

# (Words of Life) 58. the Anointing of the Spirit

by Zac Poonen

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of each person having their own unique ministry and being filled with the Holy Spirit to serve the body of Christ.*

**Duration:** 27:15

**Scripture:** Galatians 5:22

**Topics:** "Holy Spirit", "Church Growth"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the ministry of the Holy Spirit in building the church as the body of Christ. It discusses how the Holy Spirit makes believers more like Jesus in character and ministry, giving them both fruit and gifts. The importance of each believer having a unique function in the body of Christ is highlighted, with a focus on cooperation between different ministries for the growth of the church. The need for believers to be continuously filled with the Holy Spirit to serve effectively and the significance of seeking the gifts of the Spirit for edification and building up the body of Christ are also emphasized.

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## Transcript

Welcome again to Words of Life. Today we are going to think about the ministry of the Holy Spirit in building the church as the body of Christ. When the Holy Spirit makes us like Jesus, not only in our character, also in our ministry, He gives us fruit and He gives us gifts.

He helps us to cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh, as we saw in our last session. That is to make us more and more like Christ. In our character.

But Jesus also served the Father. The Holy Spirit wants to make us like Jesus in our ministry also. We can't have the same ministry as Jesus.

He died for the sins of the world. We don't do that. Many other things He did was exclusive for His ministry.

We don't read of any of the apostles walking on the water or feeding the 5000 with five loaves. And the ministry that a man like Paul had, many other believers don't have. But all of us have some function in the body of Christ.

The Bible says the church, the people who constitute the church believers in Christ are part of one body. Of which Jesus is the head or the brain. And all the others are parts of the body.

Somebody may have a function like the eye. Somebody may have a function like the ear. Some like hands.

Some like legs. Some hidden ministries like heart, liver, kidney. Some like the tongue.

Preachers. Some like the heart. Those who pray.

Who pray for the preachers. These are all important parts of the body of Christ. Nobody has all the gifts.

Except Jesus who had all the gifts because He was the total body of Christ. There was only one person on earth who was the total body of Christ. That was Jesus himself.

But now he has ascended to heaven and he has made us his spiritual body with all of us having different functions. Some believers may have ten gifts. Some believers may have one.

God decides that. The fruit of the spirit, all of us must have all of them. We read in Galatians 5, 22 and 23.

Love, joy, peace, etc. But the gifts of the Holy Spirit, we don't have to have all of them. One person does one thing and another person does another.

And even in similar ministries there can be a difference. Take the two hands. Both are hands but one is exactly the opposite of the other.

In one hand the thumb is on the left and in the other hand the thumb is on the right. So even in similar ministries there can be a difference. But they all work together.

And the purpose of these gifts is to add people to the body and to build them up. Take the matter of evangelism and discipleship. Evangelism is to make someone who is not part of the body of Christ a part of the body of Christ.

So let's take an example from a human body. Here is a potato. It symbolizes an unbeliever.

Now how does this potato become a part of my physical body? The eye looks at it. The hand goes and takes it. And the hand takes it and puts it inside the mouth.

This is evangelism. Bringing the unbeliever into the church. But if you just put the potato in the mouth, it will rot in the mouth and afterwards you will spit it out.

A lot of evangelism has been like that. Evangelists go and bring a whole lot of potatoes and beans and everything and put it in the mouth. And then it stays there.

And then it becomes rotten and it's spat out. And these people are not saved. Or they lose their salvation.

Another evangelist goes and picks them up again and puts them back in the mouth. But that's not what we do with a potato. When we put a potato into our mouth, the hand's job is over.

The evangelist's job is over but the job is not complete. Now, other parts of the body take over. The teeth begin to chew it.

And make it small. The throat swallows it. It goes into the stomach.

And all types of acids are thrown into it to break it down. And I don't know all that happens inside the body. A doctor can explain that.

But I know that many things happen. And after some weeks, this potato has changed its form. It becomes flesh.

And blood. And bones. It has become part of my body.

Now, who did that? Was it just the evangelist? You know, a lot of evangelists boast, I have brought so many souls to Christ. We can say they are blind evangelists who don't know the ministry of the body of Christ. They are also proud evangelists who are counting statistics and numbers.

What about the other parts of the body which did the job of incorporating this potato into the body? Are they unimportant? Is your hand the only important part in eating food? I would say it's the least important part. It's just the first part. There are hundred other jobs done before this potato becomes a part of the body.

And that is, if evangelism must cooperate with disciple making ministries, then only the church becomes strong. What I have found in Christendom is, those who make disciples don't despise the evangelists. But those who make disciples do not despise the evangelists.

But those who are evangelists despise the disciple makers. They say, you are not doing anything. What do you mean you are not doing anything? If the hand says to the rest of the body, you are not doing anything.

In fact, they are doing 90% of the job for the potato. And so, many evangelists try to make everybody into evangelists. And so, like some of these idols, you have so many hands.

What's the use of so many hands? If we don't digest that, that's why evangelists is only one of the ministries that God has placed in the body of Christ. It says in Ephesians in chapter 4 verse 11, that God has set, the Lord has set in the church apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds, teachers. All of them are to build up the body of Christ.

Verse 12. So, when an evangelist tries to make everybody an evangelist, he is as foolish as trying to make a body full of hands. That's as foolish as an apostle trying to make everybody an apostle.

Or a prophet trying to make everybody a prophet. Or a teacher trying to make everybody a teacher. Or a teacher asking all the believers, why can't you teach like me? Such a teacher is an arrogant teacher.

And an evangelist who tries to make all believers into evangelists is an arrogant evangelist. That is the tragedy in Christendom today. Arrogant evangelists who want everybody to be evangelists.

There is a difference between evangelist and witness. All believers must be witnesses. There is no doubt about that.

But all are not evangelists. Evangelist is a particular calling, which is different from being a witness. So, don't let some evangelist make you feel condemned because you are not an evangelist.

Lots of people in evangelistic ministries who have got a condemnation ministry making a lot of people feel condemned because they are not evangelists. That shows they are under the old covenant. Because the

ministry of condemnation is an old covenant ministry.

A new covenant ministry is a ministry of encouragement. Not to make that fellow have my ministry, but to have his ministry. I am a teacher.

No evangelist can make me feel condemned because I am secure in God. But I am not foolish to make everybody into a teacher. The whole body is not a tongue.

The whole body is not a hand. And who determines what you should be? 1 Corinthians 12 says, verse 7 Each one is given the manifestation of the spirit for the common good. Different ones God gives different gifts.

And verse 11 The Holy Spirit is the one who distributes this according to His will. So who decides that? Not you or me. The Holy Spirit.

All I say to arrogant evangelists and arrogant pastors and teachers is let the Holy Spirit do His job. You don't try to do His job for Him. Let people have their own ministry not your ministry.

Don't be such an arrogant conceited person to think that your ministry is the most important. That's exactly what it says in 1 Corinthians 12. If the eye says the ear is not like me and despises it what will it be in verse 17 if the whole body were an eye where will the hearing be? If everybody is an evangelist where will the shepherds and teachers be? If everybody becomes a teacher where will the evangelists be? But God verse 18 has placed the members as He desired.

One of the most important things needed today in the body of Christ is for each person to allow another person to have his own ministry. To appreciate that person's ministry as another part of the body and to see that he and I are working together for the building of the body of Christ. In Luke chapter 9 the disciples came to Jesus and said Lord we saw somebody casting out demons He is not following us He is engaged in a miracle ministry He is not involved in disciple making like us So we rebuked him What did Jesus say?

Don't rebuke him Some people are not called to the disciple making ministry He is called to a miracle ministry He is not against us and that means he is working with us But he is in another sphere So what did He tell the disciples?

Don't rebuke him At the same time don't join him You stick to your ministry I see people in Christendom who have different ministries In my younger days when I was foolish and arrogant I criticized them Just like those disciples So the Lord told me Don't stop them You do your ministry don't join them also Then I found the balance They are doing something for the Lord It is not my calling I am not going to fight with them I am not going to criticize them I will thank God for them If they are doing something wrong let God be their judge I have to make sure that I don't do anything wrong in the ministry God has given me You know if all of us took this position this mature position would reduce criticism of one another in the body of Christ The biggest sin in Christendom today is that we

criticize other people who are not like us Instead of leaving God to judge them I am not saying that you should lower your standards I am saying leave other people to do what God has called them to do And it says who are you to judge another man's servant Romans 14 His own master he stands or falls God can make him stand It is none of your business in any case We need to let other people have their ministries Just like we need to let other people get light slowly on certain areas which we got light long ago but we need to let other people get light at the right time A 10th grade student who studies in the same school and

a 1st grade student who studies in the same school both know that he does not have the knowledge that he has But to get his knowledge he has to wait for that 1st grade

student for 9 times Suppose his younger brother is in 1st standard Does he expect his younger brother to have the same wisdom he has in 10th standard He is unwilling to wait 9 years for him to come to my level But believers are sometimes not even willing to wait 6 months for somebody to get light I have got light so you must get it immediately But how long did you wait for you to get light Be merciful to that other person He is growing Maybe you got light on something that you obeyed God in For example water baptism Some people still have not got light on that They may be born again Do not reject them Do not force them to be baptized till they get light It is no use Maybe you feel that you should not wear ornaments That is my own conviction And I believe it But I will not force another

person who does not yet have light on it He may take 9 years to come there I am willing to wait If I force him today what he does will be a dead work There is a lot of forcing going on in Christendom today I am in 10th standard I have got light And I am going to force this 1st standard student to do things according to my light That person may do it It is dead works Almighty God does not force people So, lead people to grow at their own pace Challenge them Encourage them And let them have their own ministry What we all need is to be filled with the Holy Spirit The 2nd promise in the Bible in New Testament is Matthew 3.11 He shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit and fire Jesus himself was filled with the Spirit right from birth That's how he lived a holy life in the power of the Holy Spirit

But yet at the age of 30 before he entered into his ministry he was anointed Now, I am not here to explain all this because this is not a matter of explanation It's a matter of experience There are some things we can't explain I can't explain how my digestive system works But I experience that it is working perfectly There may be another man a doctor who can explain it and maybe his own digestive system is not working properly Which is important?

Explanation or the thing must work properly Explanation is good But experience is the important thing And if we see it in Scripture then it's right to seek for that experience I see that Peter was a scared man before the day of Pentecost Even a small servant girl put fear in him When he got filled with the Holy Spirit his whole attitude changed He was not afraid anymore He stood before chief priests and scribes and said, you crucified Christ How did that happen? Did that gradually happen over a period of five years?

Or even over one week?

It was in a moment when he was baptized in the Holy Spirit and fire So, this is not a gradual thing No, it is a gradual thing Peter had to grow a long way before he became like Christ But being born again is not a gradual thing Once you are in darkness then you are in light It's like crossing the border of one country to another You are in this country You cross the border you go to another country It's in a moment To go from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light is not a gradual thing It's merely a gradual thing coming all the way to the gate of the border It may take many years But the actual crossing over is a moment So, there may be a long preparation to be born again but the new birth is an act of a moment We may not know the exact moment that is not important Sometimes,

when I travel in a train the train moves from Kerala to Tamil Nadu I don't know when it took place When I got into the train I was in Kerala After some hours when I wake up I am in Tamil Nadu I don't know when I crossed the border It's not important to know the time But you must be sure you are born again In the same way Practicing the Holy Spirit is a moment When we are filled with the Holy Spirit That is not just

once New birth is once When we fill with the Holy Spirit is repeated Peter himself, we read was filled with the Spirit three times Acts 2 and then again Acts 4 Fill with the Holy Spirit Fill with the Holy Spirit Ephesians 5.18 says You are continuously filled with the Spirit Those who are continuously filled with the Spirit are called Spirit filled people You read in Acts of

the Apostles certain people were full of the Holy Spirit Apostles were always full of the Holy Spirit Unfortunately today when people have the experience once they are called Spirit filled people They may have lost the Spirit ages ago But they are called Spirit filled people because once upon a time they experienced it That's not enough We must be filled with the Spirit always everyday And that is how Jesus had the gifts to serve the Father Without that Jesus could never have served as he did I believe my entire ministry is because I was baptized in the Holy Spirit I sought God for the gift of prophecy to be able to speak in a way that encourages challenges and builds up And then God gave it But I still seek for a greater measure of it The Bible says Seek earnestly for the gifts of the

Holy Spirit 1 Corinthians 14 1 Especially that you may prophesy To build up the body So if you don't seek for the gifts of the Spirit you don't get it In Luke chapter 3 we read when Jesus was baptized he prayed And then the Holy Spirit came Even he received the Holy Spirit's anointing through prayer And so must you and I And you must come because you have a burden to help other people in need If you read Luke 11 5-13 Jesus tells us how to pray for the Holy Spirit in verse 13 He tells the story of a man who keeps on knocking at the door asking for food for his visitor And he doesn't leave till he gets it There are two things that person had A desperate desire and faith that his neighbor would open the door and give it to him That's what you need Two things If any man thirst he said come to

me And if you have faith you believe rivers of living water will flow out from you John 7 37-39 Blessing thousands around you That's what you need Will you pray Will you say Lord Fill me with the Holy Spirit Give me the gifts of the Spirit I cannot serve you without this Forgive me for thinking I can serve you in my own knowledge and strength Give me the gifts of the Spirit to serve you Not for my glory For the body of Christ God will answer your prayer Believe Him God bless you

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