

## BASIC DOCTRINE – THE FUNDAMENTALS

### PART 9: THE HOLY SPIRIT

Just before His Ascension into heaven Jesus spoke to His disciples saying *“you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now...you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”*  
(Acts 1:5-8)

The “power” Jesus was referring to here would not find its origin in some impersonal force but in the third person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit. Although it is sometimes pointed out that the Greek word for ‘spirit’ is *“pneuma”* which can also mean “wind” or “breath” some have drawn the false conclusion that the Spirit is nothing but the force of God.

The idea of the “breath,” attributed to the Spirit speaks of such qualities as speaking and bringing forth life that are in turn closely linked with the ideas of life, creation and generation. Thus Scripture describes God as having breathed life into man in the act of creating him (Gen 2:7).

Scripture makes it plain that the Spirit is a personal being with the same intimate qualities as the other members of the triune being of God. Thus Paul is able to say that believers can grieve the Holy Spirit when they sin (Eph. 4:30).

Because the Holy Spirit is a person, the authors of Scripture often used personal pronouns when referring to Him.

*"But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me. (John 15:26)*

*As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, "Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." (Acts 13:2)*

As we see from above passages the Holy Spirit is part of the triune being of God who is deity, coexisting, personal and eternal with God the Father and God the Son.

After the fall, the Holy Spirit was active in the regenerative work and redemption of man. During the period of the Old Testament, and even into the New Testament period before the outpouring of the Spirit recorded in Acts upon the ascension of Jesus, the Holy Spirit is only given to certain individuals for certain specific purposes.

The Holy Spirit called the judges of Israel and empowered with ability to defend Israel in times of deliverance from their enemies.

*When the children of Israel cried out to the Lord, the Lord raised up a deliverer for the children of Israel, who delivered them: Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother. The Spirit of the Lord came upon him, and he judged Israel.*

*(Judg 3:9-11)*

The Spirit spoke to and through the prophets to the children of Israel with words of judgment and encouragement.

*Yet the Lord testified against Israel and against Judah, by all of His prophets, every seer, saying, "Turn from your evil ways, and keep My commandments and My statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by My servants the prophets." (2 Kings 17:13)*

And through the prophets, the Holy Spirit brought forth the written revelation of God.

*knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. (2 Peter 1:20-21)*

It was the Spirit which moved upon the Virgin Mary to bring about the miraculous conception and birth of Christ

*And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God. (Luke 1:35)*

Jesus spoke to His Apostles, just before His arrest and crucifixion, of the Holy Spirit as a comforter and guide, which would come to them after His death.

*However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; (John 16:13)*

But of all of the activities of the Holy Spirit, it is the regeneration, renewal and empowering of the life of the individual believer that is most personal and endearing to us, for it was by the mercy and grace of God that the Spirit sought us first even before we sought Him.

It was the Holy Spirit who initiated the call of the Father into our soul, opening our heart and mind, enabling us to respond to the message of salvation with repentance and enter into new life.

*And on the Sabbath day we went out of the city to the riverside, where prayer was customarily made; and we sat down and spoke to the women who met there. Now a certain woman named Lydia heard us. She was a seller of purple*

*from the city of Thyatira, who worshiped God. The Lord opened her heart to heed the things spoken by Paul. (Acts 16:13-14)*

In our response to the call of the Father with repentance, the Spirit applies the work of Christ to our life bringing to us forgiveness, justification and a new life with a heart anew. This is why Paul says that salvation is “*not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit*” (Titus 3:5).

It is the Spirit who baptizes and empowers believers with spiritual gifts according to His will.

*There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills. (1 Cor 12:4-11)*

*God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will? (Heb 2:4)<sup>1</sup>*

The Holy Spirit is also essential in the life of the church in bearing not only the gifts of the spirit but also fruits.

*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. (Gal 5:22-23)*

And finally it is the Spirit who will bring us resurrection in the last day with a body that will be beyond pain and suffering.

*But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you. (Rom 8:11)*

As we can see, our experience of God, which includes our worship and sacrifice, is dependent upon the Holy Spirit's revelation of God to us, along with His work of calling, regenerating our hearts and mind, energizing our willingness and cooperation to sustain us with His assurance and continual mercy.

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<sup>1</sup> For much more on this, see [Bread of Life Level One Foundations and Fundamentals](#) by Dr Phillip L. Wiley – Class 2: Holy Spirit Baptism.