

Empowering Presence: The Work of the Holy Spirit

WHAT IS THE WORK OF THE SPIRIT?

A. THE HOLY SPIRIT EMPOWERS

1. He Gives Life

- The H.S. gives life to all animate creatures;
 - When you send forth your Spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the ground. (Psa 104:30 ESV)
 - If he should set his heart to it and gather to himself his spirit and his breath,¹⁵ all flesh would perish together, and man would return to dust. (Job 34:14-15 ESV)
- Spirit gives us new life in regeneration
 - Jesus to Nicodemus – That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷ Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' (Joh 3:6-7 ESV)
 - It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. (Joh 6:63 ESV)
- The Spirit conceived Jesus in the womb of Mary
 - Matthew 1:18, 20; Luke 1:35
- The Spirit will complete this life giving work in the resurrection
 - If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you. (Rom 8:11 ESV)

2. He Gives Power for Service

a. The Old Testament

- Holy Spirit empowered people for special service
- Joshua (Num. 27:18; Deut. 34:9)
- The Judges to deliver Israel from oppression

- Othniel (Judg. 3:10); Gideon (6:34); Jephthah (11:29); Samson (13:25; 14:6, 19; 15:14)
- Saul (1 Sam. 11:6); David (1 Sam. 16:13); Bezalel (Ex. 31:3; 35:31, 34)
- Protected God's people and enabled to overcome their enemies
 - Exodus (Isa. 63:11-12)
 - David against Saul (1 Sam. 19:20-23)
- The Messiah
 - ² And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. ³ And his delight shall be in the fear of the LORD. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide disputes by what his ears hear, (Isa 11:2-3 ESV)
 - Behold my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my Spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations. (Isa 42:1 ESV)
 - The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; (Isa 61:1 ESV)
 - Cf. Luke 4:18

POINT OF CONTROVERSY: WAS THE HOLY SPIRIT ACTIVE WITHIN OLD TESTAMENT SAINTS?

- ▶ John 14:17, "He dwells *with* you, and will be *in* you." And also in John 7:39 "as yet the Spirit *had not been given*, because Jesus was not yet glorified."
- ▶ Joshua is said to have _____
 - ▶ Num 27:18 ESV
 - ▶ Deu 34:9 ESV
- ▶ Ezekiel
 - ▶ Eze 2:2; 3:24
- ▶ Daniel (Dan. 4:8-9); Micah (Mic. 3:8)

b. The New Testament

- Anointing And Empowering Jesus As Messiah
 - Descent upon Jesus at baptism (Matt. 3:16; Mark 1:11; Luke 3:22; John 1:32)
 - Empowering Jesus to enter the wilderness (Luke 4:1)
 - Empowered to preach; fulfilling Isaiah prophecy (Luke 4:18-19)
 - Empowered to cast out demons with a word (Luke 4:36, 40-41)
 - Jesus had an anointing of the Holy Spirit without measure and without a time limit (John 3:34-35; John 1:32; Acts 10:38)
- Empowered The Disciples For Various Kinds Of Ministry (Acts 1:8)
- Empowered The Early Christians To Work Miracles As They Proclaimed The Gospel
 - Stephen (Acts 1:8); Paul (Rom. 15:19; 1 Cor. 2:4)
- Empowered The Preaching Of The Gospel
 - (Acts 4:8, 31; 6:10; 1 Thess. 1:5; 1 Peter 1:12)
- Empowers The Reading And Teaching Of Scripture
 - (Heb. 3:7; 10:15)
- Giving Spiritual Gifts To Equip Christians For Ministry
 - (1 Cor. 12:11)
- Empowers Prayer And Makes Effective
 - Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. (Rom 8:26 ESV)
- Empowers Spiritual Warfare (Acts 13:9-11)

B. THE HOLY SPIRIT PURIFIES

1. A Definite Act

- When we are saved the Spirit does a cleansing work in us; making a decisive break with the patterns of sin that were in our lives before
 - And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God. (1Co 6:11 ESV)
 - he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, (Tit 3:5 ESV)

2. A Progressive Act

- Produces in us growth in holiness of life
- Brings forth the fruit of the Spirit within us; those qualities that reflect the character of God
 - Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control (Gal. 5:22-23)
- Sanctification comes by the power of the Spirit; we are able to put to death the deeds of the body and grow in holiness by the Spirit
 - ³ For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. (Rom 8:13 ESV)

C. THE HOLY SPIRIT REVEALS

1. He Gives Revelation To Prophets And Apostles

- For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. (2Pe 1:21 ESV)
- Matt. 22:43; Acts 1:16; 4:25; 28:25; 1 Peter 1:11
- The New Testament authors were also guided into all truth (John 16:13)
- Others who were filled with the Holy Spirit also spoke or sang words that became part of Scripture
 - Elizabeth (Luke 1:41); Zechariah (Luke 1:67); Simeon (Luke 2:25)

2. He Gives Evidence Of God's Presence

- Sometimes we create a false dichotomy concerning who get's attention
- H.S. does glorify Jesus and bear witness to him
 - John 16:14; 15:26; Acts 5:32; 1 Cor. 12:3; 1 John 4:2
- Makes his own presence known
 - H.S. came upon the seventy elders with Moses and they prophesied (Num. 11:25-26)
 - H.S. came upon the Judges to enable them to do mighty works (see above)
 - H.S. came upon Saul and he prophesied (1 Sam. 10:6)
 - H.S. descended upon Jesus at baptism (John 1:32)
 - H.S. came as a sound of rushing wind with tongues of fire at Pentecost (Acts 2:2-3)
 - People speaking in tongues or praising God in a spontaneous way (Acts 2:4; 10:44-46; 19:6)
 - H.S. is a perceptible presence in believers (John 7:39)
- Makes himself known to individual believers in various ways
 - Bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God (Rom. 8:16)
 - Provides a guarantee of our future fellowship with him in heaven (2 Cor. 1:22; 5:5)

- Reveals his desires to us so that we can be led by those desires and follow them (Rom. 8:4-16; Gal. 5:16-25)
 - He gives gifts that manifest his presence (1 Cor. 12:7-11)
- One of his primary purposes is to manifest the presence of God

3. He Guides And Directs God's People

- Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted by the Devil
- Spirit gave direct words of guidance to people
 - Philip – Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:29)
 - Peter – Cornelius' men (Acts 10:19-20; 11:12)
 - Antioch Christians – set apart Barnabas and Saul (Acts 13:2)
- Spirit physically transported a person
 - Philip (Acts 8:39-40)
 - Elijah (1 Kings 18:12; 2 Kings 2:16)
 - Ezekiel (Ezek. 11:1; 37:1; 43:5)
 - John (Rev. 17:3; 21:10) – Possible transportation was a vision
- Spirit usually gives day to day guidance; being “led” by the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:14; Gal. 5:18); and *walking* according to the Spirit (Rom. 8:4; Gal. 5:16)
- Holy Spirit gave guidance to establish people in various ministries or church offices
 - Barnabas and Saul (Acts. 13:2)
 - Elders in Ephesus had been established by the Spirit (Acts 20:28)
- Spirit provided guidance through spiritual gifts such as prophecy (1 Cor. 14:29-33)

4. He Provides A Godlike Atmosphere When He Manifests His Presence

- Conviction of sin, righteousness and judgment (John 16:8-11)
- Pours out God's love into our hearts (Rom. 5:5; 15:30; Col. 1:8)
- Provides atmosphere of peace (Rom. 14:17)
- Provides atmosphere of joy (Acts 13:52; 1 Thess. 1:6)
 - All fruit of the Spirit
- Atmosphere of truth, wisdom, comfort, freedom, hope, adoption, glory, unity, power
 - John 14:17; 15:26; 16:13; 1 John 5:7; Deut. 34:9; Isa. 11:2; Acts 9:31; 2 Cor. 3:17; Rom. 14:17; Rom. 15:13; Rom. 8:15-16; Gal. 4:5-6; 2 Cor. 3:8; Eph. 4:3; Acts 1:8; 1 Cor. 2:4; 2 Tim. 1:7

5. He Gives Us Assurance

- Bears witness with our spirits that we are children of God (Rom. 8:16)
- Gives evidence of the work of God within us (1 John 3:24; 4:13)

6. He Teaches And Illumines

- He teaches certain things to God's people and illumines them so that they can understand things
 - Teaches and brings to remembrance (John 14:26)
 - Guide into truth (John 16:13)
 - Teach what to say at the appropriate time (Luke 12:12)
 - Revealed a famine to Agabus; that Paul would be taken captive in Jerusalem (Acts 11:28; 21:11); that Paul would suffer in Jerusalem (Acts 20:23; 21:4); revealed to Paul what would happen in latter days (1 Tim. 4:1)
- Understanding the things of God
 - ² Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God. (1Co 2:12 ESV)
 - Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of your law. (Psa 119:18 ESV)
 - Eph. 1:17-19

D. THE HOLY SPIRIT UNIFIES

- At Pentecost the prophecy of Joel 2:28-32 was fulfilled (Acts 2:16-18)
 - But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel: ¹⁷ "And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; ¹⁸ even on my male servants and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy.
- Emphasis on Spirit coming on a community of believers; sons and daughters, old and young men, maidservant and menservants rather than one man like Moses or Joshua
- The church was initiated...a unified community
 - Acts 2:44-47; 2 Cor. 13:14; Phil. 2:1-2; Eph. 2:18; 4:3
- Differing gifts draw us closer together
 - 1 Cor. 12:7, 11, 13, 21
- Strife, disputes, dissensions, factions are desires of the flesh – that which is opposed to being led by the Spirit (Gal. 5:18-25)
- Col. 3:14

E. THE HOLY SPIRIT IS PERSONAL

Question: Does the Holy Spirit ever leave an individual?

- Samson (Judg. 16:20); Saul (1 Sam. 16:14); Israel (Isa. 63:10)
- Holy Spirit can be grieved and cease to bring blessing in a situation
 - Stephen rebuked the Jewish leaders – “You always resist the Holy Spirit” (Acts 7:51)
 - Paul warns the Ephesians – “Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, in whom you were sealed for the day of redemption” (Eph. 4:30)
 - Tells the Thessalonian church – “Do not quench the Spirit” (1 Thess. 5:19)
 - Paul warns Christians not to defile their bodies by joining them to a prostitute because the Holy Spirit lives within their bodies (1 Cor. 6:19-20)
- More serious judgments when confronted with hardened sinning against the Spirit
 - Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5)
 - “Why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy spirit and to keep back part of the proceeds of the land?” – he fell down dead
 - “How is it that you have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord?” – she died immediately
 - Hebrews warns us:
 - How much worse punishment, do you think, will be deserved by the one who has spurned the Son of God, and has profaned the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has outraged the Spirit of grace? (Heb 10:29 ESV)
- Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit (Matt. 12:31-32)
- Filled with the Holy Spirit
 - *To be filled with the Holy Spirit is to be filled with the immediate presence of God himself, and it therefore will result in feeling what God feels, desiring what God desires, doing what God wants, speaking by God’s power, praying and ministering in God’s strength, and knowing with the knowledge which god himself gives.* – Wayne Grudem, 649.
 - Eph. 5:18; Luke 1:15, 41, 67; 4:1; Acts 2:4; 4:8; 6:3, 5; 7:55; 9:17; 11:24; 13:9

Come, O Creator Spirit

Come, O Creator Spirit blest,
And in our hearts take up thy rest;
Spirit of grace, with heav'nly aid
Come to the souls whom thou has made.

Thou art the Comforter, we cry,
Sent to the earth from God Most High,
Fountain of life and Fire of love,
And our Anointing from above.

Bringing from heav'n our sev'nfold dow'r,
Sign of our God's right hand of pow'r,
O blessed Spirit, promised long,
Thy coming wakes the heart to song.

Make our dull minds with rapture glow,
Let human hearts with love o'erflow;
And, when our feeble flesh would fail,
May thine immortal strength prevail.

Far from our souls the foe repel,
Grant us in peace henceforth to dwell;
Ill shall not come, nor harm betide,
If only thou wilt be our Guide.

Show us the Father, Holy One,
Help us to know th'Eternal Son;
Spirit Divine, for evermore
Thee will we trust and thee adore.