

GETTING TO KNOW THE HOLY SPIRIT

John 7:37-39

By Andy Manning

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Water is essential for life.
 - i. Our bodies are mostly made of water.
 1. Your brain and heart are 73% water.
 2. Your lungs are 83% water.
 3. Your skin is 64% water.
 4. Your muscles and kidneys are 79% water.
 5. Even your bones are 31% water.
 6. Blood is 83% water.
 - ii. Without enough water, your body will suffer in all sorts of ways.
2. There is another kind of water that is essential for spiritual life. You cannot effectively live the Christian life without this water. This water is available to everyone, but not everyone drinks it. This water is the Holy Spirit. Without Him you cannot live for Christ.
3. Let's learn about the Holy Spirit, and how we can tap into His power for us.

II. TEXT & EXPOSITION: John 7:37-39

1. *37 On the last and most important day of the festival, Jesus stood up and cried out, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me, and drink. 38 The one who believes in me, as the Scripture has said, will have streams of living water flow from deep within him." 39 He said this about the Spirit. Those who believed in Jesus were going to receive the Spirit, for the Spirit had not yet been given because Jesus had not yet been glorified.*
2. This occurred on the last day of the Festival of Shelters. Every year the Jews celebrated three great festivals – Passover, Pentecost, and Shelters. Every adult male Jew living within fifteen miles had to attend. Shelters occurred around October 15 and lasted seven days. It had a double significance. The first was historical. All during the week the people lived in little portable shelters made out of branches. This was to remind them of when they lived in portable shelters during the forty years in the wilderness. The second meaning was agricultural. This was a time to celebrate and thank God for the harvest, for this was when the barley, wheat, and grapes were harvested. They had a ceremony that took place every day of the festival. The priests would march one time around the altar, while the temple choir sang praises to God (Hallel, Ps 113-118). At the same time, the high priest would take a golden pitcher and fill it up with water from the Pool of Siloam, and after the priests marched around the altar, he would pour out the water on the altar. This was to thank God for rain, and to pray for rain in the future. It was also a commemoration of God's miraculous provision of water from the rock in the

wilderness. On the last day of the festival, the priests would march around the altar seven times before the water was poured out in memory of the fall of Jericho, when the Jews marched around the city seven times before the walls fell down.

3. It is in this context that Jesus stands up and cries out, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. The one who believes in me, as the Scripture has said, will have streams of living water flow from deep within.”
4. Then John provides us with an explanation. Jesus is referring to the promised Holy Spirit who will indwell believers after Christ’s glorification – His ascension. This was fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost, which was shortly after Christ’s resurrection and ascension.
5. So, Jesus compares the Holy Spirit to water, and He promises the Spirit (pneuma) to those who believe in Him.

III. FOUR ESSENTIAL TRUTHS ABOUT THE HOLY SPIRIT

1. The Holy Spirit is God.

- i. The Holy Spirit is not just a spiritual force; it is not just God’s power. The Holy Spirit is God. This is classic, orthodox doctrine. This is what Protestants believe. This is what Catholics believe.
- ii. The Bible teaches that there is one God in three persons – the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These three are coequal and coeternal.
- iii. We know that the Holy Spirit is not an impersonal force because Jesus refers to the Spirit as He.
- iv. **John 15:26** “When the Counselor comes, the one I will send to you from the Father—the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father—he will testify about me.”

1. Notice several truths in this verse:

- a. The Holy Spirit goes by multiple names. Here He is called the Counselor (*parakletos*; Helper, Comforter, Advocate), and the Spirit of truth.
- b. He is sent by Jesus.
- c. He comes (proceeds) from the Father.
- d. He testifies about Jesus (teaches about Jesus; points people to Jesus).
- e. The Spirit is referred to as “he”. He is a person.

2. The Holy Spirit permanently indwells in believers.

- i. **John 7:38-39** “38 The one who believes in me, as the Scripture has said, will have streams of living water flow from deep within him.” 39 He said this about the Spirit. Those who believed in Jesus were going to receive the Spirit, for the Spirit had not yet been given because Jesus had not yet been glorified.
 1. The Spirit is described as being “deep within” believers.
 2. The Spirit is “received” by believers.

- ii. If you are a Christian, then the Spirit lives inside of you.
- iii. Notice that John says that those who believe in Jesus were going to receive the Spirit, for the Spirit had not yet been given because Jesus had not yet been glorified.
 - 1. Before Christ, the Holy Spirit did not permanently indwell believers. He worked in their lives. At times He would come upon certain individuals to empower them for special tasks, but He did not permanently dwell within believers.
 - 2. But Jesus promised that at some time in the future the Holy Spirit would permanently dwell within believers.
 - a. He described the indwelling Spirit as “streams of living water” flowing from deep within him. A stream is not limited, but unlimited. It is not temporary, but ongoing.
 - b. **John 14:16** “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever.”
 - 3. This was inaugurated after Christ was “glorified,” on the Day of Pentecost. This special day in the history of the church is described in Acts 2. Before Jesus ascended, He instructed His followers to wait in Jerusalem for the promised Spirit (Lk 24:49). Not long after this, all the believers were together in one place in Jerusalem, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit.
 - 4. **Acts 2:1-6** “When the day of Pentecost had arrived, they were all together in one place. 2 Suddenly a sound like that of a violent rushing wind came from heaven, and it filled the whole house where they were staying. 3 They saw tongues like flames of fire that separated and rested on each one of them. 4 Then they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in different tongues, as the Spirit enabled them. 5 Now there were Jews staying in Jerusalem, devout people from every nation under heaven. 6 When this sound occurred, a crowd came together and was confused because each one heard them speaking in his own language.”
 - 5. From that day on, the moment a person becomes a Christian, they receive the Holy Spirit.
 - 6. **1 Corinthians 3:16** “Don’t you yourselves know that you are God’s temple and that the Spirit of God lives in you?”

3. The Holy Spirit blesses us in many ways.

- i. Notice again that Jesus compares the indwelling Holy Spirit to streams of living water. Water is the perfect illustration for the Holy Spirit.

1. The Holy Spirit cleanses us.

- a. One of the things that water does is it cleanses. Can you imagine trying to take a bath without water, or trying to wash your car without water?
- b. Water purifies our bodies in several important ways:
 - i. It regulates digestion by breaking down and flushing out waste;
 - ii. It clears toxins from the body;
 - iii. It cleans out the kidneys, reducing the risk of kidney stones;
 - iv. It cleans out the arteries, reducing the risk of heart attack and stroke.
- c. The Holy Spirit blesses us by cleansing us from sin. I'm not talking about forgiveness. I'm talking about sanctification. The Holy Spirit is the one who helps us to overcome sin. He is the one who cleans us up.
- d. First, the Holy Spirit cleanses us through regeneration.
 - i. **Titus 3:5** "he saved us—not by works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy—through the washing of regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit. 6 He poured out his Spirit on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior"
 - ii. When the Holy Spirit indwells us at the moment of salvation, He transforms us and gives us a new heart with the desires and power to please God.
 - iii. **Philippians 2:13 (NLT)** "For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him."
 - iv. Through regeneration, the Holy Spirit redeems us from the power of sin and Satan so that we don't have to live in sin, but now can walk in obedience.
 - v. **Romans 6:6** "For we know that our old self, was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be rendered powerless so that we may no longer be enslaved to sin"
- e. Second, the Holy Spirit cleanses us through conviction.
 - i. **John 16:8** "When he comes, he will convict the world about sin, righteousness, and judgment"
 - ii. He pricks our conscience when we are in sin. He makes us uncomfortable in sin. He doesn't let us enjoy sin for more than a moment.

2. The Holy Spirit comforts us.

- a. Water refreshes you. It just makes you feel better. Think about how it feels to drink a cold cup of water on a hot day. Or remember how it feels to jump into the swimming pool on a very hot day. Water refreshes us. It makes us feel better.
- b. Dehydration can lead to all sorts of body aches and pains, including headaches, heartburn, back pain, joint pain, and arthritis. But water helps to alleviate these pains. It makes us feel better.
- c. Dehydration can also contribute to depression. Simply drinking enough water can help your mood.
- d. The Holy Spirit does the same thing. He makes us feel better.
- e. He comforts us.
 - i. His very name, *parakletos*, can be translated “Comforter.” **John 16:7 (KJV)** “Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.”
 - ii. **2 Corinthians 1:4** “He comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any kind of affliction, through the comfort we ourselves receive from God.”
- f. He encourages us.
 - i. *Parakletos* can also be translated “Encourager.” The Greek word for “encourage” is *parakaleo*. The Holy Spirit encourages us when we are down.
- g. He gives us joy, peace, and hope.
 - i. **Romans 15:13** “Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you believe so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.”
- h. The Holy Spirit helps emotionally when we are going through adversity.

3. The Holy Spirit changes us.

- a. Water is essential for growth. Grass cannot grow without water. Trees cannot grow without water. Children cannot grow without water.
- b. The Holy Spirit is essential for spiritual growth. The Holy Spirit is the one who grows us to become more and more like Christ.
- c. **Galatians 5:22-23** “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, and self-control.”

- d. Another word for spiritual growth is “sanctification.” The Bible says this is the work of the Spirit.
- e. **1 Corinthians 6:11** “And some of you used to be like this. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.”

4. The Holy Spirit charges us.

- a. Water energizes us. Doctors have found that dehydration zaps your energy, and drinking water gives you energy.
- b. The Holy Spirit energizes us. He charges our batteries. He empowers us to live the Christian life. He empowers us for effective Christian service.
- c. Before His ascension, Jesus told His followers to stay in Jerusalem until He sent the Holy Spirit so that they could be empowered for ministry.
 - i. **Luke 24:49** “And look, I am sending you what my Father promised. As for you, stay in the city until you are empowered, from on high.”
 - ii. **Acts 1:8** “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”
- d. The Holy Spirit empowers us to serve God; to be bold and winsome witnesses. To effectively make disciples and build His church.

5. The Holy Spirit counsels us.

- a. Water has a big impact on the brain.
 - i. It is needed for the efficient manufacture of neurotransmitters, including serotonin.
 - ii. Water is needed for the production of hormones made by the brain, such as melatonin.
 - iii. Water can prevent attention deficit disorder.
 - iv. Water improves attention span.
 - v. Water helps prevent memory loss as we age, reducing the risk of diseases like Alzheimer’s.
 - vi. Water improves focus and mental sharpness.
- b. The Holy Spirit benefits us in a similar way by counseling us. He leads and guides us. He teaches us. He gives us wisdom. He helps us to live in the truth; and to live wisely; and to live in a way that is pleasing to God.

- i. Jesus called Him the “Counselor.” **John 14:16** “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor, to be with you forever.”
 - ii. He teaches us, and reminds us of the teachings of Jesus. **John 14:26** “But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and remind you of everything I have told you.”
 - iii. He guides us to the truth; He helps us understand and apply the Bible. **John 16:13** “When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth.”
- c. Examples:
 - i. The Holy Spirit told Simeon that he would see the Messiah before his death, and then led him to baby Jesus when He was brought to the temple. Lk 2:26
 - ii. The Holy Spirit led Jesus to go into the wilderness to be tempted. Mk 1:10
 - iii. The Holy Spirit compelled Paul to go to Jerusalem. Acts 20:23
- d. These are the blessings of the Spirit. He cleanses us. He comforts us. He changes us. He counsels us. He charges us.
- e. Notice what He doesn’t do: He doesn’t knock us down to the floor. He doesn’t make us laugh uncontrollably. He doesn’t amp up our body heat. He doesn’t give us the holy hiccups. He doesn’t give us convulsions, put us in a stupor, make us look drunk, cause us to fall down, cause us to speak gibberish, cause us to make primal sounds, jump, run around the auditorium, or roll on the ground. Those are things you don’t find in Scripture (John MacArthur). If anyone was Spirit-filled it was Jesus, and we don’t find Him doing any of that.
- f. Much of what you see today in “charismatic,” “Spirit-filled,” and “full-gospel” churches today may be spirit-inspired and spirit-empowered, but it has nothing to do with the Holy Spirit. Perhaps they are being moved by an evil spirit.

4. We must meet certain conditions to enjoy the Spirit’s blessings.

- i. Water can benefit us in many ways, but to benefit from water we must drink it.
- ii. The Holy Spirit can benefit us in many ways, but only if we meet certain conditions.
- iii. Condition 1: Salvation. The first condition that must be met to benefit from the Spirit’s blessings is salvation. You must be saved. The Holy Spirit is only

given to born again Christians. You must repent of your sins and believe the gospel, and Jesus will give you the Holy Spirit.

iv. Condition 2: Surrender. You must fully surrender yourself to Jesus Christ in total obedience to receive the Spirit's power.

1. **Ephesians 5:18** "Be filled with the Spirit."

2. When you get saved, you get baptized with the Spirit. Jesus places the Holy Spirit inside of you. You didn't have ask for it or do anything. It is one of the blessings of salvation. Believers are not commanded to be baptized with the Spirit.

3. But believers are commanded to be filled with the Spirit.

4. What does it mean to be filled with the Spirit? To be filled with the Spirit is to allow the Spirit to control you so that He can fill you with His power.

5. It is possible to possess the Holy Spirit, but not be empowered by the Spirit. It's possible to be Spirit-baptized, but not Spirit-filled.

6. How do we obey the command to be filled or empowered by the Spirit? Total surrender. Give Him total control. The Spirit may be resident, but is He president? You may possess Him, but does He fully possess you? Only until then will you begin to experience the full blessings of the Spirit-filled life.

v. Condition 3: Supplication. You must ask God to fill you with the Spirit once again.

1. **Luke 11:13** "If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him?"

IV. CONCLUSION

1. Most people don't know how much water they need to drink; or they know, but they don't want to drink that much water. Dr. Don Colbert says if you want to know how much water to drink, divide your body weight (in pounds) by two, and then that's how many ounces of water you need to drink each day. So if you weigh 200 pounds, you need to drink 100 ounces of water a day. Another way to think about it is to picture an empty milk gallon jug, fill it three-fourths full, and that's how much water the average person needs to drink a day.
2. But most people are dehydrated. Nelson Searcy wrote, "Three-fourths of Americans walk around chronically dehydrated."
3. I believe that many Christians are spiritually dehydrated because they are living without the power of the Holy Spirit. This is why many Christians look just like unbelievers.
4. We need the power of the Holy Spirit. And it is available to us. We just have to fully surrender, and ask God to fill us once again. To fill us so that we can serve Him, and glorify Him, and grow in Him, and enjoy Him as we should.