

THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

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About the author...

Jay left Wheeling Pittsburgh Steel in 1986 to go into preaching on a full time basis. He preached in Overbrook, Kansas from 1986 to 1991 when he began his labors with the church in Springfield, Ohio. Jay is married to a wonderful wife and helpmate, Kathy. They have three faithful children, Brian, Aaron and Cassandra and three beautiful grandchildren, Trevor, Taylor and Trey.

Introduction

My sincere thanks to the elders, deacons, preacher and members of the church of Christ which meets at 39th street in Independence, Missouri for the invitation to speak on the subject of "The Work of the Holy Spirit."

Further, I would be amiss not to offer my deepest appreciation for the tremendous effort on the part of Jack Williams and other faithful members in making these lessons available on the Internet. It is my fervent hope that those of you who benefit from their labor will be encouraged to make plans to attend the lectureship offered each year by this faithful congregation of God's people.

Now, to our subject. I doubt that few would argue that the Holy Spirit is the least understood (and most abused) member of the Godhead. And while it is certainly true that error abounds regarding the person of the Holy Spirit and His manner of operation, this lesson is not intended to address all the error being taught (other than the fact that when truth is presented error is automatically exposed), but rather an honest study of the Holy Spirit and His work in light of what the Bible teaches.

To accomplish that goal, the following will serve as an outline for our study together of the Holy Spirit:

- I. Who Is the Holy Spirit?
- II. What Role Does the Holy Spirit Play in God's Plan of Redemption?
- III. How Does The Holy Spirit Accomplish His Work Today?

I. Who Is the Holy Spirit?

(Much can be accomplished with a Biblical answer to this question.)

- A) The Holy Spirit is a personage (person), as distinct as God the Father and God the Son. Further, the Holy Spirit is masculine; *"Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He will not speak of himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will shew you things to come"* (John 16:13). Notice how that over and over again the personal pronoun he is used.
- B) The Holy Spirit is Deity; *"But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Spirit, and to keep back part of the price of the land? Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but*

unto God" (Acts 5:3-4). When Ananias lied to the Holy Spirit he was guilty of lying unto God. The Holy Spirit is God. As God, The Holy Spirit possesses every attitude of Deity. The Psalmist, in a few words, captures so much; *"Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hast formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God"* (Psalms 90:2).

- C) There is only one Holy Spirit; *"There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling"* (Ephesians 4:4).
- D) We frequently refer to the Holy Spirit as the third member of the Godhead. We do so for two reasons: 1) There is a Godhead which consists of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit (Acts 17:29; Romans 1:20). 2) Whenever the three members of the Godhead are mentioned in a single verse, the Holy Spirit is always mentioned third. *"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and the Holy Spirit"* (Matthew 28:19). And while each member of the Godhead possesses an individual identity, there is a harmony of thought, intent, and purpose that creates a perfect unity. *"There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit: and there three are one"* (1 John 5:7).

Now, what have we noticed thus far? 1) The Holy Spirit is a distinct individual. 2) The Holy Spirit is masculine. 3) The Holy Spirit is Deity. 4) There is only one Holy Spirit. 5) The Holy Spirit is the third member of the Godhead.

II. What Role Does the Holy Spirit Play in God's Plan of Redemption?

The Holy Spirit revealed the will and plan of God for man. The Holy Spirit inspired select men in the Old Testament: *"Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy spirit"* (2 Peter 1:20-21). The Holy Spirit revealed, among other things, the coming of the Messiah. A promise that fired the flames of hope in every generation of God's people. The promises of the coming Saviour were not limited to any single book, but rather a central theme that united every book from Genesis to Malachi.

The Old Testament faithful were offered small pieces of information at a time. The prophet Isaiah would speak of it like this; *"But the word of the Lord was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, there a little..."* (Isaiah 28:13). But they were far from discouraged, the prophets would study their own writings; *"Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you. Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ, which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow"* (1 Peter 1:10-11).

Now, I would not leave the impression that the Holy Spirit's revelation concerning Christ were either few, or insignificant. Just as a sample of evidence given to verify His identity, I offer the following:

- A) Concerning His birth, Jesus would be born of a woman (Genesis 3:15; Galatians 4:4), a virgin (Isaiah 7:14; Luke 1:26-35), in the city of Bethlehem (Micah 5:2).
- B) Christ would come from the tribe of Judah (Genesis 49:10; Hebrews 7:14), from the

- lineage of David (2 Samuel 7:12-13; 1 Chronicles 17:11-13; Luke 1:30-33).
- C) His nature would be both Divine (Isaiah 6:1; John 12:36-41; Isaiah 9:6-7; Matthew 1:18), and human (Deuteronomy 18:15-18; John 1:14; Philippians 2:6-11).
 - D) The mission of Christ was to preach the gospel of peace to the lost house of Israel (Isaiah 61:1-2; Luke 4:18-19; Matthew 10:6). A message that was fully intended to include the Gentiles (Isaiah 42:6; 49:6-7; 62:2; John 12:51-52; Acts 13:46-47; Ephesians 2:11-16).
 - E) The death of Christ was foretold with such detail. He would be betrayed by a friend (Psalms 41:9) for thirty pieces of silver (Zechariah 11:12; Matthew 26:14-16). No bone of Jesus would be broken (Psalms 34:20; John 19:32-34), but His hands, feet and side would be pierced (Psalms 22:16; Zechariah 12:10). Jesus would be numbered with the transgressors, but He would offer no defense in dying for our sins (Isaiah 53:1-12; Luke 23:8-9; John 19:9-11). He would cry "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Psalms 22:1; Matthew 27:46). Habakkuk 1:13; 2 Corinthians 5:21 offers some insight into why.
Beloved, do you know who penned Psalms 16:10; 22:1; 18; Psalms 34:20; 41:9? A shepherd boy who became a king, a thousand years before the event, before crucifixion was ever practiced as a means of capital punishment. Why did the Holy Spirit speak these words by the mouth of David (2 Samuel 23:2; Acts 1:16)? I know why! So that you and I can know without a shadow of a doubt that Jesus Christ is the true Messiah!!!
 - F) The resurrection, the grave, could offer no defeat. Jesus would come forth triumphant over death (Psalms 16:10; Acts 2:27; Revelation 1:18). The significance of the resurrection cannot be overstated: 1) Jesus was declared to be the Son of God by the resurrection (Romans 1:4). 2) There is the assurance of a judgement day by the resurrection (Acts 17:30-31). 3) We are begotten again unto a lively hope by the resurrection (1 Peter 1:3). 4) Jesus was raised from the dead to sit on David's throne (Acts 2:30).
 - G) The kingdom of Christ; the holy Spirit revealed when the kingdom would be established (Daniel 2:36-45; Matthew 3:2; 4:17). The kingdom would not be a earthly or material kingdom, but a spiritual kingdom given to Christ when He ascended to the Father (Acts 1:9-11; Daniel 7:13-14). Jesus would sit on the throne of David at the right hand of the Father, in heave, until time was more (Psalms 89:35-37; 1 Corinthians 15:24-26).
- The Holy Spirit inspired select men in the first century. Connect the following verses together:
- C *"But unto us God revealed them through the Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. for who among men knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man, which is in him? even so the things of God none knoweth, save the Spirit of God". ... "Which things also we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Spirit teacheth; combining spiritual words with spiritual things" (1 Corinthians 2:10-13) [A.S.V. 1901].*
 - C *"Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He will not speak of himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak and He will shew you things to come" (John 16:13).*

- C *“How by revelation He made know unto me the mystery; as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ” (Ephesians 3:3-4).*

Now, what do those versus collectively teach? 1) The Holy Spirit revealed the mind of God unto select men in the first century. 2) The Holy Spirit revealed every bit of truth that God wanted to reveal. 3) We can (and must if we hope to spend eternity in heaven) read and understand God’s revealed will for man.

May I stop and emphasize that point for a moment. while it is true that in Old Testament God made it clear that heaven’s revelation had not been completely revealed (Deuteronomy 18:15-18) and that the Old Testament was a temporary Law that would be removed and replaced (Jeremiah 31:31-34; Hebrews 8:6-13). Not because the Law was imperfect, but because man was (Psalms 19:7; Hebrews 7:19). such is not the case in the New Testament. There is a finality connected to the New Testament that absolutely denies any type of alteration (Galatians 1:8-9; 2 John 9-11; Revelation 22:18-19). Beloved, the Bible is the final and complete revelation of God to man, and is fully sufficient to meet man’s every need.

- C *“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (2 Timothy 3:16-17).*
- C *“According as His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and Godliness, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue” (2 Peter 1:3).*

How important is the Spirit’s revelation? Friends, without it we would be utterly lost, for the Bible addresses those things which are beyond our physical senses (II Corinthians 4:18). All that we know about God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, the soul of a man, heaven, hell, Hades, salvation, and so on, we learn from the scriptures inspired by the Holy Spirit.

III. How Does the Holy Spirit Accomplish His Work Today?

The Holy Spirit does not directly inspire men today, though I assume all of us would recognize how needful that was in the first century, in absence of the written word (Mark 16:20). But that none could (if honest) fail to understand the Holy Spirit made it clear that direct inspiration would end with the completed written word (1 Corinthians 13:8-13; Ephesians 4:8-13).

Does the Holy Spirit impact our lives today? Absolutely! Not through inspired men, but through an inspired book. The Bible is a spirit-filled message. The scriptures learned and obeyed can bring is from the depths of despair to the heights of joy. The Holy Spirit convicts, converts and conforms only by means of the written word.

- A) The Holy Spirit convicts the lost of sin (Ecclesiastes 7:20; Romans 3:23), not to crush but to inform souls of their spiritual state, in sin and separated from God (Isaiah 59:1-2; Ephesians 2:1; Romans 6:23).
- B) The Holy Spirit converts, but He does not convert one person one way and another person a different way. What God requires of one He requires of all (Acts 10:34-35). The Holy Spirit converts by means of the gospel of Christ (2 Thessalonians 2:14). All should recognize that obvious truth, for the Holy Spirit came to glorify the Son (John

- 16:14). He does so by pointing men to Jesus Christ as the Saviour of the world (1 John 4:14). More, the Spirit makes it clear that salvation is nowhere else (John 14:6; Acts 4:12). Jesus is the ultimate demonstration of God's love for the souls of men (Romans 5:6-8). The Holy Spirit provides the conditions of reconciliation (John 8:24; Luke 13:3; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:38; 8:12; 35-39; 18:8; Romans 6:3-5; 10:9-10) that will set men free from sin and death (John 8:32). How does the Holy Spirit convict and convert? Only through means of the written word (Romans 1:16; James 1:21; 1 Peter 1:22-23).
- C) The Holy Spirit conforms us to the image of Christ (Romans 8:29) by giving us a standard of morality to live by (Romans 12:1-2; Titus 2:12-14; 1 Peter 1:16). Thankfully you can still hear the word "NO" in the church (1 Timothy 3:15). He comforts us by revealing that failure to live sin free does not mean rejection. Forgiveness is ever available for a child of God (Acts 8:22; 1 John 1:7-10; 2:1-2). He strengthens by giving us the whole armour of God that we can stand against the foes of Christianity (Ephesians 6:10-17). The Spirit encourages every Christian to live confident of heaven (1 John 5:13), by providing the keys to successful Christianity (2 Peter 1:5-11). The Holy Spirit will lead us from here to eternity through the written word of God which is a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our path (Psalms 119:105). A-men