

THE HOLY SPIRIT GIVES STRENGTH AND POWER

1. **John 14.16-17**, "I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, who will stay with you forever. He is the Spirit. . . he remains with you and is in you." Just before Jesus ascended to heaven, he gave his last instructions to the disciples. **Luke 24.49**, " And I myself will send upon you what my Father has promised. But you must wait...until the power from above comes down upon you."
2. How does the Holy Spirit give us strength and power? The Holy Spirit gives strength and power to preach God's Word and witness for Jesus. **Acts 1.8**, Jesus said, "When the Holy Spirit comes upon you, you will be filled with power, and you will be witnesses for me. ." The power and anointing is for every believer so that we can witness and share the Good News with friends, family and neighbours. We are all to be witnesses for Jesus. Pastors and evangelists need a special anointing to proclaim God's Word **Acts 4.31b**, "They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to proclaim God's message with boldness."
3. The Holy Spirit gives strength and power to stand firm in trials and temptations. **Ephesians 3.16,17** "I ask God from the wealth of his glory to give you power through his Spirit to be strong in your inner selves. .I pray that you may have your roots and foundation in love." Just like the roots of a tree go deep in the earth and hold a tree steady in a storm, in the same way the Holy Spirit fills us with God's power and gives us the strength to stand firm in our Christian faith when trials and temptations come.
4. When people try to make us angry, laugh at us, or persecute us because we are Christians, the Holy Spirit gives US strength to suffer, love and forgive. Stephen was a man who was full of the Holy Spirit. He was taken to court and condemned to death for his faith in Jesus. As the people were throwing the rocks at him, he prayed that God would forgive them. The Holy Spirit gave Stephen the strength to stand strong in the face of persecution and to forgive his enemies (**Acts 7.54 -60 and Colossians 3.13**).
5. We have strength in our inner beings to say "No" to temptations. **Titus 2.12** "God's grace instructs us to give up ungodly living and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in this world." Many temptations will come to us, but the Holy Spirit gives us the strength to stay true to Christ and resist the temptation of the world. Because of the Holy Spirit's strengthening power we live victorious Christian lives which are holy, godly and pleasing to God.
6. The Holy Spirit strengthens the body of Christ by giving different gifts to God's **people (1 Corinthians 12.5- 11,27-31, Romans 12.3-8)**. "He, the Holy Spirit gave gifts to people... to prepare all God's people for the work of Christian service in order to build up the body of Christ" **Ephesians 4.11-12**. The gifts we receive from the Holy Spirit help to build up the body of Christ. Some of these gifts are:

Pastors -to care for their congregations.

Prophets & Preachers -they make God's Word clear to the listeners.

Teachers- They know God's Word well and teach it clearly to others.

Healing- When they pray for and anoint sick people, God makes them well again.

Giving Money- God has blessed some people with a lot of money, but they don't keep it to themselves.

They joyfully give their tithes and also give very generous offerings for God's work.

Evangelists -God uses these people to bring others to Christ - some do it through preaching, and others do it through witnessing to others.

Encouragers -They are always ready to help those who are discouraged and carrying heavy burdens. They encourage, teach, and pray with people who are not strong spiritually.

There are many other spiritual gifts that God gives so that Christians can strengthen and help each other and show God's love and power to others in the community. Some people may be given several gifts. "Each one, as a good manager of God 's different gifts, must use for the good of others the special gift he has received from God" **I Peter 4.10**. Are we using our gifts to strengthen the body of Christ and demonstrate God's love to others?

The Holy Spirit gives us strength and power:

- Strength to preach God's Word and to share the Good News with others. (witness)
- Strength to stand firm for Christ in trials and temptation, forgive others, and live a holy life.
- Strengthens the body of Christ by giving different gifts to his people.

