

Class 7: The Holy Spirit

In the Name of The Father, The Son, and the What?

“Spell this out in capital letters: THE HOLY SPIRIT IS A PERSON. He is not enthusiasm. He is not courage. He is not energy. He is not the personification of all good qualities, like Jack Frost is the personification of cold weather. Actually, the Holy Spirit is not the personification of anything..... He has individuality. He is one being and not another. He has will and intelligence. He has hearing. He has knowledge and sympathy and ability to love and see and think. He can hear, speak, desire, grieve and rejoice. He is a Person.”

-A.W. Tozer

“Many people have come to Christ as a result of my participation in presenting the Gospel to them. It's all the work of the Holy Spirit.”

-Billy Graham

“And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit.”

-Ephesians 1:13



The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity. The deity of the Holy Spirit is rarely questioned, as is the deity of Christ, probably because the Holy Spirit has never taken on human form. In the Old Testament the expressions “God said” and “the Spirit said” are used interchangeably. This pattern continues in the New Testament, as in Acts 5:3-4 where Peter says, “Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit, and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself?... You have not lied to men but to God.” Lying to the Holy

Spirit is lying to God.

The Bible also attributes divine qualities to the Holy Spirit. Paul ascribes omniscience to the Holy Spirit, saying “The Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God...No one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God.” (I Corinthians 2:10-11). The Spirit is described as omnipresent in Psalm 139, “Where can I go from your Spirit? Or where can I flee from your presence?” The Holy Spirit also works in creation, hovering over the face of the waters (Genesis 1:1-2), consistent with omnipotence.

THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Arthur Pink, in his book The Holy Spirit ascribed twenty-two roles to the Holy Spirit. We will look at only a few here.

Revelation of Truth - Prosecutor and Sculptor

It is the Holy Spirit who reveals truth to us. The Holy Spirit brings us to salvation, and reveals spiritual truth for our sanctification.

Jesus told the disciples “when the Spirit comes, He will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment.” (John 16:8). Jesus tells Nicodemus “No one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit...the Spirit gives birth to spirit.” (John 3:3,5). Paul tells the Corinthians that, “No one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says ‘Jesus be cursed,’ and no one can say, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ except by the Holy Spirit.” (I Corinthians 12:3)

The prophets were moved to speak by the Holy Spirit, and it was by the Holy Spirit that the Scriptures were inspired (I Peter 1:21, II Timothy 3:16). We can also ask the Holy Spirit for wisdom because Jesus promised us that, “The Counselor, the Holy Spirit will teach you all things.” (John 14:26). In all these ways, God reveals truth to us.

Power

What is it that enables us as believers to do things that make us afraid? The power of the Holy Spirit, “for God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power.” (II Timothy 1:7). “You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you,” Jesus promised. (Acts 1-8). The word for power



is *dunamis*, the word from which we derive “dynamite.” This power strengthens us as believers, and is associated with the miracles of Jesus and the ability of the disciples to witness.

Comfort

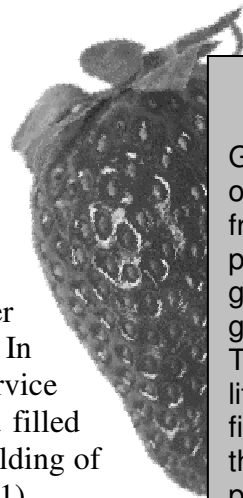
Jesus told the disciples at the Last Supper, “I will ask the Father, and He will send you another Counselor to be with you forever - the Spirit of truth.” (John 14:16). This Counselor is a “*paraclete*,” one who comes alongside us. It is the Spirit who gives us a sense of Sonship (Galatians 4:6), so that we know that we are God’s, in His tender care.

Prayer

The Holy Spirit enables us to pray, for He “helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words...He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.” (Romans 8:26-7).

Enabling for Service

The Holy Spirit also calls men and women to service and enables them to serve well. In some cases, this service is formally ordained office within the church - prophet, priest and king were anointed to show they were set aside for service and empowered by the Spirit. Persons serving in the ordained offices of elder and deacon are to be filled with the Spirit. In other cases, the Spirit has strengthened for service outside ordained positions - for instance, God filled Bezalel and Oholiab with the Spirit for the building of the tabernacle and all its furnishings (Exodus 31).



THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

Galatians 5:22 shows us the fruit of living a Spirit-filled life. “The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.” These are habits of mind, of lifestyle and of conduct, which find their source in God. Notice that the word “fruit” is singular, pointing to the fact that a believer should exhibit all of these characteristics as a unity. It is important to know that these “fruit” are not produced by a believer, but by the Holy Spirit working inside a person who is in vital union with Christ (John 15:1-8). A yielded believer should begin to show these qualities in his or her life as we mature into the image of Jesus and as the Spirit works within us.

FILLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT AND BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Filling of the Holy Spirit

The passage which best discusses the filling of the Spirit is Ephesians 5:17-21, as follows:

“Do not get drunk with 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 the Lord Jesus Christ. Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.”

All this is connected. In the Greek there are two verbs in the imperative (“Do not get drunk with wine...instead be filled with the Spirit”), on which depend four verbs which are present participles (“speaking,” “singing and making music,” “giving thanks” and “submitting”). That

is, the single command to be filled with the Spirit is followed by four descriptive consequences of the Holy Spirit's fullness.

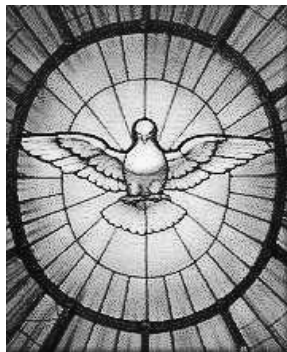
The first and fourth consequences of this command to be filled are that we are in right relationship with each other, because our speech is right and we submit to one another. The second and third consequences are that we are in right relationship to God because we are worshipful and thankful.

We can make four points about the statement that we are to be filled.

First, the statement is in the **imperative mood**. 'Be filled' is not a tentative suggestion, a mild recommendation, or a polite piece of advice. It is a command.

Second, the verb is in the **plural form**. Being filled is not optional. It is a command for all Christians.

Third, the verb is in **passive voice**: be filled. That is, "let the Holy Spirit fill you." We must to yield to the Spirit without reserve. But we are not purely passive in receiving the Spirit's fullness, any more than we are passive in getting drunk. A man gets drunk by drinking; we become filled with the Spirit by drinking too, as Jesus said, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink." (John 7:37). We must come to be filled.



Fourth, the verb is in the **present tense**. In the Greek language, the verb form can show that the action is either a single action or that the action is continuous. Thus when at the wedding in Cana Jesus said, "Fill the jars with water." (John 2:7), the verb form shows that he meant to do it only once. The present imperative, "be filled with the Holy Spirit," on the other hand, indicates that this filling is to be continuous. This is not some dramatic or decisive experience that will settle the issue for good, but a continuous appropriation.

In summary, God intends us to be filled with the Holy Spirit as part of the normal Christian life. The filling puts us in right relationship with each other and God. All Christians are exhorted and commanded to be filled by the Holy Spirit by being yielded to him on an ongoing basis.

The Baptism of the Holy Spirit

The Old Testament prophet Joel, John the Baptist and Jesus all said that God would provide an outpouring of His Spirit on His people. This experience, sometimes referred to as the "baptism" of the Holy Spirit, began at Pentecost.

From time to time in the book of Acts, there are believers who have a second experience with the Holy Spirit, sometimes at some interval after they have initially believed (Acts 8:14-17, 10:44-48, 19:6-7). From these experiences some Christians derive a belief that a "second baptism" is commonplace, or even necessary, for a Christian to receive the Holy Spirit.

The Reformed tradition believes that such a second experience is not necessary or normative. The doctrinal passages of Scripture indicate the Spirit is received at conversion, and indeed must be at work before our hearts are softened to conversion. “No one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, ‘Jesus be cursed,’ and no one can say, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ except by the Holy Spirit.” (I Corinthians 12:3). “He saved us by the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit...” (Titus 3:5). “If anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ.” (Romans 8:9)

The cases in Acts may have served as confirmation to the disciples that Samaritans and Gentiles, the subjects of the “second baptisms,” could serve God as acceptably as could the Jews who received the spectacular signs of Pentecost. The second baptism may have been appropriate for a particular situation. It may happen from time to time presently as God wills. Certainly, we want never to “quench” the Spirit. We should want all that the Holy Spirit has for us, and we should be encouraged ourselves, and we should encourage the body of Christ, to receive the fullness of the Spirit. But there is no doctrinal teaching to require any particular experience with the Holy Spirit.

THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT



Four passages in the New Testament discuss the gifts of the Holy Spirit - I Corinthians 12, Romans 12:3-8, Ephesians 4:7-12 and I Peter 4:10-11. At I Corinthians 12:4-6, Paul says, “Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of working, but it is the same God who inspires them all in every one.”

Paul emphasizes that, although there are diverse gifts, **the giver is God**. He says this three times, each time relating the gifts to a different person of the Trinity (“the same Spirit,” “the same Lord” and “the same God.”)

Second, the Scriptures emphasize that **each believer has at least one gift**. Gifts are not just widespread – they are universal. No one can say that he or she has no gift to share. This is emphasized in each one of the passages on the gifts. “For I say to **every one** of you...” (Romans 12:3); “one and the same Spirit, and he gives them **to each one**, just as he determines...” (I Corinthians 12:11); “But to **each one of us** grace has been given...” (Ephesians 4:7); “**Each of you** should use whatever gift he has received...” (I Peter 4:10).

Next, Paul makes several points by his body metaphor. The gifts are given, not for our private enjoyment, but for the purpose of building up the body.

In early 2001 two sports stories played out on opposite ends of the U.S. New Englanders went into wild celebration when Adam Vinatieri kicked a last-second field goal to win Super Bowl XXXVI for the Patriots 20-17 over the Rams. Meanwhile on the West Coast, the Lakers were seeking to defend their NBA title, but without the best big man in basketball. Shaquille O’Neal

(all 7'1" and 340 pounds) was out of action, felled by an injury to his toe. The humble and lowly toe! Who can love a toe, except perhaps a podiatrist? But a single toe brought glory and pride and celebration to one coast; and a single toe brought anxiety and fear to the other coast (Mr. O'Neal recovered and led the Lakers to a successful title defense).

So it is with the body of Christ. All the members must exercise their gifts for the body to function as God has designed it. Any member, no matter how humble, can bring glory to the whole body. And if any member, no matter how humble, fails to do its part, the whole body suffers.

Because **the gifts are for the use of the body**, no one member should feel pride in his part, or disappointment in his gift. All the gifts are valuable for the functioning of the body.

The passages together suggest a great number of gifts. There are nine gifts listed at the beginning of I Corinthians 12, and nine at the end, and four of these are new. There is also a list of seven in Romans 12, five of which are not in I Corinthians; a list of five in Ephesians, two of which are new; and two gifts are cited in Peter, one of which is new. In some cases it is difficult to determine if the gifts named coincide because the names are similar but not the same; however, there are about twenty or so gifts in total. However, there is also no indication that the lists are exhaustive – there may be additional gifts. No single gift is in all the lists, and thirteen appear in only one list, as if to emphasize the variety of the gifts.

In some cases, our spiritual gifts may be talents given by the Holy Spirit applied to building the body of Christ. In some cases the spiritual gifts named are closely related to ordinary work, and are almost mundane. For instance, in Romans 12, Paul names serving, teaching and encouraging as spiritual gifts (v. 7), and says that he who contributes should do so generously; he who shows mercy should do so cheerfully (v. 8). In I Corinthians 12:28, Paul names the “gift of administration” as one of the gifts. These gifts – serving, teaching, encouraging, giving, mercy and administration – are probably all closely related to natural talents. These gifts are not what most people would classify as “miraculous,” but God has transformed the heart of a person who was hostile to God so that person now wishes to use their giftedness to build the body of Christ.

In other cases, the gifts are miraculous in that they involve works beyond ordinary human capacity. These gifts include healing, miraculous powers, and prophecy, distinguishing between spirits, speaking in and interpreting other tongues. (I Corinthians 12:9-10) However, all the gifts, whether appearing mundane or miraculous, are given by the same Spirit for the good of the body.

What is the place of the gifts of the Holy Spirit today? Some churches believe that these gifts were only for the apostolic age and are not available for us today. Other churches believe all of the gifts are available today. A few would say that one who has not received the gift of tongues has not received the Holy Spirit.



Those who doubt the validity of some or all of these gifts for today argue along several lines. First, they argue that some or all of these gifts were valid for a period prior to the New Testament

only and that such signs were needed to show God's authority. Now that foundation has been laid and does not need to be laid again. For instance, we do not need more apostles, which is among the offices listed in I Corinthians 12:27. Some of these people will argue that some of the gifts were temporary, limited to the apostolic age, and others were permanent.¹

Second, they argue the issue of "gift" versus "office." During the apostolic age, Peter, Paul and others may have been commissioned by God, given the ability to heal consistently and wherever they were. Those questioning the gifts for today would argue that while God may heal or allow Christians to prophesy or work miracles from time to time, God does not have people who occupy the position or "office" of healer, prophet or miracle-worker today, consistently exercising those gifts.

Third, those who question the gifts may do so based on the idea that prophecy, tongues and interpretation are new revelation. The argument is that the Scripture is our authority, and that the canon is closed. Therefore, the exercise of the gifts must always be subject to Scripture.

Those endorsing the validity of the gifts for today point out that there is plenty of evidence to show that the gifts are in use today, and that the exercise of the gifts is a faith-building experience. They would also point out that most of the above arguments are not made from Scripture, which is our authority. Scripture advocates the freedom of the believer in Christ. If there is no clear and direct statement in Scripture to require that any gift ended, we should expect that the gifts continue.

There are many nuances of positions along the lines outlined above. This is a good place to note that in the Evangelical Presbyterian Church there is freedom. The motto of the EPC is "In Essentials Unity; In Non-Essentials Liberty; In All Things Charity." This is an area where we must exercise charity. Finally, as discussed above, the fruit of the Spirit is the primary means of considering growth or maturity in a Christian's life. As such, the fruit is more significant than the operation of the gifts of the Spirit in our lives.

The EPC has adopted a "Position Paper on the Holy Spirit," which states in part, "Some would require that Christians manifest a particular gift, such as speaking in tongues, as evidence of a deeper work of the Spirit within. Others would have us believe such a gift is no longer available or acceptable. As a Reformed denomination, we adhere strongly to our belief in the sovereignty of God, a belief that does not allow us either to require a certain gift or to restrict the Spirit in how He will work. Rather, we call upon all Christians to open their lives unto God's Spirit to fill, empower, and 'gift' as He sees fit."

The Position Paper also states that the gifts should be exercised under the guidelines of Scripture and the local Session. Officers in the local church should therefore take the initiative to study in

¹ Martin Lloyd-Jones in God the Holy Spirit argues that the temporary gifts were apostleship, prophecy, healing, miracles, discerning spirits and tongues. Permanent gifts are the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, the ability to teach, the gift of ministering and helps, the gift of administration and governments, the ability that Elders and Deacons have, the gift of evangelism, the gift of the pastorate, the gift of exhortation and the gift of faith. He observes that some of the temporary gifts are experienced today, but are not exercised by persons "commissioned" with an office as in the New Testament.

this area so as to be able to exercise their authority judiciously. The Position Paper is a good place to start, available on the EPC website <http://www.epc.org/about-epc/position-papers/holy-spirit.html> and in paper pamphlet.

Additional resources:

Evangelical Presbyterian Church, “Position Paper on the Holy Spirit.”

Sinclair Ferguson, The Holy Spirit, InterVarsity Press, 1996.

Charles Hodge, Systematic Theology, Abridged Version, P&R Publishing, pp. 185-192, 1992.

Martin Lloyd-Jones, God the Holy Spirit, Crossway Books, 1997.

John R. W. Stott, Baptism and Fullness, InterVarsity Press, 1964.

