



Next Steps - Foundations



THE HOLY SPIRIT

empowered for the journey

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Welcome

Welcome to [Next Steps - Walking the Discipleship Pathway](#).

We are so glad you are here. Whether you have just made a decision to follow Jesus, or you have been a Christian for a while and want to grow deeper in your faith, this pathway has been designed with you in mind.

At C3 Church Goulburn, we believe that following Jesus is the greatest adventure life has to offer.

Yours in Christ
Ps Ken & Fiona Hayward & the team

How to Use This Booklet

This booklet is yours to work through at your own pace. There is no rush.

You can:

- Read through it on your own and reflect personally.
- Work through it with a leader or mentor.
- Do a bit of both — read ahead, then chat it through

Each section includes some teaching, key bible passages to look up, reflection questions and space to journal your thoughts.

Don't skip the writing spaces — sometimes the most important discoveries happen when we put pen to paper.

When you have finished this booklet, speak with a leader about your next step.

The Baptism of the Holy Spirit

At the moment of salvation, the Holy Spirit comes to live within every believer. He bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God (Romans 8:16) and seals us as God's own. This is the wonderful reality of every person who gives their life to Jesus.

Ephesians 1:13

"In Him you also trusted after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise."

But the bible also speaks of something more - a distinct empowering of the Holy Spirit that Jesus Himself promised to His disciples.

Acts 1:8

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

This is empowering - what the bible calls the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:5) - is not just for the original disciples. The book of Acts shows us a repeated pattern of believers receiving this empowering subsequent to their salvation:

The Samaritans - Acts 8:14-17

The Samaritans had already believed and been baptised in water. But when Peter and John heard that they had not yet received the Holy Spirit, they travelled to Samaria specifically to pray for them.

As they laid hands on them, the Samaritans received the Holy Spirit. Their salvation was real and complete - but there was a distinct subsequent experience available to them.

Paul - Acts 9:17

Paul had already encountered the risen Jesus on the Damascus road - his salvation was dramatic and undeniable. Yet God sent Ananias to him specifically so that he might be filled with the Holy Spirit. Two distinct experiences - meeting Jesus, and then being filled with His Spirit.

Cornelius' household - Acts 10:44-46

While Peter was still preaching, the Holy Spirit fell on all who were listening. The evidence was immediate and visible - they spoke in tongues and praised God. Peter recognised it instantly as the same experience the disciples had received at Pentecost. For Cornelius and his household, salvation and Spirit baptism happened simultaneously - showing us that while these are distinct experiences, they don't always happen at separate times.

The Ephesian Disciples - Acts 19:1-6

Paul found disciples at Ephesus who had believed but had not yet received the Holy Spirit. He laid hands on them and they spoke in tongues and prophesied. Again - believers who had not yet experienced the empowering of the Spirit.

Reflection

† As you read through these accounts from Acts, what stirs in your heart?
Do you believe there is more of God that you are yet to experience?

What Does This Mean For You?

The baptism of the Holy Spirit is not just a theological concept - it is a personal gift available to every believer. Jesus described it as 'rivers of living water flowing from within' (John 7:38-39). It is an empowering for life, for witness, and for service.

For some people this experience happens at the same moment of salvation. For others it comes as a subsequent distinct experience. What matters is not the timing but the reality - have you been filled with the Spirit and are you living a Spirit-empowered life?

At C3 Church Goulburn we warmly encourage every believer to seek and receive the fullness of the Holy Spirit. We believe this gift is for you - today.

Acts 2:38-39

"Repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off - for all whom the Lord our God will call."



Who is the Holy Spirit?

Before we can fully understand what the Holy Spirit does, we need to understand who He is. This is important because the Holy Spirit is often misunderstood - sometimes reduced to a feeling, a force, or an abstract spiritual influence. But the bible paints a very different picture.

He is a Person

The Holy Spirit is not an 'it' - He is a Person. He has a mind, a will, and emotions. He can be grieved (Ephesians 4:30), He can be quenched (1 Thessalonians 5:19), and He intercedes for us with groaning that words cannot express (Romans 8:26). Jesus consistently referred to the Holy Spirit using personal pronouns.

† *How does it change things for you to know that the Holy Spirit is a Person rather than a force or a feeling?*

John 16:13

"But when He, the Spirit of Truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on His own; He will speak only what He hears, and He will tell you what is yet to come."

He is God

The Holy Spirit is not a lesser or secondary deity - He is fully God, the third person of the Holy Trinity. Father, Son and Holy Spirit - three persons, one God. When Ananias lied to the Holy Spirit, Peter told him, "You have lied not to men but to God." (Acts 5:3-4)

He was present at creation - 'the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters' (Genesis 1:2). He was active throughout the Old Testament, coming upon prophets, kings and leaders to accomplish God's purposes. And He is the same Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead:

Romans 8:11

"And if the Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of His Spirit who lives in you."

† *What do you think it means that the Spirit of God lives in you?*

He is your Counsellor and Comforter

One of the most beautiful things Jesus ever said was this - that it was actually to our advantage that He go away, because then the Holy Spirit would come (John 16:7). Jesus called Him the *Paraclete* - a Greek word meaning one who comes alongside, a helper, a counsellor, a comforter, an advocate.

John 14:16-17

"And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever."

† *In what areas of your life do you most need the Holy Spirit as your Counsellor and Comforter?*

It is remarkable - that the same Spirit who hovered over creation, who filled the prophets, who raised Jesus from the dead - now comes to live inside every believer. Not just with us, but in us.

He has been active from the beginning, but something new happened at Pentecost - what was previously available to some, was now poured out on all flesh. (Acts 2:17). The age of the Spirit began, and continues today.

The Holy Spirit in Your Life



Please look up the following scriptures and find the truth in each about how the Spirit works in a believer's life.

John 16:13

Acts 1:8

Romans 8:16

Romans 8:26

2 Corinthians 3:18

Speaking in Tongues

Of all the works of the Holy Spirit, speaking in tongues is perhaps the most misunderstood and the most debated. Yet it is clearly present throughout the New Testament - from the upper room at Pentecost to the homes of new believers across the Roman world. Rather than avoiding the topic, we want to explore it openly and honestly, letting scripture guide us.

What is Speaking in Tongues?

Speaking in tongues is a supernatural ability given by the Holy Spirit to speak in a language unknown to the speaker. At Pentecost the disciples spoke in known human languages that visitors from other nations recognised (Acts 2:6-8). But the New Testament also speaks of a heavenly prayer language - a Spirit-empowered form of prayer that bypasses the limitations of our human understanding.

1 Corinthians 14:2

"For anyone who speaks in a tongue does not speak to people but to God. Indeed, no one understands them; they utter mysteries by the Spirit."

† What does this verse tell us about the nature and purpose of speaking in tongues?

The Biblical Evidence

Speaking in tongues appears consistently throughout the book of Acts as evidence of the Holy Spirit's empowering.



Acts 2:4 - The disciples at Pentecost



Acts 10:44-46 - Cornelius and his household



Acts 19:6 - The Ephesian disciples

What is the Purpose of Tongues

The New Testament identifies several purposes for speaking in tongues, here are some of them:

As a Private Prayer Language

1 Corinthians 14:14-15

"For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful. So what shall I do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will also pray with my understanding."

When we pray in tongues we are allowing the Holy Spirit to pray through us - bypassing the limitations of what our minds can articulate and entering into a deeper level of communion with God.

For Personal Edification

Praying in tongues builds us up spiritually - strengthening our inner person and deepening our connection with God.



1 Corinthians 14:4

As Intercession

Romans 8:26

"The Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us through wordless groans."

† Have you ever felt at a loss for words in prayer? How does knowing the Holy Spirit can intercede through you change the way you approach prayer?

How to Receive the Holy Spirit

The baptism of the Holy Spirit is not something we earn or achieve - it is a gift from a generous Father who delights in giving good things to His children. Jesus made this beautifully clear:

Luke 11:13

"If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!"



Read Acts 2:37-39

Who does Peter say the promise of the Holy Spirit is for?

Receiving the Holy Spirit begins with faith - believing that God wants to give this gift to you personally. Not just to the disciples at Pentecost, not just to people with great faith or long Christian experience, but to you - today.



Read John 7:37-39

What does Jesus say will happen to those who come to Him and drink?

The Laying on of Hands

Throughout the book of Acts we see a consistent pattern - believers receiving the Holy Spirit through the laying on of hands by church leaders.



Read Acts 8:17, Acts 9:17 and Acts 19:6

The laying on of hands is a God-appointed method of transferring some sort of blessing or authority from one to another.

The first instance we read of the laying on of hands in the bible is found in [Genesis 48](#) where Jacob lays his hands on his grandchildren to transfer blessing. Aaron laid his hands on the scapegoat to transfer the sin of Israel. Moses laid his hands on Joshua to transfer authority, and the apostles laid hands on people to receive the fullness of the Spirit.

Having said that - God is not limited to one method. The Spirit fell on the household of Cornelius, evidenced by speaking in tongues, before the laying on of hands.

If you would like someone to pray with you to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit, speak to your group leader, or other spirit-filled believer, who would love to pray with you personally.

Yielding to the Spirit

This is the practical step that many people find both simple and challenging. Find a trusted leader or Spirit-filled Christian to pray with you. We have included a **sample prayer** at the end of this booklet.

When you pray to receive the Holy Spirit, at some point you will need to yield your voice and your tongue to the Spirit. He will not force you - He is a gentleman. But as you open your mouth in faith, trusting Him to provide the words, many people find that syllables and sounds begin to form that are not their own language.

Don't analyse it. Don't judge it. Don't stop and wonder if it's real. Simply yield - and trust that your Father is faithful to His promise.

For some people the evidence of speaking in tongues happens instantly and dramatically. For others it is a more gradual experience of yielding and trusting over time. Neither experience is more valid than the other. What matters is your heart posture - open, hungry and trusting.

If you have prayed and not yet had the experience of speaking in tongues, don't be discouraged. Keep asking, keep seeking, keep knocking.

Reflect and Respond

Take some time to work through these questions honestly. There are no right or wrong answers — this is between you and God.

1. Read Ephesians 5:18. Paul says to '*be filled with the Spirit*' - the original Greek suggests this is a continuous action, meaning '*keep on being filled.*' What does a lifestyle of continually being filled with the Spirit look like for you practically?

2. Before reading this booklet, what was your understanding of the Holy Spirit? How has that changed or deepened?

3. Have you received the baptism of the Holy Spirit? If yes, describe your experience. If not, what is your next step?

4. Read 1 Corinthians 14:14-15. How might incorporating tongues into your personal prayer life change the way you pray?

5. Who could you ask to pray with you to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit?

There are two points we need to make very clear.

1. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is not a 'one and done' deal. We are called to be 'continually filled' with the Holy Spirit - we see this evidenced in the life of the disciples in the book of Acts.
2. Speaking in tongues is evidence of the infilling of the Holy Spirit, but it is not the only evidence. The Holy Spirit can be evident in the believer's life in various ways, such as gifts of prophecy, words of knowledge, etc. which will be covered in a later booklet in this course.

Heavenly Father

Thank You for the gift of salvation and for making me Your child. Your Word tells me that You are more willing to give the Holy Spirit to those who ask than any earthly father is to give good gifts to his children - and so I come to You now with faith and with hunger.

I ask You to fill me afresh with Your Holy Spirit. Baptise me in Your Spirit and in Your fire. I open my heart, my mind and my voice to You - have Your way in me.

I receive by faith the gift of the Holy Spirit. And as I yield my voice and my tongue to You, I trust You to give me the words to pray in a language given by Your Spirit.

Thank You Father, for this beautiful gift. I receive it now, in Jesus' name.

Amen

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