

# Depending on the Holy Spirit

“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 end of the earth.”

**Acts 1:8 (ESV)**

## Outline of talk by John MacKinnon

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*Below is an outline of what the talk covers. Please see the corresponding session guide for more guidance on structuring the rest of the training session.*

### Introduction

John 14: 16,17 “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you”

- Clarifying who the Holy Spirit is.

### Empowered for Witness

Acts 1:8 “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth”

- Not an optional extra - we will be a witness - good or bad
- Dependent upon him

### Be Filled Daily

Ephesians 5:18 “And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit”

- Resist
- Quench
- Grieve
- Filled
- Seeking him daily in the quiet place

### The Holy Spirit’s role in Magnifying Jesus

John 16: 14,15 “He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you”

- Only in his power can we magnify and glorify Jesus. This is what it is to be gospel-centred

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## Transcript of talk by John MacKinnon

*You are free to use and adapt the content of this talk to suit your context.*

One of life's most joyful experiences is the capacity to give and receive gifts. The gifts don't have to be expensive, elaborate or ornate. In fact, many of the best gifts are the ones which are deeply personal, practical, or empowering. On the floor at my side of the bed in our bedroom, there is a rug designed for an infant child room. It's in the shape of a car, and it was a gift from my grandson who thought Papa likes cars. It's deeply personal. Every day in life, I turn the pages of God's Word in a Bible given to me as a gift. It's deeply practical. As someone who suffers significant hearing loss, I wear in my ears an expensive gift of Bluetooth, high quality hearing aids, and they are both liberating and empowering and my hearing is dependent upon them.

Now we know that every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and as Christians, we are eternally amazed at the truth of Romans 6:23. "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus, our Lord." As we seek to testify to the good news of the gospel, I want to encourage us to depend upon God's personal, practical, and empowering gift of the Holy Spirit. And to discover that in giving us His Holy Spirit, He gives us nothing less than Himself. The Holy Spirit is not an it nor an impersonal force nor an energy. He is a person co-equal and co-eternal with God, the Father and Christ, the Son. Jesus promised the Holy Spirit and said of Him in John's gospel.

"And I will ask the Father and He will give you another helper to be with you forever. Even the spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him. You know Him for He dwells with you and will be in you." John 14:16-17.

Our journey to faith in Christ is only possible because the Holy Spirit has been at work in our lives, convicting us of sin and of righteousness and of judgment, John 16:8. As those who were dead in our sin, we needed the supernatural work of God, the Holy Spirit to breathe new life into us, and it is He who enables us to trust in Christ for our salvation. Our salvation is in its entirety from first to last a sovereign work of God. And while there are many more things we could say about the Holy Spirit's work in sanctifying us, guiding us, directing us, enlightening us, assuring us, and enabling us to pray, it shouldn't come as a surprise that we are entirely dependent upon Him in our evangelism. One aspect of the Holy Spirit's work is empowering us for witness.

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth." Acts 1:8.

The book of Acts is the most wonderful account of the birth and growth of the worldwide witness of the church of our Lord Jesus Christ. The promised Holy Spirit, who humbles believers in repentance and faith also in-dwells them to bear testimony to the transforming work of Jesus in their lives. The book of Acts is effectively the ongoing work of the redemption of Jesus being applied to different people's lives as God, the Holy Spirit empowers His people to proclaim, to testify, to witness to the authentic reality of the gospel. A witness is someone who articulates what they know and for believers, this includes telling others the story of Jesus and calling them to repentance and faith. Interestingly, the text of scripture clearly teaches that we will be witnesses.

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It's not an optional extra. And the reality is we will either be a good witness or we will be a poor one.

Now, while we can also witness in many other ways with kind deeds and actions, we are only engaging in evangelism when we allow God, the Holy Spirit to empower us to proclaim the gospel, to share God's word, to make Jesus known and call people to put their faith in him. This is why we are dependent upon God, the Holy Spirit on a daily basis to equip, to enable and to empower us, to join with Him in winning the world for Christ. The Holy Spirit has a passion for lost people, and as we allow Him, His way in our lives, His passion becomes ours. This leads us on to the second aspect of the Holy Spirit that we're going to look at, how we are to be filled daily. The early days of my Christian life included a fair bit of confusion around the person of the Holy Spirit, with questions of baptism, gifts of medicos galore.

And it will come as no surprise then that I am very thankful for those who took the time to teach me what the Bible says about the Holy Spirit and who also encouraged me to trust the revelation of God, the Father, God, the Son and God, the Holy Spirit we read about in God's Word. As I read it for myself, I realised that the Bible reveals four common responses we can make towards Him. We can resist Him. Stephen spoke about this in the context of Israel rejecting the Messiah in Acts 7:51. We can quench the Holy Spirit. Paul, writing to the church at Thessalonica, exhorted them not to quench what God was saying through fellow believers in 1 Thessalonians 5:19. We can grieve the Holy Spirit when we continue in sin. And we read about that in Ephesians 4:30, or we can be filled with the Holy Spirit.

"And do not get drunk with wine for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit." Ephesians 5:18.

Now the text of this verse is present imperative or present continuous. And that gives us the meaning that it is not a one-off filling, but that we are to go on being filled day by day by day. In the secularised entertainment saturated society that we live in, where we are seeking to be a witness to Jesus and to magnify His name, it is essential for us as believers to be daily dependent upon the infilling of the Holy Spirit. He delights to sanctify the everyday humdrum business of our lives and to equip and produce within us all that we need for taking every opportunity to make Jesus known. We need to be seeking a fresh morning by morning infilling of the Holy Spirit in our lives in order that the fruit of the Spirit might manifest itself in our character and our witness to the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ might be a fruitful one.

Well, how does this occur? It occurs as we spend time with God in the quiet place, for the quiet hour, with the quiet heart and there, as we spend time with God in prayer, we also allow God's Word to fill our minds with the beauty and the majesty of God and the Holy Spirit warms our heart and leads us as believers into worship, praise, adoration, and magnification. Now this is something that we should do intentionally. It is in the context of the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians that we read. "If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit." Galatians 5:25. And once again, we find ourselves wanting to be in harmony with the work of the Holy Spirit, as He magnifies Jesus in us and through us. Now, the last aspect of the Holy Spirit we will be thinking about is the Holy Spirit's role in magnifying Jesus.

"He will glorify me, for He will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine, therefore, I said that He will take what is mine and declare it to you." John 16:14-15.

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The principal role of the Holy Spirit in the world is to magnify Jesus. One of my constant exhortations to anyone seeking to share their faith with someone else is to ensure that in everything they do, they make much of Jesus. As we think about what it looks like to be dependent upon the Holy Spirit in filling us on a daily basis, we can be assured of His presence and of His power. When we see the evidence for Jesus being magnified or glorified in our lives, the gospel magnifies and glorifies Jesus in that it declares who Jesus is and all that he has accomplished for sinners. The Holy Spirit works in our hearts to apply the gospel to our lives and the joy of the ongoing infilling of the Holy Spirit for those of us who are Christ's followers is that we become gospel centred. As we make the gospel known to others, we in the power of the Spirit are able to magnify Jesus. We are able to make much of him.

Now the Bible plainly teaches that we cannot magnify Jesus in our own strength, but as followers of Jesus, we don't need to do that. We don't do that which we cannot do. Sometimes in our evangelism, we can be driven by a sense of guilt about not sharing Jesus or with reluctant fear, try to muster up the resilience, the boldness and the energy we need to say something about Jesus to someone else. The good news is that we don't need to do that, nor should we. God, the Holy Spirit delights to magnify Jesus and He longs to glorify Jesus through the whole of your life. Every facet of your life spirit-filled can magnify Him. In *A Passion for Life*, we are seeking to encourage and equip one another to share Jesus, to share Him with our friends, our family, our colleagues, our neighbours, and even complete strangers. We are seeking to think about how we can lovingly connect, how we can be clear in what we communicate, and how our witness can be faithful in the context of the local church where Jesus is Lord, and He is magnified in our lives.

Now, all of this would overwhelm us, but God has given us Himself, the helper, the Holy Spirit, who longs to magnify Jesus, who longs to make much of Jesus, and who longs to make Jesus known through you and through me. Now, as a result, we can lead a wonderfully liberating life for His glory. At the beginning of our time together, we were thinking about some of the personal, practical, and empowering gifts that loved ones have given to us. The greatest gift of love is of course, the gift of Jesus, for God so loved the world that He gave. And our experience as Christians is one where the Holy Spirit made much of Jesus. And as we turn to Him in repentance and faith, He applied all the accomplishments of his grace into our lives.

The same Holy Spirit works in us daily to make us more like Christ, and the good news for us all is that as we seek to share the incredible gift of love that has found us, the Holy Spirit will empower us and enable us to magnify Jesus in our evangelism. We are not on our own. He is very much with us, indwelling us for His glory.

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The training video is available for anyone to watch at [apassionforlife.org.uk/ibd6-view](https://apassionforlife.org.uk/ibd6-view)