

Water, Wind & Fire

Some symbols of the Holy Spirit in Scripture

Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. *Galatians 5:25, NIV*

AIR/BREATH/WIND

When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit.” *John 20:22, NRSV*

And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. *Acts 2:2, NRSV*

The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit. *John 3:8, NRSV*

WATER

On the last day of the festival, the great day, while Jesus was standing there, he cried out, “Let anyone who is thirsty come to me, and let the one who believes in me drink. As the scripture has said, ‘Out of the believer’s heart shall flow rivers of living water.’” Now he said this about the Spirit, which believers in him were to receive; for as yet there was no Spirit, because Jesus was not yet glorified. *John 7:37-39, NRSV*

For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. *1 Cor 12:13, NRSV*

FIRE

“I baptize you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. *Matthew 3:11, NRSV*

Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability. *Acts 2:3-4, NRSV*

WHAT THE HOLY SPIRIT DOES (an abbreviated list)

The Holy Spirit gives us spiritual strength.

...[I pray that] He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man; so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. *Ephesians 3:16-17a, NIV*

The Holy Spirit encourages us.

Then the church throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria enjoyed a time of peace. It was strengthened; and encouraged by the Holy Spirit, it grew in numbers, living in the fear of the Lord. *Acts 9:31, NIV*

The Holy Spirit guides us.

“And now, compelled by the Spirit, I am going to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there. I only know that in every city the Holy Spirit warns me that prison and hardships are facing me.” *Acts 20:22-23, NIV*

The Holy Spirit gives us insight.

Now we have not received the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things that are freely given to us by God. And we speak about these things, not with words taught us by human wisdom, but with those taught by the Spirit, explaining spiritual things to spiritual people. The unbeliever does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him. And he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned. The one who is spiritual discerns all things, yet he himself is understood by no one. *1 Cor 2:12-15, NET*

The Holy Spirit gives us new life.

Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit." *John 3:5-6, NIV*

He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, *Titus 3:5, NIV*

The Holy Spirit gives us confidence in our relationship with Christ.

The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, *Romans 8:16, NIV*

The Holy Spirit molds our character.

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. *Romans 15:13, NIV*

But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law. Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you just as I have forewarned you that those who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. *Galatians 5:16-23, NIV*

To God's elect, strangers in the world, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by his blood:

1 Peter 1:1-2, NIV

The Holy Spirit empowers our prayers.

But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith; praying in the Holy Spirit; *Jude 20, NIV*

And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints. *Eph 6:18, NIV*

In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. *Romans 8:26, NIV*

The Holy Spirit facilitates worship.

Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth. *John 4:23-24, NIV*

...for we are the true circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh, *Philippians 3:3, NIV*

Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit. Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. *Eph 5:18-20, NIV*

The Holy Spirit gives power for witnessing.

...but you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth. *Acts 1:8, NIV*

...for our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake.
1 Thessalonians 1:5, NIV

The Holy Spirit enables us to serve Christ in the Church.

Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines. *1 Cor 12:7-11, NIV*

Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received. Whoever speaks must do so as one speaking the very words of God; whoever serves must do so with the strength that God supplies, so that God may be glorified in all things through Jesus Christ. To him belong the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen. *1 Peter 4:10, NRSV*

We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness. *Romans 12:6-8, NRSV*