Spirit freely, without coercion, as we ask, seek and knock.

More important than any specific gift of the Spirit is the faith, hope and love God gives us by his Spirit. Indeed, gifts of God's Spirit without love count for nothing at all as Paul so strongly shows in 1 Corinthians 13 – the love chapter. We may have amazing gifts of the Spirit, but if we do not have love we are nothing and it counts for nothing (verses 1-3).

Response: How can we be filled with the Spirit?

You could describe how you were filled or touched with the Spirit.

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TOPIC 4: Fruit of the Spirit

READINGS: Christ-like character

1. Galatians 5:16-26 (fruit of the Spirit)
2. John 15:1-10 (bearing much fruit)
3. John 14:15-26 (the Spirit teaches)
4. John 16:7-15 (the Spirit guides)
5. 2 Timothy 3:14-17 (the Spirit inspires)
6. Romans 8:26-27 (the Spirit prays)
7. John 4:21-24 (the Spirit in worship)



International mission team in Brisbane

Now Christian lawyers and leaders

A miracle house

People showing the fruit of the Spirit inspire and encourage us.

I met an on-fire team of Pacific Island law students (now lawyers and pastors) in 2002, and we hosted them in Brisbane for a month. Philip George and his wife Dhamkia (3rd and 2nd on the right in the photo) provided the team with accommodation in a ‘miracle house’ they bought.

Philip and Dhamika bought the house with no money! They used it for the Kingdom. They befriended a ‘backpacker’ lady at a shopping centre, and invited her to eat with them and stay the night. Then she told them she came to Brisbane to buy two rental properties in Brisbane at that time as house prices rose rapidly. A couple of years later she sold them to reap huge profits. She advised Philip and Dhamika to do the same, but they had no money for that.

“You’ve been kind to me,” she observed. “So I will lend you the \$10,000 deposit needed for a housing loan. Buy a rental property, and the rent will cover the loan repayments. Then when you sell it, return my money to me, without interest.”

They bought that house just in time to offer it to the mission team of Pacific islanders to stay freely for a month. When they sold it a couple of years later, they gained almost \$90,000, wiping out their debts and making more funds available for mission.

Philip and Dhamika constantly show the fruit of the Spirit with loving, Christ-like attitudes and actions. They demonstrate Kingdom life, and continually discover God’s blessing, a result of God’s hand on them.

I conducted their miracle wedding in Brisbane. It cost them nothing. Not only did they have no minister’s fees, but also the church, the flowers, the bridal party’s clothes, the banquet, and the wedding video all came free, without them asking for any of it! Philip earned money while a student by cleaning St Andrew’s Presbyterian Church, a beautiful, gothic church in the heart of Brisbane city. So they offered him the church for the wedding. The people arranging flowers for the Sunday service the next day provided special flower arrangements for the wedding also. A student friend’s mother owned a clothing boutique, and donated all the bridal party’s outfits, normally rented or bought. Philip boarded at the Salvation Army hostel near the college, so they gladly provided the smorgasbord wedding breakfast for 100 people. Another friend offered to video their wedding. Imagine the family’s surprise when they saw that video in Sri Lanka. Philip and Dhamika show the fruit of the Spirit naturally.

The Fruit of the Spirit describes the on-going results of God’s Spirit

working in our lives to reproduce the life of Christ in us. We become more Christ-like, and we see constant evidence of his life in us.

Some people feel uncomfortable studying the Holy Spirit because they just want to focus on Jesus. However, the more we know the Holy Spirit as a real person, the more we love and honour Jesus because the Spirit always glorifies him (John 16:14), and reproduces his life in us. The final discourse passages in John 13-17 show Jesus opening his heart to his friends on the night of his arrest and trials just before his torture and execution. Jesus spoke a lot about the Holy Spirit in those passages, and they give us a glimpse of the wonderful mutual love and honour in the Godhead between all the Persons of the Godhead.

Jesus is one with the Father and revealed the Father (John 14:9-11). The Holy Spirit reveals Jesus and the Father to us. Jesus promised his followers that the Spirit would be our helper, advocate, counsellor, teacher and friend (John 14:26; 16:7-15). In other words, Jesus wants us to know the Spirit intimately, and the more we know the Spirit the more we will know Jesus and the Father.

Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit, his Spirit, would glorify him. The more we yield to the Spirit the more we will show the fruit of the Spirit in our lives, the life of Jesus in us.

The Holy Spirit reproduces the life of our Lord Jesus in us, and he develops the nature of the Father – godly character – in us. This topic explores that process.

This topic includes studies on these themes:

1. Fruit of the Spirit in us personally
2. Fruit of the Spirit in us communally
3. Growth in the Spirit personally
4. Growth in the Spirit communally

1. Fruit of the Spirit in us personally

Being born spiritually is a beginning process; growing fruit is an on-going or end process. The end to which we aspire is to be like Christ, increasingly. We all have more to learn and experience of the Spirit's work in us. So this study and the next begin to look at the fruit and gifts of the Spirit in our lives.

This topic covers two general areas of that on-going process:

Fruit: the Christ-like characteristics that the Spirit produces, personally and communally.

Growth: the process of developing Christ-likeness, personally and communally.

The fruit of the Spirit can be understood as the result and evidence of what the Spirit produces in our lives, and also as a metaphor of growing fruit, taking time to ripen in a maturing process.

Jesus pointed out that a good tree produces good fruit and a bad tree produces bad fruit (Matthew 7:17). So it is with us.

What fruit can we expect from the Spirit's work in us personally? In Galatians 5:16-26, and in other passages such as Romans 7, Paul discusses the conflict we all have between our sinful nature, and the life of the Spirit within us. We constantly choose between the two, often by default. If we do not continually repent and seek the Lord, then our old nature with its selfish or sinful desires prevails. If we "put to death" the old nature by denying self, as Jesus told us to do (Luke 9:23), then the Spirit of God in us prevails because we co-operate with him instead of resisting and quenching him.

Adam and Eve sinned because they failed to obey God. So do we. That is why we must live in repentance continually. We fall short of all the Spirit wants to do in us, and so we sin in thought and word and action.

Many pressures can pull us away from living in the Spirit, including:
The world, with its lifestyle all around us, at work, on TV, in DVDs, films and magazines;
The flesh, with its self-centred attitudes and appetites constantly within us;
The devil, with demonic powers opposing God's kingdom within and around us.

God's Spirit in us overcomes these forces to produce the fruit of the Spirit in our lives and character. The more we respond to the Spirit of God, the more that fruit becomes evident. Paul gives a useful list of the qualities of that fruit. Each quality is not a different kind or separate "fruit" making up many "fruits" because together they are all the fruit or result of the Spirit working in us and reproducing the life of Christ in us.

We can think of this fruit in many ways, but one useful way is like this: The Spirit reproduces the qualities of the life of Jesus in us, and that affects our relationship with God, with others and within ourselves:

Our relationship with God: *love, joy, peace,*

Our relationship with others: *longsuffering, gentleness, goodness,*

Our relationship with ourselves: *humility, faithfulness, self-control.*

As fruit, this list reminds us that all these qualities are the result of being controlled more and more by the Spirit. Sometimes people who claim to be Spirit-filled are aggressive, self-assertive, dogmatic, dominant and even uncaring. They're also deceived! A person truly filled with the Spirit is humble, willing to listen, open to being wrong, gentle and caring, as well as

living powerfully in the authority of the kingdom of God. Jesus lived that way.

Note that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Jesus: “God has given us the Spirit on his Son” (Galatians 4:6), so the life of Jesus is given to us by his Spirit producing the fruit of the Spirit in us.

Response: How can we be more like Jesus?

You could comment on discoveries of the Spirit changing you and others.

2. Fruit of the Spirit in us communally

The fruit of the Spirit affects us as a community of God’s people also, not just as individuals. Where people in the church are increasingly filled with love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, humility, faithfulness, and self-control, the church is transformed. That is every pastor’s dream!

Unfortunately the church often fails to demonstrate the fruit of the Spirit. As Paul pointed out to the Corinthians, we can be squabbling babies as Christians (1 Corinthians 3:1-4). That is the same problem Paul addresses in Galatians 5:16-26, with similar lists of human sins in both passages including envy, strife and divisions. These are communal or church problems.

The answer to these problems is to have the fruit of the Spirit increasingly evident in our lives together. The church is meant to be like that, full of the Spirit. Unfortunately, a local church may not be like that. So most of us have quite a lot of repenting to do!

Paul also instructs the church about this in Ephesians 4:1-3, challenging the church to live “with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” That chapter ends with a similar challenge: “And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God ... and be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you” (Ephesians 4:30-32).

We can grieve the Spirit constantly in our life together. Most of the New Testament letters were written to correct that problem. Even the early church, which was so effective in spreading the gospel, had many problems. Paul and others constantly challenge Christians to live together in love and unity, not in strife, arguments, divisions, and competition.

The fruit of the Spirit in our life together becomes more evident when we all respond to the Spirit. As we respond to the Spirit continually we discover his blessing and help all the time in our life together. As churches

are increasingly full of the fruit of the Spirit, love and unity and mutual support and encouragement keep growing.

The church is meant to be the most forgiving, accepting, caring and loving community on earth. Unfortunately some churches are not. As Paul constantly challenged churches we too need to put away strife, envy, jealousy, competition, pride and anger, and respond to the Spirit of God who produces love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, humility, faithfulness and self-control among us.

A very helpful activity that any group of two or more people can do is to encourage one another by commenting on the fruit or growth they see in one another. You can do this easily in groups in these two ways:

1. Each person volunteers to hear from the others, and the others comment on the fruit and growth they see in that person. Comments need to encourage and build up. It is not a time to correct anyone, which, unfortunately, we often want to do. We are to love one another, and this is just one way of expressing that love and support.

2. Each person can write their name at the top of a sheet of paper and pass it around the group. Each other person then, in turn, writes brief comments on it about the qualities of the Spirit they see most in that person, and signs their first name. You can use the Galatians 5:22-23 list, but could also add other terms or word pictures of your own. Then, when you receive your sheet back, read it quietly, absorb, the encouragement and love given to you, have an attitude of thanks to God for the Spirit's work seen in your life, and comment on what this means for you. You may want to ask about the meanings of some comments, or express appreciation.

If appropriate, you could pray together, thanking God for the Spirit's work in your lives and asking for greater growth in Christ-likeness.

Response: How can we respond more fully to the Spirit together? You could comment on how others helped you to respond to the Spirit.

3. Growth in the Spirit personally

Grow up! We hear that when we are childish or stupid. Christians are meant to grow up also. We can "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18).

How do we grow up as Christians? It is through is the work of the Spirit in us. He makes us more like Christ. He reproduces the fruit of the Spirit in our lives more and more fully.

Jesus talked about producing fruit in our lives in the picture of the vine

and the branches (John 15:1-8). The branches cannot bear fruit unless they remain in the vine, but if they remain in the vine they can bear much fruit. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Jesus in us and he reproduces the life and character of Jesus in us.

Some of the results of that growth include knowing Jesus intimately, producing Christ-like character, living a clean life, having unfruitful qualities cut away, being united with Jesus, seeing prayers answered, living a life of discipleship, of loving relationships, and of glad obedience. Where we fail, as we often do, we can claim forgiveness and ask the Spirit's power to flow in us as life flows in the vine to the branches.

We have seen that the fruit of the Spirit involves growth and a maturing process, becoming increasingly Christ-like. This generally involves growth in us:

- to be more like Christ;
- to give ourselves fully to God, no holding back;
- to become increasingly sensitive to the Spirit;
- to live more obediently;
- to absorb Scripture more fully;
- to take time in prayer and fellowship with God;
- to get priorities right, or at least work on it;
- to be less pious and more real;
- to live in union with the Lord more consciously;
- to do what the Spirit prompts;
- to grow strong and bold in faith;
- to love God and others more;
- to be willing to serve and help others;
- to live for Jesus in our work situation;
- to forgive and pray for difficult people;
- to relate to others in compassion and care;
- to pray effectively with others in need;
- to be open to receive prayer and help from others;
- to do something well in the life of the church;
- to serve the Lord and our family at home;
- to endure hardships for God's kingdom;
- to enjoy living in the Spirit and knowing God.

The Holy Spirit, our Helper, provides all the help we need (John 14:17, 26; 16:7, 13-15). Observe the links between Father, Son and Spirit in these passages. Reflect also on the tenderness and intimacy of these passages as they are set in John, chapters 13 to 17: Jesus washing his disciples' feet, promising the Spirit as Helper and Friend and praying earnestly for love and

unity among his followers, including us.

What does this say about how we grow? Sometimes we see obedience in terms of law and rules we must obey. Jesus does not speak like that in these discourses on the Spirit. He emphasizes the loving relationship from which obedience springs, mutual loving and giving. To be filled with the Spirit can mean a new baptism in love, a deeper and more intimate relationship with our Lord through his Spirit in us. Then obedience flows out of that love relationship, with joy.

However, we don't always live that way! So, how can we?

Let's be practical! There are many things we can do to help us grow. Some we can do personally, which we consider here. Many we can do together, which we consider in the next section.

Prayer and Meditation

2 Thessalonians 5:17 says pray always! That sounds impossible, doesn't it? Yet, as we live in the Spirit, in intimate relationship, it becomes the way we live, increasingly abiding in the vine: sometimes in quietness, perhaps with background music, or constantly being aware of the Lord. Note how many Scripture songs are also prayers. You can pray while doing chores, or normal activities, even now while reading this book! Quiet moments at night after the kids are in bed can help, as can meditation in wakeful times in our own bed. Playing worship music in the car can transform travel, lower blood pressure, and remind you of the Lord's presence; perhaps even save you from some speeding fines!

Enjoy variety in your praying, as in **A-C-T-S**:

- Adoration and worship;
- Confession and consecration;
- Thanksgiving and praise;
- Supplication and intercession.

These dimensions of prayer enrich personal and corporate prayer. The Psalms cover all these kinds of prayer. Many prayer songs express these aspects of prayer. Scripture passages give voice to these prayers.

Bible Reading and Study

2 Timothy 3:16-17 reminds us that all Scripture is God-breathed, inspired by the Spirit who breathes life into us as we absorb it. Note the difference between analysing or studying the style of a letter from a friend and absorbing the message and spirit of the letter. The Bible is great literature, worth studying as such, but it is also life-giving, Spirit-inspired food for

growth.

Listen to the Spirit as you read. He speaks to you, and can surprise you. He applies Scripture directly to our lives. Use various translations. Bible study guides can help. Skim read whole books to get the feel of them, or an overview. Read great devotional or study literature; it can throw light on Bible teaching. Read accounts of the Spirit's work in people and in the world today; it can build your faith.

Personal Self-Discipline

Galatians 5:22-23 lists the fruit of the Spirit including self-control. As we are controlled by the Spirit more fully so we discover more self-control. We are bombarded by social pressures, advertising, consumerism, materialism, hedonism, and the ideologies of the world (1 John 2:15-17). We fail. We fall. We need forgiveness, and strength. The Spirit helps us (Romans 8:26). We grow. Nor do we grow alone. We need one another to develop personal self-discipline. We are here to help each other.

Richard Foster's helpful book *Celebration of Discipline* develops these themes and more, including the inward disciplines of meditation, prayer, fasting, and study; the outward disciplines of simplicity, solitude, submission, and service; and the corporate disciplines of confession, worship, guidance and celebration.

Response: What helps you in prayer, Bible study and self-discipline? You could comment on what has helped you most in these areas.

4. Growth in the Spirit communally

Many Bible passages describe our life together which can help us grow up in Christ or grow in the Spirit. Paul often addresses this in his passages on the body of Christ, as in Ephesians 4:1-16. Here he discusses how the body of Christ is built up as we grow in unity and perfection, toward the fullness of Christ, that we may no longer be unstable children, but "grow up in all things" into Christ the head of his body.

Some of our strongest times of growth can also be with others in prayer and meditation (as in prayer groups), Bible reading and study (as with teaching and preaching), and personal self-discipline (as in mutual discipleship). Similarly, our life together in worship, fellowship and service, helps us to grow up.

Regular Involvement in Worship

John 4:23-24 tells us of Jesus' promise that by the power of God's Spirit can we truly worship. That may be alone, on a mountain, by the sea, under the stars. It will also involve worship with others in the Christian community. Commitment to Christ involves commitment to his church. Give yourself wholeheartedly to the Lord in the life of the church. The Spirit is renewing and reviving the church, often powerfully. No local church is perfect; not with you or me in it! We are all growing, and some of us have a lot of growing to do yet.

Many churches offer diversity in worship, including family services, liturgical services, youth services, evangelistic or revival services, and renewal services.

Fellowship in a Small Group

Hebrews 10:24-25 reminds us to care for one another, show love and do good deeds, and not forget to get together. For the early church, that meant home groups for three hundred years. Times of revival see a rediscovery of home groups (as in the Wesley class meetings in homes). This is one of the most significant developments in the church today. Home groups multiply. They can meet needs for loving fellowship and care that sitting in pews may never do. They foster united praying, intimate worship, and practical service for one another as needs become known.

Commitment to Serve Others

John 13:13-17 shocks us. It shocked Peter. To lead is to serve.

"Preach the gospel at all times. Where necessary, use words," St Francis said, and lived. Lead on St Francis, Mother Teresa, and the millions of unsung, unknown heroes of the faith who served others! We can too. Where you have a Spirit-filled saint, you have a loving servant, Christ-like, humble, gracious, bold, living for God and for others.

Our love for God, our commitment to Jesus, and our life in the Spirit plunge us into serving others. So we will often confront injustice as we truly seek to live for God or follow Jesus, led and empowered by his Spirit. Martin Luther King Jr died doing that, opposing injustice in Jesus' name.

Response: What is helpful for you in worship, fellowship and service? You could comment on what has helped you most in these areas.

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TOPIC 5: Gifts of the Spirit

READINGS: Tools for the job

1. John 14:8-14 (doing greater things)
2. 1 Peter 4:7-11 (gifts and ministry)
3. Romans 12:1-8 (gifts and service)
4. Ephesians 4:11-16 (gifts and unity)
5. 1 Corinthians 12:4-11 (gifts and diversity)
6. 1 Corinthians 12:27-31 (gifts and authority)
7. 1 Corinthians 13 (gifts and love).



South Pacific mission team at the Three Sisters, Katoomba, Australia

Gifts for ministry and mission

Gifts of the Spirit equip us in ministry and mission.

God's Spirit moved strongly on the Christian Fellowship in the law school of the University of the South Pacific in 2002. Their president, Romulo, and a strong leadership group, led them in praying early every morning, and they saw many lives changed.

A team of them discovered more about spiritual gifts when they visited Australia in 2002 for revival meetings in many denominations. They prayed personally for hundreds of people in various churches and home groups. That was new for them and they grew in their faith, understanding and authority.

Jerry, one of the students from Fiji, returned home for Christmas vacation after the visit to Australia, and prayed for over 70 sick people in his village, seeing many miraculous healings. His transformed life challenged the village because he had been converted at university after a wild time as a youth in the village. The following December vacation, 2003, Jerry led revival in his village. He prayed early every morning in their traditional Methodist Church. Eventually some children and youth joined him early each morning. By 2005 he had 50 young people involved, evangelising, praying for the sick, casting out spirits, and encouraging revival. By 2009 Jerry, a lawyer and pastor of a church in Suva, had planted a new church in his village as well.

Simon, returned to his island of Tuvalu, also transformed at university. He witnessed to his relatives and friends through the vacation in December-January, bringing many of them to the Lord. He led a team of youth involved in Youth Alive meetings, and prayed with the leaders each morning from 4 a.m. Simon became President of the Christian Fellowship at the Law School from October 2003 for a year. Since graduating he has led others in discovering more of life in the Spirit. We can all discover more about the Spirit's gifts.

Gifts are *gifts*. We can't buy them. We can't earn them. We can't manufacture them. We can't even fully determine which gifts we will have because the Holy Spirit distributes his gifts as he chooses (1 Corinthians 12:11), although we can ask in faith.

Gifts are mysterious, as God himself is mysterious. As with the studies on being baptised in the Spirit or being filled with the Spirit, so studies on gifts of the Spirit have many facets, and cannot easily be reduced to formula or categories. They are more like currents in the wind or the river. The wind and the river are metaphors Jesus used of the Spirit. Speaking about the

Spirit, Jesus said that the wind blows where it will, and that from within us would flow rivers of living water (John 3:8; 7:38).

So we have an immediate problem! How do we examine and understand gifts of the Spirit more as currents in the wind and in the river rather than categories and formula, especially when categories are so popular and so easy to use?

Instead of thinking in terms of formula, boxes, pigeon holes, or closed sets, we can think about those same gifts in terms of anointing, personality gifting, the breath of God in us and blowing or breathing through us.

So in this study on gifts of the Spirit, which is full of various lists of gifts from Scripture, it helps to think of them as living expressions of the living God in and through us; not as gift-wrapped boxes we can grab and open. Gifts are gifts to be received in faith, with real appreciation and gratitude, but not to be owned or grabbed. We don't own them. God owns us, and moves in and through us.

The Spirit gives his gifts liberally and freely as he chooses. So we all can receive more of the Spirit and his gifts and be more fully used in his service as followers of our Lord, empowered by his Spirit. This study examines his empowering presence in our lives, individually and corporately.

This topic includes studies on these themes:

1. Power for mission
2. Gifts for mission
3. Unity for mission
4. Love for mission

1. Power for mission

To be filled with the Spirit, baptised in the Spirit or to experience a new release of the Spirit, is linked clearly in Scripture with a release of spiritual power for mission, service or ministry to the needs of people. When this happens, not only is the fruit of the Spirit more evident (or should be!), but so are the gifts the Spirit releases in us. Both fruit and gifts flow from the Spirit's life within us. Although the fruit of the Spirit - what we are - has priority, especially love, the gifts of the Spirit are vital for what we do - our ministry.

Different New Testament passages describe different aspects of the Spirit's work.

Luke (in his Gospel and in the Acts), the only Gentile author in Scripture, shows how the gift of the Holy Spirit involves a specific *baptism*

in power: for Jesus, for Jewish believers and for Gentile believers also (Luke 3:16, 22; 4:1, 14, 18-19. 36, 40-41; 24:49; Acts 1:4-5, 8; 2:1-4, 38-39; 8:14-17; 9:17-19; 10:44-48; 11:15-17; 19:5-7).

John's Gospel and letters emphasise the Spirit's coming with a *baptism in love*: an intimate, personal relationship between the Lord and his followers by his Spirit leading to deep and meaningful relationships between believers filled with the Spirit (John 1:29-34; 7:37-39; chapters 13 to 17; 20:19-22; 21:15-19; 1 John 4:1-21).

Paul, the great missionary to the Gentiles, celebrates the Spirit's presence as a *baptism in grace (charis)*, bestowing the gift of God's grace (*charisma*, singular), seen in the gifts of grace or gifts of the Spirit (*charismata*, plural; from which we get charismatic). The church is charismatic, by definition, nature and function: God's people, saved by grace, gifted by grace, and baptised into the one body by the same Spirit, whether Jews or Gentiles, slaves or free (1 Corinthians 12:13). Note the context of that baptism into one body by the Spirit: it is Paul's teaching on the gifts of the Spirit in 1 Corinthians 12 to 14. One result of being baptised in the Spirit or filled with the Spirit is the release of the gifts of the Spirit in the body of Christ.

Why do we need the gifts of the Spirit? Look at John 14:12. Jesus said, "I am telling you the truth: whoever believes in me will do what I do; yes, he will do even greater things, because I am going to the Father."

Jesus points out that not one bit of power or ability that was available to him is lost to his church. His promise of the Spirit's power is linked with his return to the Father (see Matthew 28:18; John 7:38; 16:7). The Holy Spirit continues the ministry of Jesus in and through us.

Our task is to continue the ministry of Jesus in the power of his Spirit. All Jesus' ministry was performed because the Spirit of the Lord was upon him enabling him to do the Father's will.

Jesus acts in these same ways today through his church, so there is:
forgiveness: to bring freedom from the past,
healing: for physical and emotional illness,
wholeness: instead of brokenness,
liberty: where personality or relationships are bound.

Everything Jesus did in ministry is the norm for the church, except his unique death and resurrection. He alone provides salvation. We proclaim and demonstrate that salvation in our lives and ministry or service.

What are the marks of Spirit-filled living and ministry? The New Testament offers many insights into living in the power of the Spirit, such as these:

John 16:7 – Jesus has sent the Spirit to be our Helper or Advocate.

Acts 1:4-5, 8; 6:8; 10:38 – The Spirit worked through Jesus and works through us also.

Romans 15:18-19 – The Spirit was powerful in Paul’s ministry.

1 Corinthians 2:4-5; 4:20 – God’s kingdom is not a matter of words, but power.

2 Timothy 1:7 – God has given us a spirit of power, love and a sound mind.

Note the joy and gratitude that goes along with seeing the power of God at work in our lives and in the lives of others. Ephesians 5:18-20 tells about believers

filled with the Spirit,
in control, not drunk,
encouraging one another,
rejoicing together,
praising the Lord,
always giving thanks to God.

As we learn to live a Spirit-filled life, we can expect to see more of the power of the Spirit at work in us and others. This should keep us humble and grateful, for it is God who is at work in us (Philippians 2:13). Whatever we do in Christian living and service is never just in our own strength or ability, but through God’s Spirit within us.

Response: How can we discover more of the power of the Spirit to meet needs?

You could report on how you discovered more of God’s power meeting needs.

2. Gifts for mission

Gifts of the Spirit are given for mission, ministry or service. They are tools for the job of serving God in the church and in the world, to meet the needs of people in compassion, grace, and with authority.

Paul acknowledges that the gifts come from the one God (1 Corinthians 12:4-6):

There are diversities of gifts, but *the same Spirit* (the Holy Spirit).

There are differences of ministries, but *the same Lord* (Jesus our Lord).

There are varieties of activities, but it is *the same God* (the Father) who works in us all.

Spiritual gifts can be studied in many different ways. This study is a very brief summary of the various gifts the Spirit (not as boxes or categories,

but as currents in the wind and the river of God), each with a different perspective or emphasis:

The manifold grace of God – speaking and serving gifts (1 Peter 4:10-11).

The motivational gifts from God our Father (Romans 12:4-8).

The ministry gifts from Christ our Head (Ephesians 4:11).

The manifestations of the Spirit our Empowerer (1 Corinthians 12:8-10).

The Manifold Grace of God

The following list of spiritual gifts is divided into two sections, speaking and serving, based on 1 Peter 4:10-12, which describes speaking and serving gifts as expressions of the manifold grace of God: “Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received. Whoever speaks must do so as one speaking the very words of God; whoever serves must do so with the strength that God supplies, so that God may be glorified in all things through Jesus Christ. To him belong the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.”

The Bible references given here are adapted from the Fuller Evangelistic Association.

SPEAKING GIFTS

1. Apostle: spiritual authority; leadership over churches (1 Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 4:11; 3:1-9; 2 Corinthians 12:12).
2. Prophet (prophecy): speaking from God; inspired utterance (1 Corinthians 12:10, 28; Romans 12:6; Ephesians 4:11; Luke 7:26; Acts 15:32; 21:9-11).
3. Evangelist: sharing the gospel; leading others to Christ (Ephesians 4:11; Acts 8:5-6, 26-40; 14:21; 21:8; 2 Timothy 4:5).
4. Teacher (teaching): impart truth; communicate knowledge (1 Corinthians 12:28; Romans 12:7; Ephesians 4:11; Acts 18:24-28; 20:20-21).
5. Pastor: caring for people; shepherd (Ephesians 4:11; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; John 10:1-18; 1 Peter 5:1-3).
6. Exhortation: enabling; encouragement; challenge; comfort (Romans 12:8; 1 Timothy 4:13; Hebrews 10:25; Acts 14:22).
7. Words of wisdom: revealed awareness; understanding (1 Corinthians 12:8; 2:1-13; Acts 6:3, 10; 2 Peter 3:15; James 1:5-6).
8. Words of knowledge: revealed insight about someone or something (1 Corinthians 12:8; 2:14; Acts 5:1-11; Colossians 2:2-3).
9. Discernment: awareness of spirits and spiritual forces (1 Corinthians 12:10; Acts 16:16-18; 1 John 4:1-6).
10. Missionary: cross-cultural use of gifts and ministry (1 Corinthians

9:19-23; Acts 8:4; 13:2-3; 22:21; Romans 10:15).

11. Courage (martyrdom): endurance amid suffering (1 Corinthians 13:3; Acts 7:54-60; 8:1-4; 12:1-5).

12. Tongues: using an unknown language; prayer language (1 Corinthians 12:10, 28; 14:13-19; Acts 2:1-13; 10:44-46; 19:1-7).

13. Interpretation of tongues: awareness of the meaning of it (1 Corinthians 12:10, 30; 14:13, 26-28).

SERVING GIFTS

14. Service: identify and meet needs in tasks to be done (Romans 12:7; Acts 6:1-7; 2 Timothy 1:16-18).

15. Mercy: compassionate action; alleviate suffering (Romans 12:8; Acts 16:33-34; Luke 10:33-35; Mark 9:41).

16. Helping (assistance): supporting others; releasing their gifts (1 Corinthians 12:28; Romans 16:1-2; Acts 9:36).

17. Voluntary poverty: identifying with poor and needy; living simply (1 Corinthians 13:3; 2 Corinthians 8:9; Mark 1:18-20; 10:21; Acts 2:45; 4:34-35).

18. Giving: liberality; releasing finances and resources (Romans 12:8; 2 Corinthians 8:1-7; 9:2, 6-8).

19. Leadership: see goals and inspire and enable others (Romans 12:8; Acts 7:10; 15:7-11; 1 Timothy 5:17; Hebrews 13:17).

20. Faith: strong assurance and confidence in God's purposes (1 Corinthians 12:9; Acts 11:22-24; 27:21-25; Romans 4:18-21; Hebrews 11).

21. Administration: devise and execute effective plans for mission (1 Corinthians 12:28; Acts 6:1-7; 27:11).

22. Celibacy: called to be single and fulfilled in it (1 Corinthians 7:7-8; Matthew 19:10-12).

23. Hospitality: open home and warmly welcoming; available (Romans 12:9-13; Hebrews 13:1-2; Acts 1(1:15; Romans 16:23).

24. Intercession: praying effectively for others (James 5:14-16; 1 Timothy 2:1-2; Colossians 1:9-12).

25. Healing: agent and means of God's gift of wholeness (1 Corinthians 12:9, 28; Acts 3:1-10; 5:12-16; 9:32-35).

26. Miracles: human channels of God's supernatural intervention (1 Corinthians 12:10, 28; Acts 9:36-42; 19:11-20; Romans 15:18-19).

27. Exorcism: authority over evil spirits; expelling evil powers (1 Corinthians 2:6-8; 10:20-21; Colossians 1:13-16; 2:20; Acts 5:16).

Motivational Gifts from God our Father

Romans 12:6-8 lists gifts in a passage about discovering and doing the will of God in the body of Christ, using our God-given abilities. This list corresponds closely to our natural God-made abilities, filled with God's Spirit. Some writers suggest that knowing these God-given gifts in our lives motivates us to serve him well as we use them for his glory.

1. prophecy: so prophesy in proportion to our faith;
2. ministry: so use it in ministering or serving;
3. teaching: so use it in teaching;
4. exhorting: so use it in exhortation;
5. giving: so give liberally;
6. leading: so lead with diligence;
7. showing mercy: so do it with cheerfulness.

Most of us do all of these things in various ways, but each of us will be gifted more strongly in some of these areas. Knowing our gifting can help us serve the Lord with gladness, fulfilled in our gifting and calling.

Ministry Gifts from Christ Jesus our Head

Ephesians 4:11 summarises the leadership or ministry gifts given by the risen Lord, Head of his church. These gifts differ from all the other lists of gifts because it is the person who is the gift of Christ to his church, not just their ministry gift.

1. apostle: sent by the Lord;
2. prophet: speaking from the Lord;
3. evangelist: proclaiming the gospel of the Lord;
4. pastor: shepherding the Lord's people;
5. teacher: instructing the Lord's people.

Increasingly, these gifts are being recognised and developed in local churches. Usually, where people are gifted by the Lord in these ways, they become leaders in the church, often unpaid (as in home groups or specialised ministries such as with youth or children), sometimes paid (as on staff, part time or full time). This list in Ephesians is not a list of local church staff, although the staff usually has some of these gifts. The more that the leaders in the church, voluntary and paid, can exercise and be supported in these ministries, the more the church will demonstrate the anointing and power of the Spirit in its life.

Manifestations of the Spirit

1 Corinthians 12, gives two useful lists of manifestations of the Spirit in the body of Christ. The following helpful categories are used by some writers:

Manifestations of the Spirit are listed in 1 Corinthians 12:7-10:

The power to know:

1. word of wisdom: a divine understanding for a need;
2. word of knowledge: a divine revelation about a person or event;
3. discerning of spirits: a divine awareness about spirit powers;

The power to act:

4. faith: a divine enabling
5. healings: a divine provision of wholeness;
6. miracles: a divine intervention supernaturally;

The power to speak:

7. prophecy: a divine word given;
8. tongues: a divine unknown language (occasionally known to others);
9. interpretation of tongues: a divine understanding of a message in tongues.

These manifestations of the Spirit often cause strife and division in churches, as they did in Corinth. Paul's letter addresses those problems, especially in 1 Corinthians 12-14. That is how the love chapter of 1 Corinthians 13 came to be written. Paul emphasises the importance of these gifts, and strongly argues that we all need each other because we are all gifted differently. The eye cannot say it does not need the hand; the head cannot say it does not need the feet.

These gifts are gifts of grace. We all need God's grace in growing in these gifts, and appreciating them in one another.

1 Corinthians 12:28 then arranges various gifts in an order of ministry significance:

1. apostles
2. prophets
3. teachers
4. miracles
5. healings
6. helps – service
7. administration
8. tongues

Leadership in the life of the church is particularly significant, for it can stifle or release the gifting of God's people. Leaders do not need to envy or fear God's gifting in his people. The more the body of Christ lives in its gifting and calling, the more the leaders themselves are able to live in their

own gifting and calling, and not be overloaded with ministry which is neither their gifting nor their calling.

We all function in many of these ways, but some will be gifted by the Spirit more fully in various ministries. Gifts may emerge unexpectedly as we believe and obey the leading of the Spirit in our lives. We often discover God's gifting as we serve one another in various kinds of ministry, for the Spirit then anoints us for those ministries.

Response: What gifts of the Spirit are emerging in your life and ministry? You could comment on gifts you see in you and in other people.

3. Unity for mission

A common criticism of spiritual gifts is that they cause division in the church, especially the controversial ones like tongues and interpretation, healing and miracles, discernment of spirits and exorcism or deliverance, prophetic words and inspired words of knowledge or wisdom, and risky faith; in short, just about everything in the list in 1 Corinthians 12.

Few people have problems with the Romans 12 list of prophecy (speaking a word from the Lord), service, teaching, encouragement or exhortation, giving, authority and mercy. These deal with practical Christian service, the spelling out of that transforming renewal and doing God's will described in the well known, favourite verses 1 and 2.

Similarly, the Ephesians 4 list has become popular in this ecumenical age with its strong emphasis on the unity of the body of Christ, although we often miss the implications of verses 11-12! That list in verse 11 concerns Spirit-filled leadership - apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers - whose task described in verse 12 is to equip God's people for their ministry in the power of the Spirit, not do it for them.

The gifts of the Spirit empower *all* God's people for ministry. Of course, there will be leadership; that's precisely what the Ephesians list is about. Leaders (including pastors) help to equip the whole body of Christ for ministry.

Each passage on the gifts of the Spirit stresses the importance of being one body (1 Corinthians 12:12-13; Romans 12:4-5; Ephesians 4:4). The whole context of Paul's teaching on the gifts of the Spirit is one of unity with diversity; one body with many parts functioning in harmony. Paul repeats many themes in the three key passages in 1 Corinthians 12, Romans 12, and Ephesians 4:

- **One body:** The church is the one body of Christ on earth (1 Corinthians

12:12-27; Romans 12:4-5; Ephesians 4:4-6).

- **Gracious gifts:** They are given, not earned and not achieved (1 Corinthians 12:1, 4, 6, 8-11; Romans 12:6; Ephesians 4:7-8, 11).
- **All Christians have gifts:** There are no exceptions; and each gift is important (1 Corinthians 12:7; Romans 12:6; Ephesians 4:7).
- **Gifts differ:** Value our differences; we need each other (1 Corinthians 12:4-7; Romans 12:4-6; Ephesians 4:7-8).
- **Unity:** They function in unity and promote unity (1 Corinthians 12:12-13, 25; Romans 12:4-5; Ephesians 4:3, 13, 16).
- **Maturity:** Spiritual gifts build up the body in maturity (1 Corinthians 12:7; Romans 12:9-21; Ephesians 4:12-15).
- **Love:** Love is the top priority; gifts must be used in love (1 Corinthians 13; Romans 12:9-10; Ephesians 4:4, 15-16).

Right at the beginning of his letter to the Corinthians, Paul tackles the problem of divisions in the church. This letter was written to answer questions in dispute among the Corinthian Christians, e.g. lawsuits (6:1), marriage (7:1), food offered to idols (8:1), worship and communion (11:17), and gifts of the Spirit (12:1).

Division, even over spiritual gifts, was a problem in the early church, as it is now. Why does this happen? In 1 Corinthians Paul addresses the problems causing division:

taking sides (1:12);
worldly or unspiritual attitudes (2:12; 3:1);
childish or immature actions (3:1);
jealousy and quarrels (3:3-4);
boasting(3:21).

What are the answers to divisions over spiritual gifts? The passages on spiritual gifts specifically address division! Note some of Paul's Spirit-filled teaching:

Jesus is Lord (1 Corinthians 12:3);
we need each other (1 Corinthians 12:21);
be concerned for one another (1 Corinthians 12:25-26);
we all belong together (1 Corinthians 12:27);
be a living sacrifice (Romans 12:1);
don't conform to the world's standards (Romans 12:2);
let God transform you (Romans 12:2);
be modest (Romans 12:3)
value our differences (Romans 12:4);
use our different gifts with grace (Romans 12:6);
become mature (Ephesians 4:13);

stop being childish (Ephesians 4:14);
speak the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15);
grow up (Ephesians 4:15);
be controlled by Christ (Ephesians 4:16);
fulfil your part (Ephesians 4:16).

The answer to abuse and misuse is not disuse but wise use of the Spirit's gifts and power in our personal lives and our life together.

Remember Jesus' great prayer for unity among all who believe in him, so that the world will believe (John 17:20-23). Unity is vital for mission. The union of various church organisations may not produce unity, and indeed can be full of disunity. The unity of the Spirit (within and across our organisation) is found in the hearts of the people where the Spirit leads.

Mature expressions of renewal in the church today have rediscovered, or begun to rediscover, this unity, often to the surprise of those involved! That unity is not based on our doctrines or theology, but is based on our oneness in Christ, united in his Spirit. We are one body in Christ.

Response: How can we discover greater unity in the Spirit?

You could give testimonies of discovering unity across various groups.

4. Love for mission

The heart of the gospel is love: God's love for us (John 3:16) calling for a response from us in love for our God and for one another (Mark 12:30-31). Jesus emphasised this, and gave us a new commandment going much further than the old commandments: "I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. If you have love for one another, then everyone will know that you are my disciples (John 13:34-35).

That calls for a new quality of love: the same love Jesus had for his disciples. Only the Spirit of Jesus can give that to us. Exactly! "God has poured out *his love* into our hearts by means of the Holy Spirit, who is God's gift to us" (Romans 5:5).

Note again how the famous love chapter of 1 Corinthians 13 came to be written, as the heart of Paul's teaching on the gifts of the Spirit (1 Corinthians 12-14). It is, of course, beautiful for weddings, and needed in marriages and families. However, Paul wrote it as his answer to the problem of divisions in the church, especially concerning gifts of the Spirit.

Paul's hymn of love soars with this powerful description:

“Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonour others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails.”

Love is the answer to division over spiritual gifts as well as the answer to discord and differences in general. Chapter 13 provides very significant reflection on the place of love in Christian living and ministry, especially its importance for spiritual gifts:

Verses 1-3: the priority of love.

tongues without love is just clanging noise;
prophecy, without love means I am nothing;
understanding mysteries, without love means I am nothing;
knowledge, without love means I am nothing;
faith, without love means I am nothing;
giving, without love gains nothing;
martyrdom, without love gains nothing

Verses 4-7: the picture of love

Love is longsuffering, kind, not envious, not boastful, not proud, not rude, not selfish, not provoked, thinks no evil, rejoices in truth, bears all, believes all, hopes all, endures all, and never fails.

Verses 8-13: the permanence of love

prophecies will fail
tongues will cease
knowledge will vanish
knowledge is partial
prophecies are partial

When perfection comes, and we are face to face with God and one another, everything partial will be finished. Until then, and also then, faith, hope and love last on, and love is the greatest.

So, make love your aim, and earnestly desire spiritual gifts, especially speaking a word from God (1 Corinthians 14:1).

How can we earnestly desire spiritual gifts, in loving relationships?

That may mean that we:

ask for this release in the Spirit now;
pray that the Spirit will give us words from God;
claim gifts God has laid on our heart;
learn from mature Christians about their gifts;
talk about how we can use our gifts;
expect gifts of the Spirit to emerge in our life;

read helpful books concerning spiritual gifts;
observe the ministry of people using their gifts;
participate in a group open to these gifts;
pray for a release or infilling of the Spirit.

Spiritual gifts can emerge in our lives personally. However, in the New Testament, even in the life of Jesus, they emerged mainly in community. John the Baptist ministered to Jesus, although John felt uncomfortable about that (Matthew 3:13-17), and then the Spirit came upon Jesus. The disciples at Pentecost were together, praying, when they were filled with the Spirit. Peter and John prayed for the new believers in Samaria who then received the Spirit. Ananias prayed for Saul, who had been praying and fasting alone for three days, and then Ananias prayed for him to be filled with the Spirit and be healed. The Spirit fell on people in the home of Cornelius while Peter was preaching to them. When Paul prayed for new believers in Ephesus, they received the Spirit. Every New Testament example happened in community, in relationship, in ministry to one another.

God's Spirit and power can come upon us as we pray alone, but note that the biblical examples, and most believers' testimonies about this happening to them, happened as people prayed for one another.

Response: What is the Spirit leading you to seek or claim?
You could report on how the Spirit released his gifts in you and others.

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TOPIC 6: Ministry in the Spirit

READINGS: We all minister

1. 1 Corinthians 12 (body ministry)
2. 1 Corinthians 14 (mutual ministry)
3. Isaiah 2:1-5 (vision for wholeness)
4. Micah 4:1-5 (prophecy of wholeness)
5. Luke 5:17-26 (power for wholeness)
6. Luke 13:34-35 (yearning for wholeness)
7. 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24 (prayer for wholeness)



South Pacific ministry team visits churches in Australia

Case Studies in Ministry

Case study 1: traditional ministry

Peter was deeply committed to his calling to the ministry, ably supported by his wife, Petrina. His many talents found full expression in his ministry: preaching, teaching (including school Religious Education), counselling, visiting, chairing committees, leading meetings, representing the church on denominational boards and in civic functions, administering church activities, interviewing people for baptisms, church membership and weddings, conducting weddings and funerals, and fitting in a bit of study when he could as well as attending seminars for church leaders.

The phone rang constantly, especially at breakfast or dinner when people hoped they could catch him before he was off again. He wished he had more time for his family, and knew that the strain was showing in family relationships and in his own reaction to stress, inevitable with the constant demands of the ministry. He wished he could find time for waiting on God and quiet reflection as well as study, but there was so much to do. His work was less than his best, because he had so little time to pray, wait in God, and prepare well, and because the constant demand of meeting people's needs saps energy and consumes time.

Case study 2: body ministry.

Paul and Pauline were both deeply committed to their ministry. They recognised that they had different gifts and calling within that ministry. They also believed strongly in the need for all Christians to minister in the power of the Spirit. They prayed regularly with people about this and saw their prayers answered. The members of their church asked for, expected, and used spiritual gifts. Church members prayed together for one another and for others. Most of the pastoral care and outreach happened in the home groups. Paul met with home group leaders one night each week, and enjoyed that. Mary met regularly with the leaders of women's day time groups, social caring groups and the music team in the church.

Paul usually preached once on Sundays, and home groups, study groups and youth groups used the summary of the message. He encouraged gifted preachers in the church who also preached. Church members did most of the teaching (including all the school work) and those gifted with administration organised it all, usually part time with one specific area of responsibility they had chosen and loved to do. A small caring group

organised volunteers to visit all the sick people. A keen task group made sure all visitors were contacted by phone or a personal visit during the week after they came to a service. The elders insisted that one day each week was family day for the pastor and his family so they encouraged them to spend time away to wait on God and bring their vision and the Lord's leading clearly in their ministry.

Spirit-filled ministry

Ministry in the power of the Spirit is for everyone in the body of Christ. We probably agree with that in theory, but we do not always do it in practice.

We are to teach everyone to obey everything that Jesus commanded. That is in the great commission. It was Jesus' intention that all of that should happen (Matthew 28:18-20), and he promised to help us do it.

That sounds like revival, with God's Spirit touching hundreds or thousands of people with grace, healing, forgiveness and eternal life. We are headed in that direction, because it is biblical. This study began with these case studies of some typical churches, one focused on the minister, the second focused on the ministry of everyone.

This topic includes studies on these themes:

1. Body ministry
2. Mutual ministry
3. Wholeness ministry
4. Freedom ministry

1. Body ministry

The passages on spiritual gifts show that we all have gifts to use in the Body of Christ. Our ministry is sometimes called 'body ministry' to emphasise this important theological truth: we belong to one body, the church, we are members of the body, and we minister together in that body. Our ministry is not an individual affair. We need one another (see 1 Corinthians 12:12-31).

Imagine a church full of people, many hundreds of them, who speak and teach in the power of the Spirit, who evangelise effectively at work and all over the community, who heal the sick and cast out demons in homes and even in hospitals, who care for the poor and needy with both sacrificial giving of resources and time as well as with miraculous intervention, who all do the things Jesus did and told his disciples to do. That happens increasingly now.

Note two important aspects of body ministry:

1. Each minister or pastor is freed and encouraged to use his or her spiritual gifts. Their work does not have to be spread thinly over everything, resulting in ineffectiveness and stress.

2. Members also use their spiritual gifts, and don't have to spread themselves over everything either. Members, most vitally, are members of the body of Christ, not just members of an organisation.

The lists of spiritual gifts include those called and gifted by God for leadership ministries in the church (e.g. Ephesians 4:11 and 1 Corinthians 12:27-28). The more that spiritual leadership is exercised in the power of the Spirit, the more other gifts are released in the life of the body.

Similarly, as we all fulfil our calling and minister according to our various gifts, so the leaders are released more fully into their calling and gifting. Their gifts are enhanced instead of being smothered in busyness. Ordained ministers can then concentrate on the areas of God's calling and gifting, not be spread ineffectively over too many other tasks.

Response: How can we help free some leaders from overload?
You could describe how you have seen body ministry develop.

2. Mutual ministry

Both small and large churches come alive when God's gifted people work together in ministry to care for one another and reach out to others. Most churches do some of this already. For example, people interested in various ministries get involved in them, such as with children in Sunday School, with youth in youth groups, with men or women in groups for them, with outreach in evangelism teams, with administration in boards or committees.

Mutual ministry in the power of the Spirit just takes that further. It shifts from a focus on organisation to a focus on relationships. House churches in the New Testament, and all over the world today, demonstrate this (see 1 Corinthians 14 for an example).

The following true examples show how a traditional church developed body ministry. It maintained a beautiful, powerful traditional service with a range of expanding ministries. Those ministries included a renewal church service, a prayer group that grew into many prayer groups and household communities, and a range of activities led by people keen to serve God in those ways. These examples illustrate this shift going on all over the world toward mutual ministry.

Music and Worship

Scene 1: A church had a beautiful pipe organ where one organist played it well each week for the four hymns each Sunday morning. For over 100 years that was the music and worship ministry of that church. The minister chose the hymns each week from the church hymnal. It was beautiful music, well played, and many people loved to sing the well known hymns, especially older people.

Scene 2: That same church had no service at night, so the minister met with a few others and they were led to start a renewal service on Sunday nights. Young people, and some older people, began meeting together during the week to play their instruments together, and so they played in a gradually growing band on Sunday nights. Many were gifted musicians who helped others grow in that gift. Gifted worship leaders, singers, and musicians led the worship on Sunday nights, and all the minister had to do was preach occasionally. He also had gifted preachers he could use and train and some of them later went into full time ministry. That was mutual ministry in music and worship.

Teaching and Discipling

Scene 1: A church had a good program for children, youth and adults and needed teachers to teach them. The minister taught most of the adult classes during week nights, but on Sundays volunteers taught Sunday School classes and a youth group class. They had excellent teaching material prepared by their denomination, so just needed to find people who would use it. Often they lacked good teachers because people were so busy it was hard for them to take on another job.

Scene 2: That same church had an elder who enjoyed discipling others, and started a core group on a Friday night where they sat on the floor as well as on comfortable chairs, used guitars or a home piano, learned to pray for one another including laying hands on people in need, and shared lively discussions, led by the Spirit increasingly. Many people from that core group began leading cell groups in small teams, so the elder just continued meeting with the core group, training them by doing ministry together, and raising more small teams who started other cell groups. Eventually about 10 cell groups met, led by people in that first core group. The elder then met

with those cell group leaders from 6-8 a.m. with a light breakfast once each week. That became a pastoral care group for those cell group leaders who all had home groups of about 10-20 people. So those group leaders cared for over 100 people, discipling them in the home groups. The minister just met with the elder regularly to encourage and advise him. That became mutual ministry in teaching and discipling.

Pastoral Care

Scene 1: A church had a minister who was good at pastoral care and was very busy caring for people. Like many pastors, he was called and gifted by God to do that. He visited people in their homes, often took communion to people, especially sick people, and regularly visited people in hospital. As the church grew he became so busy it was hard to do that job well, and very hard to get to everyone regularly. Although he was gifted and called for pastoral care, he was continually frustrated that his time was limited and he could not visit people as often as he wanted to. Some volunteers helped him, and he was very grateful for that.

Scene 2: That same church had a meeting of the elders who offered to help the minister care for the people, and offered to help organise the visiting. They asked him to take them with him as much as possible so that they could have fellowship with him, learn on the job, and share together in the pastoral care work. So the minister often had someone with him for pastoral visits, especially some retired people who loved to visit. That enriched the visit, and those retired people found new friends and usually followed up on those visits with further visits, especially for people in need such as the sick and bereaved. The minister taught his elders and others on the job, by doing it together. People learned to care, to listen, to encourage, to get to know families in the church, to pray for the sick and the healthy, and to hear from God as they cared for people. The visiting and caring ministries of the church kept expanding, and more people attended services more regularly because people took an interest in them. Many of the church people discovered they loved visiting others, including people in hospital. A pastoral care team of volunteers co-ordinated the work and kept in touch with people who were visiting or praying to inform them of various needs. People, filled with the Spirit, kept on discovering their gifts for serving and encouraging one another. That was mutual ministry in pastoral care.

Love One Another

Mutual ministry expresses the mutual love Jesus demands of us: “By this shall everyone know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:35).

The ‘one another’ verses show how important mutual ministry is and how it can happen:

love one another - John 13:34; 15:12, 17; Romans 12:10; 13:8; 1

Thessalonians 4:9; 1 Peter 1:22; 1 John 3:11, 23; 4:7, 11, 12; 2 John 5

serve one another - Galatians 5:21; 1 Peter 5:5

accept one another - Romans 15:7

strengthen one another - Romans 14:19

help one another - Hebrews 3:13; 10:24

encourage one another - Hebrews 10:25

forgive one another - Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 3:13

submit to one another - Ephesians 5:21

carry one another's burdens - Galatians 6:2

be tolerant with one another - Ephesians 4:2; Colossians 3:13

be concerned for one another - Hebrews 10:24

be kind and tender hearted to one another - Ephesians 4:32

All of that can be done informally and spontaneously, as well as in planned programs or ministries. As the Spirit of God moves more powerfully in people’s lives, this happens more fully because this is what the Spirit does in us.

Response: How can we become involved in mutual ministry in areas of our gifting?

You could report on ways that has happened for you and others.

3. Wholeness ministry

God’s intention for his people is wholeness, not brokenness. Jesus quoted from Isaiah (Luke 4:18-19; Isaiah 61:1-3) declaring he was anointed to preach the gospel to the poor, to heal the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour.

Jesus did this because the Spirit of the Lord was upon him. He was anointed to do it. The Holy Spirit continues to do this work in and through

the body of Christ in the world now. The Spirit produces personal wholeness in individuals and also communal wholeness in the church and in society.

Personal Wholeness

One problem which stops many people getting involved in the ministry of bringing wholeness is that we ourselves are not yet fully whole. So we wonder how we can help others become whole. How can we help others to be whole if we at times feel alone, limited, sometimes struggling, sometimes with wrong attitudes, and sometimes sick?

We minister and learn as we grow; not after we have arrived. Near the end of his life, Paul could still say that he had not yet become perfect, but he was pressing on (Philippians 3:12-14).

Jesus gave powerful ministry to his followers, even though they had a lot of growing up to do. They preached, healed the sick and cast out demons (Luke 9:2; 10:9). Yet, as David Pytches points out in his book *Come Holy Spirit*, they had remarkable deficiencies. They were:

ambitious (Mark 9:34);
argumentative (Mark 9:33),
cowardly (Matthew 26:70, 72, 74);
critical (Matthew 26:8);
deserters (Mark 14:50);
doubtful (Mark 8:4, cf. Mark 6:37);
dull (Matthew 15:16);
faithless (Matthew 17:20; Luke 17:5);
greedy (John 12:6; Matthew 26:14-15);
ineffective (Matthew 17:16);
misunderstanding (Matthew 16:22);
prayerless (Mark 9:28-29; Luke 11:1);
revengeful (Luke 9:54);
unforgiving (Matthew 18:21);
unloving (Mark 10:13).

Yet Jesus passed his ministry on to them. Even after the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, they still had more growing to do. Peter pulled back from going into Gentile homes at Antioch, so Paul opposed him publicly (Galatians 2:11-12).

Similarly, the early church ministered in the power of the Spirit even though those Christians had many difficulties. Most New Testament letters were written to sort out serious problems. There's hope for us yet! And there's hope for those we work with or lead.

God's grace does not depend on our performance. The Spirit has always worked in and through unworthy servants (Luke 17:10), except in Jesus. He alone is worthy. In him we are made worthy. God uses human vessels like us, vessels of clay; and someone observed that some vessels are a bit cracked! Yet the glory of God can shine through those cracks. Paul made that point when he discussed his weaknesses that became opportunity for God to show his strength in and through those weaknesses (2 Corinthians 12:9-10).

So we continue to pray for people's needs, to pray for blessing, to pray for healing, to pray for God's anointing in people's lives. That may be personal prayer, alone with God who knows every need better than we do. It may be in our homes as we pray for people's needs. Often we will pray for one another and others in prayer groups and home groups. Those prayers can lead to many ways of helping others and supporting them.

Communal Wholeness

God gave his people a covenant of blessing. He wanted to bless his people with *shalom* – peace and wholeness as a community. The prophetic vision and promise declared that blessing as in Isaiah 2:1-5 and Micah 4:1-5.

Jesus continued that blessing and brought it to fulfilment in himself. One beautiful and powerful example is where a group of friends brought a paralysed man to Jesus, and persisted to the point of lowering him through the roof of the crowded house. Jesus forgave the man's sins and healed him, showing God's grace, spiritually and physically (Luke 5:17-26).

Jesus yearned to bring wholeness to his people and to the community. His deeply moving cry over Jerusalem shows his heart of compassion and love (Luke 13:34-35). Jesus made people whole and brought reconciliation and communal wholeness. The kingdom of God is not just personal salvation. It is a kingdom of people in relationship, forever one.

God's intention is still *shalom* – peace and blessing. The Spirit makes us whole. This includes:

- spiritual wholeness (destroyed by sin)
- emotional wholeness (damaged by past hurts);
- physical wholeness (attacked by disease or injury);
- mental wholeness (spoiled by psychological or demonic problems);
- relational wholeness (ruined by divisive forces and spirits);
- communal wholeness (corrupted by evil).

The early church proclaimed the power of God to make us whole and ministered that power to people in need (Acts 2:43; 3:6-8; 5:12; 9:32-35,

40-42; 14:8-10; 16:16-18; 20:9-12; 28:3-9). We have no simple answers to the problems of restoring wholeness, personally and communally. But we can minister wholeness, especially as we do so in the power of the Spirit with love and compassion.

How can we do this? Some of the means available to us include these:
show God's love, acceptance and compassion;
witness to God's desire for wholeness in us;
quit sin and help others to do so too;
forgive, and encourage others to forgive;
receive medical and spiritual help;
use our complimentary spiritual gifts;
trust God more fully for wholeness;
pray for healing and ask God in faith;
encourage openness and care for one another;
bind evil powers in Jesus' name;
persist in prayer and loving support;
learn to speak with authority in Jesus' name.

We sometimes balk at praying for the power of God to touch people, to heal, or to meet specific needs because we expect a zap or immediate answer. That may or may not happen. Most of us need to grow a lot more before we are like Jesus and can minister as effectively as he did! Healings and answers to prayers often take time, and need compassionate, loving persistence.

Great healing power is released in a small community of loving, caring people who accept one another, forgive each other, reach out to others in compassion, love and trust God intimately, and believe the Spirit will meet people's needs as we minister to them.

Response: How can we grow in this ministry of healing and wholeness? You could tell of answered prayer or God's intervention in times of need.

4. Freedom ministry

Jesus came to set the captives free. That includes all of us! Everyone is captive to sin until Jesus sets them free. Even then, sin may intrude, or hold us back from all God has for us.

Jesus' ministry of bringing wholeness and freedom in the power of the Spirit had many dimensions. It involved:
showing compassion and mercy (Matthew 14:14; 20:34; Mark 1:41);
demonstrating the Kingdom of God (Matthew 4:23);

witnessing to the truth of Jesus' claims (Matthew 8:14-17; Luke 5:18-26);
revealing Jesus as the promised Messiah (Matthew 11:1-6);
bringing people to repentance (Luke 10:8-12);
illustrating physically what God does spiritually (Matthew 9:1-8);
offering grace to Gentiles as well as Jews (Luke 7:1-10);

“Jesus saves.” Jesus came to save. His name Jesus means Saviour. The word ‘save’ carries the meaning of wholeness. Jesus saves from the evil which destroys us. The Greek word *sozo* (save) in Jesus’ ministry includes the meanings of his power to save from sin and destruction, preserve, rescue, heal and make whole.

Here are some examples where *sozo* (save) is used:

save from sin (Matthew 1:21; Luke 7:50; John 3:17);

save from destruction (Matthew 10:22; 24:13; Mark 13:13);

preserve (Matthew 16:25; Luke 6:9; John 10:9);

rescue (Matthew 8:25; 14:30; 18:11; 27:42, 49);

heal (Matthew 9:22; Mark 5:23, 28; 6:56; 10:52; 16:18; Luke 8:36, 48, 50);

make whole (Mark 5:34; Luke 8:48; 17:10, 19; John 5:6, 14; 7:23; 11:12).

Jesus ministered this life and freedom in the power of the Spirit. He also gave that ministry to his disciples, both the 12 and the 70 or 72 (Luke 9:1-2; 10:1, 9). They were surprised when they discovered they had authority over demonic powers. We may be too! However, Jesus emphasised that we do not need to rejoice over that but that we do need to rejoice that we are saved, that we belong in heaven.

Concerning demonic powers we need to avoid two common unbiblical extremes. One is to deny their existence. The other extreme is to be obsessed with demons and blame everything on them or the devil. Jesus is Lord. Yet some Christians may focus more on what the devil does than what Jesus does. The whole focus of the Bible is that God reigns and calls us into his kingdom. Jesus proclaimed and demonstrated the kingdom or rule of God.

Jesus constantly cast unclean spirits out of people. So did the disciples, and so did the early church. They took seriously the bondage that spirits inflict, including many diseases, physical and psychological. We take seriously the physical causes of disease, with amazing remedies and medical treatments increasingly available to us. Increasingly we hear of DNA, hormonal and neurological factors in disease, and their medical treatment. We can also learn more about spirit infestation and deliverance from that bondage. Jesus’ healings addressed physical, mental, psychological and spiritual problems and needs.

One result of being baptised or filled with the Spirit is a new authority

over destructive spirits. Jesus usually told them to be quiet and get out. So can we, as the Holy Spirit reveals and leads. Here are a few examples: Matthew 8:16, Jesus cast out spirits with a word, and healed all who were sick.

Matthew 10:1, Jesus gave his disciples power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all kinds of sickness and disease.

Matthew 12:28, Jesus claimed that casting out demons by the Spirit of God is an evidence of the kingdom of God coming.

Mark 1:25; Luke 4:35, Jesus silenced an evil spirit in the synagogue and commanded it to come out.

Luke 8:17, Jesus freed the deranged man with a legion of evil spirits.

Luke 9:42, Jesus cast spirits out of a convulsing boy.

Spirits do not cause all diseases, but many diseases and bondages are spirit related, as Jesus consistently demonstrated.

The early church continued that ministry in the power of the Spirit. Paul thought and acted in terms of the freedom and liberty which the Spirit brings. Romans 8 is one splendid example with continual reference to the freedom we have in the Spirit of God. The opening verses declare the saving ministry of Jesus by his Spirit: "There is no condemnation to those in Christ Jesus who live according to the Spirit. The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death" (verses 1-2).

Paul prayed that people would live in wholeness and freedom, their whole spirit, soul and body kept blameless. And he adds that God who calls you is faithful and he will do this (1 Thessalonians 5:23-24). Paul reminded the Philippians that the Lord who had begun a good work in them would complete it (Philippians 1:6).

God can do that, and he does. Jesus really is Saviour and Lord. The Holy Spirit gives us liberty and freedom.

Response: How can we know freedom more fully?

You could tell of your discoveries of freedom.

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TOPIC 7: Led by the Spirit

READINGS: Hoist your sail

1. Genesis 24:1-67 (led to find a wife)
2. Exodus 13:17-22 (led to freedom from slavery)
3. Matthew 4:1-11 (led to face trial)
4. Acts 13:1-3 (led to send missionaries)
5. Acts 16:1-10 (led to go westward)
6. Romans 8:12-17 (led to live as God's children)
7. Galatians 5:16-26 (led to life in the Spirit)



Vanuatu mission team prays together in Brisbane

Surprised by God

“I think this problem is too hard for you to solve,” I stupidly said to God in my mind, adding “We are too divided, too self-interested.” But at least I asked God to help us and guide us. Our church elders meeting, tense from the start, began with prayer, open to anyone. Even that was tense, but earnest. As we prayed a simple solution came to me! Older people in the church loved their traditional morning service as it had always been, four hymns with the pipe organ. Younger people, fresh and keen, coming in large numbers to the evening charismatic service wanted choruses and more freedom in the traditional morning service. Older members strongly opposed that, threatening to leave if it changed. Some keen younger people had already given up on the morning services seeing no hope of change. God surprised me. After our prayer time, I suggested an option.

“Why don’t we have an extra hour of free worship *before* the traditional service?” Inspiration is often simple and effective. We had full unity on that, immediately! Traditional members felt heard and respected, and so did charismatic enthusiasts. Unforeseen results of that simple change included numbers swelling in the morning as well as evening services, dynamic heartfelt singing of the old hymns, and a big increase in offerings. No traditional people objected to that. It may not be the best solution for every church, but that church grew steadily in numbers, commitment, evangelism and discipleship.

Seeking to be led by the Spirit, many of us prayed regularly together, open to personal and communal leading. We started a Friday night cell group, worshipped there and encouraged the use of all the spiritual gifts. Prophetic words and healings through prayer increased. We shared informal communion, a love feast, each week with a large loaf of home made bread, fully eaten, and full glasses of sparkling wine (non-al in that church). Gradually that group multiplied to many other home groups and community houses of young people, and some families, living, worshipping, praying and serving the Lord together.

The traditional morning service continued, and the church grew in numbers and in commitment, especially through the evening service and home groups and household communities. Evangelism, discipleship and service grew naturally. Friends involved friends.

I met with leaders of the home groups and community houses for breakfast once each week in a strong core group where we talked and prayed together, seeking to be led by the Spirit. Many initiatives grew out of that, supported in prayer and unity.

At that time I started renewal meetings at the theological college where I taught, a rather unusual development for a theological college. Our Friday night home group agreed to be involved, and became the start of the interdenominational Renewal Fellowship at the college. Numbers attending grew from a dozen to 30 in a few weeks. Later, in the early nineties that grew again to over 100 meeting each week. We did not form a church but remained a renewal group offering renewal worship and ministry to people from many churches. Most people attending came from denominational churches which did not offer renewal ministries.

We tried to be led by the Spirit in everything, including the choice of worship songs *without* pre-arranged or pre-rehearsed lists. That's not easy. Our own habits and interests easily intrude. Worship became the main feature each night. That included about two hours of music and singing combined with Scripture reading, prophetic words or songs, and many times of praying with people for a range of different needs. During those prayer ministry times we usually continued with worship. The music or songs beautifully harmonised with the prayer ministry at the front, often prophetically, confirming what we were praying.

The Australian *Renewal Journal* (www.renewaljournal.com) grew out of that inter-denominational Renewal Fellowship, as did a widening range of renewal ministries with visits to churches and many international short term missions.

Imagine someone being *fully* led the Spirit. They would be as unpredictable as Jesus was! He had no one method of evangelising, although he often told people to drop everything and join him. He had no one method of healing, and did not even lay hands on everyone who was sick, though he did touch many sick people. Crowds actually laid hands on him, and got healed that way (Matthew 14:34-36; Mark 5:27-30; 6:56; Luke 6:19).

Imagine a church being *fully* led by the Spirit. That too would be unpredictable. There would not be a 51% majority at any meeting determining the will of God for that church. Elders or leaders would seek God's will till they had unity, then act in that unity. Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers would minister constantly in their calling and anointing, as they equipped all God's people to minister with the leading of the Spirit.

Is this merely a dream? An unreachable ideal? A fantasy? Not according to Jesus. He expected it, and even commanded it (Matthew 20:18-20). He wanted his disciples to teach others to do all that he commanded them to do, not just do bits and pieces.

Of course, this is only possible as we are led by the Spirit. We cannot

do it ourselves. This topic explores how we may learn to be more fully led by the Spirit.

This topic includes studies on these themes:

1. The Spirit leads us
2. The Spirit leads gently
3. The Spirit leads personally
4. The Spirit leads communally

1. The Spirit leads us

God guides. The Lord leads by the Spirit within us. This has been the testimony of God's people in Scripture and in history. As the wind of the Spirit blows on us, we can hoist our sail to be carried on the ocean of God's love further than we've ever been before.

Some people are content to hoist a small sail and catch a little of the wind of the Spirit. Others, by faith, hoist a large sail to catch more of the same wind. Here are some examples from Scripture of people specifically led by the Spirit of the Lord:

Genesis 24:27, 48 (Abraham's servant led by the Lord);

Exodus 13:17-18 (the Lord led the Israelites out of Egypt, see also Deuteronomy 8:2; 29:5; Psalm 78:52-53; Amos 2:10);

Psalm 107:7 (the Lord led those who called out for help);

Matthew 4:1; Luke 4:1 (the Spirit led Jesus);

Acts 13:2 (the Spirit led the church to send missionaries);

Acts 15:28 (church decisions led by the Spirit);

Acts 16:6-7 (Paul's group led to Europe by the Spirit);

Romans 8:14 (God's children are led by the Spirit);

Galatians 5:18 (the Spirit leads in freedom from legalism).

Jesus promised his followers that they would be led by the Spirit. Those promises still apply now:

John 14:16 (the Spirit helps and strengthens us);

John 14:17 (the Spirit reveals the truth about God);

John 14:26 (the Spirit teaches us and reminds us);

John 15:26 (the Spirit reveals Christ to us);

John 16:7-8 (the Spirit convicts people);

John 16:13-15 (the Spirit leads into all truth).

Note the intimate nature of that relationship. The Spirit's leading is personal, real and available to us all. However, that leading may not always be clear, or may be given later than we want or expect it.

The Spirit of the Lord is active in all of life, so we can be led by the

Spirit in many ways. Here are a few:

- The canon of Scripture: the Spirit's leading will harmonise with the whole teaching of the Bible, not just a few isolated proof texts.
- The commands of Christ: the Spirit reveals Jesus to us and helps us obey him, including his clear commands in Scripture and his personal direction in our lives.
- The convictions within us: often we have the inner prompting or leading of the Spirit if we listen and obey or yield to him.
- The Christian friends we have: mature, Spirit-led people will confirm true leading from the Spirit of the Lord and often save us from subjective misunderstandings.
- The church community: the Spirit's leading comes in unity and submission to one another, especially from people the Lord has called and gifted to lead.
- The circumstances of life: sometimes the Spirit works in events to guide us, and lead us through doors the Lord opens for us.

Where these safeguards or guidelines line up like lights on an airstrip runway, we usually have clear leading from the Spirit. This provides a check against silly or misguided ideas about being led by the Spirit.

Response: How can we be more Spirit-led?

You could indicate what was helpful for you in learning to be Spirit-led.

2. The Spirit leads gently

The leading of the Spirit can be so gentle we easily miss it, and go our own way. Often the noise and busyness of life drowns out the still, small voice of the Spirit. We may not stop long enough to tune in to his voice.

We may even read the Bible as a study book and not really listen to the Spirit. Then we may depend too much on our own mind and our own understanding, which Scripture warns us against doing (Proverbs 3:5-6).

Some people say "The Lord told me" to do this or that, but it may not be the Lord. Various spirit powers can deceive us. We so need the wisdom and guidance of other Spirit filled and Spirit-led people. Individuals often go astray if they are not humble and will not listen to others. That does not mean we must be governed by others, for that would be legalism. The Spirit sets us free from legalism as Paul strongly argued in Galatians, the book in which he also lists the characteristics of being led by the Spirit with the fruit of the Spirit evident in our lives (Galatians 5).

What about people who claim to be led by the Spirit, but then do

strange, unloving, unbiblical or stupid things?

Only Jesus got it right all the time. None of us do. Beware of dogmatic, legalistic attitudes on this! We often misunderstand the Spirit's leading. We may indeed receive a prompting or leading from the Lord by the Spirit, but we may interpret that according to our own limited, biased, individualistic, materialistic world view.

What we think is the word of the Lord to us may be partly of the Spirit but mostly of us or our human nature. However, we can grow in sensitivity, humility, grace, love, unity and obedience. These are all marks of life in the Spirit. Then we'll get it right more often.

Some people use a particular text in the Bible to back up their own ideas. Beware of proof texts: proving something because one text happens to say it. Some people play with snakes or drink poison or lay hands on everyone in a hospital declaring this is the Spirit's leading because it is in a Bible verse (Mark 16:18). Others legalistically require women to wear hats in church services (1 Corinthians 11:5-6), forgetting that the passage is about right relationships and humility. Many instructions in the Bible relate to that time and culture. For example many cultures in the world do not use hats or head coverings at all.

Sometimes we use the Bible to prop up our own ideas! However, we can also take seriously the passages we often ignore or avoid. Our favourite texts are usually not these:

Luke 9:23-24, Jesus said we are to deny self, die daily, follow him and lose our life.

Luke 12:32-34, God's kingdom involves eternal riches, not material possessions.

Ephesians 5:21, mutual submission to each other is essential.

James 5:16, we are to confess our faults to one another and pray for one another.

We often overlook the tough teachings and emphasise our favourite passages, rather than hold it all together, as Jesus did. Worse, we can easily make Scripture fit our tradition or twist it according to our tradition (see Matthew 15:3-9). For example a common tradition says that signs and wonders or miracles ceased after the New Testament was written, even though the New Testament says the opposite (see John 14:12; Matthew 28:20).

We can go overboard in any direction - especially in stormy situations! Some people, for example, emphasise gifts of the Spirit but overlook the fruit of the Spirit needed to make those gifts effective. Others emphasise the fruit of the Spirit but overlook the gifts of the Spirit which make loving

ministry so effective.

To be led by the Spirit who is so persistent and gentle, we need to avoid grieving him by our hard hearts or lack of love (Ephesians 4:30-32). We can also resist the Spirit (Acts 7:51). Like people in Jesus' time or in the days of the early church, we too can be deaf to God's message and resist the Spirit. Or we may quench the Spirit (1 Thessalonians 5:19) by resisting him and not yielding to his leading and guiding. To summarise:

Do not grieve the Spirit (Ephesians 4:30).

Do not resist the Spirit (Acts 7:51).

Do not quench the Spirit (1 Thessalonians 5:19).

The Spirit does not force himself on us. Like a dove, he comes gently as we are open, responsive and obedient. The more we know the ways of the Spirit, the more we can be led by the Spirit.

Response: How can we get to know the Spirit intimately?
You could tell of your discoveries of intimacy with the Spirit.

3. The Spirit leads personally

We can all live and grow in the Spirit personally, becoming more sensitive and responsive to him and his leading.

Romans chapter 8 is about living in the Spirit. Like other great chapters on major themes (Hebrews 11 on faith, 1 Corinthians 13 on love, 1 Corinthians 15 on resurrection) this passage in Romans throws brilliant light on its theme, being led by the Spirit.

The Holy Spirit in Romans 8 is described as:
the Spirit (verses 2, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 13, 15, 23, 26, 27);
the Spirit of God (verse 11);
God's Spirit (verse 9, 14, 16);
his Spirit (verse 11).

Paul had been discussing the inner conflict we all experience. We *want* to do what is good, but we don't do it (7:18-19). Our minds may understand God's law, but our human nature fails to live it. Only God can save us from this condition, through our Lord Jesus Christ (7:25). Then the Spirit of God frees us as we live in the Spirit. "Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom" (2 Corinthians 3:17).

The Spirit is mentioned 17 times in the first 17 verses of chapter 8 in Romans, and even more in the rest of the chapter. The whole chapter describes living in the Spirit.

Note these wonderful aspects of living in the Spirit from those verses:

- v. 1: no condemnation; freedom from guilt
- v. 2: union with Christ Jesus
- v. 3: God acted to overcome sin
- v. 4: God's righteous requirements are met
- v. 5: our minds can be controlled by the Spirit
- v. 6: being controlled by the Spirit gives life and peace
- v. 7: we cannot obey God in our own strength
- v. 8: we cannot please God in our own strength
- v. 9: we can live as the Spirit leads us
- v. 10: we have been put right with God in the Spirit
- v. 11: the Spirit gives resurrection life to our bodies
- v. 12: our obligation is to live free from bondage
- v. 13: we live in the Spirit's power as we reject sin
- v. 14: as we live in the Spirit, we are God's children
- v. 15: we have intimate union with our Father, unafraid
- v. 16: we have intimate union with God's Spirit
- v. 17: we will inherit God's blessings with Christ

Present blessings and future destiny in the Spirit include these:
 the Spirit leads us and leads creation into freedom (verses 18-25);
 the Spirit helps us in our praying (verses 26-27);
 God's purpose is being fulfilled (verses 28-30);
 God's love in Christ Jesus is ours always (verses 31-39).

What does that mean in practice? Here are some suggestions:
 taking time to wait on God;
 reading the Bible devotionally (not just for study);
 learning from others who live close to God;
 reading books about life in the Spirit;
 studying biographies of people filled with the Spirit;
 acting on hunches, e.g. phoning, writing, visiting;
 asking to be led, and expecting to be;
 taking time with people and discovering the Spirit's leading;
 acting in faith and seeing God bless that;
 using gifts of the Spirit in your life;
 tuning in to the Lord during the day regularly;
 living more consciously in worship and thanks;
 learning to walk in obedience with God during the day.

Response: How can we learn to be led by the Spirit individually?
 You could testify to your individual discoveries.

4. The Spirit leads communally

Together, we can respond powerfully and effectively to the Spirit's leading in ministry. All of us can be more like Jesus in our care for others in the power of the Spirit.

The Spirit often came in power on people responding to God together: John 1:29-41, Jesus was filled with the Spirit in public, interacting with John the Baptist.

John 20:19-23, Jesus breathed the Spirit upon the disciples, and then commissioned them.

Acts 2:1-4, Pentecost came at a prayer meeting where they had unity together.

Acts 8:14-17, Peter and John prayed with powerful effect for those evangelised by Philip.

Acts 9:17-19, Ananias prayed for Saul who was filled with the Spirit and healed.

Acts 10:44-48, Peter preached and the Spirit fell on the whole group of Gentiles.

Acts 19:5-7, Paul prayed for a dozen men who were filled with the Spirit together.

Many of the strongest moves of the Spirit of God today happen to groups of people seeking him together. *Flashpoints of Revival* (see Appendix) gives over 50 examples of powerful moves of God's Spirit on people, leading to revival. The second edition (2009) includes further examples of whole communities transformed, including ecological renewal.

Some values or safeguards for being led by the Spirit together include:

Emphasis on unity and belonging together;

Checks and balances in what happens;

Greater diversity of gifts and ministries;

Combined faith and vision;

United prayer and response to God;

Guarding against crackpots and lone rangers;

Recognition of leadership and maturity;

Opportunity to grow in ministry together;

Laboratory for discipleship;

Learning from one another;

Submission to one another;

Room to try and fail while still being supported;

Scope to try and to succeed with loving support.

Jesus taught his disciples by demonstrating ministry and involving them

in ministry (Luke 9:1-6; 10:1-12). Paul also worked with a missionary band demonstrating ministry and involving them in ministry. He appointed a group of elders in the places he worked, demonstrating ministry and involving them in ministry. Then he moved on to further ministry. Most of us learn that way.

So how can we be more involved in these aspects of corporate life in the Spirit? Some common examples in church life include the following ways of learning from others about ministry in the Spirit:

Meeting regularly in a small group to pray and minister together;

discussing biblical teaching as in these studies;

reading and discussing helpful books;

seeing effective ministry in action;

learning about the Spirit from mature leaders;

growing in faith as you see others with faith;

being inspired and helped by powerful preaching;

watching others pray for people effectively;

listening to others' testimonies of God's grace;

enjoying worship together and responding to God together.

As we open our lives to one another, forgive and pray for one another, commit ourselves to a few people to learn and pray together, and begin ministering to one another more, the Spirit can lead us together as part of the body of Christ, the community of faith.

A simple but helpful activity to encourage one another in a small group can be symbolic gift giving. You can give symbolic gifts to each person related to the Spirit's leading in their lives. These gifts can be verbal, not material objects. For example, very significant gifts in some groups have included a green light (to go for it), the ability to walk on water (figuratively), a box of matches (to light fires of the Spirit), a telescope (to see the large view), a home with many rooms (for hospitality and helping people), 4-D glasses to see visions of God's activity, and so on. Ask the Spirit to lead you. The symbolic gifts may be an inspired word from the Spirit, or pictures or parables suited to each person.

Response: What steps can we take to learn together to learn be led by the Spirit more fully in life and ministry?

You could give examples of how you learned to respond to the Spirit.

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TOPIC 8: The Spirit of the Lord

READINGS: God is Spirit

1. John 4:24 (God is Spirit)
2. Isaiah 11:1-2 (the Spirit gives wisdom)
3. Micah 3:8 (the Spirit gives power)
4. Ezekiel 37:1-14 (the Spirit gives visions)
5. 2 Corinthians 3:17-18 (the Spirit gives freedom)
6. Isaiah 61:1-3 (the Spirit gives mission)
7. Luke 4:18-19 (the Spirit gives anointing)



Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives

Transformation

The powerful DVDs, *Transformations 1* and *2*, and others (see www.sentinelgroup.org) with reports by George Otis speak urgently and prophetically to the church today and show the way ahead for community transformation in the power of the Spirit of the Lord.

Transformations 1 gives amazing reports of changed cities. These include Cali in Columbia, Almolonga in Guatemala, Kiambu in Nigeria, and Hemet in California. God answered the united prayers of his people in ways they had never seen before. The drug lords in Cali, ruling everything there with money and murder, were imprisoned within nine months of Christians meeting together for all night worship and prayer in their biggest stadium. Four packed prisons in Almolonga were emptied in 20 years after Christians began praying and celebrating together, and huge harvests from the land increased the market loads from 4 trucks a month to 40 a week. Unity, prayer and worship among churches replaced fear and crime associated with the occult in all these places..

Transformations 2 gives astounding reports of changed districts, even a whole country. God's Spirit transformed Canada's aortic region, Ungava Peninsula. The Hebrides Islands in Scotland saw profound revival. Uganda welcomed in the new millennium with its president and his wife publicly renouncing evil and dedicating their country to God in the country's crowded largest stadium.

The Spirit of the Lord removed the evils of alcoholism, sexual abuse, drug addiction, suicide, violence, and civil war in whole communities. Many other resources and books now report on these significant developments. God's Spirit continues to invade churches and communities. We call that revival when it happens in a big way.

My books, *Flashpoints of Revival* (2009 edition), and *South Pacific Revivals* (2010), give many examples of the Spirit of the Lord invading communities and changing lives on a large scale. They include reports of community and ecological transformation with the healing of the land, especially in the South Pacific where poisoned streams became pure overnight, fish and crabs returned or appeared in vast numbers, and food crops multiplied, as whole villages were reconciled, truly one in Christ. See also my articles the *Renewal Journal* (www.renewaljournal.com).

The Spirit of the Lord was continually involved in all life in both the Old and the New Testament times, and still is today. He transforms individuals and whole communities.

The Lord's Spirit invades individual lives. It happened to Jesus at

around age 30. It happened to the followers of Jesus at Pentecost in a prayer meeting. It happened to new believers in Samaria when Peter and John laid hands on them. It happened to Saul of Tarsus three days after his conversion when Ananias prayed for him. It happened to Cornelius, a roman soldier, and his friends while Peter was preaching to them. It happened to believers in Ephesus when Paul laid hands on them. Each personal transformation had communal impact and consequences, even global as God's kingdom invaded society. It keeps happening now.

As the Spirit of the Lord moves in the earth, the kingdom of God is established more fully, not only for the future in heaven, but also here and now. Jesus told us to pray for that: *Your kingdom come; your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.* This final study examines some of the ways that has happened and may happen.

This topic includes studies on these themes:

1. The Spirit of the Lord in Israel
2. The Spirit of the Lord in Jesus
3. The kingdom of God
4. The king: Jesus Christ is Lord

1. The Spirit of the Lord in Israel

God is Spirit, and only by the power of his Spirit can people worship him as he really is (John 4:23-24).

The studies in this book examined important aspects of living in the Spirit. God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit who desires an intimate relationship with us (Topic 1); when we are reconciled to God, we are born of the Spirit (Topic 2); we share in the anointing and authority of Jesus as we are filled with his Spirit (Topic 3); as we grow in grace then the fruit of the Spirit matures in us (Topic 4); God's life and power become evident in us through the gifts of the Spirit (Topic 5); we share ministry in the Spirit together (Topic 6); increasingly we can be led by the Spirit (Topic 7); and the Spirit of the Lord may be in and upon us, as in Israel and in Jesus, to fulfil God's purposes in the world (Topic 8).

One purpose of these studies has been to help us gain new perspectives on living in the Spirit, to see biblical truth in new light.

The Spirit of the Lord, or the Spirit of Yahweh (Jehovah), is seen in the Old Testament as the Spirit of God - the Spirit of the Sovereign Lord, Israel's covenant God - coming upon people to fulfil God's purpose in the earth. The Spirit of the Lord came upon Jesus, the chosen and anointed Messiah, so that he could fulfil God's promises and purposes. The early church understood

the same truth: the sovereign Lord gave his Spirit to the church to fulfil God's purposes in the earth.

This perspective unites all Scripture in the unfolding purposes of God, brought into being by the Spirit of the Lord. It is another way of perceiving salvation history. Salvation is not just for individuals. The purposes of God involve the whole world, the whole of history and the whole of the cosmos.

Note the reference to the Spirit of the Lord in the following passages and especially the vision or pictures of the age to come or the end to which the Spirit is moving:

Isaiah 11:1-2, the Spirit of the Lord will rest on a descendant of Jesse, David's father, with wisdom, understanding, counsel, might and knowledge. Jesus fulfilled this.

Micah 3:8, the Spirit of the Lord fills his servant with power, justice and might.

Ezekiel 37:1-14, the Spirit of the Lord gives visions and breathes life into the dead.

Isaiah 61:1-3, the Spirit of the Lord anoints his servant for mission, fulfilled ultimately in Jesus (Luke 4:18-19).

2 Corinthians 3:17-18, the Spirit of the Lord gives freedom and liberty as we are transformed from glory to glory.

The Old Testament prophets spoke for God. They called God's people back to a right relationship with their Sovereign Lord and with one another, e.g. Isaiah 29:13 (compare Matthew 15:7-9; 2 Timothy 3:5; Micah 6:6-8). John the Baptist and Jesus did the same (e.g. Luke 3:7-20; Mark 1:14-15; 12:29-31).

The Spirit of the Lord came on his people in Israel to fulfil his purpose for that nation and for its destiny as the people of God among the nations. Here are some examples:

Judges 3:10, the Spirit of the Lord came on Othniel;

Judges 6:34, the Spirit of the Lord came on Gideon;

Judges 11:29, the Spirit of the Lord came on Jephtha;

Judges 13:25; 14:6, 19; 15:14, the Spirit of the Lord came on Samson;

1 Samuel 10:6-11, the Spirit of the Lord came on Saul;

1 Samuel 16:13, the Spirit of the Lord came upon David;

2 Samuel 23:2, the Spirit of the Lord spoke by David;

2 Chronicles 20:14-15, the Spirit of the Lord came upon Jahaziel the prophet who announced, "the battle is not yours, but God's."

The Spirit of the Lord came upon the prophets of Israel, and spoke through them. They announced God's purposes and judgements for his people. They were the guardians of the theocracy, God's rule.

This was costly. Many prophets were killed, as were John the Baptist, and Jesus, and many of those who followed Jesus. The Spirit of the Lord confronts the demonic powers in people and society. The kingdom of God challenges and transforms the kingdoms of this world.

Response: How does God move on us as he did upon people in Israel's history?

You could comment of similar times of the Spirit's moving on you as in Israel.

2. The Spirit of the Lord in Jesus

The passage in Luke 4:18-19, where Jesus quotes from Isaiah, makes a dynamic link between Old Testament prophecy and New Testament fulfilment concerning the Spirit of the Lord.

Jesus recognised the work of the Spirit of the Lord as crucial to his ministry. He did no mighty works before the Spirit came upon him at his baptism. Luke, especially, sees this as pivotal in Jesus' life. The Holy Spirit came upon him (3:22), he returned from the Jordan full of the Holy Spirit (4:1), faced and overcame temptation being led by the Spirit (4:1), and then returned north to Galilee in the power of the Spirit (4:14). At Nazareth, Jesus interpreted his experience in terms of the Spirit of the Lord coming on him for the purposes described in Isaiah 61:1-3.

Jesus' ministry gives many examples of his words and his deeds which fulfilled this prophecy concerning the Spirit of the Lord:
bringing good news to the poor (Luke 4:38-44; 6:17-19);
proclaiming liberty to captives (Luke 8:26-39; 11:14-23);
giving sight to the blind (Luke 7:36-50; 18:35-43);
setting free the oppressed (Luke 13:10-17; 17:11-19);
announcing the Lord's salvation (Luke 12:32-40; 18:15-30).

Jesus answered a question about him being the Messiah by referring to that charter: the blind can see, the lame can walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf can hear, the dead are raised to life, and the gospel is preached to the poor (Luke 7:21-23).

Jesus' ministry demonstrated how the Spirit of the Lord was upon him enabling him to fulfil God's purposes. The Spirit of the Lord fulfils God's will in the world. Jesus saw his ministry in that context. So can we.

God's purposes were supremely fulfilled in Jesus' atoning death, his mighty resurrection and his ascension to glory where he now has all authority in heaven and on earth. He expresses that authority through the

Spirit of Lord, his Spirit, in his people. The Holy Spirit continually glorifies Christ and reveals God's will to his people and to the world. He convicts the world of sin, righteousness and judgement (John 16:8-15).

Our mission is to continue the ministry Jesus had. The Spirit of the Lord fulfils that work in and through us.

Jesus gave his disciples power and authority to do what he did (the twelve, Luke 9:1-6; the seventy-two, Luke 10:1-12). Then, after the resurrection he renewed that same commission:

Matthew 28:19-20, we are to obey all Jesus commanded them to do;

Mark 16:15-18, this applies to everyone;

Luke 24:45-49, Jesus' death and resurrection make it possible;

John 20:19-22, we are sent as Jesus was sent by the Father;

Acts 1:8, we are his witnesses to the whole earth.

Further, Jesus promised us the power to do it. The Spirit of the Lord still empowers the servants of the Lord:

Matthew 28:18, 20, all authority has been given to Jesus; he is with us to the end;

Mark 16:17-18, Jesus gives believers power for mission;

Luke 24:49, Jesus said he would send the promised power;

John 20:22, Jesus breathed the Spirit on his followers;

Acts 1:4-5, 8, Jesus promised that his followers would be baptised in the Spirit and filled with power for mission.

The Spirit of the Lord comes on us for mission, as on Jesus, and his disciples. This is the kingdom perspective: the Spirit of the Lord imparts power for mission.

Response: What dimensions of Jesus' ministry are available to us? You could comment on your discoveries of new dimensions of ministry.

3. The Kingdom of God

The Spirit of the Lord is working in the earth to bring the kingdom of God to bear in our lives and in the world. God's kingdom is both a future state in its fulfilment, but also manifested now. The kingdom of God was the central theme in Jesus' ministry.

Jesus proclaimed and demonstrated God's kingdom. The kingdom of God refers to God's sovereign rule, not a geographical realm nor a political reign.

Jesus' ministry demonstrated the kingdom of God coming on earth with salvation, healing, wholeness, liberty and transformation. His church is

meant to also demonstrate the kingdom of God. Jesus told us to pray for that: *Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.*

These gospel passages indicate Jesus' strong emphasis on the kingdom of God:

Mark 1:14-15, the kingdom is near; repent and believe.

John 3:3-5, be born again to see the kingdom.

Matthew 6:10, pray, your kingdom come.

Matthew 6:33, seek first the kingdom.

Matthew 12:28, the kingdom has already come.

Matthew 13:11, the secrets of the kingdom.

Matthew 16:19, the keys of the kingdom.

Matthew 19:14, the kingdom belongs to the childlike.

Matthew 19:24, difficulties of entering the kingdom.

Matthew 21:31, repentant sinners enter the kingdom.

Luke 6:20, the kingdom belongs to the poor.

Luke 9:2, 11, 60, demonstrating the kingdom.

Luke 12:32-34, the Father gives the kingdom.

Luke 17:20-21, the kingdom is within you.

These statements about the kingdom of God demonstrate the presence of the Spirit of the Lord in Jesus' ministry. God's Spirit, powerfully present in Jesus' ministry, brought the kingdom to bear in the lives of people, saving, freeing, healing, and delivering from demonic oppression. Eventually it affected political decisions concerning justice and liberty, confronting and overcoming demonic oppression in people and in society. Society was transformed from within, just as individuals' lives were transformed from within by the power of the Spirit of the Lord. Jesus declared this to be the work and evidence of the kingdom of God (Matthew 12:28).

The church proclaimed and demonstrated the kingdom of God. The following passages tell a little of the emphasis of the early church on the kingdom of God:

Acts 1:3, Jesus continued to teach on the kingdom.

Acts 8:12, Philip preached and demonstrated the kingdom.

Acts 14:22, the kingdom involves us in trials.

Acts 19:8, Paul discussed the kingdom.

Acts 28:23, 31, Paul continued to preach the kingdom.

Romans 14:17, the kingdom is righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

1 Corinthians 4:20, the kingdom is not just words but power.

1 Corinthians 6:9-10, evil does not inherit the kingdom.

1 Corinthians 15:24, 50, Jesus will hand the kingdom to the Father.

Galatians 5:21, kingdom life is pure and holy.

Ephesians 5:5, the kingdom belongs to the righteous.

Colossians 4:11, working together for the kingdom.

2 Thessalonians 1:5, suffering for the kingdom.

Revelation 12:10, the kingdom will triumph over all evil.

Note again the themes of right relationships with God and with one another in the power of the Spirit of the Lord. The power of God was seen in signs (of the kingdom), wonders (revealing the kingdom) and miracles (demonstrating the kingdom). See, for example, Mark 16:17, 20; John 20:30; Acts 2:43; 4:30; 5:12; 6:8; 8:6; 13; 14:3; 15:12; 19:11.

The early church, like Jesus, saw the work of the kingdom in terms of confronting evil in the power of the Spirit of the Lord, the demonstration of that power, and the freeing of people from the powers of evil oppression, to live in the love, joy and peace of God's kingdom.

For this we can pray (your kingdom come) and work (Colossians 4:11), till in the end the kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of our God and of his Christ, and he will reign for ever and ever (Revelation 11:15; 12:10-11).

Response: How is the kingdom of God revealed among us now?
You could testify to the transforming power of God's reign.

4. The King: Jesus Christ is Lord

The kingdom of God has a king. God rules in his Son, Jesus, to whom God has given all authority in heaven and on earth. The Spirit of God, who is also the Spirit of Jesus, exalts and honours Jesus (John 16:13-15). The Spirit of the Lord does not speak on his own authority but glorifies Christ and reveals the will and word of the Father and the Son to us.

"Jesus Christ is Lord." That was the first and shortest creed of the church.

Jesus is Lord in the heavens and on earth. Applied to our own lives, that means that everything already belongs under his rule or authority. Increasingly as we yield to the Spirit of God we discover the reality of the kingdom of God in our lives, where Jesus is Lord.

What may that mean in daily living? The list is endless. It involves all of life, living each day in God's kingdom. The following suggestions illustrate some ways in which we can live in the kingdom of God by the power of the Spirit as we live with Jesus as our Lord.

You may like to tick the ones you need to do:

- living in close relationship with God daily;
- worshipping God in spirit and in truth;
- ministering in the power of the Spirit;
- quitting occult activity and freeing people from it;
- renouncing all secret oaths to live in freedom;
- being led by the Spirit to meet people's needs;
- serving the Lord in your home and family;
- providing warm hospitality to the lonely;
- caring for people in need;
- providing transport in your car consistently;
- involvement in a caring, sharing group;
- commitment to a regular prayer group;
- praying compassionately for healings;
- binding evil powers in Jesus' name;
- freeing the oppressed in prayerful support;
- finding a need and meeting it together;
- participation in a ministry task group;
- supporting and encouraging church leadership;
- commitment to a weekly core group;
- using your talents for God's glory;
- encouraging and affirming people;
- visiting shut-ins, the elderly or hospital patients;
- writing to and visiting prisoners regularly;
- demonstrating loving care in your home;
- working for justice and peace in Jesus' name;
- political and social involvement for righteousness;
- writing letters or articles for social action;
- helping the poor and disadvantaged in Jesus' name;
- joining a task group to alleviate suffering;
- serving the Lord and others in your vocation;
- working for renewal and unity in the church;
- praying and acting for God's kingdom to come in power;
- planning a prayer/study/service group.

We conclude these studies about living in the Spirit with marvellous passages about Jesus Christ our Lord, because the Spirit of our Lord always glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ. That same Spirit inspired the Scriptures which also glorify the Lord Jesus Christ. He is King of kings and Lord of lords, and he shall reign for ever and ever. The Spirit of God inspired the writers of these passages to describe the glory of Jesus our Lord. Jesus

reveals God in his glory and majesty.

The following passages resonate like a trumpet blast, declaring the glory and greatness of Jesus our Lord and King.

John 1:1-5, 14. God is revealed in Jesus, full of life and light, grace and truth - “We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.”

Ephesians 1:15-23. Jesus reigns supreme over all - God “raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that can be invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come.”

Philippians 2:5-11. Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father - “God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

Colossians 1:15-20. Jesus is above all, and pre-eminent in all things – “The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For in him all things were created, things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him.”

Hebrews 1:1-3. Jesus reveals God’s glory and upholds all things – “The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word.”

Response: You may want to respond to these majestic passages with adoration and worship. You could offer yourself in fresh surrender to Jesus your Lord and Saviour. You may like to pray together the beautiful communion prayer:

Father,
we offer ourselves to you
as a living sacrifice
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Send us out in the power of your Spirit
to live and work
to Your praise and glory.
Amen.

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APPENDIX 1: Voices from history

Most of these historical comments are reproduced from *The Spirit of God in the Christian Life* (JBCE 1981), with more added.

Tertullian (160-220) was a brilliant Christian scholar and lawyer theologian from North Africa. In commenting on baptism and the Spirit, he says:

“Not that in the waters [of baptism] we receive the Holy Spirit, but cleansed in water, and under the angel we are prepared for the Holy Spirit.”

Tertullian joined the Montanist movement early in the third century and challenged the worldliness of the church of his day. The Montanists flourished in Asia Minor from the second century into the fifth century. Montanus spoke in tongues at his baptism and began prophesying. His movement called people to holy living and they expected the Lord to return soon. They valued the gifts of the Spirit, especially prophecy, although the movement became excessive and was rejected by the established church.

Augustine of Hippo (354-430) wrote:

“When you were exorcised [that is to have evil cast out] you were so to speak, ground. When you were baptised you were, so to speak, watered. When you received the fire of the Holy Spirit you were, so to speak, baked.”

Augustine refers to making bread and uses this to describe the work of God in our lives:

ground -- to grind the wheat;

watered -- to mix the dough;

baked -- to bake the bread in an oven.

Augustine of Hippo was a great thinker, leader, and writer in the early church who embraced the Christian faith after a varied career through the first half of his life.

He witnessed, was often instrumental in, and recorded many miracles. He said, “For when I saw in our own time frequent signs of old, I desired that narratives might be written, judging that the people should not be ignorant of such things.”

Often healing miracles accompanied the celebration of the sacraments and were supported by a dedicated life of prayer within the Christian community. He wrote, “Today miracles still go on happening in our Lord’s name, through the sacraments he instituted and through the prayers and memorials of his saints.”

Augustine believed that miracles build up faith: “The world believes,

not because it is convinced by human argument, but because it has been faced with the power of divine signs.”

The Spirit’s gifts and power given to the apostles were part of the experience of the church in Augustine’s day.

Cyril of Jerusalem lived about 315-386. He was Bishop of Jerusalem from about 349.

He likened Christian initiation [baptism in water] to the experience of Christ in the river Jordan. “As the Holy Spirit in substance lighted on him, like resting upon like, so after you had come up from the pool of sacred waters, there was given to you an unction [anointing], the antitype [a pattern of the way things happen in the future] of that wherewith he was anointed and this is the Holy Spirit.”

In other words, Cyril of Jerusalem held that Jesus’ experience of water baptism followed by anointing by the Spirit was a Pattern that Christians were meant to follow. That is to say, people would become Christians, enter the water of baptism and then receive empowerment for service by the filling of the Holy Spirit.

Gregory the Great (540-604) became Pope in 590. The times were wracked by war, famine and devastation. Nevertheless, it was a time of intense missionary activity accompanied by the overt manifestations of the gifts of the Spirit. Gregory was a prolific writer, and in his Dialogues and sermons we read of many accounts of prophecies, healings, and visions that people were currently experiencing.

In commenting on Augustine the missionary to Britain (died 604), he said, “By the shining miracles of his preachers, God has brought faith even to the extremities of the earth... The tongue of Britain, which before could only utter barbarous sounds, has lately learned to make the alleluia resound in praise of God”, and Augustine and his fellow missionaries “seemed to be imitating the powers of the apostles in the signs which they displayed.”

He believed that such phenomena should be integrated into the life of the church, and in the Dialogues he says, “Every act of our Redeemer, performed through his human nature, was meant to be a pattern for our actions.” After describing a healing, he said, “If anyone would ask you how this happened, tell him simply that the Lord Jesus Christ was here doing his work.”

Francis of Assisi (1182-1226) was born in that typical Italian town of the thirteenth century. It had a hierarchy, at the bottom of which were peasants, believing in the power of miracles, relics and pilgrimages, but knowing little of the power of Christ in their lives, or even of the facts of the gospel story. Then came prosperous citizens, the higher clergy and the land-owning gentry. Assisi had its wars, such as that which made such a deep impression on Francis, the war with the neighbouring city of Perugia .

Into this world came Francis, renouncing his family's prosperity and proclaiming the excellence of a life of poverty, peace, love, and labour. He has been called the Mirror of Christ, God's Jester, and the Little Poor Man of Assisi. He took Christ seriously, reminding his world that love is more than an abstract virtue about which to preach sermons and write poems; it is something that has to be hammered out in the painful realities of daily living.

He told how the power of Jesus' Spirit changed him: "I remember the first victory of my new heart. All my life I'd panicked when I met lepers. Then one day on the road below Assisi, I did one of those surprising things that only the power of Jesus' Spirit could explain. I reached out and touched a leper, a man the very sight of whom nauseated me. I felt my knees playing tricks on me, and I was afraid I would not make it to the leper. The smell of rotting flesh attacked all my senses – as if I were smelling with eyes and ears as well. Tears began to slide down my cheeks because I thought I wouldn't be able to do it. Then, as I began to lose my composure, I grabbed the man's hand and kissed it. In doing so, I received more than I gave. In finding that leper, I found Christ."

Walter Hilton (1340-1396) was an English mystic whose spiritual writings were widely read in the fifteenth century in England. The most famous of them *The Scale of Perfection* describes the spiritual journey of the soul. The section on prayer advises the reader to be detached from all earthly things and use every effort to withdraw one's mind from them so that the mind may be stripped free of them and rise continually to Jesus Christ. While Christ will remain a mystery in his divinity, his humility and humanity are ways of experiencing his goodness.

To pray well is to allow one's heart to be freed from the burden of all worldly thoughts and, by the power of the Spirit, rise to a spiritual delight in the presence of Christ. "For prayer is nothing other than the ascent of the heart to God."

In the section on loving others but hating their sin, he quotes Paul from Romans 5:5, "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given us." It is only by this *givenness*, this grace, that we can love

others and hate sin, and without this "... all other actions do not make a man good or worthy of heaven."

All Hilton's writing depends on the basic thesis of the initiative for salvation and spiritual growth lying with God.

Thomas á Kempis (1381-1471) lived and wrote against a background of education and experience in the schools of the Brethren of the Common Life, an association founded in the Netherlands in the fourteenth century to foster a higher level of Christian life and devotion. Thomas á Kempis, while widely sought after as a spiritual adviser, is probably best known for a book which tradition strongly suggests he wrote *The Imitation of Christ*. It is a series of meditations and prayers designed to draw the individual Christian into a deep love for Christ.

In one meditation, he exhorts the reader to give up or forsake oneself in order to find God. "Stand without choice, without following your own will, and without all possessions, and you will advance much in grace." If you resign yourself wholly into God's hands, and take nothing for yourself, you will gain great inward peace.

That is something which should happen all the time, every hour, in great things and in small. God urges: "In all things I would find you naked and poor, and bereft of your own will. ... Stand purely and firmly in me, and you will be so pure in heart and in soul that darkness of conscience or slavery to sin will never have power over you."

St Teresa of Avila (1515-1582), The Spanish Carmelite nun and mystic, is remembered by the church for two major reasons. She was a reformer of the Carmelite Order and thus a woman of strong character, shrewdness and practical ability. She was also an influential writer on prayer and the first to point out the existence of states of prayer between meditation and ecstasy; she gave a description of the entire life of prayer.

Her combination of mystic experience with ceaseless activity as a reformer and organiser make her life the classical instance for those who contend that the highest contemplation is not incompatible with great practical achievements.

In her book of prayer *Interior Castle*, she describes a kind of prayer which she desires for all Christians, but which the Lord gives: a strange kind of prayer, the nature of which one cannot ascertain. What happens, she says, is that one's faculties are in close union with God, but our Lord leaves both faculties and sense free to enjoy the happiness, without understanding what it is that they are enjoying and how they are enjoying it.

St Teresa describes the joy of the soul being so great that instead of rejoicing in God alone she would rather share that joy so that others may rejoice in praising God “to which end it directs its whole activity.”

“How can your tongues be better employed, when you are together, than in the praises of God, which we have so many reasons for rendering him?”

Martin Luther (1483-1546), a Reformation pioneer, distinguished between the Spirit and the letter in Scripture, “for nobody understands these precepts unless it is given to him from above. ... Therefore, they most sadly err who presume to interpret the Holy Scriptures and the law of God by taking hold of them by their own understanding and study.”

Luther argued that the Holy Spirit is hidden in the letter of Scripture, since the letter itself may proclaim only the Law, or the wrath of God. The Holy Spirit conveys the word of grace, the gospel. So the true reading of Scripture involves a continual process of bringing faith to birth, or constant renewal and re-creation of spiritual awareness.

John Calvin (1509-1564) of Geneva was a prolific writer. Among his writings we find commentaries on most of the Bible. In commenting on Ephesians 3:14ff., he disagrees with those “who argue, that, if the grace of the Holy Spirit alone enlightens our minds, and forms our hearts of obedience, all teaching will be superfluous.”

“For we are enlightened and renewed by the Holy Spirit so that the teaching may be strong and effective, so that light may not be set before the blind, nor the truth sung to the deaf. Therefore the Lord alone acts upon us in such a way that he acts by his own instruments. It is therefore the duty of pastors diligently to teach, of the people earnestly to attend to teaching, and of both to flee to the Lord lest they weary themselves in unprofitable exertions.”

Thomas Goodwin (1600-1680), the seventeenth century Puritan leader, in a lecture on the letter to the Ephesians, explains how the Holy Spirit works in the lives of all men and women. He explains that the Holy Spirit works in three ways:

First of all, the Holy Spirit makes it possible for a person to turn to God. The Holy Spirit touches a person’s mind so that he or she is able to believe. This is called regeneration.

The second thing the Holy Spirit does is in water baptism when we are cleansed from our sin.

The third thing the Holy Spirit does is to fill us so that we are able to

carry out the task of evangelism. This he calls being sealed in the Spirit.

Richard Baxter (1615-1691) was an English clergyman of Reformed persuasion who made a deep impression on English Christendom. He left nearly two hundred writings, breathing a spirit of unaffected piety and love of moderation. Near the end of his life, writing his autobiography, he says:

“I am now, therefore, much more apprehensive [have more perception] than heretofore of the necessity of well grounding men in their religion, and especially of the witness of the indwelling Spirit; for I more sensibly perceive that the Spirit is the great witness of Christ and Christianity to the world. And though the folly of fanatics tempted me long to overlook the strength of this testimony of the Spirit, while they placed in it a certain internal assertion or enthusiastic inspiration, yet now I see that the Holy Ghost in another manner is the witness of Christ and his agent in the world. The Spirit in the prophets was his first witness; the Spirit by miracles was the second; and the Spirit by renovation, sanctification, illumination, and consolation, assimilating the soul of Christ and heaven is the continued witness to all true believers. And if any man has not the Spirit of Christ, the same is none of his (Romans 8:9).”

John Wesley (1703-1791) found strong motivation for evangelism at a conversion experience at the age of 35 while hearing Martin Luther’s Preface to the Epistle to the Romans read at a meeting in Aldersgate Street, London. “About a quarter before nine while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed, I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation, and an assurance was given to me that he had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death.” From then on he resolved “to Promote as far as I am able vital Practical religion and by the grace of God to beget, preserve, and increase the life of God in the souls of men.”

He told how he and others including his brother Charles and George Whitefield with about 60 people were touched by God at a love feast in Fetter Lane, London: “About three in the morning, as we were continuing instant in prayer, the power of God came mightily upon us, insomuch that many cried out for exceeding joy, and many fell to the ground. As soon as we were recovered a little from that awe and amazement at the presence of his majesty, we broke out with one voice, ‘We praise Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord’”

In a Letter to a Roman Catholic, he wrote (among other faith statements), “I believe the infinite and eternal Spirit of God, equal to the

Father and the Son, to be not only perfectly holy in himself, but the immediate cause of all holiness in us: enlightening our understandings, rectifying our wills and affections, renewing our natures, uniting our persons to Christ, assuring us in our actions, purifying and sanctifying our souls and bodies to a full and eternal enjoyment of God.”

Wesley understood the value of small groups designed to promote Christian growth through prayer, Bible study, and the sharing of lives, and he established these groups all over Britain.

David du Plessis (1905-1987), acclaimed by *Time* magazine as one of the nine best known religious leaders in North America, was a humble man who dared to love others. A group of Catholic and Protestant editors included his name in a list of eleven religious giants who have challenged the assumptions and changed the thinking of the Christian community.

This gracious Pentecostal pioneer lectured at Princeton, Yale, Union, and leading Catholic seminaries in America and Europe as well as at the Ecumenical Institute of the World Council of Churches. He was an official observer at the Vatican Council and involved in the Catholic Pentecostal dialogue in Rome where Pope Paul VI greeted him with, ‘So you are Mr Pentecost?’

He earned that nickname through his untiring efforts to bring the Pentecostal message to the whole church. Known as the boy preacher at fifteen where he was involved in the despised Pentecostal movement in South Africa, David du Plessis lived to see that movement grow over 100 million Pentecostal/Charismatic Christians worldwide by 1980, to over 400 million by 2000, and over 600 million by 2008.

The forthright English Pentecostal evangelist, Smith Wigglesworth, gave a remarkable and heretical (for a Pentecostal) prophecy to young David in 1936. The Lord would pour the Spirit upon the established church, he said, and the ensuing revival would eclipse anything the Pentecostals had experienced. David would be mightily used by God to bring acceptance of the Pentecostal message to the established churches. “This same blessing will become acceptable to the churches and they will go on with this message and this experience beyond what the Pentecostals have achieved. You will live to see this work grow to such dimensions that the Pentecostal movement itself will be a light thing in comparison with what God will do through the old churches. There will be tremendous gatherings of people, unlike anything we’ve seen, and great leaders will change their attitude and accept not only the message but also the blessing.”

David du Plessis declared, “God has no grandsons”, emphasising that

all God's children needed a personal spiritual birth for life in the Spirit. He stressed that Jesus is both the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world and the baptiser in the Holy Spirit (John 1:29-34).

At an ecumenical leaders' conference, he was asked, "What is the difference between you and us? We quote the same Scriptures you do, and yet when you say those words they sound so different. We say the same things that you do, but there seems to be a deeper implication in what you say."

Referring to 2 Corinthians 3:5-6 (the letter kills but the Spirit gives life), he replied: "Comparisons are odious, and I do not wish to injure anyone's feelings or hurt your pride. But the truth as I see it is this: You have the truth on ice, and I have it on fire. ... My friends, if you will take the great truths of the gospel out of your theological freezers and get them on the fire of the Holy Spirit, your churches will yet turn the world upside down."

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APPENDIX 2: Spiritual Gifts Questionnaire

This general list gives you a simple way of checking to see what God is already doing in your life. You can identify some of the gifts you see in yourself. It is a simple self assessment guide adapted from similar questionnaires. Give yourself a score on each statement ranging from 5 (strong) to 1 or 0 (weak). Avoid too many with 3! Then add your scores in the table to get totals for each line.

Your highest scores will indicate some areas of strength or gifting, as you see it. You could also get a friend to score you as they see you and you could do that for them. Remember this provides a very general guide. You are growing, and other gifts or strengths will emerge as you grow.

Romans 12:6-8 -

1. prophecy
2. ministry
3. teaching
4. exhorting
5. giving
6. leading
7. showing mercy

Ephesians 4:11 -

1. apostle
2. prophet
3. evangelist
4. pastor
5. teacher

1 Corinthians 12:8-10 -

1. word of wisdom
2. word of knowledge
3. faith
4. healings
5. miracles
6. discerning of spirits
7. prophecy
8. tongues
9. interpretation of tongues

Gifts Check List [Scoring: 5 = strong, to 1 or 0 = weak]

1. I like to affirm people.
2. I am good at listening.
3. I love to explain things clearly.
4. I like talking to a group about Jesus.
5. I sense what God is saying to a group.
6. I enjoy witnessing.
7. I give generously to God's work.
8. I choose to live simply for the Kingdom.
9. I am good at organising.
10. I have compassion for people in need.

11. I often pray with sick and hurting people.
12. I am helpful and adaptable.
13. I like doing things for others.
14. I enjoy having visitors or guests.
15. I relate well to other cultures.
16. I often give a lead in discussions.
17. I usually feel courageous in serving God.
18. I sense spiritual oppression quickly.
19. I have strong faith in God's promises.
20. I enjoy praying with people.

21. I find ways to encourage others.
22. I relate to others easily.
23. I love teaching Bible truths.
24. I like preparing messages from the Bible.
25. I get insights or impressions from God.
26. I love helping people to become Christians.
27. I use my resources freely for Christian work.
28. I give away my goods to help the needy.
29. I plan things well.
30. I feel deeply for lonely people.

31. I bring peace to troubled people.
32. I like being helpful.
33. I am active in serving others.
34. I have an open home.
35. I enjoy mixing across cultural groups.
36. I am often chosen leader in a group.
37. I like taking risks for God.
38. I detect spiritual opposition readily.
39. I act in faith on the Spirit's leading.
40. I see my prayers answered regularly.

41. I love building others up, not knocking them.
42. I care about people and like to help them.
43. I like mastering and explaining truth.
44. I find my messages bless others.
45. I get impressions or pictures from the Lord.
46. I have lead people to faith in Christ.
47. I always give more than a tithe.
48. I gladly do without many material goods.
49. I easily set goals and work for them.
50. I relate closely with hurting people.

51. I pray for the sick and see them helped.
52. I am happy doing practical work.
53. I see needs and do something to help.
54. I like having people drop in on me.
55. I adapt well to different lifestyles.
56. I put plenty of thought into things I lead.
57. I often speak boldly in Jesus' name.
58. I have taken authority over evil spirits.
59. I believe in God's word very strongly.
60. I often tune into God through the day.

61. I work at encouraging people.
62. I really care about people.
63. I am patient in helping others understand.
64. I have a strong call to preach in some way.
65. I often get a word or leading from the Lord.
66. I love talking to unbelievers about Jesus.
67. I give gladly to many Christian ministries.
68. I am happy on a small income.
69. I pay attention to details in organisation.
70. I like to get along side people in need.

71. I take time to comfort and pray for the sick.
72. I help people in practical ways.
73. I am fulfilled when I serve others.
74. I love having people at my place.
75. I enjoy making friends with foreigners.
76. I often delegate work to others in teams.
77. I am willing to stand up for Jesus anytime.
78. I have commanded evil powers to leave.
79. I step out in faith and see things happen.
80. I pray for others regularly.

SCORING TABLE

Write your scores for each statement then total them horizontally in the last column.

1	21	41	61	A
2	22	42	62	B
3	23	43	63	C
4	24	44	64	D
5	25	45	65	E
6	26	46	66	F
7	27	47	67	G
8	28	48	68	H
9	29	49	69	I
10	30	50	70	J
11	31	51	71	K
12	32	52	72	L
13	33	53	73	M
14	34	54	74	N
15	35	55	75	O
16	36	56	76	P
17	37	57	77	Q
18	38	58	78	R
19	39	59	79	S
20	40	60	80	T

AREAS OF GIFTS

- A ENCOURAGEMENT - supporting and affirming others
- B PASTORAL - caring for people and helping them
- C TEACHING - imparting truth to help people grow
- D PREACHING - proclaiming God's word
- E PROPHETIC - revealing insights received from God
- F EVANGELISM - introducing people to Jesus
- G GIVING - spirit of liberality and generosity
- H VOLUNTARY POVERTY - going without for the sake of others
- I ADMINISTRATION - helping plans reach fulfilment
- J MERCY - compassion and care for others
- K HEALING - bringing wholeness to hurting people
- L HELPING - assisting others in their work
- M SERVICE - finding ways to serve other people
- N HOSPITALITY - open heart and home for people
- O MISSIONARY - cross-cultural ministry
- P LEADERSHIP - involving others in ministry
- Q COURAGE - gifted with boldness or authority
- R DISCERNMENT - awareness of spiritual forces
- S FAITH - firm belief leading to action
- T INTERCESSION - commitment in prayer for others

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APPENDIX 3: China Miracle

*Jesus said, "I will build my church" (Matthew 16:18). This contemporary example of powerful New Testament style church growth is a wonderful account reported by Carl Lawrence. **The Coming Influence of China**, Vision House, pp. 186-192, reproduced in my book, **Body Ministry: The Body of Christ Alive in His Spirit**. See <https://renewaljournal.wordpress.com/>*

The Spirit told us what to do

Two young women set off to plant churches without plans or training because Jesus said to "go".

After we prayed, the Holy Spirit would tell us exactly what to do.

We would keep praying and he would tell us what to do,

and we would do it.

Then we prayed and then he would tell us what to do.

We would do it and keep praying.

Several high-ranking church leaders from Europe visited a pastor in Hong Kong. The pastor took them to visit some of the Three-Self churches. They found them inspiring, and uniquely Chinese, but they wondered aloud if perhaps they weren't seeing the real church. ...

On the final day of their visit, the pastor hoped to show them what they kept wanting to see. He knew

they would not really be satisfied unless they met a real church planter. As it turned out, they saw something incredibly beyond what they ever expected to find in China.

At their last stop, the pastor discovered that two young women had just returned from their mission station for a short visit, so he asked them to come to the hotel late, to meet the visiting church leaders.

These young ladies had both become Christians as teenagers while listening to radio broadcasts, and they each had immediately felt the call to be a missionary. The pastor had met with them and attempted to teach them how to witness right where they were.

“No,” they insisted, “the Bible you gave us says Jesus said to go to all the world. We want to ‘go.’”

“But,” the pastor argued, “you have only been Christians for six months, and you are so young.”

They replied, “Pastor, we have read everything Jesus said and nowhere does he ask people how old they are. We want to go.”

Smiling, the pastor asked them, “But can you give me an exegesis of the five classical appearances of the Great Commission in the New Testament?” Their disappointed faces made him feel ashamed. “Very well. We need some workers on Hainan Island.”

“Hainan Island, we have never heard of it.”

The pastor said, “It is an island off the mainland. The

people there are fishermen. It is very rough. There are no Christians there. For young ladies it might be very dangerous.”

Excitedly they responded, “How soon can we go?”

“Well, I have to go back to Hong Kong and make arrangements. There will be . . . ”

They interrupted him, “Oh no, no, we must not wait. Our Lord said ‘go,’ not sit around and plan. We will go to this place - what did you call it?”

“Hainan. Hainan Island.”

They looked at each other, “Hainan, yes Hainan. That is where the Lord wants us to go.”

They had been there for two years and were now back for a short period of time to try to get Bibles and other literature for their new churches. The pastor had not seen them since the day they insisted that they ‘go now’!

After the arrangements were made, he went to the lobby at the appointed time and waited for the ladies to arrive. He watched the bellboys in their crisp, tailored uniforms, and the tourists who attempted to be casual in their designer clothes. Then he spotted the two young women. *Oh no*, he thought as they walked in.

Their black pyjamas and broad-brimmed fishermen hats stood in stark contrast to the appearance of the sophisticated hotel receptionist making her way towards them.

The pastor moved quickly to intercede. "It's all right, they are here to see me." Several people stood staring as he greeted them as politely as possible without drawing too much attention. "Come, we will go to my room to meet some people from Europe."

Once in the room, the two European church officials graciously greeted them. He proceeded to ask the young ladies questions, interpreting for his guests as he went along.

"Pastor, ask them how many churches they have established on Hainan."

The women put their heads down and answered, "Oh Pastor, we have only been there two years . . . yes, two years. Not many. Not very many." Their voices were apologetic.

"How many?"

"Oh, not many, not many. We have only been there a short time. The people were not very friendly. . . Sometimes they became very vicious. Yes, sometimes they told us they were going to drown us in the ocean . . . several men threatened us . . . Oh my, and because we were so young, even some of the other ladies did not like us. Yes some even called us terrible names . . . so not many churches . . . no, not many. . ."

The pastor interrupted and slowly repeated the words, "How many? How many?"

There was a moment of silence, then one of the women looked up with embarrassment and anguish,

as though confessing to a crime,

“Only . . . thirteen.”

The pastor looked astonished and interpreted for the guests, “Thirteen.”

One of the guests repeated the number, “Only thirteen, only - my goodness. I haven’t planted that many churches in my lifetime.”

One of the pastor’s assistants interrupted, “No, Pastor, she did not say thirteen. She said thirty.”

The pastor looked at the two young women and asked, “Thirty?”

“Oh, yes, not many, we have done very poorly. Only thirty”

The two guests could only mutter, “Thirty churches in two years . . . my word. . . .”

Again the women began to apologize when the pastor interrupted to ask another question, “How many people are in the churches?”

“How many? . . . Oh, not many. . . .” Again both heads went down, apologizing for their failure. “Not many.” The process repeated itself until, again, the pastor looked like he was ready to shake them and practically yelled, “How many?”

“Only two hundred and twenty people. Not many, no . . . not many.”

Quickly multiplying in his head, the pastor said, "Two hundred and twenty in thirty churches?"

"Oh, no, in only one, but that one is a very small church, very small. There are bigger ones. . . ."

As the pastor interrupted he heard the numbers repeated by his guests: "Two hundred and twenty is small? Dear Lord, I wish I had some that large."

"Ask them how many are in the big churches."

The process began, but with a more reverent inquiry: "And how many in the big churches? You know, the biggest one?"

"Oh, not many"

"I know, 'not many.' But, please, ladies, how many?"

"Oh, less than five thousand. Only four thousand nine hundred Yes, less than five thousand. We have just started."

From behind the pastor came the sound of weeping: "Dear Lord, forgive us."

"What did they do? How did they do it? Ask them what they did?"

When asked, they looked astonished. "What did we do? Why nothing. Yes, we did nothing, nothing."

"You did nothing? You have thirty churches - the smallest with two hundred and twenty people, the largest with almost five thousand new Christians!

And you did nothing?”

“No, nothing. We just prayed.”

“I know you prayed, but what else did you do?”

“After we prayed, the Holy Spirit would tell us exactly what to do. We would keep praying and he would tell us what to do, and we would do it. Then we prayed and then he would tell us what to do. We would do it and keep praying.”

“Dear Lord, they *just* prayed . . . and the Holy Spirit told them exactly what to do and they prayed. . . .”

The pastor laid his hands on the shoulders of the two sisters. Behind him his two guests, on their knees weeping, joined as they ‘just prayed’.

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APPENDIX 4: Books

Appendix: Books

Renewal Journal Publications

See

www.renewaljournal.com

for Blogs on each book

PDF Boks, eBooks, and Paperbacks

Available on
Amazon and Kindle
Most Paperbacks in both

Basic Edition and
Gift Edition (colour)

Renewal Journal Publications

<https://renewaljournal.blog/>

PDF Books, eBooks, and Paperbacks

Most Paperbacks are in both

Basic Edition and

Gift Edition (colour)

Revival Books

Flashpoints of Revival

Revival Fires

South Pacific Revivals

Pentecost on Pentecost & the South Pacific

Great Revival Stories, comprising:

Best Revival Stories and

Transforming Revivals

Renewal and Revival, comprising:

Renewal: I make all things new, and

Revival: I will pour out my Spirit

Anointed for Revival

Church on Fire

Renewal Books

Body Ministry, comprising:

The Body of Christ, Part 1: Body Ministry, and
The Body of Christ, Part 2: Ministry Education, with
Learning Together in Ministry

Great Commission Mission comprising:

Teaching Them to Obey in Love, and
Jesus the Model for Short Term Supernatural Mission

Living in the Spirit

Your Spiritual Gifts

Fruit & Gifts of the Spirit

Keeping Faith Alive Today

The Leader's Goldmine

Word and Spirit by Alison Sherrington

Study Guides

Signs and Wonders: Study Guide

The Holy Spirit in Ministry

Revival History

Holy Spirit Movements through History

Renewal Theology 1

Renewal Theology 2

Ministry Practicum

Devotional Books

Inspiration

Jesus on Dying Regrets

The Christmas Message – The Queen

Holy Week, Christian Passover &

Resurrection comprising:

Holy Week, and

Christian Passover Service, and

Risen: 12 Resurrection Appearances

Risen: Short Version

Risen: Long version & our month in Israel

Mysterious Month – expanded version

Risen: Long version

Kingdom Life series

Kingdom Life: The Gospels – comprising:

Kingdom Life in Matthew

Kingdom Life in Mark

Kingdom Life in Luke

Kingdom Life in John

A Preface to the Acts of the Apostles

[The Lion of Judah series](#)

[The Titles of Jesus](#)

[The Reign of Jesus](#)

[The Life of Jesus](#)

[The Death of Jesus](#)

[The Resurrection of Jesus](#)

[The Spirit of Jesus](#)

[The Lion of Judah](#) - all in one volume

[Discovering Aslan - comprising:](#)

[Discovering Aslan in The Lion, the Witch
and the Wardrobe](#)

[Discovering Aslan in Prince Caspian](#)

[Discovering Aslan in the Voyage of the
'Dawn Treader'](#)

[Discovering Aslan in the Silver Chair](#)

[Discovering Aslan in the Horse and his Boy](#)

[Discovering Aslan in the Magician's
Nephew](#)

[Discovering Aslan in the Last Battle](#)

General Books

[**You Can Publish for Free**](#)

[**My First Stories**](#) *by Ethan Waugh*

[**An Incredible Journey by Faith**](#) *by Elisha Chowtapalli*

Biographical:

[**By All Means**](#) *by Elaine Olley*

[**Exploring Israel**](#) – Geoff's family's trip

[**Light on the Mountains**](#) – Geoff in PNG

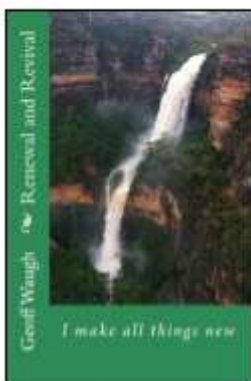
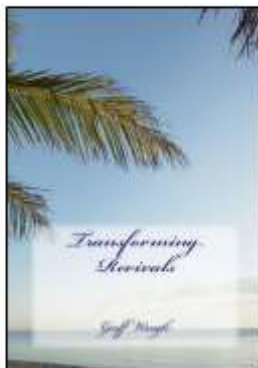
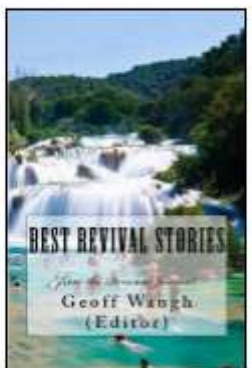
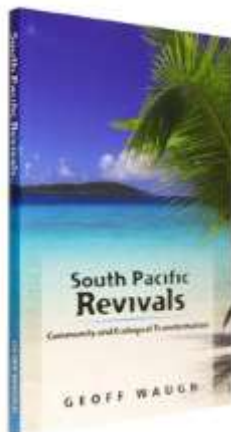
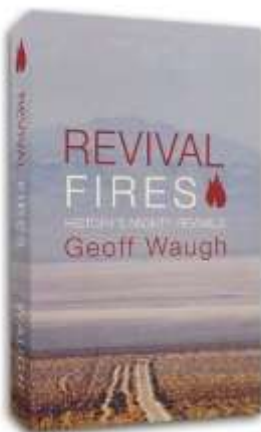
[**Looking to Jesus: Journey into Renewal & Revival**](#) - Geoff's autobiography

[**King of the Granny Flat**](#) *by Dante Waugh*

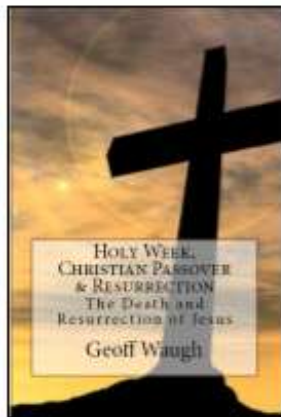
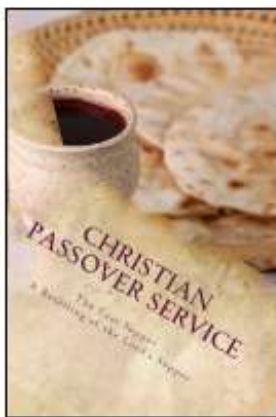
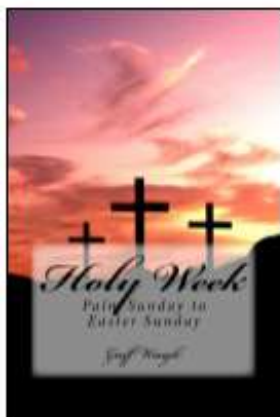
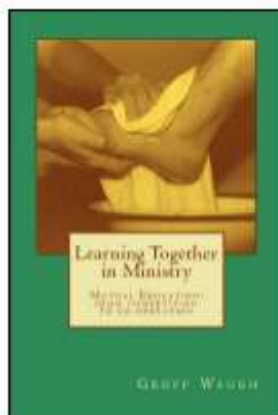
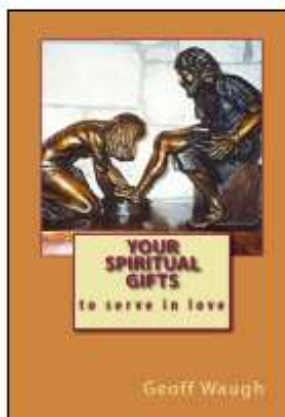
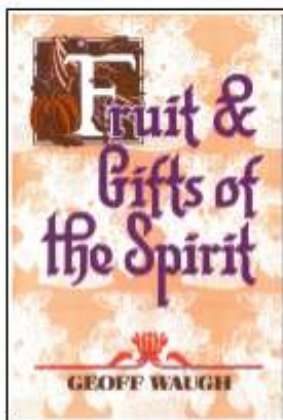
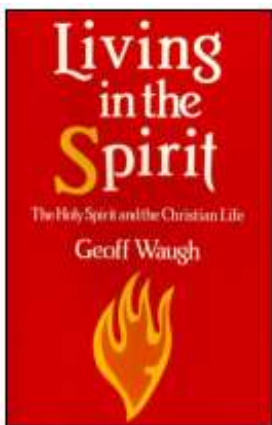
[**Journey into Mission**](#) – Geoff's mission trips

[**Journey into Ministry and Mission**](#) -
autobiography

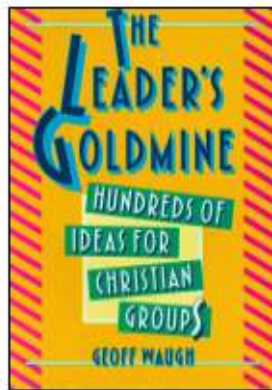
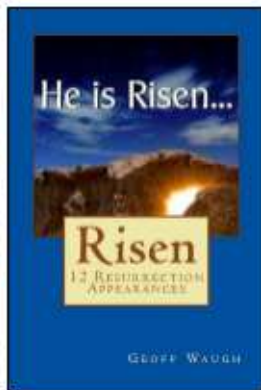
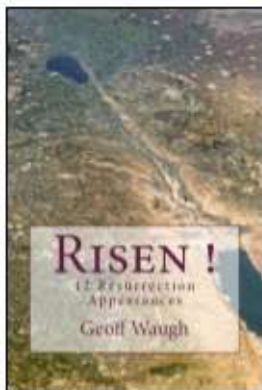
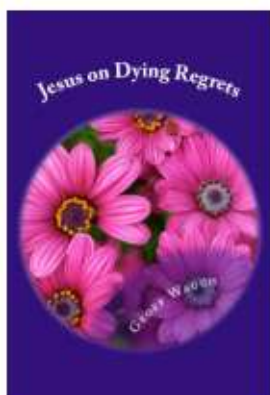
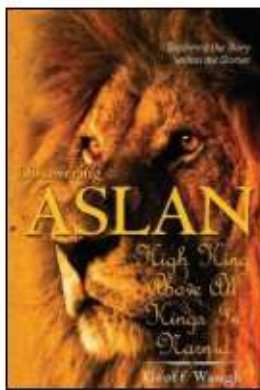
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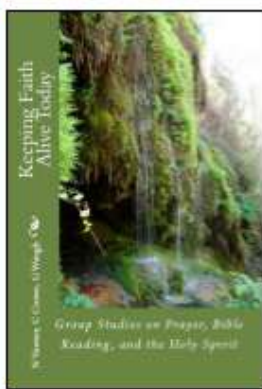
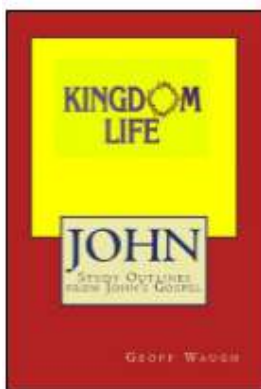
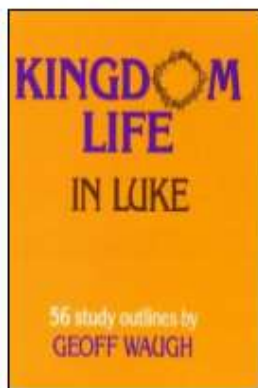
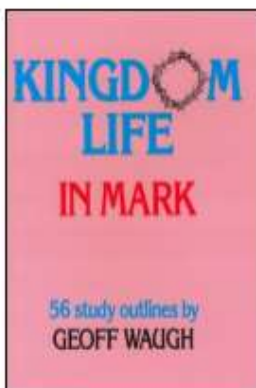
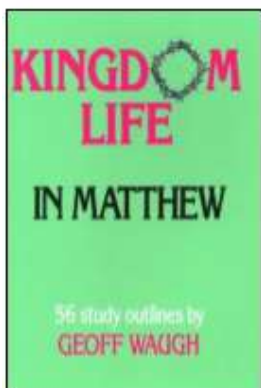
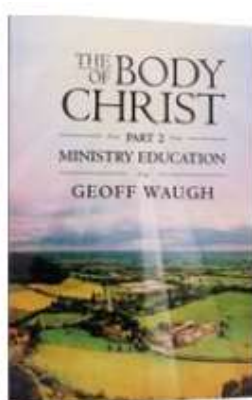
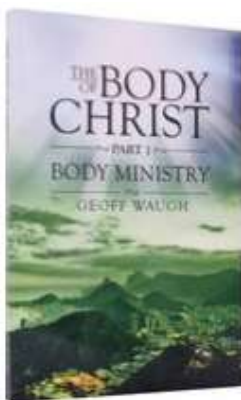
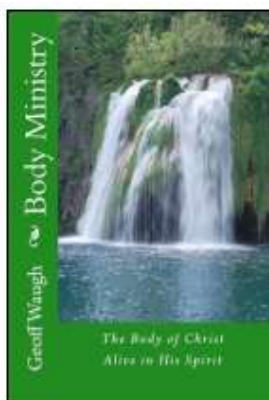
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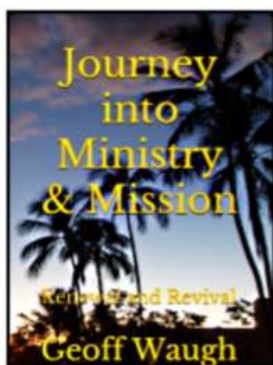
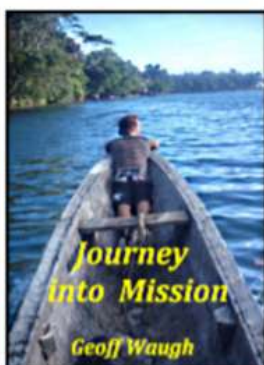
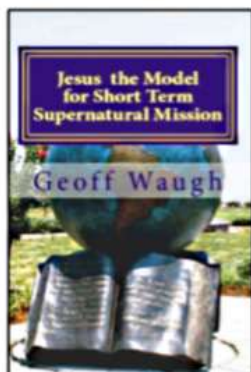
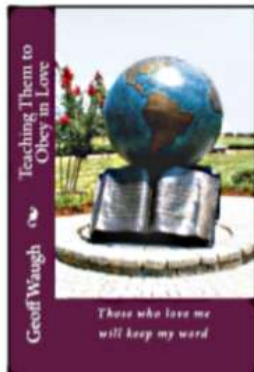
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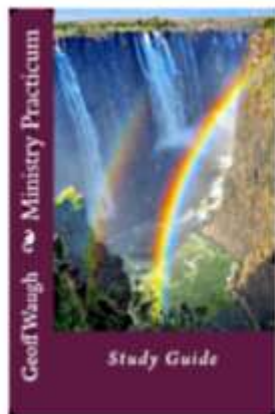
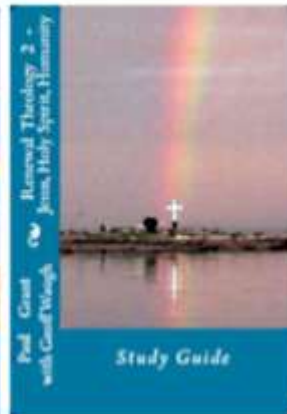
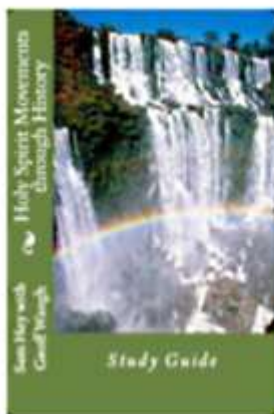
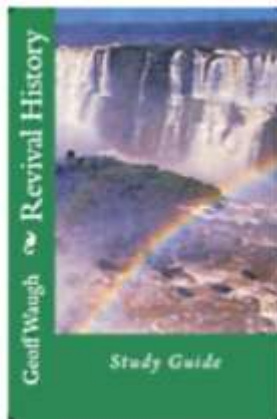
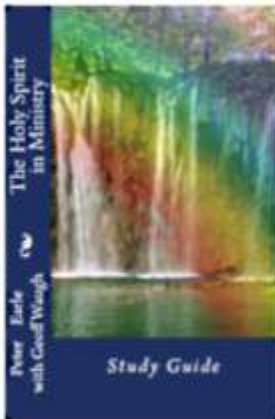
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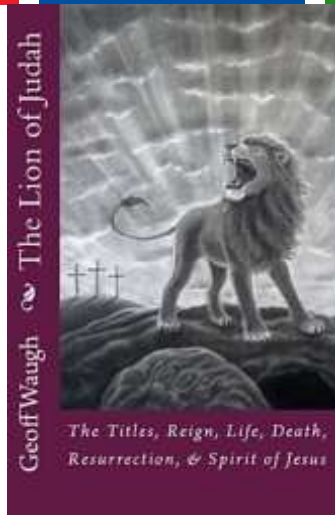
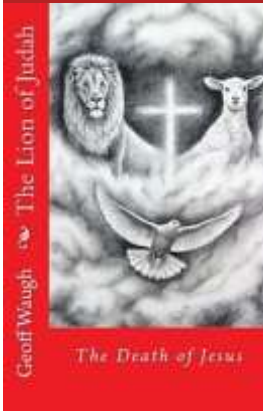
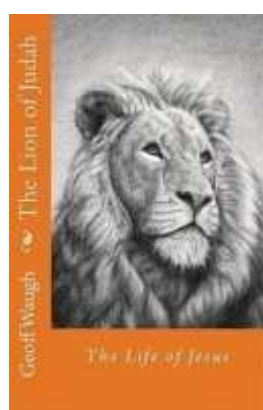
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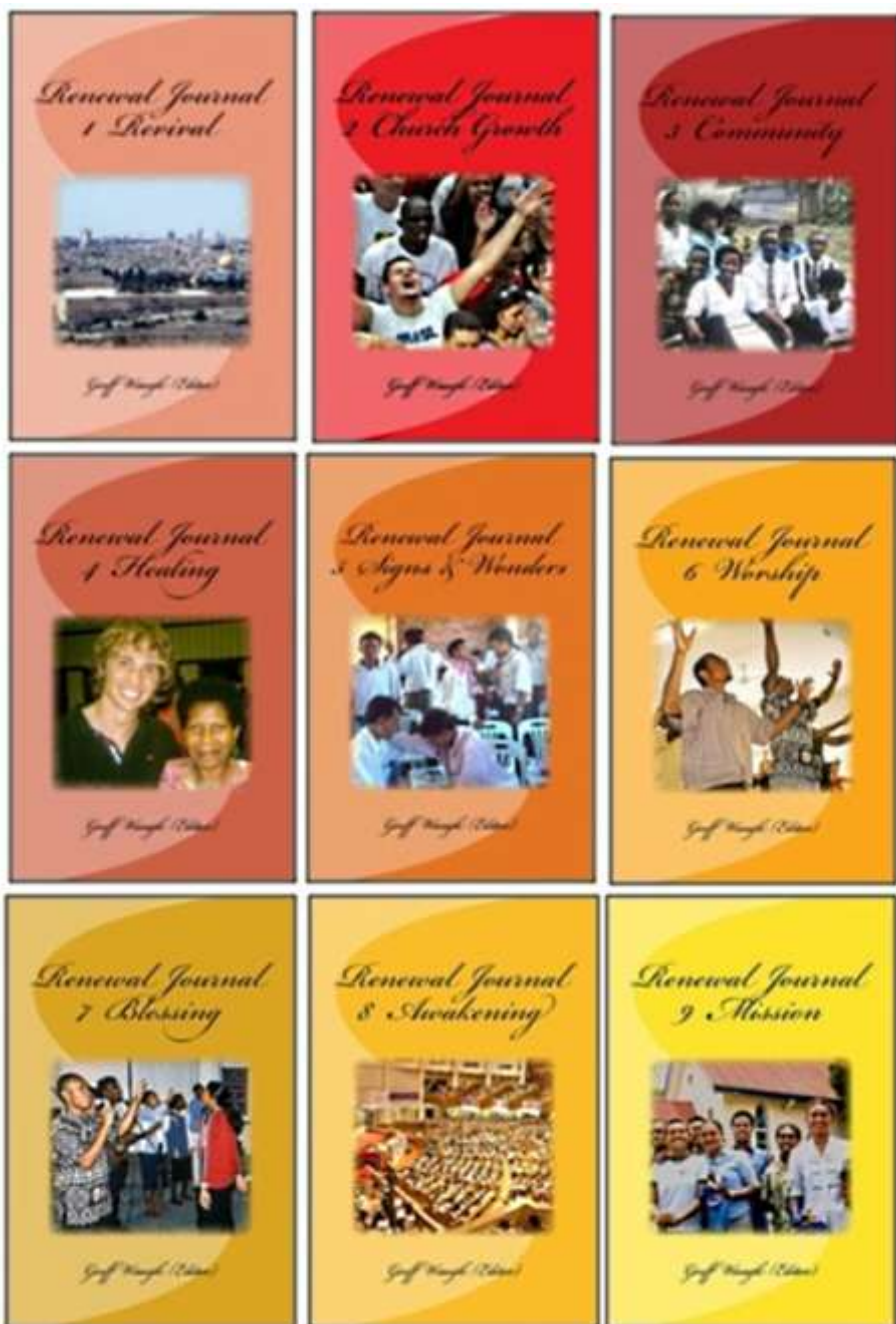
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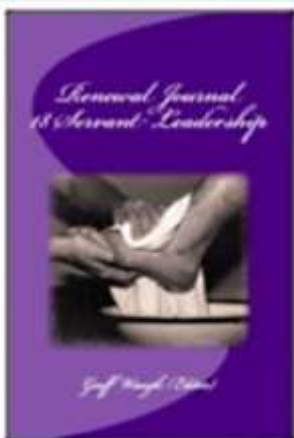
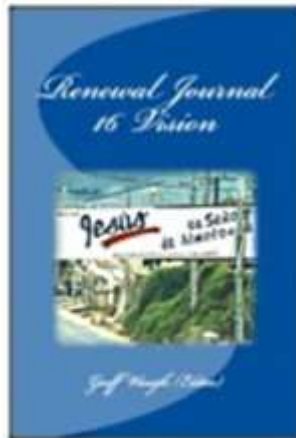
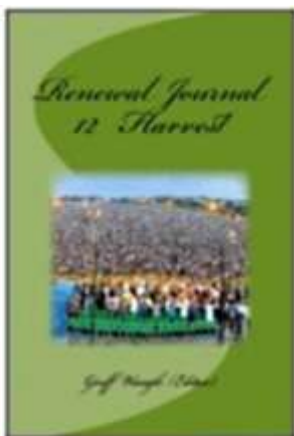
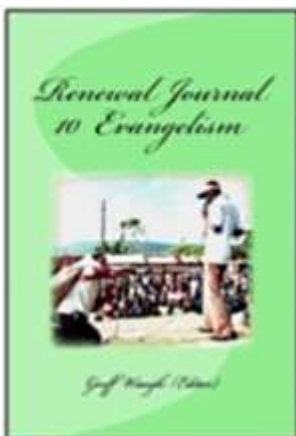
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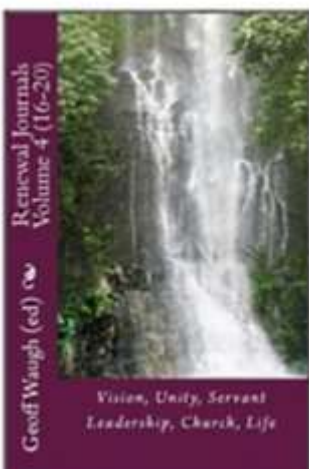
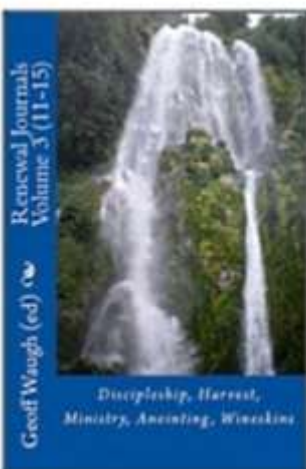
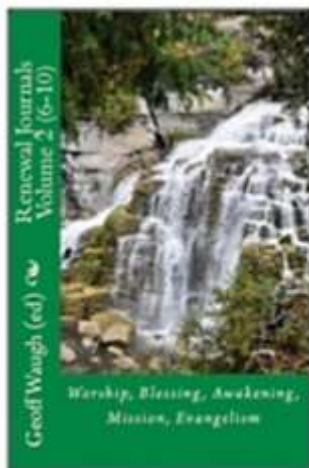
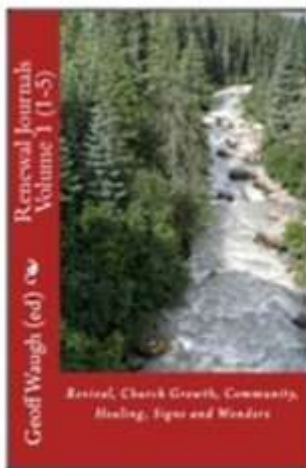
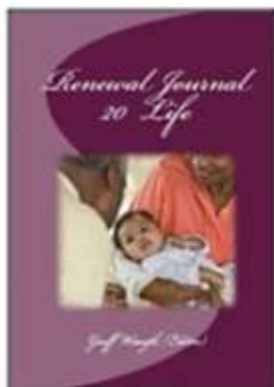
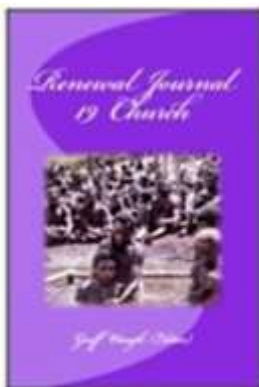
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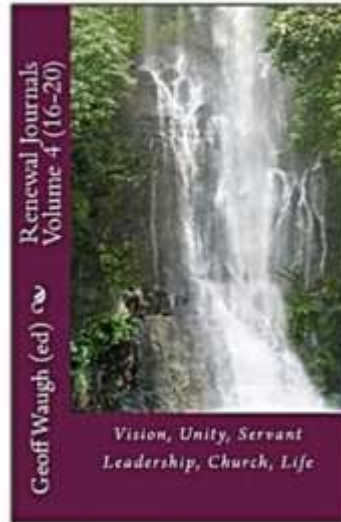
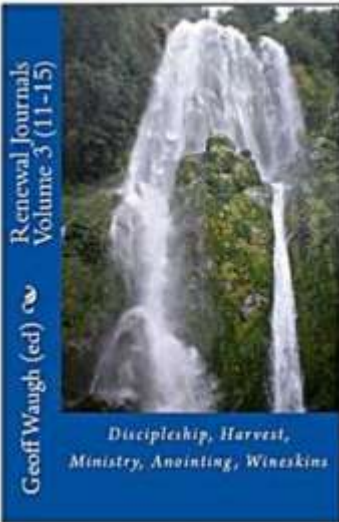
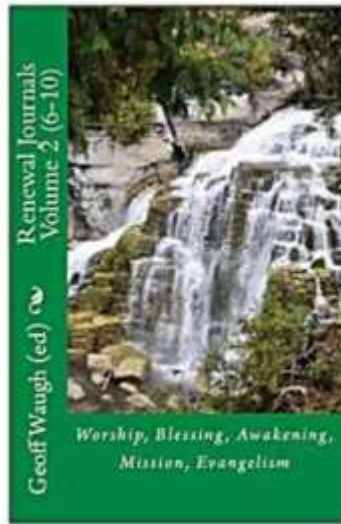
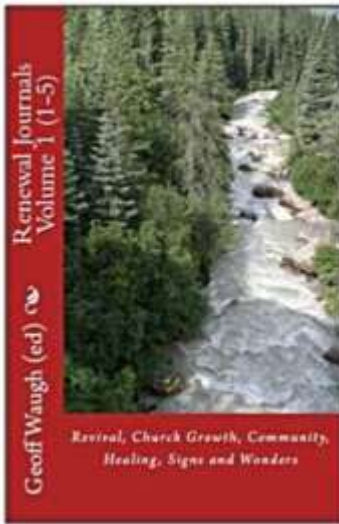


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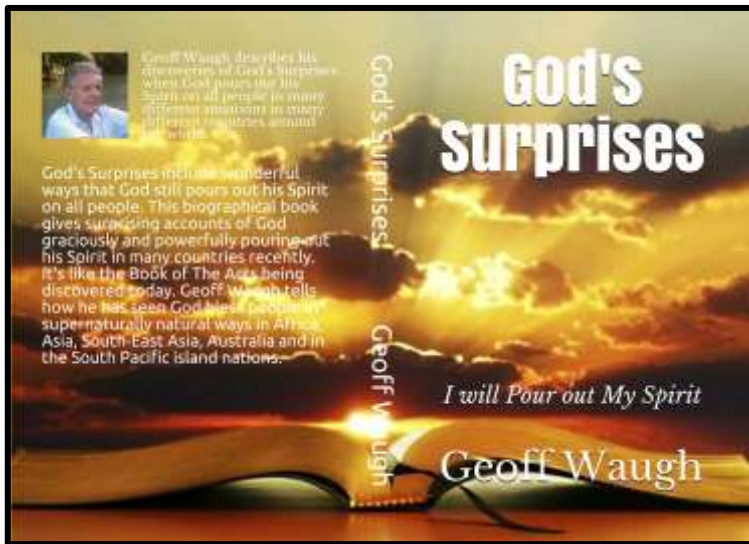
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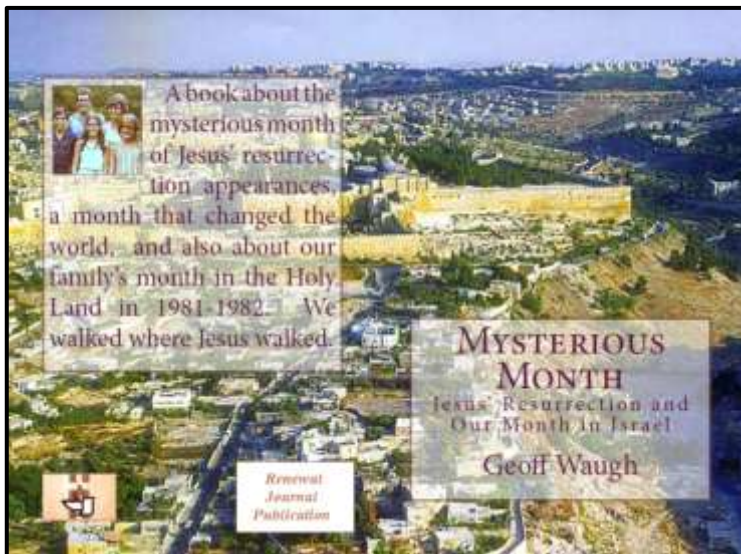
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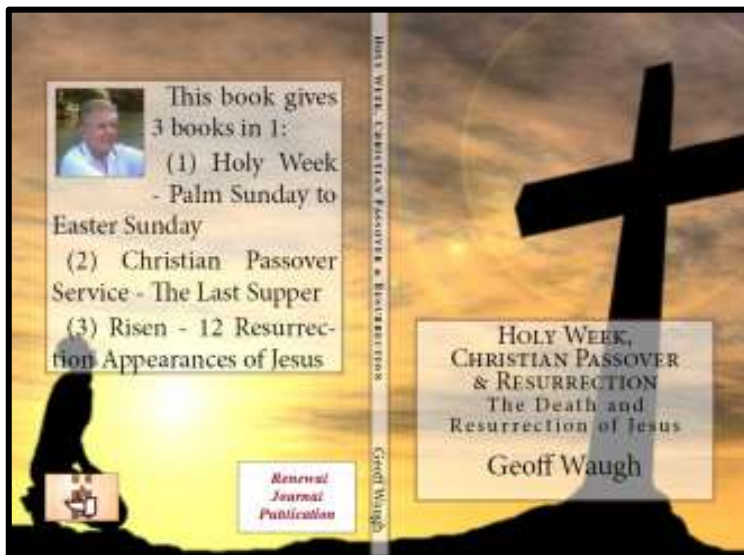
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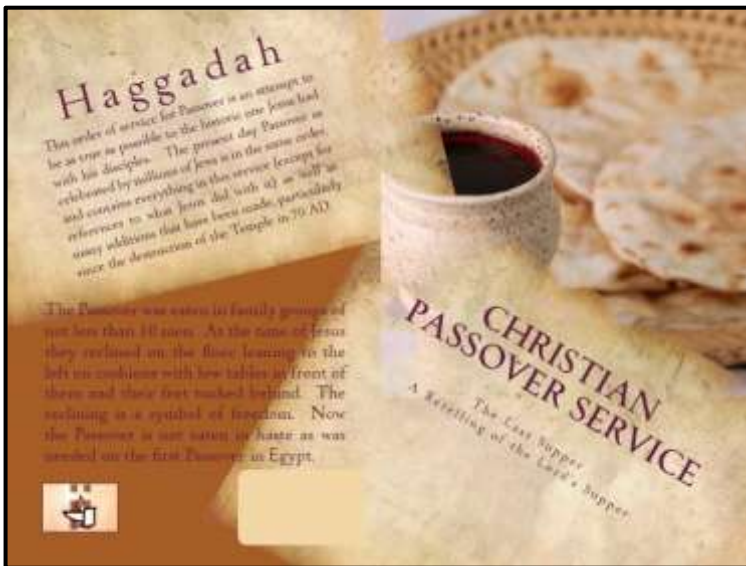
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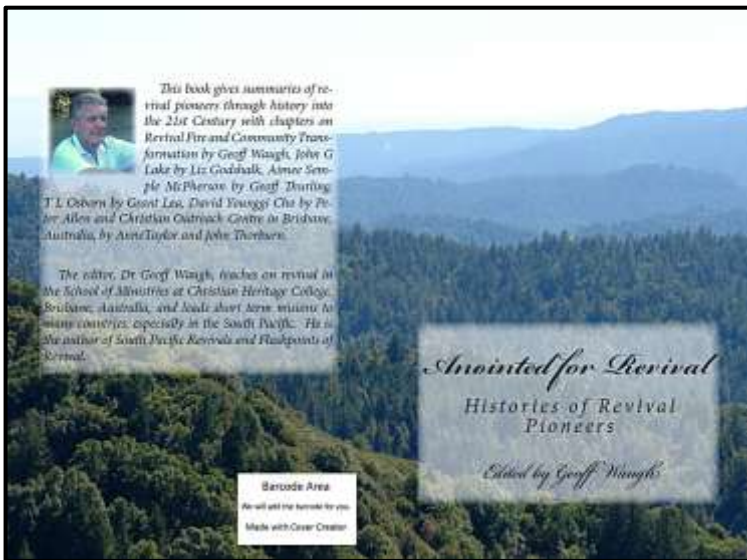
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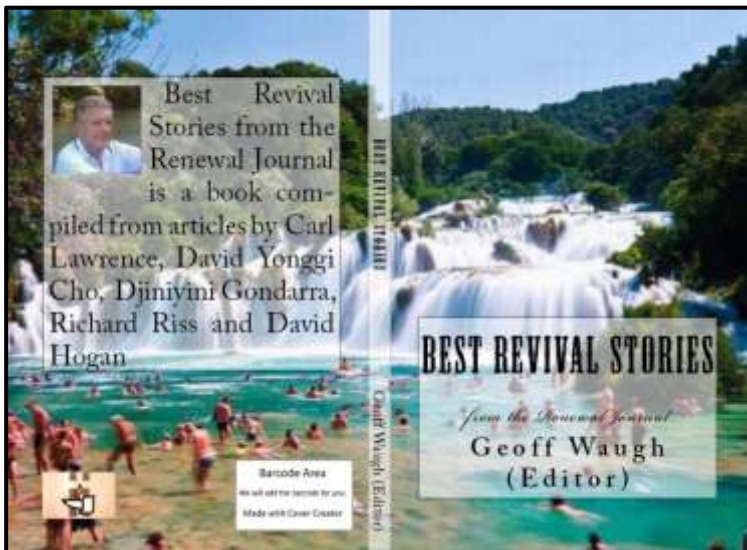
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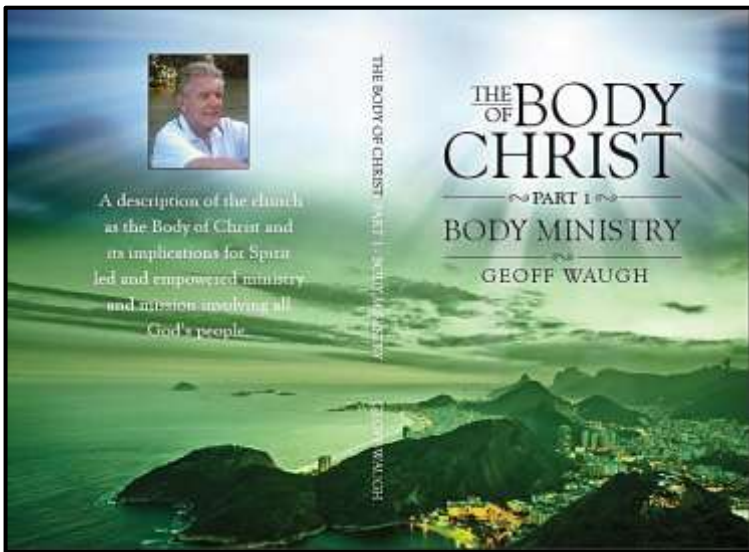
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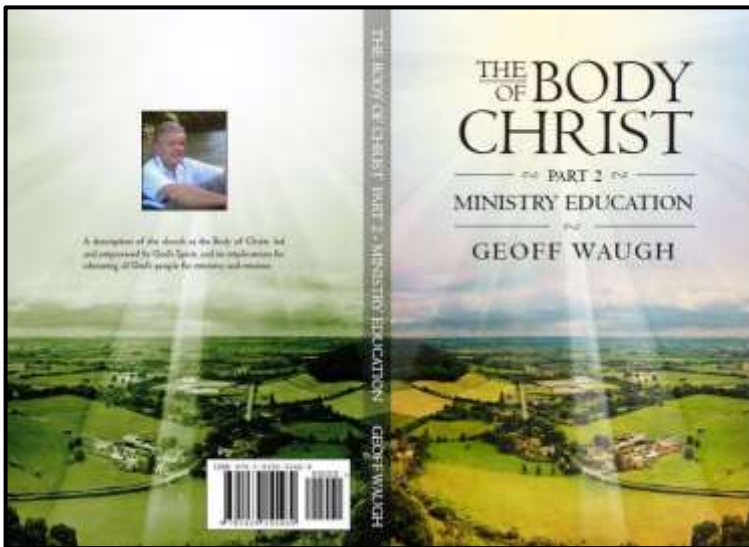
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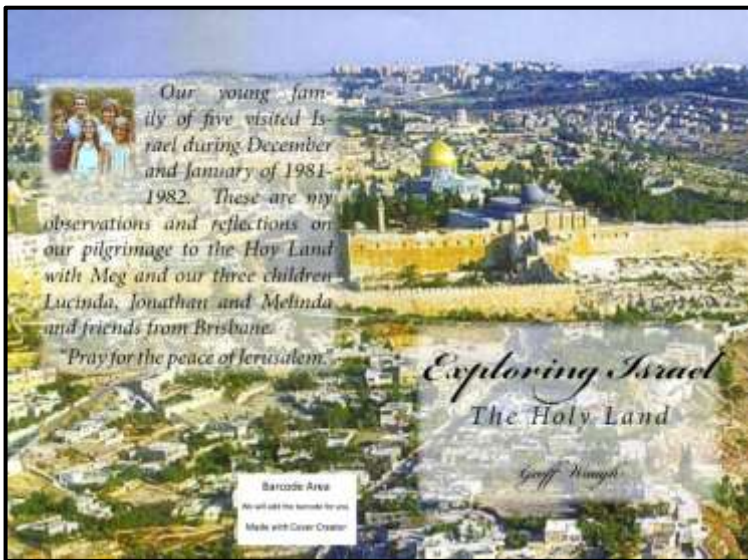
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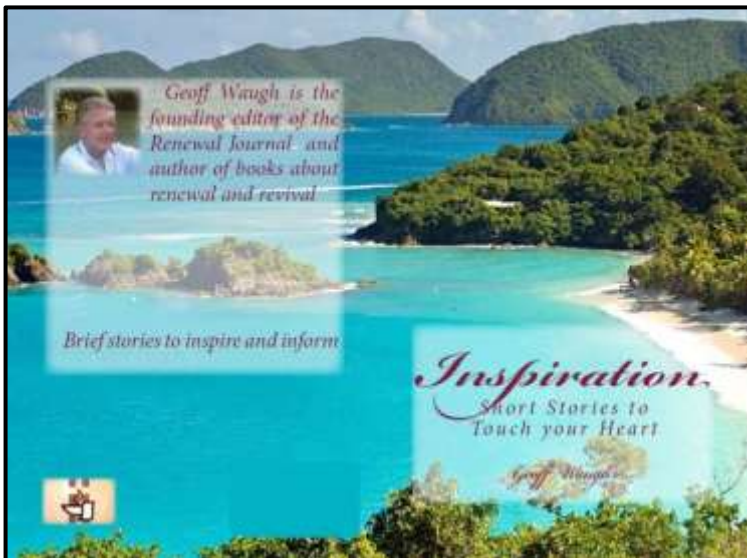
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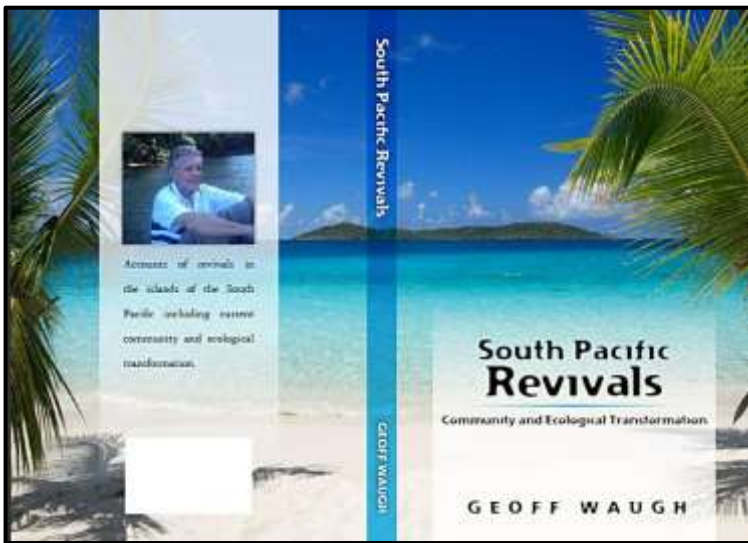
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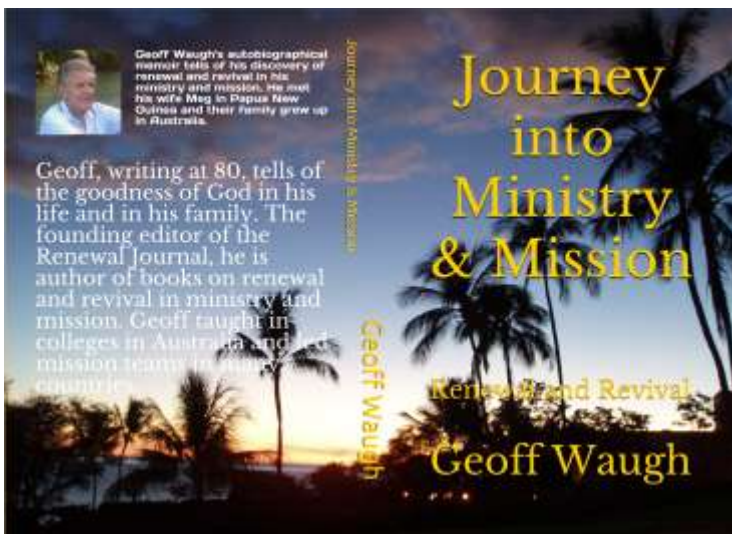
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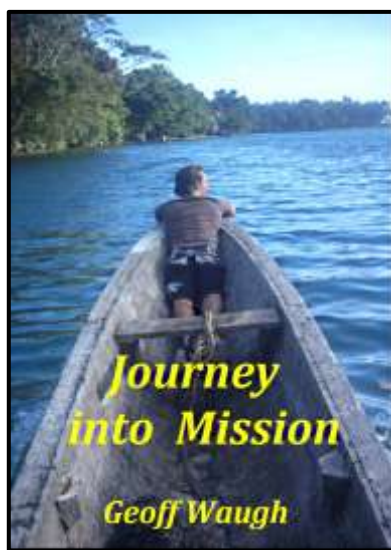


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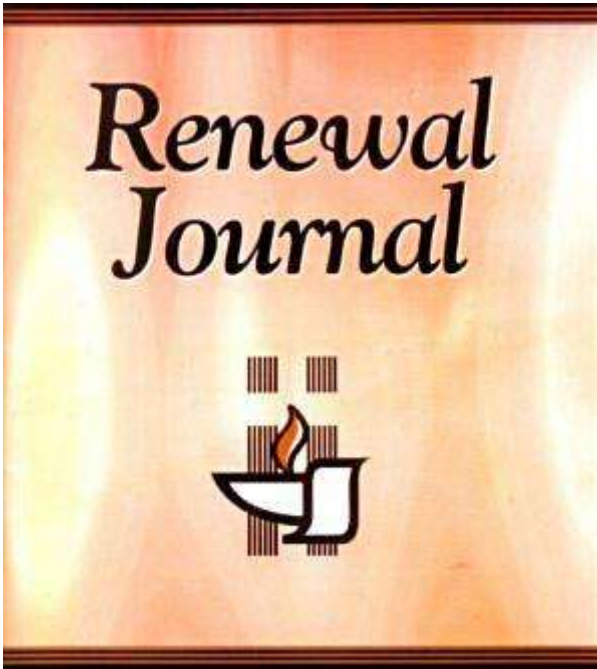
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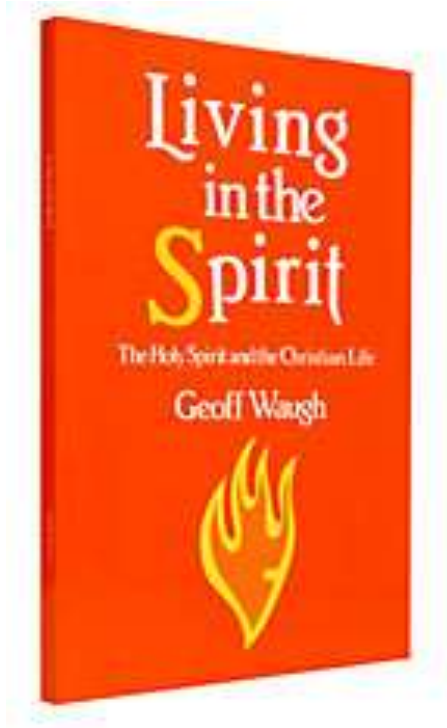
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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr Geoff Waugh taught on renewal and revival at Alcorn College (Methodist), Trinity Theological College (Uniting, Anglican, and Catholic) and Christian Heritage College (Charismatic) in Brisbane, Australia, as well as in Bible Schools in Papua New Guinea (Baptist) and in the South Pacific Islands (with Churches of Christ and United Churches). He led short term missions and taught church leaders in Africa, Nepal, India, Sri Lanka, Burma/Myanmar, Thailand, Malaysia, the Philippines, China and in the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Fiji. He is the founding editor of the *Renewal Journal* and is the author of books on renewal and revival including *Flashpoints of Revival*. Geoff is father to three adult children and grandfather of eight, lives in an extended household with two of those families, and is grateful to his family and to God for his strong evangelical heritage and for enriching fellowship with God's wonderfully diverse people.

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