

Adult Bible Study

in Simplified English

Living in the Spirit

Lesson 4: It's Our Turn

Bible Text

Acts 1:8

Memory Verse

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes into your life. ..." (Acts 1:8a)

Word List

equip: to prepare someone for a particular activity

distract: to cause someone to stop thinking about or paying attention to someone or something and to think about or pay attention to someone or something else instead

take turns: to do or use something by doing or using it one after another in order to share the responsibility or opportunity of doing or using it

We teach young children to "**take turns**." On the playground, one child swings for a while. Then we ask that child to get off the swing and allow another child to swing. In school, one person speaks at a time. We ask children to raise their hands to show that they want to speak. Children take turns in their games when each child has a chance to play.

Why do we do this? We want to teach our children to be kind to one another. We want everyone to have a turn. And we want to keep order. When everyone tries to swing, no one gets to swing. When everyone speaks, no one can hear.

The Old Testament tells the story of God's relationship with His children. God made man and woman and put them in a perfect garden. They walked with God. And then they sinned. They brought death to the beautiful world that God had made. But God made a promise. He would send Someone to fix the sin problem and end the death.

Then God began to take turns giving the message of His promise to one person at a time. We find this promise repeated again and again throughout the Old Testament. God gave pieces of the picture to different people at different times. He sent the Holy Spirit to give them power and wisdom. And with the Spirit's help, they shared the message with others. Their message was, "Someone is coming Who will save us."

Finally, God sent John the Baptist to prepare people for Jesus. John knew Who Jesus was, and he told others. He said, "Look! There He is! That is the One I have been talking about." And John pointed to Jesus. It was John's turn to be a witness.

And now it is our turn. But our message is a bit different. We do not say,

“Someone is coming.” Instead, we say, “Jesus has come.” Now we get to tell what Jesus has done for the world. Each of us has our own story to tell about what Jesus has done for us. And we, too, have the Holy Spirit to help us. The Holy Spirit gives us the power to tell what we know. And He sends us to speak the truth to our world. Now it is our turn to be the witnesses.

The Witness of the Spirit

God promised to send Someone to save us from our sins. Then Jesus came. And Jesus did everything that God said He would do. Then Jesus made a new promise. He promised to send Someone in His place. Jesus said, “The Helper (Holy Spirit) will tell about Me when He comes. I will send Him to you from the Father. He is the Spirit of Truth and comes from the Father” (John 15:26). The Holy Spirit is a witness to the truth about Jesus. He is like a bridge between us and God. He tells us what God wants us to know.

But listening to the Spirit is different from listen to another person. We do not hear Him through our ears. We hear Him through our hearts. We must make special efforts to listen closely. How do we do that? We pray. We ask God to speak to us. And then we listen by turning our minds and hearts toward Him. We turn off the noises around us. These might be noises to our eyes and ears like the

radio, the TV, our phones, or the internet. Or these might be noises in our minds like thoughts that **distract** us or worry us. Listening to the Holy Spirit is different from what we are used to. We must practice to learn how to listen. But the Spirit rewards our efforts by speaking to us in power and love.

The Power of the Spirit (Acts 1:8a) **8a “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes into your life....”**

We know that God has power. The Bible is full of stories that show God’s power to do amazing things. We know that Jesus has power. We have the stories of the many great works that Jesus did. But what kind of power does the Spirit have?

The Holy Spirit is one with God. So He was with God in the very beginning. Genesis 1:2 says that the Spirit helped to create the world. The word that the Bible uses for the Holy Spirit can be translated to mean “energy.” The Spirit was the energy that caused life to begin. Yes, the Holy Spirit is very powerful. He has the power to create life.

He also has the power to bring life back from the dead. The Spirit gave Jesus the power to heal people who were sick and dying. And it was the Spirit who raised Jesus after three days in the grave. Only a very great power can do something like that!

And now that same Spirit lives in us. Romans 8:11 says, “The Holy Spirit raised Jesus from the dead. If the same Holy Spirit lives in you, He will give life to your bodies in the same way.” The Holy Spirit gives us life. Romans 8:5 tells us that “those who let the Holy Spirit tell them what to do are under His power.” The Holy Spirit gives us the power to change. He changes us from the inside out. He makes our hearts tender toward God so that we will obey Him. He makes our hearts tender toward other people so that we will love them. We grow in qualities of love, peace, and joy. We call these qualities the fruits of the Spirit.

The changes in our hearts lead to changes in our actions. The Holy Spirit gives us the power to serve God in obedience. And He gives us the power to serve God’s church. The Spirit **equips** us by giving each of us different abilities. Some people become good leaders with the help of the Holy Spirit.

Things to Think About

1. How has the Spirit changed you to make you more like Jesus? What fruits of the Spirit are growing in your life?
2. How has the Spirit equipped you to serve God through His church?
3. What truth do you have to tell about what Jesus has done in your life?
4. How do you feel about telling your story? What do you need to do to be ready when your turn comes?

Others become good teachers. Some are given special wisdom about the future. And others are good at speaking words of comfort. We call all of these different abilities “gifts.” They are gifts of the Spirit because the power to do them comes from Him.

The Sending of the Spirit (Acts 1:8b)
8b “...You will tell about Me in the city of Jerusalem and over all the countries of Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth.”

The Holy Spirit changes us and gives us gifts for a special purpose. We have a job to do. The Spirit is a witness to the truth about Jesus. And so are we. Jesus said to His followers, “You are to tell what you have seen” (Luke 24:48). The Holy Spirit sends us out to do the same thing.

What do we tell? We tell what Jesus has done for us. He came and showed us how to live with the Spirit. Then He died to save us from our sins. And He sent the Spirit to guide us through our lives. We each have a story of the special way Jesus has touched our lives. We all have something to tell.

Why do we go? We go because we love Jesus. We are thankful for what He has done for us. We go because we love other people. Others need to know what Jesus can do for them. They need the chance to hear the truth. And we go because the Spirit tells us to

go. We obey the Spirit because He speaks for God. We obey the Spirit because He gives us the power to do it.

Things to Remember

The Holy Spirit lives in everyone who is a follower of Jesus. The Spirit is a witness of the truth about Jesus. He speaks to us through our hearts. He tells us the truth we need to hear about Jesus and about ourselves.

Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to live in us and to give us power. The Spirit has the power to create life, to bring life back from the dead, to change us, and to equip us. We should all want that power in our lives!

And now it is our turn to tell the story. The story began long ago when sin entered the world. Many people have gone before us telling of God's plan to save us. Now we get to take a turn. We have a story to tell that the world needs to hear. Let us do our part well. The Spirit will give us the power to go and tell. We must simply listen and obey.

Acts 1:8

8 "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes into your life. You will tell about Me in the city of Jerusalem and over all the countries of Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth."

Genesis 1:1-2

1 In the beginning God made from nothing the heavens and the earth.

2 The earth was an empty waste and darkness was over the deep waters. And the Spirit of God was moving over the top of the waters.

Philippians 3:10-11

10 I want to know Him. I want to have the same power in my life that raised Jesus from the dead. I want to understand and have a share in His sufferings and be like Christ in His death.

11 Then I may be raised up from among the dead.

Galatians 5:22-23

22 But the fruit that comes from having the Holy Spirit in our lives is: love, joy, peace, not giving up, being kind, being good, having faith, 23 being gentle, and being the boss over our own desires. The Law is not against these things.

Romans 12:6

6 We all have different gifts that God has given to us by His loving-favor. We are to use them.

1 Corinthians 12:4

4 There are different kinds of gifts. But it is the same Holy Spirit Who gives them.