

THE ANOINTING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT PART 2

(The following ACTS article is a continuation of “The Anointing of the Holy Spirit Part 1”)

C. THE FUNCTION OF THE ANOINTING

While studying the work and moving of the Holy Spirit, we must acknowledge that there are mysteries. There is an element of the sovereignty of God in the subject of anointing that goes beyond our understanding (John 3:8). Our only response to God’s sovereignty must always be to simply and wholeheartedly surrender to His Lordship and will.

God in His wisdom has chosen to leave an element of mystery in His ways, requiring us to live by faith (2Cor 5:7; Heb 11:6). There is much in this life that we see and understand only “*in part*” (1Cor 13:12). Our posture toward the Lord must always be one of trust, obedience and submission to the entirety of His Word.

PRACTICAL PRINCIPLES OF THE ANOINTING

As we continue in this study, let us once again review the definition of anointing: *Anointing is the Person and presence of the Holy Spirit, bringing with His presence all of the necessary power, gifts and authority that are needed to fulfill the Father’s will at a given moment of ministry or assignment.* With this understanding clearly in mind, let us look at some principles about how the anointing of the Holy Spirit functions.

1. ANOINTING IS DIRECTLY RELATED TO AN INDIVIDUAL’S CALLING TO FULFILL A GOD-GIVEN MINISTRY ASSIGNMENT.

In other words, when God gives someone a ministry assignment or call, He also makes available *all* the necessary power, authority, gifting, revelation, insight, etc., that is needed to fulfill that assignment! Hallelujah!

When God commands or leads you to perform His will, all that you need to successfully fulfill His will is available to you by the power and anointing of the Holy Spirit. What God commands a person to do, He gives them the divine ability to do!

Of course, there is always much study, learning and personal transformation that should be happening along the way. As we apply ourselves – growing in our abilities, gifts and knowledge of the Word – then God will release even more. This principle of being faithful with what we have and God releasing more (Luke 16:10a; 19:17) is an essential principle for growing in God’s anointing.

OPERATING IN THE ANOINTING

God desires to anoint us to fulfill His will and call. We read of a *similar principle* at work in Paul’s presentation about faith.

Romans 12:3: “*God has dealt to each one a **measure of faith.***” This measure of faith (as with anointing) is a divine enablement given in proportion to the gift that He has given us.

“Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching” (Rom 12:6,7).

Paul states the same principle a bit differently in his letter to the Ephesians: “*But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ’s gift*” (Eph 4:7). In other words, this measured gift of divine enablement is directly related to being able to *operate* in the gift that God has assigned to an individual for the purpose of ministry.

Pastor To Pastor: The context for Ephesians 4:7 relates directly to the spiritual gifts mentioned a few verses later in Ephesians 4:11. This verse (4:7) does NOT pertain to a measure of grace regarding **salvation**, as some wrongly teach. God’s grace for salvation by faith is given equally to ALL people, for He desires that none should perish and that all should be saved (Acts 2:21; 17:30,31; Rom 3:22,23; 11:32; 1Tim 2:4; 4:10; Titus 2:11; 2Pet 3:9). God does desire that *all* receive His free gift of salvation through faith in Christ (Eph 2:8). Sadly, however, many have rejected and will continue to reject this offer – and even worse, millions of people today have **never even heard** the Gospel message of salvation through Jesus Christ.

Pastor To Pastor: Though this is not the time for a full study of spiritual gifts, let me give you one important principle regarding spiritual gifts.

All spiritual gifts – whether they be *manifestation* gifts (1Cor 12:1-11), *motivational* gifts (Rom 12:3-8) or *ministry* gifts (Eph 4:11) – are **sovereignly assigned** by God. It is not for us to pick and choose what gift we want or think is most needed. God assigns His gifts according to His unlimited knowledge and perfect holiness (see 1 Corinthians 12:11).

Though every believer has ministry purpose in the Body of Christ, and in the world we live in, there is a wide variety of callings and gifts. With each, God gives the necessary divine power, faith, grace and anointing to fulfill His will and purpose.

Though we must never attempt to control or manipulate the anointing (the Holy Spirit), we **can grow** in anointing. As we are faithful with what God gives to us, He releases more (Matt 25:21). We can also learn to better operate in the anointing of the Holy Spirit, in order to be more fruitful in ministry and aligned with God's will.

“TRANSFERRING” THE ANOINTING

A certain teaching contends that a person who is anointed and powerful in ministry can lay hands upon another person and give them a “portion of their anointing” – even a double portion! This has been called a “transfer of anointing”, and is loosely based upon the events in Scripture surrounding Elijah and his successor, Elisha (see 1 Kings 19:16,19; 2 Kings 2:1-13).

However, the scriptural text does not support this teaching. Elijah did throw his *mantle* (his shawl) upon Elisha (1Ki 19:19). But it was only a *symbolic confirmation* of what the Lord had already spoken regarding Elisha's divine call to be Elijah's successor (1Ki 19:16). In this event, Elijah did not give the call to Elisha, nor could he give him the anointing to fulfill it. This was God's doing. Elijah was simply obedient to God's Word, and communicated what God had told him to say to Elisha (1Ki 19:19).

Elisha clearly recognized that he did not have the ability to carry on the prophetic ministry of Elijah as God had called him. Elisha knew he needed the power of God (anointing), indirectly referenced in Scripture as **the spirit of Elijah** (2Ki 2:9,15). So Elisha asked Elijah for a “double portion” of his spirit (2Ki 2:10).

But as Elijah was the anointed prophet of God, his only response to Elisha's request for a double portion was a prophetic utterance: “*You have asked a*

hard thing. Nevertheless, if you see me when I am taken from you, it shall be so for you; but if not, it shall not be so” (2Ki 2:10).

It is clear when reading this portion of Scripture that Elijah knew he could not give anything spiritual to Elisha. He could affirm God’s call upon Elisha, but he could not anoint him to fulfill it.

Obviously, God (in His sovereignty) did allow Elisha to see Elijah being taken into Heaven. Thus Elisha picked up Elijah’s mantle **according to the will of God, as was prophesied**. From that point on, God’s anointing was clearly evident in Elisha’s ministry (2Ki 2:15).

The Giver of callings, gifts and anointing is God Himself, for only God can give the Holy Spirit! We are not in control of God or His Spirit; we cannot decide who will be anointed, or how much anointing they will receive. Neither are we in charge of the gifts and callings of God. If God has anointed us for ministry, we cannot choose to give that same anointing to someone else.

GOD CALLS – WE AFFIRM

Even Moses, one of the greatest servants of God, could not give to others the anointing that God had given him. However, **the Lord** Himself did take of the anointing which He had placed upon Moses and **the Lord** gave it to the elders (Num 11:16-17).

Moses was commanded by God to give some of his *authority* to Joshua (Num 27:20) and to *commission* him (27:23). But that was after God had already appointed Joshua as Moses’ successor (27:18). Also, Joshua was present when the Lord anointed the elders (11:16,17,28), which is why Joshua was described as one, *“in whom is the Spirit”* as a leader among the Israelites (27:18).

It was the Lord who called and anointed Joshua. Moses affirmed Joshua’s calling, and commissioned him to carry on after he departed.

It is the Holy Spirit who gave the prophetic gift and anointing to Elijah and then to Elisha, along with signs and wonders (see also Numbers 11:25-29; 1 Samuel 10:6,10; 1 Kings 18:46).

Pastor To Pastor: It is not wrong to desire from God a “double portion” of His Spirit. Nor is it wrong to ask for a particular gift in order to do ministry.

We *should* ask; then we must trust God for what He will give to us, and for when He will give it.

But also note that Elisha was obedient to fulfill all that God had called Him to do – both in response to the original call, and in preparation to receive God’s anointing (1Ki 19:20,21; 2Ki 2:1-11). God’s call and anointing **will not automatically be fulfilled** in our lives. Rather, our obedience, our submission and our full cooperation are required every step of the way – during both the preparation for, and the fulfillment of, the ministry assignment.

AN IMPARTATION

The concept of one individual “transferring” his anointing to another is not correct. However, the Scriptures do provide us with numerous examples of what is called ***an impartation***. This is most associated with the laying on of hands (Heb 6:2) and with prayer, as directed by the Holy Spirit. (See Acts 13:1-3; 1 Timothy 4:14; 2 Timothy 1:6)

I am aware of powerful men and women of God who pray for others to receive an **impartation** from the Holy Spirit. We have already learned that they cannot give their gift or anointing to someone else. However, it does seem as if something of what God is doing by His Spirit through a ministry, or during a special season where God is moving in a pronounced and sovereign way, can be stirred within, or *imparted* to, others. At times, those who have been prayed for in such a meeting seem to move in a greater level of both authority and the Holy Spirit’s power after being prayed for.

I personally have received powerful impartations of the Holy Spirit. These events changed my personal life as well as my direction in ministry after having been prayed for. But this is the sovereign work of the Holy Spirit bringing a fresh impartation of anointing in my life, not the works of men.

IMPARTATION THAT CONFIRMS

The clearest biblical example of this type of *impartation* is found in the developing ministry of Timothy.

Paul reminds Timothy of a moment early in his ministry when Paul and the elders of the churches in Iconium and Lystra had laid their hands on Timothy

and prayed for him: *“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”* (1Tim 4:14). This same event is referenced again in Paul’s second letter to Timothy: *“Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind”* (2Tim 1:6,7; see also 1 Timothy 1:18).

The original word used for “gift” in this passage is *charisma*. This suggests that a manifestation of the Holy Spirit was bestowed upon Timothy when Paul and the elders prayed for him.

Paul was not the author of Timothy’s gift or calling. Rather, as Paul and the elders laid hands on Timothy and prayed for him, the Holy Spirit revealed God’s will for Timothy and spoke prophetically through them to **confirm** God’s call and desire for Timothy’s life. As they commissioned Timothy for the Lord’s service, it was the Holy Spirit who anointed Timothy to fulfill his call from God.

Pastor To Pastor: It is through these occasions of prayer and the laying on of hands that the Holy Spirit will often reveal something of the will and purposes of God. His will can be revealed as a picture in the mind, a prophetic word, a confirming scripture, or an impression of what the Holy Spirit desires regarding an individual or their situation.

At these times, we must wait patiently upon the Lord and listen. However, if we are not hearing something specific from the Lord, we should **not** speak. The value of our role as a pastor comes from being faithful and obedient to God and His Word. We may be tempted to want to please others, or feel pressured to be a “spiritual” leader who has a word for people. This is what the Bible calls *“the fear of man”*. It is a trap that can lead to much worse compromise and fleshly responses (Prov 29:25).

We are called to be faithful: to God, to His Word, and to the leading of the Holy Spirit. If you are praying for someone, and the Lord does not speak to you concerning them, that is perfectly fine. The Lord may want to speak to them directly, or at another time, or in another way. If God is silent, we should be silent. If God speaks to us concerning someone else, we must be faithful and careful to say **only** what God is saying or revealing – no *more* and no *less*.

It is never our role to tell someone what to do, where to go, etc. We simply submit to the individual what it is that we are sensing from the Holy Spirit.

Most often, it should *confirm* something to them that the Lord has *already* placed in their heart. The matter is then between them and God to fulfill.

Finally, this important note: A prophetic word from the Lord will **ALWAYS** agree with what God has already revealed to us through the Bible, His holy written Word! Everything we do in life must conform to and agree with the Word of God, and the principles revealed therein.

FOLLOWING THE HOLY SPIRIT'S LEADING

Other examples of *impartation* can be seen in Acts 6:1-7 and 13:1-3. These events in the early Church were **not** just symbolic ceremonies. In these accounts, leaders in the Body of Christ sought the leading of the Holy Spirit and followed it specifically. Then with sure faith, they prayed in obedience to that leading. In response, God equipped, blessed and anointed those who were prayed for to fulfill that which He had appointed for them.

The critical factor is this: The leading of the Holy Spirit is for revealing the express purpose and will of God. Jesus Himself acknowledged that His earthly ministry was only possible because He was doing the will of God the Father (John 5:19,30; 6:38; 8:29). *We can and must* do no less!

As we follow the leading of God the Spirit, He will use us to fulfill His will. A part of that may be to confirm His call in others; and then for us to pray for them to be anointed and gifted for all that God has purposed for them, for His glory and the edification of His Body (Eph 4:12-16).

GREATER RELEASE

At many of the World MAP pastors' seminars, I have taught on the subject of anointing or about the baptism of the Holy Spirit. At these conferences, innumerable pastors have received a fresh filling of the Holy Spirit; others were baptized in the Holy Spirit for the first time. I personally gave them nothing, other than teaching from the Scriptures on these subjects. I may have prayed for them, but it is the Holy Spirit who touched them and filled them (Luke 3:16; John 16:7) – *because they hungered for more of Him!*

We receive many, many reports from these same pastors about dramatic changes in their ministries. They see an increase in signs, wonders and

miracles in their meetings; they have a fresh zeal for God and for evangelism; they lead many into salvation or the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

What has happened? For one thing, there has been teaching from the Word of God, which brings illumination on a certain subject. The person hearing the teaching then makes a decision to receive by faith what they have learned – and to act upon it!

But there is more that takes place. The Holy Spirit is present and moving in a unique way, bearing witness to the truth of the Word of God that has just been presented. Thus, when people respond with an open heart and faith – and, in their hunger for God, ask to receive all that He has provided for them – **He responds to their hunger in a profound way** (Matt 5:6; John 6:35). They do receive! More of God's anointing for ministry is released to them.

Please understand that God is not limited to a conference site or event. God the Spirit is everywhere present, and will respond to those who seek Him with all of their heart (Jer 29:12,13). God will meet you wherever you are, as you seek wholeheartedly for Him. Hallelujah!

I want to say again that **no one fully understands** how God's Spirit can and will move and work. Yet we do know that God by His Spirit will respond to our hunger for **Him**.

The Holy Spirit freshly fills people in response to prayer (Luke 11:9-13). When their faith is stirred, they begin to ask in faith believing from that point forward (Heb 11:6).

THE BEST REQUESTS

As we have learned, the apostles laid hands on one another and upon other workers, praying for them and commissioning them for ministry (Acts 13:2,3; 6:1-6). God directed them to do this, so something necessary and dynamic was taking place.

We may not understand all of the Holy Spirit's ways. But we know this: As the Holy Spirit leads us to pray for others – and as we allow other men and women of God to pray for us – God's anointing, gifts, wisdom and more are imparted. Though we cannot decide who receives God's gifts and anointing, we can certainly pray for others to be powerful instruments and to be used effectively in God's service by the power of the Holy Spirit! (2Tim 1:6,7)

We must always submit to and embrace God's sovereign will for our lives in these matters. Perhaps the best requests for us to make of God are: "What are the gifts, and Your assignment, that You have for me? How have You called me to use them? What do You want to give me in order for me to fulfill Your will?"

God has specific assignments, callings and ministry purpose for every man and woman. Along with those, He will give us abundantly "*above all that we ask or think according to the power [the Holy Spirit] that works in us*" (Eph 3:20) to enable us to fulfill His will as we yield our lives and desires fully to Him.

2. ANOINTING IS NOT DESIGNED TO BE CONTAINED, POSSESSED, OR KEPT TO OURSELVES.

The basic purpose of anointing is to enable us to be effective in ministry or in our assignment. This includes freely giving away in ministry to others what has been given to us by the Holy Spirit.

Jesus Himself, at the beginning of His ministry, said: "*The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, because He has anointed Me...*" (Luke 4:16-21). You will note as you read these verses that Jesus then listed a number of things He was specifically anointed to do **for others**.

Anointing is a sacred privilege. We should not desire it in order to be perceived as more spiritual or better than someone else. Anointing is an equipping from the Holy Spirit, given to make us more fruitful and effective in ministry and in our calling. This means that we will actually become better **servants** to all (John 13:12-17). A lifestyle and attitude of *giving*, at every level and dimension of life, is the Bible's command to every believer (Matt 10:8; Luke 6:38; Acts 20:35).

God desires His people to continually give of their resource and abilities to benefit others. Without a lifestyle of giving, we will not be healthy spiritually, and the Body of Christ will also be lacking. God has given us a profound example in the geography of Israel that will help to illustrate this principle.

LIFE OR DEATH

Israel has two large bodies of water. One is the Sea of Galilee, the other is the Dead Sea. The Sea of Galilee is a beautiful, fresh-water lake that is full of life.

The Dead Sea is exactly like its name. It is so filled with salt and minerals that it cannot support life. The water in the Dead Sea is undrinkable, and so harsh that prolonged exposure to it can burn your skin, cause blindness or even kill you!

The Sea of Galilee is fed by fresh water flowing into it from brooks and streams. At the lowest end, this fresh water then flows out into the River Jordan, which then flows directly into the Dead Sea. How is it possible, then, for the life-giving fresh water from the Sea of Galilee to become the toxic and lifeless Dead Sea?

There is one important difference between these two seas: Good, healthy water flows *into* both, but flows *out* only from the Sea of Galilee. The Dead Sea has no outlet. The water in the Dead Sea just sits and evaporates, leaving behind an ever-increasing buildup of salt and minerals. The water becomes poisonous and lifeless.

In the same way, the anointing of the Holy Spirit in the minister's life is intended to produce the life of Jesus in others. It will increase the life of God within us, and then flow through us to others. We are to continually give away to others through empowered, life-giving ministry and service.

As we pray for others, preach, teach the Word and share words of edification under the Holy Spirit's anointing, we are life-giving ministers who will bless and edify others. If we become selfish with our time or efforts – and choose to not provide a continual “flow” of the life of the Holy Spirit within us in ministry and service to others – the anointing of the Holy Spirit will stagnate within us. We are intended to continually and freshly receive from the Holy Spirit (Eph 5:18,19), and then give away the “living waters” that we receive through ministry and service to others (John 7:37-39).

You can read about this principle in Matthew 25:14-30. What happened to the servant who did nothing with the gifts and anointing God had given him?

3. ANOINTING CAN BE LIMITED OR STOPPED.

We have learned that the anointing is the Person and presence of God the Spirit. The Holy Spirit is not a disembodied or impersonal force. The Holy Spirit is the Person of God.

Scripture reveals that the Holy Spirit can be “*grieved*” (Eph 4:30). This means to be made sorrowful, become injured or become distressed. The Holy Spirit can also be “*quenched*” (1Thess 5:19). This word contains the idea of being suppressed or stifled, like a fire being dampened with water.

a. Quenching The Holy Spirit

How do we *quench* the Holy Spirit? This most often happens when people are resistant to, or apathetic about, the working and moving of the Holy Spirit. If people are unwilling to respond to the Holy Spirit’s promptings or desires to move among them, they can stop (quench) His work in their midst.

On the other hand, the Holy Spirit can also be quenched when our human efforts or enthusiasm replace the actual work of the Holy Spirit. There are churches where people would much rather go through their own rituals and forms each week, with no desire to welcome the fresh work of the Holy Spirit into their services. When this happens, He is not free to work and move; thus the Spirit is “quenched”.

There are other places where people want to “act” like the Holy Spirit is present. They may jump around, shout, shake, or other such things. It is true that when the power of the Holy Spirit is at work, there are sometimes physical manifestations. But if this is done just as a form, and is not in response to a *genuine* work of the Holy Spirit, this behavior can also quench the *actual* work that the Holy Spirit desires to do at that moment.

Any time people choose to substitute a *form* for the actual presence and working of the Holy Spirit, He is not free to move as He desires. Thus, He is quenched.

What do all of these examples have in common? They all reveal man’s attempt to control or imitate God’s work. People may decide that they are comfortable with a certain form or style that they want to adopt. Every week, it is the same schedule or form in their services.

Unfortunately, this can prevent the Holy Spirit from actually working in their services to minister His life, power, healing and anointing to the people. There is no room or invitation for Him to come and work. In these instances, the will of man opposes the desire of the Holy Spirit – and the Holy Spirit is “quenched” or not free to work.

The Bible specifically addresses the efforts of human flesh replacing the power and presence of the Holy Spirit: *“Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit, says the LORD of hosts”* (Zech 4:6).

Pastor To Pastor: Church leader, even your own style or form can limit the work of the Holy Spirit. Each time a group of believers gathers, we must always be sensitive to what the Holy Spirit wants to do.

He may desire to move in a gentle, quiet way and minister healing. The Holy Spirit may come in power and set captives free! He may usher in a sense of triumphant celebration during worship, to build the faith and expectancy of the believers. Or He may bring great conviction, and with it a desire for repentance, to those present for their failures before God.

The point is, we should always welcome and allow time for the work of the Holy Spirit in our services. We need to pray, listen and obey the promptings and prophetic words that may come. Then our “style” of ministry or preaching should align with what the Holy Spirit is doing at that moment.

For instance, if we are exuberant or yelling when the Holy Spirit wants to minister peace or “stillness” (Ps 46:10), we will quench His work at that moment. If we ignore a mood of celebration that is rising in worship, we may stop a victorious breakthrough among the people. We may even need to pause during worship, and allow everyone present to wait upon the Lord to hear from Him personally.

MOVING WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

It is vitally important that, as church leaders, we develop discernment and sensitivity to the Holy Spirit. This is best done through extended prayer times in the days **before** believers will gather. These prayer times should not involve just asking God to bless what you already have planned. This is an opportunity to submit your heart and plans to God, and wait upon Him to receive a sense of what HE desires to do! Take time during the meeting as well to wait, listen and discern.

Decide to be a person who is committed to whatever God wants to do. Remember, this is His Church and these are His people. You are there to steward them, care for them and disciple them. But **most importantly**, your role is to point people to God and teach them how to respond to His Spirit in everything!

The Holy Spirit can perform a work of deliverance, growth or healing in a person very quickly during a service. This type of work might otherwise take months, or may never happen at all, without the Holy Spirit's ministry to them at that moment. So let us move *with* the Holy Spirit, and cooperate with His work every time we gather!

b. Grieving The Holy Spirit

The Scriptures also speak of *grieving* the Holy Spirit (Eph 4:30). To "grieve" means to make sad or sorrowful. The Holy Spirit can be made sorrowful by anything that we allow or harbor in our hearts that is unlike Jesus.

We can have attitudes, habits, thoughts, words or actions – whatever is not Christ-like will grieve the Holy Spirit.

“And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you” (Eph 4:30-32).

Paul's exhortation to the Ephesian Christians helps them to understand that they are the *temple of the Holy Spirit*, both individually (1Cor 6:19) and corporately (1Cor 3:9-17) as the Body of Christ.

Because the Spirit of God lives in us, we can have intimate relationship with Him. The Holy Spirit can be grieved because He loves us (Rom 5:5). Let us depart from any thought or deed that may cause grief and sorrow to the Spirit of God living within us.

THE SPIRIT AND THE WORD

There may be leaders who would say they welcome the work of the Holy Spirit in their midst. But they may become presumptuous by neglecting the diligent study of God's Word and the preparation necessary to teach and disciple others in the ways of the Lord. They will just "let the Holy Spirit do the work".

This mindset is wrong, and can lead to serious problems in a leader's life and within the church. This attitude can become an excuse for laziness or lack of discipline, which God will not bless.

The Bible speaks very clearly to leaders about this issue. *“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth”* (2Tim 2:15,16).

As leaders, we must prepare our hearts with much prayer, **and** fill our minds with the Word of God. We must diligently study the Scriptures and prepare teachings from the Word of God that will help those we lead to become mature disciples of Jesus Christ. We must never teach error, false doctrines or fleshly ideas due to a lack of study and familiarity with the truth of God’s Word. We will be judged on what we teach to others (Jas 3:1).

When we are prepared from the Word of God, we can fully expect the Holy Spirit’s anointing to empower the preaching of the true Word of God. We can expect the Holy Spirit to use us as an instrument in that moment of ministry, and also expect His power in signs and wonders to follow.

But if we are not diligent to study the Bible and pray, we will be far more likely to minister out of our own ideas or fleshly inclinations. How can the Holy Spirit anoint us when we are not presenting the Word of God or fully representing Christ in our lives and ministries?

SPONTANEOUS ANOINTING

The Bible does teach that there are times when the Holy Spirit can fill our mouths with the right words: *“But when they deliver you up, do not worry about how or what you should speak. For it will be given to you in that hour what you should speak”* (Matt 10:19; see also Mark 13:11 and Luke 12:11,12). However, these verses refer to situations of persecution or unusual circumstance, not to a normal weekly meeting of your flock! So, this Scripture reference should never be used as an excuse to not diligently study God’s Word and prepare sound teachings.

There may be times when we are called upon unexpectedly to preach, pray or minister. I believe that in those moments there comes a *spontaneous anointing* (help) from the Holy Spirit. Remember, He is the One who desires to make Jesus known, and to draw people to salvation through Christ! He will use us in any situation to do that. But the more prepared we are in the Word of God and prayer, the better prepared we will be for God to use us *effectively*.

God requires His leaders to be diligent in and faithful to His Word. This is for the leader's personal benefit, as well as for the benefit of those whom they lead. A daily habit of Bible study and prayer builds within us a "spiritual reservoir" from which the Holy Spirit can draw. The Holy Spirit then adds His power, wisdom and divine insight to what we say. This combination can change the life of the hearer!

The Word of God exhorts us to always be prepared for the Holy Spirit to use us in any situation (2Tim 4:2; 1Pet 3:15). This is accomplished only through diligent study of God's Word and prayer!

4. ANOINTING CAN BE ABUSED OR MISUSED.

There are several examples in Scripture of men and women who abused or misused the power of the Holy Spirit. When they did, their misbehavior brought God's judgment and correction.

a. Judges chapters 13-16 – Samson

God's gift to Samson was great physical strength. When the Holy Spirit came upon him (Judg 13:24,25; 14:6,19; 15:14), Samson would perform great acts against the Philistines who oppressed Israel. However, even though Samson had a great and unusual gifting, his moral weakness led to his downfall and cut short his life and service to Israel (see Judges Chapter 16).

Samson thought that he could live his life on his own terms, and still expect God to anoint him. This was *gross presumption*, and led to his failure as a servant of God. Though he later repented and God used him once more, Samson's life and ministry likely fulfilled far less than God intended.

b. Leviticus 10:1-3 – Nadab and Abihu

These two sons of Aaron (the High Priest) were anointed to serve as priests to the people of Israel. The Bible reveals that they offered "*profane*" (strange or *foreign*) fire before the Lord, in a way "*which He had not commanded them*" (Lev 10:1). This was done in disobedience to God's prior command (Ex 30:9).

God had set precise times and methods for the sacrifices and offerings of the priests. Obedience to the Lord and His ways is always of utmost priority. The fact that Nadab and Abihu were anointed as priests did not excuse their

disobedience. God's judgment was swift and severe upon these two sons of Aaron whose service for God was done on their own terms (Lev 10:2).

As church leaders, we must **always obey** both the leading of the Holy Spirit and the principles and commands of God's Word. We must not fall into the trap of thinking we can pick and choose how **we** want to follow God and minister in His Church. We must embrace ALL of what He reveals to us through His Word about effective ministry, and do it with all our might!

Pastor To Pastor: It is tempting for church leaders whom God anoints – especially those whom God is greatly using – to think that the basic commands of Scripture somehow no longer apply to them. They forget that **all** that they do is done before the eyes of a holy God (Lev 10:3).

We have all heard about men and women whom God is greatly using who then fall into moral failure, financial improprieties, and other grievous offenses and sins. These failures rarely come upon them in a single moment. They usually begin with “small” compromises and excuses, leading to disobedience to the Word and complete failure (Jas 1:14,15).

We must never forget that God is holy, and He has called us to be holy as well (Lev 11:44; 1Pet 1:16). God's Word, His commands, His precepts are for every believer in, and follower of, Christ – **especially** His called and anointed leaders!

c. Numbers 11:16-30 – the Elders

The Bible records an event in Israel's wanderings when God placed His Spirit upon 70 elders and they prophesied (v.25). There were two men who had not gathered with the others at the Tabernacle, but had remained in the camp. The Spirit came upon them as well, and they began to prophesy (v.26).

Joshua, who at that time was Moses' assistant, asked that these two men be stopped and forbidden to prophecy (v.28). But Moses rebuked Joshua, and expressed his prophetic desire that all of the Lord's people would have the Holy Spirit upon them (v.29; see also Joel 2:28,29; Acts 2:14-21).

Joshua was likely well-intended, concerned that the two men were prophesying out of order since they were not present with the other elders. But Joshua was mistaken in thinking it was *his* responsibility to decide when and through whom God would speak.

Pastor To Pastor: When leaders attempt to exert their own control over or restrict the working of the Holy Spirit, they are in error. Often, we have well-motivated desires to have “*all things be done decently and in order*” (1Cor 14:40). But our ways are not God’s ways (Isa 55:8,9). Our human standards or ideas about what we are comfortable with may not have anything to do with what God desires to do in a given moment.

God can move in unusual ways, through unlikely sources, and by unusual methods. Consider Balaam’s donkey (Num 22:22-40), or Jesus using dirt and spit when healing a blind man (John 9:1-6).

We are living in days of great Harvest and the outpouring of God’s Spirit. Extraordinary events, miracles, prophetic utterances and other manifestations of God’s Spirit are increasing around the world. We must use discernment, yes, and not just accept or believe everything being done in God’s name (Matt 7:21-23). But we must also learn to cooperate and move with the Holy Spirit in any given moment.

We are not the ones who decide when, how and through whom the Holy Spirit may work. The vessel whom God uses is certainly not going to be perfect. None of us is, but we are the ones through whom God has decided to work!

However, it must be noted that the Scriptures also make it clear to not be involved with those who are living in sin or teaching error (1Tim 6:3-5; 2Tim 3:1-5). We must also be careful to correctly judge prophecy (1Cor 14:29). We should also not use the external standards of the world to evaluate or know a brother or sister (2Cor 5:16,17).

As pastors, in our desire to lead, we can be tempted to try and take control. We are then in danger of interfering with, or completely stopping, the work of the Holy Spirit in our midst (as Joshua almost did).

We should take time to disciple those we serve as to when and how to prophecy. But we must then be willing to let the Holy Spirit work through them as they learn and grow.

Remember, our role as pastors is to lead people to grow as disciples. This means, among other things, that we *teach* them – and *release* them – to receive from and respond to the leading of the Holy Spirit.

d. Acts 5:1-11; 8:9-24 – Ananias & Sapphira; Simon the Sorcerer

The Book of Acts records two separate attempts in the early Church to misuse the power of the Holy Spirit.

1) The first involved Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11). They were attempting to deceive the leadership of the early Church regarding the sale of their property. But when Peter confronted them, he cited their offense as a *“lie to the Holy Spirit”* (v.3).

It is apparent from the text that the issue was not about the amount of money they gave (v.4). Rather, they were judged for their hypocrisy. God was confronting the kind of hypocrisy and *religious spirit* that marked the Scribes and Pharisees (Matt 23:1-36; 6:1-6; Mark 12:38-40; etc.).

Those who follow Christ are to have a righteousness that exceeds that of the Pharisees (Matt 5:20). It is to be a righteousness of the heart, not an outward form or simply an appearance of righteousness. It also must be said that if a person *does* have that inward righteousness, it will reveal itself in outward behavior that is also truly righteous (Matt 23:25,26).

It seems Ananias and Sapphira were using the unique and profound move of the Holy Spirit in the early Church for their personal gain. They were giving the appearance of cooperating with the work, but obviously had a selfish and concealed motive. Their actions reveal that they did not respect the authority of the apostles whom God had appointed as leaders – and ultimately did not respect or honor the Holy Spirit from whom the apostles had received their authority.

God saw the hearts of Ananias and Sapphira, and brought swift and severe judgment upon them (5:5,9,10).

God’s desire is for a pure and holy Church (Eph 5:27). To accomplish this, the Lord of the Church works unceasingly to transform and purify His Bride (Eph 5:26,27). He loves us enough to discipline and chastise us (1Pet 4:17; Heb 12:3-11).

2) The second instance of an attempt to misuse the anointing of the Holy Spirit in the early Church is found in Acts 8:9-24. Here, we encounter Simon the sorcerer, who was newly converted to Christ (v.13). As Simon is following Philip, he is amazed at the great and miraculous things he sees the Holy Spirit doing!

When Simon witnessed the apostles ministering to others in the power of the Holy Spirit, he coveted that power for himself. In his immature and still-worldly thinking, Simon offered to pay the apostles money in order to get that power (vs.18,19).

Peter, by the power of the Holy Spirit, discerned the motives of Simon's heart. *"For I see that you are poisoned by bitterness and bound by iniquity"* (v.23). It was obvious that Simon had a selfish motive. His heart was bound in sin, and he did not desire the Holy Spirit in order to glorify God and to serve others. "Bitterness" in this context is like a competitive jealousy or envy (Jas 3:14). Simon wanted to be important and impressive to others, perhaps like he was when he was a sorcerer (Acts 8:9-11). He wanted God's power for his own personal gain.

Pastor To Pastor: Even today, we encounter leaders who are truly gifted, anointed and being used by God. But sadly, they can begin to think more highly of themselves than they ought to think. They begin to act as if the power is from them, and not from a merciful God (2Cor 4:5-7). They use the ministry to make their own name great, to gain wealth, or to influence others to follow them.

Most leaders do not start out this way. Good leaders hunger to see God move and for God to receive the glory when people's lives are transformed by His power. But if we are not cautious and diligent to watch over our hearts (Prov 4:23), we can be led astray.

The devil cannot deny, thwart, attack or overcome the power of God (John 1:5). So instead, Satan will attempt to deceive and poison the heart of a leader (2Cor 2:11; 11:13-15), to make him a vessel who is serving himself and no longer serving God and His purposes.

HOLDING FAST IN FAITHFULNESS

In the case of Ananias and Sapphira, and with Simon, we are provided with cautionary and sobering lessons. We must be mindful that Satan has the power to influence our thoughts and actions **if we allow this** (Acts 5:3). We must give him no place (Eph 4:27).

However, when leaders do fail – choosing sin over righteousness – it is a very serious problem. First, because our God is holy, sin violates our relationship

with God. All followers of Christ have been called and commanded to personal holiness and moral purity (1Pet 1:13-19).

Second, we are called to be leaders who are entrusted with the care of God's people. When we give way to sin, we break that trust and become a bad example to the people whom we lead. We also leave the sheep vulnerable to hell's attacks (1Pet 5:2-4; Acts 20:28-30; Heb 13:7,17; Jas 3:1). If Satan can destroy a leader, the sheep will be scattered and vulnerable to downfall (Mark 14:27).

Our failures also hurt our families and our reputations. We hurt the Family of God as well, and damage the reputations of other faithful church leaders who are then viewed with mistrust and suspicion (see Paul's instructions about choosing elders in 1Timothy 3:1-7). Satan targets church leaders very specifically with his schemes of destruction. But remember, **he cannot cause you to sin** *unless* you choose to follow his temptations. Resist the devil, and he must flee from you (Jas 4:7).

Your leadership role and anointing is a *privilege*; it is also a serious and essential **responsibility**. The Bible gives us many exhortations about remaining faithful and finishing well (Matt 24:13; Phil 3:17,18; 2Tim 4:6-8). We are to hold fast to our hope and faith in Christ to the end, being examples to the flock of faithfulness, for Jesus' sake and glory (1Pet 5:2,3).

D. OLD TESTAMENT FORETYPES OF ANOINTING

As we continue our study, let us examine some Old Testament *foretypes* of anointing. As referenced earlier, the Old Testament was given for our instruction and example (Rom 15:4; 1Cor 10:11). It will help us to gain a fuller picture of anointing as a promise given that was initially fulfilled at the beginning of the New Testament Church age (see Acts Chapter 2).

1. There are a number of symbolic foretypes in the Old Testament of the Person and work of the Holy Spirit.

Fire – In the Tabernacle and on the altar of incense, the burnt offerings had a continuously burning flame that was originally started by God (Lev 9:24; 2Chr 7:1-3). This flame was to be kept burning always (Lev 6:13).

This same image of fire, which symbolizes the living presence of the Spirit of God, is also seen in the New Testament (Matt 3:11; Acts 2:3).

Water – Water is a symbol used in the Old Testament to signify the Holy Spirit bringing spiritual refreshing and blessings from God. In this part of the world where water was scarce, the symbolic use of water to represent God’s Spirit spoke clearly to people (Ps 23:2; Isa 35:6,7).

Ezekiel had a vision of a great river flowing from God’s dwelling place in His temple (Ezek 47:1-12). This was reflective of the unrestricted flow of God’s Spirit upon His people.

Jeremiah uses the *“fountain of living waters”* (Jer 2:13; 17:13) to portray God’s presence by His Spirit. Jesus also speaks of living waters: *“...out of his heart will flow rivers of living water. But this He spoke concerning the Spirit...”* (John 7:37-39). In this instance, Jesus was specifically prophesying about the coming outpouring of the Holy Spirit (John 14:16,17; Acts 2).

Blood – We read in the Old Testament about a special anointing for the priests involving blood (Ex 29:19-21).

Oil – The use of oil was widespread throughout the Old Testament. From common usage in cooking, lamps and cosmetics, to the highest of temple functions, oil played an important role.

Oil was especially symbolic of the presence and consecrating power of the Holy Spirit. We see this with kings (1Sam 10:1), priests (Ex 29:1-9) and the ceremonial cleansing of lepers (Lev 14:10-18).

Oil also symbolized joy (Is 61:3), and its absence represented sorrow or humiliation (Joel 1:10). Oil was also an image of prosperity (Deut 33:24), comfort (Job 29:6) and spiritual nourishment (Ps 45:7).

A POWERFUL SYMBOLIC PICTURE

From just this brief look at the Old Testament, we see the rich deposit of symbols, pictures and imagery that reveal much to us about the anointing of the Holy Spirit and His work in our lives.

As foretypes, these represent the anointing and work of the Holy Spirit that *we now have available to us today!* This anointing is the fulfilled promise of our heavenly Father (Joel 2:28-32) to pour out His Spirit upon His people (Acts 2:33-39).

2. One of the most powerful symbolic pictures of the anointing of the Holy Spirit is the *making* and *use* of the holy anointing oil. A study of the following passage will give us much insight into the nature and function of the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

“Moreover the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ‘Also take for yourself quality spices – five hundred shekels of liquid myrrh, half as much sweet-smelling cinnamon (two hundred and fifty shekels), two hundred and fifty shekels of sweet-smelling cane, five hundred shekels of cassia, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, and a hin of olive oil. And you shall make from these a holy anointing oil, an ointment compounded according to the art of the perfumer. It shall be a holy anointing oil. With it you shall anoint the tabernacle of meeting and the ark of the Testimony; the table and all its utensils, the lampstand and its utensils, and the altar of incense; the altar of burnt offering with all its utensils, and the laver and its base. You shall consecrate them, that they may be most holy; whatever touches them must be holy. And you shall anoint Aaron and his sons, and consecrate them, that they may minister to Me as priests. And you shall speak to the children of Israel, saying: “This shall be a holy anointing oil to Me throughout your generations. It shall not be poured on man’s flesh; nor shall you make any other like it, according to its composition. It is holy, and it shall be holy to you. Whoever compounds any like it, or whoever puts any of it on an outsider, shall be cut off from his people”” (Ex 30:22-33).

The anointing oil was sacred and holy unto the Lord. The Israelites were to view the anointing oil in the same way. This mixture was a separate and unique anointing oil to be used only for sacred functions (vs.31-33).

God gave a divine formula for this anointing oil (vs.22-25). It was not to be duplicated for other uses. Its use was forbidden by anyone outside the covenant people of Israel (v.33).

DIVINE APPOINTING

As it was a foretype of the anointing of the Holy Spirit, the very strict statutes regarding this special anointing oil reveal to us three very important principles.

First, God has a *sovereign will* regarding the anointing of His Spirit. Just as He directed the ingredients of the anointing oil (Ex 30:22-25), God alone directs His anointing (1Sam 10:1) and how this anointing is to be expressed through a person’s life (1Cor 12:7,11).

Second, the anointing oil was intended for the priests who served in the Tabernacle (Ex 30:30). It was not to be poured upon a person's flesh (30:32). **All** genuine believers in Jesus Christ, as the "*royal priesthood*" of God (1Pet 2:9,10; Rev 1:6), have an anointing of the Holy Spirit (1John 2:20-27). This anointing is **not** available to the **unbeliever**. The Spirit of God lives *only* in those who are saved and who walk in obedience to God (John 3:5,6; Rom 8:14-16; 1Cor 12:3).

Pastor To Pastor: In the Old Testament, the High Priest went into the holy of holies once a year to make atonement for the people (see Leviticus 16). He alone had direct access to God each year.

At the time of Christ's death on the cross, the very dense, carpet-like tapestry that covered the holy of holies in the temple was supernaturally torn in two from top to bottom (Mark 15:38; see also Exodus 26:31-33). This powerful event reveals that *full access to God was now totally opened to all people*. When Christ cancelled the debt of humanity's sin at the cross, salvation through faith in Him was made available to all who would receive Him (Rom 10:9,10).

All those who call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved (Rom 10:12,13). And all those who are saved by faith in Jesus Christ have free access to the "*throne of grace*" (Eph 3:12; Heb 4:16; 10:19), which is God's very presence! Hallelujah!

Christians no longer need a priest or anyone else to go to God on their behalf. Every believer can and should have their own personal relationship with God through prayer, worship and fellowship. They can talk and pray to Him; they can hear from Him.

This equal access to God for all who believe in His Son for salvation is why **all believers** are called a holy priesthood. "...*you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices [i.e., worship, prayer, acts of service, tithes and offerings] acceptable to God through Jesus Christ*" (1Pet 2:5; see also Rev 1:6).

The "spiritual sacrifices" to which we are called do **not** cause us to be accepted by God. We are *already* accepted by God because of the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. Our salvation is only by faith in Jesus, not by any works of our own (Eph 2:8,9).

This is why the tapestry which covered the holy of holies in the temple was torn from *the top down to the bottom*. This act symbolically demonstrated that our salvation was *God-initiated*. This means that *God reached to us* by the non-earnable favor (grace) of Christ dying for our sins on the cross.

Our efforts at being righteous are ultimately futile and cannot gain us salvation (Rom 3:9-20; Gal 2:16). However, we live out and express our faith through spiritual sacrifices as we walk in obedience to God and service to His Body and the world (Jas 2:14-26).

Pastor, you must teach these basic truths of the cross *often*. Those you lead must understand the salvation they have freely received; and then be able to communicate it clearly to those desperately trying to “earn” their salvation through any means other than what Christ has already provided (1Pet 3:15).

Third, the anointing oil is not to be duplicated for other uses, nor is it to be counterfeited (Ex 30:32,33).

Anointing with oil in the Old Testament symbolized God’s divine appointing of an object or person. This appointment dedicated the object or person to a special place or function in God’s purposes.

With a sovereignly-commanded appointment came the authority and power needed to equip the individual to fulfill what God had decreed (1Sam 16:13; Is 61:1). The same principle is true for the New Testament believer, regardless of the place of service God has given them inside or outside the Church. This is also true for those whom God has called specifically to full-time ministry service (2Cor 1:21; 1Thess 5:24). God makes available to us everything we need not only to be fruitful servants of His, but to be overcomers in life and ministry!

THE PROBLEM WITH COUNTERFEITS

The availability of God’s anointing to us is wonderful news! But we must be careful not to miss the warnings in Exodus 30 about counterfeiting the anointing oil. God considered this a serious, even criminal, offense (Ex 30:32,33). One who sinned in this manner was “cut off” from the people of Israel. Biblical scholars often associate this phrase with being put to death.

What does this symbolism of counterfeiting mean to us today as New Testament ministers? We have already examined the sin of using God’s

anointing for our own gain (Phil 1:15,16). There are other ways in which God's anointing is counterfeited in ministry today.

Some people in ministry mistakenly think that the goal of their preaching is to get people excited. So they counterfeit the anointing by their exuberant style of preaching or teaching. Sometimes, they will say things that people want to hear, even if it contradicts the Bible; they might tell exaggerated stories; or they might use other forms of manipulation to excite the crowd.

Others in ministry may want to be impressive and gain a following for themselves. They may counterfeit anointing by pretending to understand "deep mysteries" that no one else knows (2Cor 11:3,4); claim titles or positions in order to be impressive to others; or use their position or authority to influence others to do things that may be unrighteous or that may benefit the leader.

There are many other ways in which people are tempted to counterfeit or misuse anointing. But the point is this: *Counterfeiting* or *misusing* the Holy Spirit's anointing is a serious offense to God. It is also a form of deception that, when pursued, will give place to the demonic realm in a church leader's life. Ultimately this will bring the judgment of God on that person's life as well.

Counterfeiting the Holy Spirit's anointing is addressed in the New Testament. One of the more pointed examples is when Paul condemns "false apostles". Paul equates them with Satan's attempt to mimic God's angels in order to lead believers astray (see 2 Corinthians Chapter 11).

There are those today who appear to be messengers anointed by God, but they are not. The New Testament gives many warnings about them (Matt 7:15-20; Acts 20:27-30; 2Cor 11:1-15; Gal 1:6-10; Col 2:18-23; 1Tim 4:1-3; 2Tim 3:1-9; 2Pet 2:1-22; 1John 4:1-6; Jude 3-19).

Later in this article, we will study seven characteristics that are found in those functioning with a genuine anointing from the Holy Spirit. This list will be helpful in examining your own ministry, as well as in discerning the genuine presence of the Holy Spirit in other ministers or church leaders.

Pastor To Pastor: There is nothing wrong with wanting to be effective in ministry and desiring the anointing power of the Holy Spirit. But it is wrong to pretend to be something we are not, including trying to act like we are anointed.

Besides, why should we go through the effort of pretending we are anointed, when we truly can be anointed – if we will receive it on God’s terms and not our own.

We can protect our lives from sin and deception regarding anointing – and step into an ever-growing, genuine anointing of the Spirit – in several ways:

- Accept the gifts and calling that God has given you; do not envy or criticize what others have or try to imitate them.
- Pray daily to know the will of God for you and your ministry.
- Be content with where God has called you, and with what He is asking you to do.
- Continually ask for God’s help and power to do His will.
- Remind yourself every day that you are in ministry to serve God and others, and not to serve yourself or your own gain.

Also, keep in mind that there is no particular *style* of preaching or leading that is more “anointed” than another style. I have seen anointed leaders who speak gently and quietly. While they were teaching the Word of God, people were sovereignly healed or touched by the Holy Spirit. Other leaders may show more outward physical expression or become louder when the Holy Spirit is ministering through them to others. Neither style is right or wrong. The important thing is to cultivate sensitivity to the Holy Spirit each time you minister. Pause, listen, respond to what He is saying and doing in a particular gathering. Then align your style with what the Holy Spirit desires to minister at that moment.

Be reminded that God has called you just as you are. He has given you specific gifts for a reason. He desires to use you *as the person you are* along with the gifts you have – in combination with His Holy Spirit’s anointing and transforming work – to minister to others.

LESSONS FROM THE ANOINTING OIL

Let us now examine more thoroughly the ingredients of the anointing oil and what they reveal about the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

Specifically, the anointing oil contained myrrh, cinnamon, sweet cane (*calamus*), cassia and olive oil (Ex. 30:23,24).

1. Myrrh

Myrrh was a mild narcotic used as a pain killer. Known for its pleasant smell, it was also used in the making of perfumes and cosmetics.

Myrrh was among the gifts presented to the young Jesus by the wise men (Matt 2:11). At the cross, there was an attempt to give myrrh to Jesus to ease His suffering, yet He refused it (Mark 15:23). By refusing this pain-killer, Christ Jesus held fast to His mission to “*taste death for everyone*” (Heb 2:9).

Because of its fragrance, myrrh was also one of the spices used for Jesus’ burial (John 19:39).

The use of myrrh as an agent that removes pain has a prophetic significance for us. Jesus Christ, the Anointed One, came to bear our burdens at the cross. At that place of sacrifice, Jesus fulfilled His purpose of being our Healer (1Pet 2:24) and the One who sets us free from the bondage of sin and death (Heb 2:9,14-18).

As a prophetic symbol in the anointing oil, myrrh speaks to us of how the Holy Spirit helps to bring people into healing and deliverance from their brokenness, bondage to sin, and sickness. The prophet Isaiah speaks prophetically of the power of anointing: “...*the yoke will be destroyed because of the anointing oil*” (Isa 10:27). The Hebrew word for a yoke being “destroyed” in this verse goes beyond just being damaged or broken; it means *utterly destroyed*.

The power of the Holy Spirit can totally deliver people and bring complete healing to the sick. It is God’s desire that we minister to others in this way with the Holy Spirit’s anointing.

2. Cinnamon

In biblical times, cinnamon was a rare, expensive and highly prized spice (Song 4:14). Cinnamon is fragrant, but is best known for its fiery-hot taste when used in certain foods. Thus, the presence of this spice in the holy anointing oil speaks to us of the fire or *zeal* that comes from the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

John the Baptist described Jesus the Messiah as the One who would baptize us with the Holy Spirit and with *fire* (Matt 3:11). The word “fire” in this verse is

interpreted by some as an agent of purification in the heart of a believer. There is truth in this interpretation, but the meaning goes even further. Fire is explosive, powerful and *consuming*. Scripture speaks of Jesus being consumed with zeal for His Father's house (John 2:13-17).

SUPERNATURAL BOLDNESS

There is a clear example of this type of fiery zeal from the Holy Spirit in the New Testament. Before the Day of Pentecost, the disciples and the few remaining believers were together in a room in Jerusalem (Acts 1:12-14). They had been told by Jesus that they were to evangelize the world (Acts 1:8). Yet how could such a huge task be accomplished by so few people? They were not great orators, philosophers or even well educated. They were ordinary people, surrounded by a hostile culture that had just crucified their leader.

These men and women were not cowards, but they were confused, unsure and without a sense of what to do or how to do it. But they wisely waited, continuing in prayer while maintaining unity and mutual encouragement. Though they did not understand, they clung to the promise that Jesus had made to them of a coming power from the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:5,8). And so they waited...

“And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit...” (Acts 2:2-4).

In a single moment, the lives of those approximately 120 people were changed as they were filled with the Holy Spirit! Immediately, this event gained notice (Acts 2:5-13). Peter, an uneducated fisherman who had denied Christ out of fear, suddenly stands and boldly preaches his first sermon under the anointing of the Holy Spirit (2:14-39). As a result, more than 3,000 souls were added to the Kingdom of God that very day (2:41).

The disciples went from being frightened, uncertain *sheep* to becoming bold, testifying, miracle-working shepherds! They declared the Gospel without shame, even to the point of suffering and death. This is the fiery zeal that comes from the anointing of the Holy Spirit (Acts 4:23-31).

This zeal is not a passing moment of human emotion. It is a strength and boldness that arises like a flame from within when we have the anointing of the Holy Spirit. It is a deep confidence in the truth of God's Word and the Gospel of Jesus Christ that moves us to act, to pray, to preach, to believe for a miracle – all by the power of the Holy Spirit!

3. Sweet Cane (*calamus*)

This is a highly fragrant cane whose stem root was greatly desired by perfumers. The pleasant fragrance was best released by bruising or crushing the root of the plant.

In the same way, there is a type of bruising or crushing of a believer's life that is *necessary* to release the fragrant aroma of God's presence within us.

Please note that this is not the same type of brokenness and destruction that comes from sinful and rebellious choices. Instead, this is a *holy brokenness* that comes only by the hand of God.

This spiritual crushing, though sometimes painful, produces two things:

First, it puts to death our *flesh* – our selfish desires and our self-dependence (Luke 9:23-26; Rom 12:1,2; 13:14; Gal 5:16-26).

Second, this “breaking open” of our lives allows a greater measure of the grace and power of God to be made manifest in and through us. Paul writes about this very thing in his letter to the Corinthians (2Cor 12:7-10).

Pastor To Pastor: As church leaders, we feel the need to be strong, confident and competent. The result of this can be that we leave no room for the Holy Spirit to be strong through us. There is a right kind of weakness that causes us to properly lean upon the Holy Spirit and depend upon His anointing in our lives. This is how ministry is done by His power, and not our own.

There is a scriptural basis for the type of *bruising* that accompanies anointing from the Holy Spirit. This crushing cannot, and should not, be avoided. It is a necessary part of maturing into Christ's image – leading us to a life of surrender, trust and obedience as nothing else can.

Please take a few minutes and look up the following scriptural examples, meditating upon the truth in each one:

- Jesus – Isaiah 53:1-6; Acts 3:18; Hebrews 5:9; 12:2
- Paul (and others) – Acts 9:15,16; Romans 8:18; 2 Corinthians 1:3-7; 4:7-18; 6:4-10; 11:22-30; 12:7-10
- All believers – 1 Thessalonians 2:14-16; 2 Timothy 3:12; 1 Peter 4:1-19

LIFE-GIVING SELF-DENIAL

The powerful principle of breaking and bruising is seen in other scriptural symbolism as well. For instance, in **communion**, breaking and crushing are a necessary part of the forming of the elements (Luke 22:14-20; 1Cor 11:23-26). Jesus used the bread (broken and ground wheat) and the wine (crushed grapes) as symbols of what He was about to do for all of humanity through His crucifixion.

Jesus Christ bore God's judgment upon Himself as the righteous consequence for our sins. His dying upon the cross reveals the ultimate, divine crushing that was necessary to release life (Acts 2:23,24) – the eternal life of salvation through believing in Jesus. Thank God that we do not have to undergo this ordeal, even though that is what our sin and rebellion deserve!

However, there is a dying to self that is necessary in order for the life and power of God within us to be released through us. This is NOT a type of fanatical martyrdom or self-mutilation to “prove” our spirituality. But the requirement of walking with Christ and fully serving Him demands a willingness to lead a life of self-denial and submission to God's will, even to the point of sacrifice (2Sam 24:18-24; Luke 9:23-26).

BECOMING TRUSTWORTHY VESSELS

Jesus' attitude in the midst of suffering is our ultimate example: “...*who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God*” (Heb 12:2). Jesus fully embraced the **purposes** of God the Father in His suffering and sacrifice.

Of course, Jesus did not enjoy the suffering (Luke 22:42-44). But He did realize the necessity of the cross (Luke 24:46-49). His willingness to suffer and die in our place not only released our salvation, but was an act of obedience to fulfill the Father's will (Matt 26:39,42,44).

Our suffering and sacrifice may be small compared to what Jesus gave for us, but it is difficult nonetheless. However, we do have the benefit of God's amazing commitment to use our suffering for **His** glory and **our** good at the same time! (Jas 1:2-5,12). God is committed to taking the sufferings and tribulations we encounter in this life and turning them to ultimate blessing (Rom 5:1-5; 8:18, 2Cor 4:17).

Our Father's commitment to us is stated clearly: *"And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose"* (Rom 8:28). And what is God's "purpose" for those who have believed upon Christ for salvation? It is also clearly stated in the very next verse: *"...to be **conformed** to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren"* (Rom 8:29).

God desires to use everything in our lives to shape us into the image of Christ, fit vessels for the Master's use (2Tim 2:19-21). Sometimes our suffering is due to the brokenness of this world and the sinful nature of the people who are in it. At other times, God may orchestrate circumstances in our lives for His divine use and purpose. Either way, God promises to use it for our good.

God will transform us in such a way that we become pure and trustworthy vessels of His will and purpose, allowing the anointing of the Holy Spirit to flow through us unhindered. But we must cooperate with and yield to His work in our lives!

THE FRAGRANCE OF CHRIST

Every believer in Christ, and especially each church leader, is called to be one who *"diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place. For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing"* (2Cor 2:14,15). This aroma of the reality of God's presence will be released through our lives as we yield to His holy "crushing" and transforming work.

Throughout Scripture, and today, God uses ordinary men and women in mighty ways. Often, they endure crushing and bruising in their preparation

and during their service. But because of it, the purposes of God are fulfilled and the fragrance of God is released through their lives. It is worth being reminded again that there are truly no great men and women of God – only humble (broken, yielded) men and women who are greatly used of God!

4. Cassia

Cassia is the bark of a plant that is similar to the cinnamon plant. Cassia was used as a laxative in Bible times. As a symbol in the holy anointing oil, cassia represents the purifying effect of the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

It is true that the anointing of the Holy Spirit provides us with power, gifts and divine ability. But in addition, the Holy Spirit's work is to *transform* the lives of those He anoints.

We can study a clear example of the importance of this work in the life of King Saul. Samuel anointed Saul to be King over Israel (1Sam 10:1). Saul was set apart for God's assigned purpose to be king. The anointing gave Saul authority, gifting and abilities to carry out his God-given assignment.

The Scriptures reveal even more that Saul received with his anointing: "*Then the Spirit of the LORD will come upon you, and you will prophesy with them **and be turned into another man***" (1Sam 10:6). Then, shortly after that: "*So it was, when he had turned his back to go from Samuel, that **God gave him another heart***" (v.9).

We can see that the anointing not only *equipped* Saul with what he needed, but it also included a *transforming* work. This made him a far more worthy and useful instrument in God's hand. This is a wonderful and encouraging picture of what the anointing of the Holy Spirit can provide for us as God's instruments as well.

Unfortunately, Saul (as have others) turned his back on all that God had given him by rejecting God's Word and commands in favor of doing his own will (1Sam 15:22-33). How tragic that what began as a great rulership over Israel ended in shame for King Saul and his family.

Pastor To Pastor: God gave King Saul everything he needed to fulfill his assignment and to be a successful king. Saul did that for a time, and was fruitful. But, sadly, Saul then chose to do what he wanted instead of what God had commanded, and his end was failure.

When God calls us, He makes available to us what we will need to fulfill His will. But never forget that what the Father is shaping us to **be** is as important as what He is calling us to **do**. God desires our transformation, that we become Christlike in character and action.

Our Father requires us to obey His Word and trust Him in all things. We will never mature to the place that we no longer need to grow and respond to the transforming work of the Holy Spirit! It is a lifelong process.

The Holy Spirit will correct, reprove and convict us. God does not condemn us (Rom 8:1), but does require that we obey and yield to His transforming work. Sometimes we may stumble or fail; but we must quickly repent and come back into proper alignment and submission to God and His will.

God works to transform us:

- For His glory;
- For our joy, peace and blessing; and
- To make us more fruitful and effective as His ambassadors and servants to others in ministry.

RESPONDING TO THE SPIRIT'S WORK

In studying *cassia*, we have learned of a primary work of the Holy Spirit. He comes to purge out that which is not in line with the life, character and Person of Christ. A vital sign of a truly anointed person is that they are becoming more and more like Christ in their character – not necessarily any great ability, gifting or ministry that they exhibit.

As church leaders, we *must* allow the Holy Spirit to continually deal with our fleshly weaknesses, temptations and failures. We must not grieve the Holy Spirit by resisting His transforming work *in us* (Eph 4:30).

We will reap what we sow, whether that be righteousness and blessing, or corruption (Gal 6:7,8). God will hold us, as leaders, to a stricter standard (Jas 3:1). Do not be deceived; God is not fooled. If you persist in sin, it will eventually become obvious to all (Num 32:23).

So choose righteousness! Respond to the Holy Spirit's work! Obey and trust God! Receive His anointing on your life and ministry! Be an example to others of a responsive, teachable, yielded vessel to the Holy Spirit's work. Let Him work in you, so that He can be glorified even more through you! Amen!

5. Olive Oil

Oil is the symbol most often used to represent the Holy Spirit in both the Old and New Testaments. Olive oil as an ingredient in the holy anointing oil has profound significance. It has elements of each of the other four ingredients, and adds one more unique feature.

In biblical times, olive oil was:

- used as medicine, to treat illness and pain (like **myrrh**)
- used as fuel for lamps, and was associated with fire (like **cinnamon**)
- made by crushing and bruising, and gives off a pleasant aroma (like **cane**)
- used to cleanse and purify both outwardly and inwardly (like **cassia**)

But olive oil has an additional quality that is vital to the Body of Christ. Olive oil is a natural *lubricant*. When placed between or over two objects, it reduces friction and wear.

This symbolism speaks to us of the necessity and importance of **unity** among God's people. Scripture presents this concept of associating anointing and unity together in a beautiful way: *"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious oil upon the head, running down on the beard, the beard of Aaron, running down on the edge of his garments. It is like the dew of Hermon, descending upon the mountains of Zion; for there the LORD commanded the blessing – life forevermore"* (Psalm 133).

Unity among God's people is a source of joy and peace. God is pleased when His people walk in right relationship with one another. His blessing is released and the anointing of the Holy Spirit flows more freely.

SYMPHONIC RELATIONSHIP

The biblical concept of unity is often misunderstood. In the Scriptures, *unity* is not the same thing as *uniformity*.

Uniformity is when all things are exactly the same, and there is no difference of any kind.

However, the concept of *unity* in Scripture is like a *symphony*. In a symphony, there are many different musical instruments. Each plays a different part. But these various parts are all working together under the direction of a conductor. Thus, there is a lovely, harmonious whole.

This is also true in the Body of Christ. There are many different gifts, callings, styles, personalities and abilities. Yet we have all been called into a *symphonic relationship* (John 17:20,21). No one is exactly the same as another; yet each has been called to play an important part. God then directs the willing participants into a harmonious symphony – His Body, loving one another as a testimony to the world (John 13:34,35).

Paul speaks of this as he discusses the *manifestation gifts* of the Spirit in 1 Corinthians Chapter 12 (see also 1 Corinthians 14:26-40). The early Church was an example of this unity, which was fostered by the anointing presence of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:42, 44-47).

DANGERS OF DISUNITY

Disunity among the members of Christ's Body has widespread ramifications. Paul rebuked the Corinthians regarding their divisiveness (1Cor 3:1-23). He called them fleshly and immature: *"For you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men?"* (v.3).

Disunity and division among the brethren is a serious offense. It is not only destructive; it also severely limits the speed and effectiveness of God's Kingdom work. Paul's discussion of the manifestation gifts mentioned above was prompted by the disorder and disunity created by peoples' pride and selfishness.

Most grievous is the fact that when the members of the Body of Christ do not have love for each other and serve the Lord's purposes in a unified manner, our witness before the world is severely hampered. The Bible urgently reminds us that the world will know we are Christians by our love for one another (John 13:35). If the world does not see the presence of love among us, our witness to the world appears questionable.

We can do great works in Christ's name; be a great preacher; hold evangelistic crusades; and much more. But if we do not love our brothers and sisters in Christ, these acts lose their effectiveness (see 1 Corinthians 13).

There are numerous exhortations in the Scriptures regarding the danger of attitudes that violate or hinder unity in the Body of Christ. Please take a few minutes and read just a few of them:

Romans 13:13,14

Galatians 5:13-23

Ephesians 4:20-29

1 Timothy 6:3-5

Titus 3:9-11

James 3:14-16

1 John 2:9-11; 3:10-18

These verses clearly show that where there is division, strife, enmity, bitterness, jealousy, competition, resentment, etc., unity is hindered and even broken. This grieves the Holy Spirit (Eph 4:30) and can quench His anointing presence (1Thess 5:19).

It is obvious that where these *carnal attitudes* are present, the devil is also behind the scenes hard at work to bring division and hinder the work of God (Jas 3:13-16). "Divide and conquer" is a strategy as old as the devil himself – a strategy he has learned to use well to hinder and attempt to destroy the Body of Christ. But his strategies are effective only if we cooperate with them!

RELATIONSHIPS: VALUED BY GOD

The anointing of the Holy Spirit will bring healing and reconciliation of relationships within the Body. This should be especially true among leaders. God expects us to live in right relationship – first with Him, and then with one another (Eph 2:14-17). It is only human pride, envy and bitter selfishness that stand in the way. These attitudes are what the devil will use to sow disunity, hate and unforgiveness in the Body.

If you feel that your brother has something against you, go to him and seek to make things right (Matt 5:23,24). If you have something against someone else, be quick to REPENT! (Matt 5:21,22) Repent of **taking offense** and allowing anger, hatred and judgmental attitudes to take root in your heart. Forgive others, lest God's judgment come upon you (Matt 6:14,15; see also Matthew 18:21-35).

God places great importance upon relationship – so much so, that He sent His Son to suffer and die so that the relationship with Him that was broken by our sin could be restored. In this same way, His love and forgiveness toward us make possible right relationships with one another.

We have learned that what God commands, He always makes possible. And He has commanded us to have right relationships with one another (John 13:34,35).

We must value and continuously invest in our relationship with God. We must also do the same with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

All lasting and life-transforming ministry flows from healthy relationships. This process begins with what we receive from God in relationship with Him. Then, out of love and compassion and from what we have received from God, we then give to and serve others. This is God's pattern for ministry. Jesus' life on this earth serves as a continuous example of this kind of ministry pattern for us.

UNITY, DIVERSITY, LOVE

There are differences of expression in the Body of Christ. But these differences need not become stumbling blocks to unity and relationship (Rom 14:13). Remember, unity is not the same as uniformity. Unity is a symphonic relationship as we each respond to the inner working of the Holy Spirit's anointing in our life. The Holy Spirit will always convict us, help us and lead us into right relationship with others – if we will respond.

A simple guide for unity has been expressed this way: *“In essentials, unity; in nonessentials, diversity; in all things, charity (love).”*

As we grow and live in the anointing of the Holy Spirit, let us have grace and love for one another. As we do, the anointing of the Holy Spirit and the witness of Christ can be released more fully in and through us!

GAINING UNDERSTANDING

This brief study of the holy anointing oil (Ex 30:22-33) reveals that God has given to us some amazing images and foretypes of the work of His Holy Spirit. Surely, our study of the Scriptures gives us understanding, wisdom and hope (Rom 15:4).

During this study thus far, you may have some questions, such as:

- Can I grow in anointing? If so, how?
- Is there such a thing as “false anointing”? If so, how can I recognize genuine anointing?
- What will hurt or quench the anointing in my life?
- Can I be continually filled with the anointing of the Holy Spirit?

We will discuss these questions and more in the next section, “Walking In The Anointing”.



