

**Doctrinal Discovery Paper:**

**The Holy Spirit Empowers**

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TH 231: The Holy Spirit in The New Testament Church

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John 14:17 references, “this is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you.”<sup>1</sup> Although the disciples knew that Jesus was going away, they recognized that after Christ’s departure, the Holy Spirit would come and empower all believers and they would be able to rise to their new duties.<sup>2</sup> The indwelling of the Holy Spirit is the action by which the Holy Spirit takes up permanent residence in the body of a believer, which then empowers the saints for service. The dictionary definition of *empower* is “to give power or authority to; to authorize.” It can also mean “to enable or permit.” When one is empowered, they are *enabled* or *permitted* to do what their ministry. Thus, making the empowerment of the Holy Spirit a supernatural inheritance that God bestows on his children so that they can live a life empowered for good works.<sup>3</sup>

Hypothetically, one is living in the age of the Spirit, because He is the one who is most prominently present with the believer today empowering them for the work of Christ in many ways.<sup>4</sup> There are many ways that the believer is empowered by the Holy Spirit and one of those ways is through the fruit of the Spirit. Dr. Charles Stanley says it this way, “God's power and only God's power enables us to exhibit love, joy, peace, patience, goodness, kindness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control, which reveal the character of Christ empowering us.” He then goes on to say, “We cannot "harness" the power of the Holy Spirit. This power is not just

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1 John 14:17, NRSV.

2 Henry Barclay Swete, *The Holy Spirit in the New Testament* (Eugene, Or.: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 1998) 83.

3 *Becoming Empowered*, accessed February 12, 2018, <http://www.maxgreinerart.com/becomeempowered.html>.

4 Ernest Swing Williams, *Systematic Theology* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1953.)

for preachers, evangelists, or people who work in special ministry; rather, it is available to every believer who willingly surrenders moment by moment in submission and obedience to the Holy Spirit.”<sup>5</sup> By this stating that believers who allow the Holy Spirit to reside in their hearts, must cultivate spiritually, be empowered by the Spirit, and be obedient to the Word of God.

The impact of the Spirit will present Himself in a mature believer’s life through spiritual gifts and the fruits of the spirit. The fruit of the Holy Spirit is a physical manifestation and attributes of a Christian’s transformed life empowered by the Spirit. Spiritual growth takes place through a life-long process of manifesting the acts of the flesh less and less and producing the fruit of the Spirit more and more. The Holy Spirit produces fruit that can reflect His nature. The fruit of the Spirit develops one’s growth and character.

In the Bible, the book of Galatians indicates that nine graces make up the fruit of the Spirit, which is the lifestyle of those who are indwelt and empowered by the spirit. Galatians 5:22-23 says, “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.”<sup>6</sup> The fruit qualities flow horizontally in ministry to one another.<sup>7</sup> These fruits are surely not the works of our flesh. Our flesh is incapable of producing such fruit, but they are products of the Spirit’s presence in our lives and maturing us as believers. When one becomes more loving, joyful, kind and self-controlled, then you can be assured that the Holy Spirit has empowered one to produce such fruits, and spiritual growth is genuinely occurring in one’s life.

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5 "How Does the Holy Spirit Empower Believers? - Fruit of the Spirit." Jesus.Org. Accessed February 12, 2018. <http://www.jesus.org/following-jesus/fruit-of-the-spirit/how-does-the-holy-spirt-empower-believers.html>.

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Galatians 5:22-23, NRSV.

7 Stanley M. Horton, *Systematic Theology* (Springfield, MO: Logion Press, 2007).

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