



# Talk 9 – Weekend Talk 1 – Who is the Holy Spirit?

Duration 43 Minutes  
HTB Transcripts

## Key:

**Personal Story / Testimony** that Nicky Gumbel tells in the classic Alpha talk. These may be replaced with a live speaker's personal story or the speaker may tell the story about Nicky in the same way Nicky tells stories about others.

**Story** that Nicky tells about someone else (about a friend or a story he heard or read about).

**Quotes** are key to the talk to emphasise a point and to enable guests to engage and relate to a point made. There is now a way that people can seek permission to omit or replace quotes used in the original talks. A quote should be replaced with something equally effective to maintain the balance of teaching, story, and references to other information sources.

**Key Quotes** will need approval to change (these will be identified by a comment in the left column). Please email [publications@alpha.org](mailto:publications@alpha.org) with your request.

**Key Bible Passages** are identified and you may wish to display these visually for your guests.

**Red type** identifies a part of the key teaching text that may be removed or altered for contextualisation.

Text left untouched is the standard key message content of the Alpha talk.

NOTE: Key elements of this script are: personal stories, humour and reference to media / popular culture to draw the guests in to engage with the talk.

Parts of the talk may need to be contextualised for other contexts or cultures but make sure you maintain the key elements of humour and personal testimony. Notice how quotes, and stories are used throughout to add emphasis to the main points of the talk (theology and testimony).

NOTE: Testimony, humour and solid biblical teaching are key to the Holy Spirit sessions. Some of the humour and testimony in the script are quite culturally specific so you may chose to adapt this to work in your context, replace with your own stories or remove them. However, before removing any stories please consider that the biblical content is key to the talk and the stories you choose should help to draw the guests in to this key teaching.

**KEY:** Personal Story Story Quotes Key Quotes Key Bible Passages

*[You may use this story or you may use your own story about yourself or someone you know. Tell of how a first experience of the Holy Spirit resulted in a transformed life.]*

Nigel Skelsey started out life wanting to be involved in the whole photographic world. But the only job he could get as his first job was at the very, very bottom — he was basically the tea-boy in a photographic company.

And what happened was this photographic company got itself into problems, and everybody was either sacked or resigned — including the editor and managing director. So Nigel became the managing director! And he turned this company completely round — he turned it from an ailing company into a very successful company winning awards all over the world.

But it kind of didn't satisfy him. He thought, 'Well, maybe I'll move, and move to another company.' So he moved to another company that was also in trouble, and he made that more successful than the company he had left. And it still didn't satisfy him. He thought, 'Well, maybe I should set up my own company.' So he set up his own photographic company, and he made that more successful than the other two companies.

And it still didn't satisfy him. He thought, 'Well, what I would really love to do is to be the pictures editor of a major national newspaper.' And he became the pictures editor of *The Sunday Telegraph*.

And in one sense he had absolutely everything. He had a beautiful wife, two great sons; he had a wonderful home; he was driving a Porsche 911 — and yet he said deep down he was unhappy. And actually he found that he hated himself. And he hated his neighbour as much as he hated himself! And he discovered that his nickname at the Sunday Telegraph was 'The Beast'!

And he was on holiday one time and he heard about Alpha. And in particular he heard about the Saturday evening of the weekend and the possibility to experience the Holy Spirit, the love of God being poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit. And he thought, 'That is what I want.'

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So when he came back to England he came on Alpha, but really he was just sitting through the course because he wanted to come on the Weekend and he wanted the Saturday night of the Weekend! So he came on the Weekend, and during the morning talks he was just longing for the Saturday evening. Saturday evening talk, he was just longing for the bit when we invite the Holy Spirit to come.

And, as he said, the more he sat through my talks, the more depressed he got! And after the Weekend he wrote me a long letter, his entire life history. And he described what happened to him during the Weekend. He said, 'I'll never forget that final session. I felt as though I was being torn in two. Halfway through I just couldn't stand it any more — the prize was so near, and you were getting there so slowly.'

'I literally wanted to scream out, "Do it now! Do it now! I can't hold out any longer." I'm not exaggerating when I say I was in agony.' — Quite a common experience when people are listening to my talks!

'Then the Holy Spirit came, and oh the relief! Do you know, for the first time in my life I feel normal. It seems a strange thing to say, but it keeps hitting me just how normal I feel. I also feel loved. I feel accepted for who I am, and I feel free. Terribly clichéd, isn't it, but I feel oh so free.'

'Yesterday I read some words of Paul in Philippians which express so deeply how I now feel about my achievements of the last fifteen years: **"For whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I've lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in him."**

*[You may contextualise the text in red according to the patterns and perceptions in the history of the church in your context/culture.]*

That was the experience of the Holy Spirit. But who is the Holy Spirit? **For a long time, I think, in the church the Holy Spirit was really rather ignored — there was a big concentration on God the Father and on God the Son. And sometimes, I think, also he's been misunderstood.**

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Maybe something to do with the fact that in the authorised versions of the Bible the name that he's given is the Holy Ghost, and 'Ghost' sounds kind of a little bit creepy, a bit eerie — almost sort of something almost like supernatural evil.

And of course God is supernatural good, the Holy Spirit is supernatural good, and we need the supernatural. But I think because of the slightly different translation, people were a little bit — a little bit sort of wary.

One woman said to her vicar, 'Vicar, we don't want anything supernatural happening in this church!'

*[You may share experiences of these attitudes of the Holy Spirit in your context, in which case you may use this story. Alternatively you might replace with a humorous story, which describes the challenge in your context.]*

And also I think sometimes he's been resisted. I heard of one church in Central London that was a very formal church and didn't really give much place to the Holy Spirit. And there was a woman who had just become a Christian, and she was just really excited about what she'd experienced, about the Holy Spirit. And in the middle of the service she shouted out, 'Hallelujah!' And the churchwarden was standing at the back, and he came and he tapped her on the shoulder and he said, 'Madam, you mustn't say that here!' And she said, 'But I'm so excited!' she said, 'I've got religion!' He said, 'Well, you didn't get it here, madam.'



## Talk Point 1

HE WAS INVOLVED IN CREATION

The Holy Spirit is not a kind of twentieth century phenomenon. He has been around literally since the creation of the world. And that's where I want to start looking this morning — at the Creation account. What we're going to do in these two sessions today is we're going to have a look at the history of the Holy Spirit through the Bible.

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We're going to start with Genesis 1, verse 1, and we're going to go the whole way through the Bible right until the very last verse of the Bible — Revelation chapter 22. We'll leave out one or two verses in between!

So if you'd like to turn to Genesis 1, verse 1. The Holy Spirit was involved in creation:

'In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.'

Like a bird hovering over her nest, waiting. And the Spirit of God was about to bring something new into being. The whole Trinity were involved in creation. God the Father, the Creator, created the world through Jesus by his Spirit.

And here the Spirit of God is hovering, waiting to bring something new. The Holy Spirit brings – out of the chaos he brings the cosmos; out of disorder he brings order; out of confusion, harmony; out of deformity he brings beauty; out of oldness he brings newness.

And here the Spirit of God was hovering, waiting to bring new things, just as the Holy Spirit is here today — waiting to bring new things to our lives. When the Spirit comes, he always brings newness — new attitudes, new desires, new ways of worship.

*[You may delete this if it is applicable or humorous in your context. Or you may replace with another humorous example of people who resist change.]*

And I think we are conservative, with a small 'c', by nature. Sometimes we're quite cautious about change — especially, I think, probably in the church.

I heard of one churchwarden who'd been the churchwarden in that parish for forty-six years, and someone said to him, 'Goodness me, over those forty-six years you must have seen so many changes.' He said, 'Yes, I have, and I have resisted every single one of them!'

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One vicar I heard about, he wanted to move his piano from one side of the church to the other, but he knew there would be great resistance to such a dramatic move. So what he decided to do was to move it one foot every week, and by the end of the year it was the other side of the church!

But the Holy Spirit is always wanting to bring new things because he's the Creator Spirit. Then, next, he brings life to human beings. Genesis 2, verse 7:

'... the LORD God formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.'

The Hebrew word for the Holy Spirit in Genesis 1, verse 1 is *rûah* [רוח]. And it's a very similar word to the word that's used here for 'breath'. And in fact generally speaking the word 'breath' in the Old Testament is translated by the Hebrew word *rûah* — the same word for 'breath' and 'Spirit'.

So that, just as when God gave human beings physical life, he breathed on them his *rûah*. So when he gives them spiritual life, he breathes on them the Spirit of God. Jesus breathed on the disciples and said, 'Receive the Holy Spirit.'

And one of the things that happens when the Spirit of God comes to live within ... Of course, the Spirit of God is all of our Creator, but he has a special relationship with those who are Christians, those who have given their lives to Christ — the Holy Spirit comes to live within them, to breathe within them the breath of life.

Sometimes you can almost see it on people's faces. You can see almost — sometimes there's almost like a deadness in people's eyes, and then the Spirit of God comes to live within them and you can see it's like life comes into the person's face, their expression, almost a physical expression.

The same with churches. Some churches seem to be very dry and dusty, and then the Spirit comes, and there's new life.

**KEY:** Personal Story Story Quotes Key Quotes Key Bible Passages



## Talk Point 2

HE CAME UPON PARTICULAR PEOPLE AT PARTICULAR TIMES  
FOR PARTICULAR TASKS

In the Old Testament the Spirit of God came upon particular people at particular times for particular tasks. So, for example, on Bezalel — Exodus chapter 31, verses 1-5:

‘Then the Lord said to Moses, “See I have chosen Bezalel son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, and I have filled him with the Spirit of God, with skill, ability and knowledge in all kinds of crafts — to make artistic designs for work in gold, silver and bronze, to cut and set stones, to work in wood, and to engage in all kinds of crafts.”’

So here the Spirit of the Lord came upon a person for artistic work. And you see it today. When the Spirit of God comes upon a man or woman, it gives something different to what they create.

Now, this is for artistic work; but it applies to any kind of work. The Spirit of God can bring a different dimension to our work. Not everybody is called to full-time Christian work, but all of us are called to be filled with the Spirit at work.

So the Spirit of God comes on particular people — on Bezalel, and then on Gideon for leadership — Judges chapter 6, verses 14 and 15:

‘The Lord turned to him [that is, to Gideon] and said, “Go in the strength you have and save Israel out of Midian’s hand. Am I not sending you?”

“But Lord,” Gideon asked, “how can I save Israel? My clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my family.”’

The nation had been overrun by the Midianites, the country was in desperate need, and God sends Gideon to be a leader. And Gideon says, ‘Oh, Lord, you’ve picked the wrong person! I can never do this. ‘How could I save Israel? My clan’s the weakest, and I’m the least in my family.’

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He felt inadequate, ill-equipped. And God says to him, 'No, I want you to go. I want you to go and set the people free.' Now, how can he do that?

Judges chapter 6, verse 34: 'Then the Spirit of the Lord came upon Gideon' — and that is what turned him into a great leader.

And again, this is the amazing thing about the Holy Spirit. When the Holy Spirit comes upon a man or a woman, he can transform us.

Then on Samson for power and strength — Judges chapter 15, verse 14. Still this is particular people at particular times for particular tasks. Here the Spirit of the Lord came upon Samson — second half of verse 14:

'The Spirit of the Lord came upon him [that is, Samson] in power. The ropes on his arms became like charred flax, and the bindings dropped from his hands.'

So often we find that what is described in the Old Testament in a physical way is true in the New Testament in a spiritual way. So here it is that Samson was bound physically. And when the Spirit of God came upon him, he was able to break free.

And so it is that many of us find ourselves bound by habits, patterns of thought, addictions. And when the Spirit of God comes upon us, he enables us to break free. Sometimes it's obvious things — drugs or excess alcohol addiction; but it can be other things — bad temper, envy, jealousy, anger, immorality of some kind, impurity of some kind. And the Spirit of God wants to set us free.

Some people, it's instantaneous, and some areas of our lives it may be instantaneous. Others, it's a lifelong process of being set free. But the Holy Spirit comes to give us strength, to live the kind of lives that deep down we're longing to lead.

And then Isaiah for prophecy. Isaiah chapter 61, verses 1-3:

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'The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the LORD'S favour and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, and provide for those who grieve in Zion—to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair.'

Prophecy in the Bible is not so much foretelling; it's more forth-telling.

'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,  
because the Lord has anointed me  
to preach good news to the poor ...'  
— to bring a message of hope to those who are poor —  
' ... to bind up the broken-hearted,  
to proclaim freedom for the captives' — to make a difference to our society.

*[You may personalise or reword this to make the same point.]*

One of the things I love more than anything else is going into the prisons! I mean, 'enjoy' is the wrong word, of course. But it is the most fulfilling, enriching experience. It's an amazing thing to see people who are physically in prison set free in their hearts by the Spirit of God, by Jesus Christ.

My experience has been often that those people who are physically in prison but know Christ are more free than those who are out of prison but in captivity inwardly.

The experience of the Holy Spirit is not just that we should have some 'nice, warm feeling in our hearts and feel good!' The experience of the Spirit is in order that we should go out and make a difference to our world. To see the transformation of our society.

And the interesting thing to me is in the Old Testament, whereas the Spirit only comes on particular people at particular times with a particular task for them to do, every time he does it something happens as a result.

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And as we go on through the Old Testament there is a rising sense of anticipation: that God is going to do something even more amazing. And this is referred to as 'the promise of the Father'. In one sense you could sum up the whole Old Testament in one word: 'promise'.



## Talk Point 3

HE WAS PROMISED BY THE FATHER

So what exactly is this promise? Would you like to turn to Jeremiah chapter 31, verse 33?:

“This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after that time,” declares the LORD. “I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people.

No longer will they teach their neighbours, and say to one another, ‘Know the LORD,’ because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest,” declares the LORD.

“For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.”

Under the old covenant, the Old Testament, the people of God were given the law. And the law was written on tablets of stone. And they looked at these laws and they said, ‘Wow, they’re great laws — don’t kill, don’t steal, don’t commit adultery, don’t covet, don’t want things that belong to somebody else.’ They said, ‘These are great laws. If we lived like this, we’d have a great society.’

And then they tried to live like that, and they found they couldn’t. And so the law, instead of becoming a blessing, it was just this great burden on them — they were trying desperately to keep it, but they were failing constantly.

And God says: ‘I’m going to do something new. This is my promise. Instead of the law being outside — something that you are trying to keep but fail,’ he said, ‘I’m going to put it inside,

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so that you really want to do it, it comes from your hearts.'

It's a bit like different attitudes to jobs. Some people have jobs that they hate.

**I think in my life I've had jobs that I hate and jobs that I love.**

And you have a different attitude depending on which it is.

*[Try to personalise this example in order to make the same point that doing the will of God will become something that you love to do – not like trying to stick to something, (eg a job) that you hate to do.]*

One of the first jobs that I had was digging roads. I put in North Sea Gas in Sloane Square. I worked for this company, and I really actually quite enjoyed digging. It's quite fun, digging, although I was on this sort of gang where — there were a whole mixture of people, but most of them were quite old, but incredibly fit and brilliant at their job.

What you did is you'd dig down these holes and you have a wheelbarrow on the road and you're throwing up the dirt. And these guys were amazing — they could just go in a straight line, throwing up the dirt. And of course as you get lower and lower in the hole it gets harder to throw up the dirt into the wheelbarrow. And not only could I not keep a straight line, but I found that as I threw it up about 10 per cent went into the wheelbarrow and the rest of it came down on my head!

But I actually quite enjoyed the digging. What I didn't enjoy was this: in those days it was kind of much more unionised and there were some bad practices, and we used to have two weeks to do the job, so to speak — but it only took us two days to dig out the hole. So we had to spend five days delaying. And those five days, basically they call it 'sitting on your shovel' — you just sat on your shovel all day! And you waited until the very last minute and so you could do overtime at the weekend.

And then again, you'd do the same when you came to fill in the hole, once the gas had been put in — it only took then half a day to fill it in, but you had to wait four days sitting on

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your shovel before you actually filled it in so you could do it at a weekend and get overtime.

And so this sitting on your shovel, it was the most boring thing I have ever done, all day! So I would come in at the very last minute. The moment it was lunchtime, I'd go off and have lunch, and I'd come back at the — and sometimes I didn't even come back on time because it was just so boring! It was so hard to keep the rules, because I hated my job.

Now I'm very blessed — I have a job that I love! I don't even know if there are any rules, but if there are any rules, I suspect if there's a contract somewhere, I probably have kept the rules, but it's not because I want to keep the contract — it's because I love what I do.

And God says, 'It's going to be like that. You're not going to keep the rules because you have to keep the rules; it's because you love it, because this comes from your heart. I'm going to put my law on the inside.'

How does he do this? How can the promise of the Father be fulfilled? In Ezekiel 36:26, God says this:

'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. I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.'

That's how he does it — by the Holy Spirit coming to live within us.

I remember Jackie Pullinger coming to speak once at our local church. Jackie's an amazing person — I've spoken about her already.

At age 21 she went to the Walled City in Hong Kong, which was an area of 60,000 people living in an area where there was no law, where the prostitutes operated, where the gangs operated, where the drugs were bought and sold.

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And she went as a young woman aged 21 on her own, and she started to minister in this very dangerous place. And she saw — and still is seeing — people coming to Christ, people being set free from drug addiction.

When she came to speak, she started her talk by saying this. She said, ‘God wants to give us soft hearts and hard feet.’ And she said, ‘The trouble with most of us is that we have hard hearts and soft feet.’

By ‘soft hearts’ she meant a heart of compassion, of love; and hard feet — feet that are willing to go anywhere. And she’s demonstrated that in her life. There’s nothing more moving than seeing this — and I’ve seen it on several occasions — Jackie ministering to someone who’s a drug addict, or someone who’s really messed up their life. You can see this extraordinary compassion, this love in her eyes, in her expression. She has a soft heart. But she’s tough — she’s willing to go anywhere, to do anything.

To whom does this promise apply? To whom is this promise going to be fulfilled? Joel chapter 2, verse 28 — this is what God says:

‘For afterwards, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy [it’s regardless of sex], your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions [it’s regardless of age]. Even on my servants [it’s regardless of background, race, colour, rank], both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days.’ — it’s for everyone!

*[You may use this story or replace it with a different story.]*

I remember one time I went to speak at a church. It was a Baptist church — I think it was called Stopsley Baptist — and I think it was Pentecost Sunday. Anyway, at the end of the service we invited the Holy Spirit to come and to fill people there.

And I remember just this extraordinary scene as people were filled with the Holy Spirit. What struck me particularly was two people on whom the Spirit came with particular power — so much so that they were actually lying on the floor. They were right in front of me

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here. One was a little old lady with white hair. I don't think she'd mind me saying she was an old lady, because I met her daughter at the end, and her daughter was 75 years of age!

So there was this white-haired old lady lying on the floor, just being filled with the Holy Spirit. And next to her was an eight-year-old boy, who was just laughing and obviously having an amazing time with God. It was a very unusual laugh — it's a laugh I've never heard before or since! But it was — I think 'sweet' is the best way to describe it!

Some time later his mother wrote to me, and she said this about her son: 'He had been quite difficult, bad-tempered and naughty on occasion. Since his encounter with the Spirit he's become a very different person. Much sunnier, more helpful, kinder, anxious to please. Obviously he still has his moments! But he is different. Not something a child of eight can sustain in his own strength over any period of time. It was an amazing night, with God touching many of my friends as well as my husband, daughter, two sons and myself in powerful and what can only be described as refreshing and equipping ways.'

On all people. The promise of the Father. Yet this promise remained unfulfilled. The people were waiting. And they waited and they waited. They waited for hundreds of years! And then, with the birth of Jesus, it's like a trumpet sounds. And everybody connected with the birth of Jesus is filled with the Holy Spirit. Would you like to turn to Luke chapter 1, verse 15?

John the Baptist, who was to prepare the way for Jesus and announce his birth — 'he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even from birth'.

Mary, the mother of Jesus — Luke 1, verse 35. The angel said:

'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.'

Elizabeth: the moment that she came into the presence of Jesus, still in his mother's womb — verse 41:

'When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.'

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Even Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist — verse 67:

‘His father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied ...



## Talk Point 4

JOHN THE BAPTIST LINKS HIM WITH JESUS

It’s still particular people at particular times. But then John the Baptist is the first person to make this link between the promise and Jesus. Luke chapter 3, verse 16:

‘John answered them all, “I baptise you with water. But one more powerful than I will come, the thongs of whose sandals I’m not worthy to untie. He [that is, Jesus] will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.”’

Baptism with water is important, but it’s not enough. Jesus is the Spirit baptiser. In the secular Greek, the word ‘baptise’ meant ‘to overwhelm, to immerse, to plunge, to drench’. It was the word that was used of if a ship sunk — it was baptised, it was overwhelmed, water everywhere, inside. And that’s what the Spirit wants to do — he wants to drench us, overwhelm us, fill us.

Sometimes, I think — this is certainly true of my heart — I become like a dry sponge. You know one of those real sponges, which when it’s very dry, even when you put it in the water it doesn’t absorb any water, because it’s so hard and crusty on the outside. Sometimes my heart becomes like that.

But then as you put that sponge into water, the edges begin to soften. And once the edges have softened, then that sponge can absorb so much water. And when you take it out of the water, it is literally pouring out water. And that’s how we’re meant to be — full of the Holy Spirit.

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Jesus himself was completely full of the Holy Spirit—chapter 3, verse 22:

‘The Holy Spirit descended on him’— that is, on Jesus — ‘in bodily form like a dove’.

Chapter 4, verse 1: ‘Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit ...’

Verse 14: ‘Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit ...’

Verse 18: He says, ‘The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he’s anointed me to preach good news to the poor.’



## Talk Point 5

JESUS PREDICTS HIS PRESENCE

And then Jesus predicts the coming of the Spirit — John chapter 7, verse 37:

‘On the last and greatest day of the Feast, — this was the Feast of Tabernacles that Jesus had gone to — Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, “Let anybody who is thirsty ...”

There’s a thirst, isn’t there, in every human heart — not just a physical thirst. Of course we have a physical thirst that can be satisfied by drinking water; but we have a spiritual thirst also, which can’t be satisfied by physical drinks — or even material things.

It’s a spiritual thirst.

And Jesus says: ‘If anyone is thirsty, come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, will have streams of living water flowing from within.’

Literally, it’s out of their innermost being will flow rivers of living water. He says, ‘Not only will I satisfy your spiritual thirst, but then you will become a source of blessing, a source of life.’

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Water, of course, in that context there — this is a society living on the edge of the desert. They knew that they were reliant on water for plant life, animal life, every kind of life! And water symbolises life.

And Jesus is saying the Holy Spirit brings life. And it means when we're filled with the Spirit, then the life of the Spirit flows through us to other people, and other people are able to come and to drink.

By this he meant the Spirit, which those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not been glorified.

When John speaks about Jesus being glorified, he's talking about the cross and resurrection. And some of the very last words of Jesus to his disciples, at the end of Luke's Gospel, were these. Don't bother to turn to it, but Jesus said this:

'I'm going to send you what my Father has promised' — the promise of the Father — 'but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.'

And then Jesus ascended, and still the promise had not been fulfilled. And they waited. Acts, chapter 1, verse 4:

'On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you've heard me speak about. For John baptised with water, but in a few days you will be baptised with the Holy Spirit."

Verse 8: 'You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.'

People's reactions were mixed. Some people said, 'Oh, that's absolutely amazing! This is wonderful!' — verse 7. Others — verse 12 — were 'amazed and perplexed': they thought, 'Wow, this is amazing, but it's a bit perplexing!'

Others said, 'Ho!' They 'made fun of them' — verse 13: 'They've had too much wine.' 'These

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people are drunk!

In other words, something amazing was happening and they didn't know how to explain it, so they gave a natural explanation that was something actually supernatural.

And Peter gets up and he says, 'Let me give you the true explanation!' He said, 'Let me explain this to you ... These people' — verse 15, he says — 'These people are not drunk, as you suppose. It's only nine o'clock in the morning! No, [he says] this is ...' the promise, this is Biblical, this is what was promised in the Old Testament:

'In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people.'

And then he says something even more amazing. He says: 'This is for you.' Verse 37:

'When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?"'

'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."

"The promise is for you" — every one of you — "and your children" — not just those standing there, but the next generation — "and for all who are far off" — "for all whom the Lord our God will call."

This is the amazing promise of the Father – the gift of the Holy Spirit is no longer just for particular people at particular times for particular tasks; it's for everyone. It's for you, and for you, and for you, and for you! Because we now live in the age of the Holy Spirit.

May we pray.

*Father, we thank you so much for this extraordinary privilege we have of living in the age of the Spirit, when the Holy Spirit is poured out on all people. And Lord, we pray that you would help us to understand better what that means for each one of us in our own lives. In Jesus' name, amen.*

**KEY:** Personal Story Story Quotes Key Quotes Key Bible Passages



# Talk 9 – Weekend Talk 1 – Who is the Holy Spirit?

Duration 43 Minutes  
HTB Transcripts

The Alpha Transcripts are taken from The Alpha DVD 2007–2008 edition and are based on *Questions of Life* by Nicky Gumbel.

Scripture quotations are taken from the HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION.

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