weekend

resource guide

for the week of 18 February

*AND when the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. 2 And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent, rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance. (Acts 1.1-4)*

Almost all Christians that I know want to be full of the Holy Spirit, but many seem to deny their need to be filled with the Holy Spirit. Yet surely this is still the great need among men today—a powerful filling of the Spirit that will cause us to

desire God,

hunger for His word,

be fervent in prayer,

boldly share our faith

obey His commands

love those we find unlovable

use our gifts to build up the local church

give liberally

expect Him to act wondrously in our time.

Everyone who wants to know how to be filled with the Spirit must first desire to be filled. This is not as simple as it sounds. A.W. Tozer challenges us: “To the interested inquirer I ask these questions: Are you sure that you want to be possessed by a Sprit Who, while He is pure and gentle and wise and loving, will yet insist upon being Lord of your life? Are you sure you want your personality to be taken over by One Who will require obedience to the written Word? Who will not tolerate any of the self-sins in your life self-love, or self-indulgence? Who will not permit you to strut or boast or show-off? Who will take the direction of your life away from you and will reserve the sovereign right to test you and discipline you? Who will strip away from you many loved objects which secretly harm your soul? Unless you can answer an eager ‘Yes’ to these questions you do not want to be filled. You may want a thrill or the victory or the power, but you do not really want to be filled with the Spirit. Your desire is little more than a feeble wish and is not pure enough to please God, Who demands all or nothing… If, on the other hand, your soul cries out for God, for the Living God, and your dry and empty heart despairs of living a normal Christian life without further anointing, then I ask you: Is your desire all absorbing? Is it the biggest thing in your life? Does it crowd out every common religious activity and fill you with an acute longing that can only be described as the pain of desire? If your heart cries ‘Yes’ to these questions you may be on your way to a spiritual breakthrough that will transform your whole life.”

While I shy away from formulas, I would suggest that we can and will be filled with the Holy Spirit as we:

*Surrender*: I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. (Romans 12.1)

*Ask*: If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him? (Luke 11.13)

*Obey*: And we are witnesses of these things; and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey Him. (Acts 5.32)

*Believe*: This is the only thing I want to find out from you: did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith? (Galatians 5.2)

Dwight Moody was pointedly asked, “Have you been filled with the Holy Spirit?” After a moment's pause to think he replied, “Yes, but I leak.” Saints of God, a spiritless faith will never deliver the realities we long or labor for…

Enjoy your LifeGroup,

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Getting to know one another better…

When you give a gift, do you tend to choose something practical or something just for the joy of it? Have you ever achieved both in one gift?

1 Corinthians 12: a gifted body…

*Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware. 2 You know that when you were pagans, you were led astray to the mute idols, however you were led. 3 Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God says, “Jesus is accursed”; and no one can say, “Jesus is Lord,” except by the Holy Spirit.*

*4   Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. 5 And there are varieties of ministries, and the same Lord. 6 There are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all persons. 7 But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. 8 For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, and to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit; 9 to another faith by the same Spirit, and to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, 10 and to another the effecting of miracles, and to another prophecy, and to another the distinguishing of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, and to another the interpretation of tongues. 11 But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills.*

*12   For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ. 13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.*

*14   For the body is not one member, but many. 15 If the foot says, “Because I am not a hand, I am not a part of the body,” it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body. 16 And if the ear says, “Because I am not an eye, I am not a part of the body,” it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body. 17 If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? 18 But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired. 19 If they were all one member, where would the body be? 20 But now there are many members, but one body. 21 And the eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you”; or again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.” 22 On the contrary, it is much truer that the members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary; 23 and those members of the body which we deem less honorable, on these we bestow more abundant honor, and our less presentable members become much more presentable, 24 whereas our more presentable members have no need of it. But God has so composed the body, giving more abundant honor to that member which lacked, 25 so that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. 26 And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.*

*27   Now you are Christ’s body, and individually members of it. 28 And God has appointed in the church, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, various kinds of tongues. 29 All are not apostles, are they? All are not prophets, are they? All are not teachers, are they? All are not workers of miracles, are they? 30 All do not have gifts of healings, do they? All do not speak with tongues, do they? All do not interpret, do they? 31 But earnestly desire the greater gifts.*

What? (does the Bible say)

Consider the various spiritual gifts Paul mentions. How does each give evidence of the Holy Spirit working in the life of the church?

Throughout this passage what are the various actions of the Holy Spirit?

Based on this chapter, what is the point of spiritual gifts?

Paul calls each gift a "manifestation of the Spirit" (12:7). In what ways does the Spirit manifest himself in the church, and why?

Now what? (should/will I think based on what this passage says)

We speak of being a church member without thinking about where the word comes from. The word member owes its place in Christian thinking and speaking largely to 1 Corinthians 12:12–20 where the word means limb or organ. We might expect Paul to say in 12:12 “as the body is one, and has many members . . . so also is the church.” Instead he says “so also is the Messiah.” Why do you think he says this?

When you think of yourself as a member of Christ himself, what comes to mind?

Paul emphasizes that the source of spiritual gifts is the Spirit. What then is he implying is not the source, and why is that important?

How do you reconcile Paul's exhortation to "eagerly desire the greater gifts" (12.31) with his earlier emphasis that God sovereignly assigns gifts (12.11, 18, 28)?

So what? (difference will this passage make in how I live)

What spiritual gifts do you think you tend overlook, under appreciate, or fail to recognize? Do you think that you tend to elevate one spiritual gift over the others? If you do, which one(s), and why?

Do you know what your spiritual gifts are? If so, please list… If not, who do you know who can help you discern what they might be?

What can you do to help others in your group or church to discover their giftedness?

How can you use your spiritual gift for the good of the people in your LifeGroup and at Faith?

Think about the members of your LifeGroup. What gifts do you behold in them? Come ready to share your insights with them!

If you were to write a letter of appreciation to someone whose spiritual gift of ministry has made a significant difference in your life, who would that person be and why? Why not take a moment and write them a note, text, or email and let them know?

My prayer requests (write in advance what you want your group to pray for…)

Praying for my group…