

THINKING IT THROUGH:

1. Why is the teaching of the laying on of hands important?
2. Why did the Holy Spirit descend on Jesus in His baptism?
3. In most cases, what did Jesus actually do when He healed?
4. God said that you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Is it a promise, or can God lie?
5. According to the Scriptures, does the Holy Spirit come into a Christian fully and forever?
6. If a Christian says he does not have the Holy Spirit, what can be done?
7. Read John 14:12-13 and Ephesians 3:20-21. Can a Christian do more than Jesus did in His ministry?
8. What is your spiritual gift? If you do not know, what should you do?

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

God's purpose for the laying on of hands was

Day 1: Read the narrative of Jacob, Genesis 48:8-21. What did Jacob do to bless Joseph's sons?

Day 2: Read the narrative of Moses, Exodus 17:8-16. What did Moses do to help gain the victory?

Day 3: Read the account of Joshua's appointment, Numbers 27:12-23. What was the significance of Moses placing his hands on Joshua?

Day 4: Read Acts 10:34-43. What was the Holy Spirit's purpose in descending upon Christ in His baptism?

Day 5: Read Luke 4:33-41. What did Jesus actually do when He healed the people?

Day 6: Read Romans 8:8-9. Do all Christians have the Holy Spirit in them?

Day 7: Read Mark 16:14-20. What is the purpose of laying on of hands?

Memory verse:

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son,

Romans 8:28-29

LESSON 11

THE LAYING ON OF HANDS

JESUS OUR EXAMPLE

The laying on of hands is a basic, foundational teaching found in the Scripture:

*Therefore let us go on toward perfection, leaving behind **the basic teaching about Christ**, and not laying again **the foundation**: repentance from dead works and faith toward God, **instruction about baptisms, laying on of hands**, resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment.* (He.6:1-2 NRSV)

Generally, churches do not teach about this subject. Before we can understand the laying on of hands, we must understand Christ and His ministry. Christ was baptized:

*When **He had been baptized**, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and **He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him**. And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Then **Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil**.* (Mt.3:16-17,4:1 NKJV)

Before Jesus started His public ministry, the Holy Spirit descended on Jesus in His baptism. Why? After all, Jesus was God, and because He had the nature of God, He never sinned:

*Have the same attitude of mind Christ Jesus had: Who, **being in very nature God**, did not consider **equality with God** something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.* (Php.2:5-7 TNIV)

God is one being, existing in three persons. The fullness of God can only be experienced in unity:

*For God was pleased to have **all his fullness dwell in him**.*

(Col 1:19 NIV)

The church gives empowerment and authority to minister through the laying on of hands. In Antioch, there were both prophets and teachers when the Holy Spirit revealed that Paul and Barnabas were to be sent out as missionaries. Those with them prayed and laid their hands on them:

*While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." So after they had fasted and prayed, **they placed their hands on them and sent them off**.* (Ac.13:2-3 NIV)

Paul and Barnabas were prophets or teachers, but once they were sent by the laying on of hands, they were given the gift of an apostle:

*When the **apostles Barnabas and Paul** heard of it, they tore their clothes and rushed out into the crowd.* (Ac.14:14 NRSV)

When Paul and Barnabas were sent on their missionary trip, they received the gift of an apostle through the laying on of hands. Also, consider Timothy's gifting:

*Do not neglect the **gift** that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership.* (1Ti.4:14 NKJV)

The prophetic message identified Timothy's gift, which he received by the elders laying on their hands. Even though the gift was given and identified, Timothy still had to develop it through its use:

*This is why I remind you **to fan into flames the spiritual gift God gave you when I laid my hands on you**.* (2Ti 1:6 NLT)

Therefore, not only has God saved us for a specific purpose, but through the laying on of hands, His Holy Spirit also empowers and equips us with gifts to accomplish His purpose.

Not everyone has the same purpose; hence, not everyone is gifted in the same way. However, each of us is commanded to use his gifts so that the church can grow:

Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. If you speak, you should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If you serve, you should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. (1Pe.4:10-11 TNIV)

God gives us spiritual gifts to serve others. The reason the church is not thriving is that many Christians do not know what gifts they possess, or they do not use their gifts:

And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. (Eph.4:11-13 NKJV)

Only when our compassion for our fellow man moves us into action will we be empowered beyond our imagination. The church is not the whole measure of the fullness of Christ because many people are ignorant of their gifts. We are so ready to accept the status quo, but God did not save us to survive this life but to thrive in this life. He has given us everything we need:

And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. (2Co.9:8 NIV)

All Christians are supposed to have a gift for the building up of His body. In the New Testament, people were empowered in their gifts through the laying on of hands. When it was decided to establish the office of deacon, those in leadership placed their hands on the seven men and prayed over them:

The statement found approval with the whole congregation; and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch. And these they brought before the apostles; and after praying, they laid their hands on them. (Ac.6:5-6 NASB)

The Holy Spirit spiritually connected God the Father with Jesus. After Jesus received the Holy Spirit, He was led into the desert to be tempted. When Jesus came out of the desert, He came in the power of the Holy Spirit and started His ministry:

When the devil had finished every temptation, he left Him until an opportune time. And Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about Him spread through all the surrounding district. And He began teaching in their synagogues and was praised by all. (Lk.4:13-15 NASB)

Some would conclude that Jesus could not be God because it was the Holy Spirit Who gave Him power. However, the persons of God are not identical:

You know what has happened throughout the province of Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached—how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him. (Ac.10:37-38 NIV)

The power of God did not originate in the person of Jesus. To understand how Jesus could be God and yet need the Spirit to grant Him the power to heal is best illustrated in man. Just as God is Father, Son, and Spirit, so man is body, soul, and spirit. Each part of a human being has different functions. Can your soul feel a table? No! Can your body think? No! Only your body can feel the table, and only your soul can think! Does this mean they are not part of a human being because they do not share the same function? No, but it teaches us that each part of a human being is unique unto itself—not all parts have the same function. God is one being, existing in three complex parts, each of Whom have their own function. The power is the function of the Holy Spirit through which Jesus did miracles:

One day, while he was teaching, Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting near by (they had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem); and the power of the Lord was with him to heal. (Lk.5:17 NRSV)

The Scriptures pointedly prove that the power was a function of the Holy Spirit. To say that power to heal came from the Spirit and not from Jesus is incorrect. Jesus was very aware of the power that flowed through Him:

But Jesus said, "Someone deliberately touched me, **for I felt healing power go out from me.**" (Lk.8:46 NLT)

When Jesus cast out demons, it was by the Holy Spirit:

But **if it is by the Spirit of God** that I drive out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. (Mt.12:28 NIV)

The Scriptures state that Christ had the Holy Spirit without measure:

For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God; **for He gives the Spirit without measure.** (Jn.3:34 NASB)

God the Father gave the Spirit without measure to Jesus His Son. The Spirit filled Jesus with the power of God, which Jesus enacted by healing people. Therefore, the three persons of God united in Jesus: the will of the Father and the power of the Spirit working through the person of Jesus. Similarly, the three parts of a man are united in a Christian: the human spirit discerns the will of God and the soul processes and enacts the will of God through the body. Christians and God are both one being consisting of different parts, working toward one purpose:

May the **grace of the Lord Jesus Christ**, and the **love of God**, and the **fellowship of the Holy Spirit** be with you all. (2Co.13:14 NIV)

Grace, love, and fellowship are different attributes. While knowledge, power, and example are different functions:

Who have been **chosen according to the foreknowledge** of God the Father, **through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ** and sprinkling by his blood: Grace and peace be yours in abundance. (1Pe.1:2 NIV)

The Bible records that the power of God by the Holy Spirit came through Jesus. Jesus released the power of God through physical touch. He cleansed the leper by the touch of His hand:

Then **Jesus put out His hand and touched him**, saying, "I am willing; be cleansed." Immediately his leprosy was cleansed. (Mt.8:3 NKJV)

Jesus' hand touched Peter's mother-in-law, causing the fever to leave:

So **He touched her hand, and the fever left her.** And she arose and served them. (Mt.8:15 NKJV)

Jesus' hand touched a blind man, healing him:

They came to Bethsaida. Some people brought a blind man to him and **begged him to touch him.** He took the blind man by the hand and led

As a result, **people brought the sick into the streets and laid them on beds and mats so that at least Peter's shadow might fall on some of them** as he passed by. Crowds gathered also from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing their sick and those tormented by evil spirits, and **all of them were healed.** (Ac.5:15-16 NASB)

Why are not some people healed with the laying on of hands? Does the absence of healing mean God is not faithful to His promise? Consider:

A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself. **That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep.** (1Co.11:27-29 NIV)

God uses sickness to discipline those He loves. For Christians who are not living lives worthy of Him, He allows them to become sick—even die. To lay hands on the sick when God has placed them under discipline is futile. Before elders act, they need to discern whether it is God's will that a person be healed; otherwise, they will be trying to do something that is against the will of God. We are commanded to heal the sick, but timing is important. Elders must discern when to lay on hands, for that person may need to repent from sin; otherwise, he will not be healed. Hence, we are commanded:

Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands, and do not share in the sins of others. Keep yourself pure. (1Ti.5:22 TNIV)

We need to discern the will of God in every situation by listening to His Spirit Who speaks into our hearts. Therefore, Christians have been given the power for healing and casting out of demons through the direct laying on of hands.

THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

God has created each of us for a specific purpose and has given us specific gifts to minister to fellow Christians. Yet many Christians do not display the power of God in their ministry:

There are **different kinds of gifts**, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are **different kinds of service**, but the same Lord. There are **different kinds of working**, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work. **Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given** for the common good. (1Co.12:4-7 TNIV)

Paul was both healed and filled with the Spirit by the laying on of hands. Therefore, if a person has not received the Holy Spirit at his water baptism, he does not need to be baptized again. He only needs a born again Christian to lay his hands on him to receive the Holy Spirit.

THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

When the Holy Spirit comes within a Christian, the power of God dwells in him, and he is given the power to heal by the laying on of hands:

*These miraculous signs will accompany those who believe: They will cast out demons in my name, and they will speak in new languages. They will be able to handle snakes with safety, and if they drink anything poisonous, it won't hurt them. **They will be able to place their hands on the sick, and they will be healed.*** (Mk.16:17-18 NLT)

All believers can lay their hands on sick people and heal them. The New Testament speaks of the power of healing through the laying on of hands:

*It happened that the father of Publius lay sick of a fever and dysentery. Paul went in to him and **prayed, and he laid his hands on him and healed him.** So when this was done, the rest of those on the island **who had diseases also came and were healed.*** (Ac.28:8-9 NKJV)

When Jesus spoke about His miracles, He said that power would be given to His followers:

*Very truly, I tell you, **the one who believes in me** will also do the works that I do and, **in fact, will do greater works than these,** because I am going to the Father.* (Jn.14:12 NRSV)

Jesus made the sick and demon-possessed people whole. How is it possible that we can do even greater things than these? Concerning Paul:

*God did extraordinary miracles through Paul, so that **even handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched him were taken to the sick, and their illnesses were cured and the evil spirits left them.*** (Ac.19:11-12 NIV)

Paul did not need to touch the sick person. At times he only touched a piece of cloth which would be brought to the sick, and they would be healed. Peter, as well, did not always need physical touch. Rather, only his shadow needed to fall on the sick or demon-possessed, and they would be healed:

*him out of the village; and when he had put saliva on his eyes and **laid his hands on him.*** (Mk.8:22-23 NRSV)

When a woman was crippled by a demon, Jesus laid His hands on her, and she was healed:

*A woman was there who had been **crippled by a spirit for eighteen years.** She was bent over and could not straighten up at all. When Jesus saw her, he called her forward and said to her, "Woman,^a you are set free from your infirmity." Then **he put his hands on her, and immediately she straightened up and praised God.*** (Lk.13:10-13 TNIV)

The people knew that healing came through physical contact with Jesus:

*He pleaded earnestly with him, "My little daughter is dying. **Please come and put your hands on her** so that she will be healed and live."* (Mk.5:23 TNIV)

The girl died because Jesus was delayed and arrived too late. However, this did not deter Jesus:

*He took along the child's father and mother and His own companions, and *entered the room where the child was. **Taking the child by the hand,** He said to her, "Talitha kum!" (which translated means, "Little girl, I say to you, get up!"). **Immediately the girl got up and began to walk,** for she was twelve years old.* (Mk.5:40-42 NASB)

The power of God came from the Holy Spirit, but the power was released through Christ by the physical touch of His hand. Since the power came through Christ, many people sought to touch Him for healing:

*A great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon, who came to hear Him and **be healed of their diseases,** as well as **those who were tormented with unclean spirits.** And they were healed. And the whole multitude **sought to touch Him, for power went out from Him and healed them all.*** (Lk.6:17-19 NKJV)

The only requirement for the power of the Holy Spirit to heal is faith. When Jesus went to His home town, He only did a few miracles because of the people's lack of faith:

*Then Jesus told them, "A prophet is honored everywhere except in his own hometown and among his relatives and his own family." And **because of their unbelief,** he couldn't do any mighty miracles among them except to **place his hands on a few sick people and heal them.*** (Mk.6:4-5 NLT)

A person's faith in Jesus allows the power of God to flow to the sick and demon possessed by physical touch:

*Wherever He entered villages, or cities, or countryside, they were laying the sick in the market places, and imploring Him **that they might just touch the fringe of His cloak; and as many as touched it were being cured.*** (Mk.6:56 NIV)

Jesus' common practice was power released through physical touch:

*When the sun was setting, the people brought to Jesus all who had various kinds of sickness, and **laying his hands on each one**, he healed them.* (Lk.4:40 NIV)

In Jesus' ministry, the laying on of hands was used to heal and cast out demons—even raise the dead:

*When the Sabbath came, He began to teach in the synagogue; and the many listeners were astonished, saying, "Where did this man get these things, and what is this wisdom given to Him, and **such miracles as these performed by His hands?**"* (Mk.6:2 NASB)

However, Jesus did not need physical touch to heal. At different times, Jesus was not with the sick or demon-possessed person. He verbally commanded, and the person many miles away was restored to wholeness. The best known example is probably the centurion who did not want Jesus to come to his house:

*The centurion answered, "Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; but **only speak the word, and my servant will be healed.** For I also am a man under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes, and to another, 'Come,' and he comes, and to my slave, 'Do this,' and the slave does it."* (Mt.8:8-9 NRSV)

Therefore, once Jesus was reunited with the Holy Spirit, the power of God for accomplishing the will of the Father came upon Him, and anyone who had physical contact with Him was restored to wholeness.

THE HOLY SPIRIT

Christians are commanded to practice the laying on of hands. Jesus taught that once He ascended back into heaven, every Christian would receive the Spirit:

Anyone who believes in me may come and drink! For the Scriptures declare, 'Rivers of living water will flow from his heart.' (When he said "living water," he was speaking **of the Spirit, who would be given to**

with a baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on Him who would come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus." (Ac.19:3-4 NKJV)

Paul did not dismiss their lack of water baptism, but rather he baptized them into Jesus. However, he did something else; he laid hands on them to receive the Holy Spirit:

*When they heard this, **they were baptized** in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when **Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them**, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied.* (Ac.19:3-4 NKJV)

Another time, the deacon Philip went to Samaria and shared the Gospel. Many were baptized with water, but none received the Spirit with power:

*When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to Samaria. When they arrived, **they prayed for the new believers there that they might receive the Holy Spirit**, because the Holy Spirit had not yet come on any of them; they had simply been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. Then **Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.*** (Ac.8:14-17 TNIV)

Only after Peter and John laid their hands on the Samaritans did they receive the Holy Spirit. Receiving the Holy Spirit through the laying on of hands is not a gift or ability that can be attained. A man named Simon wanted the ability to lay his hands on people and give the Spirit:

*Now when **Simon saw that the Spirit was given through the laying on of the apostles' hands**, he offered them money, saying, "Give me also **this power** so that anyone on whom I **lay my hands** may receive the Holy Spirit." But Peter said to him, "May your silver perish with you, **because you thought you could obtain God's gift with money!**"* (Ac.8:18-20 NRSV)

The only way a person can be empowered by the Holy Spirit is to give the Spirit control of his life. When the apostle Paul accepted the Lord, God sent Ananias to lay his hands on him:

*So Ananias went and entered the house. **He laid his hands on Saul** and said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on your way here, has sent me **so that you may** regain your sight **and be filled with the Holy Spirit.**" And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and his sight was restored. Then he got up and **was baptize.*** (Ac.9:17-18 NRSV)

Therefore, the same Holy Spirit Who lived in Jesus lives in us today, and with Him, we receive the power of God.

THE LAYING ON OF HANDS

If the church is functioning as it should, then the Christians will be mature. They will attain the fullness of God because God lives in them:

*It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, **so that the body of Christ may be built up** until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and **become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.*** (Eph.4:11-13 NIV)

However, many Christians do not experience a Spirit-filled life. They do not know the presence of Christ within them because they struggle to live the Christian life by the power of their will. The Christian life is all about Christ living in us by His Spirit:

*And this is the secret: **Christ lives in you.** This gives you assurance of sharing his glory.* (Co.1:27 NLT)

If you are not being transformed from a sinner to saint (growing in Christ's likeness), then you do not have the Spirit:

*But you are **not controlled** by your sinful nature. You **are controlled by the Spirit** if you have **the Spirit of God** living in you. (And remember that those who do not have the Spirit of Christ living in them do not belong to him at all.)* (Ro.8:9 NLT)

The Spirit of Christ is the Spirit of God, for Christ is God. We have the same Holy Spirit living in us that Christ had. However, we must realize that some people in the church do not have the Holy Spirit. In Asia Minor, Paul met some disciples who were missing something:

*Paul, having passed through the upper regions, came to Ephesus. And finding some disciples he said to them, "**Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?**" So they said to him, "**We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit.**"* (Ac.19:1-2 NKJV)

When these followers did not know of the Holy Spirit, Paul's first question was concerning their baptism because everyone who is baptized will receive the Holy Spirit:

*And he said to them, "**Into what then were you baptized?**" So they said, "Into John's baptism." Then Paul said, "John indeed baptized*

***everyone** believing in him. But the Spirit had not yet been given, because Jesus had not yet entered into his glory.)* (Jn.8:38-39 NLT)

Since the disciples could not receive the Holy Spirit until Jesus ascended, the Christian experience with the Holy Spirit is very different than the Old Testament experience. Before Jesus ascended into heaven, He gave His disciples the Holy Spirit in the same manner as the prophets had received the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament:

*And when He had said this, **He breathed on them**, and said to them, "**Receive the Holy Spirit**".* (Jn.20:22 NKJV)

The disciples received the Holy Spirit, and yet later, before His ascension, He speaks of a deeper experience of the Spirit:

*And see, I am sending upon you **what my Father promised**; so stay here in the city **until you have been clothed with power from on high.**"* (Lk.24:49 NRSV)

Jesus told His disciples that in the same way that He was clothed with power from heaven, they also would, but they had to wait for God's power:

*And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to **wait for the Promise of the Father**, "which," He said, "you have heard from Me; for John truly baptized with water, but **you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit** not many days from now."* (Ac.1:4-5 NKJV)

Christians are clothed with power when they are baptized with the Holy Spirit. At Pentecost, God promised that if people repent and are baptized, they will receive the Holy Spirit:

*Peter replied, "Repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And **you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.**"* (Ac 2:38 NIV)

This event is a fulfillment of the Old Testament when God promised to pour out His Spirit on all His people:

*In the last days, God says, **I will pour out my Spirit on all people.*** (Ac.2:17 NLT)

Only after Jesus died—a sinless man for sinful people—could God pour out the Holy Spirit on all His people:

***God raised Jesus from the dead**, and we are all witnesses of this. Now **he is exalted to the place of highest honor in heaven**, at God's right hand. And the Father, as he had promised, **gave him the Holy Spirit to pour out upon us**, just as you see and hear today.* (Ac.2:32-33 NLT)

Jesus cleansed our hearts from sin so that God could pour out His Spirit into us:

He washed away our sins, giving us a new birth and new life through the Holy Spirit. He generously poured out the Spirit upon us through Jesus Christ our Savior. (Ti.3:5-6 NLT)

When the Holy Spirit lives in us, we are born again and live a totally new life. God prophesied that He would first give us a new heart and a new spirit, after which He would place the Holy Spirit in us:

*I will **give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you**; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will **put my Spirit in you and move you** to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws. (Eze.36:26-27 TNIV)*

The previous prophecy was fulfilled at Pentecost. God said that mankind would die the day they ate the forbidden fruit. That very day, man's spirit died. After Jesus ascended into heaven, Christians not only received a new, pure heart, which was prepared to receive the Holy Spirit, but their spirits were also re-born. Through this spiritual rebirth, Christians become one with the Holy Spirit:

*But the person who is joined to the Lord **is one spirit with him**. (1Co.6:16-17 NLT)*

The oneness of spirit, our spirit with God's Spirit, is unique in that we are now seated in the heavenly realms in Christ (Eph.2:6), and Christ now lives in us (Ga.2:20; Co.3:3-4). The same Holy Spirit that came upon Christ, lives in us and fills us with the power of God:

***All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit** and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability. (Ac.2:4 NRSV)*

The Holy Spirit lives in us. This experience is different from the way that the Holy Spirit came upon the Old Testament prophets. David calls out:

***Create in me a clean heart**, O God, and put **a new and right spirit within me**. Do not cast me away from your presence, and **do not take your Holy Spirit from me**. (Ps.51:10-11 NRSV)*

The Holy Spirit comes to indwell a Christian forever:

*And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counsellor **to be with you for ever**—the Spirit of truth. (Jn.14:16-17 NIV)*

Because the Holy Spirit came with power forever and because He has the power to overcome, He has secured the Christian's life:

*It is God who enables us, along with you, to stand firm for Christ. He has commissioned us, and he has identified us as his own **by placing the Holy Spirit in our hearts** as the first instalment **that guarantees everything he has promised us**. (2Co.1:21-22 NLT; 2Co.5:5, Eph.1:13-14)*

There is no one greater than the Holy Spirit:

*Little children, you are from God, and **have conquered them**; for **the one who is in you is greater** than the one who is in the world. (1Jn.4:4 NRSV)*

Christ's Spirit lives in us and will keep us in Him until the end of time:

***I am with you always, to the end of the age**. (Mt.28:20 NRSV)*

The Spirit is a person and is promised to live in us until Christ returns. Since He is a person, He can only be in, or not in, you. A person cannot have half of the Holy Spirit. Since the Holy Spirit lives in Christians, then Christians contain His fullness. Are you full of the Spirit? Deacons are supposed to be full of the Spirit:

*Therefore, brethren, select from among you seven men of good reputation, **full of the Spirit** and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task. . The statement found approval with the whole congregation; and they chose Stephen, **a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit**, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch. (Ac 6:3, 5 NASB)*

Barnabas was full of the Holy Spirit:

*For he was a good man, **full of the Holy Spirit** and of faith. And a great many people were added to the Lord. (Ac.11:24 NIV)*

The deacon Stephen was also known to be full of the Holy Spirit:

*But **Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit**, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. (Ac.7:55 TNIV)*

The Holy Spirit is God; if He lives in us, we have the fullness of God:

*—that **you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God**. (Eph.3:19 NIV)*

Jesus promised that we would experience fullness:

*I have come **that they may have life, and have it to the full**. (Jn.10:10 NIV)*

The normal Christian life is to become mature and experience the fullness of God. Christ is God, and through Christ living in us by His Spirit, we experience the fullness of God:

***For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and in Christ you have been brought to fullness**. (Co.2:8-9 TNIV)*