

Lesson 3: Doctrine of the Holy Spirit

PRACTICAL THEOLOGY

KNOW WHAT YOU BELIEVE. LIVE OUT YOUR FAITH.

“Pneuma” comes from a Greek word meaning, *spirit, wind or breath*. Pneumatology is the study of the Person and work of the Holy Spirit. Concerning this doctrine there is much confusion and ignorance displayed in religious circles and main-stream evangelical denominations. Will we form our beliefs about the Holy Spirit based upon our experiences, or will we openly consider the Biblical doctrine of the Holy Spirit?

I. The Personality of the Holy Spirit

The personality of the Holy Spirit has been subject to denial and neglect through the centuries. To some, He is only an impersonal force or influence, and thereby referred to as “it.” However, Scripture clearly teaches the personality of the Holy Spirit.

A. Personal Qualities:

1. Of the Intellect (mind) _____ – He knows and searches (1 Cor 2:10).
2. Of Emotion _____ – He can be grieved (Eph 4:30).
3. Of the Will _____ – He makes decisions (1 Cor 12:11).

B. Personal Pronouns:

The Greek word for spirit (*pneuma*) is neuter and could thus have a neuter pronoun. Yet, contrary to ordinary usage, a masculine pronoun is used when referring to the Holy Spirit.

C. Personal Actions:

1. He speaks (Acts 13:2).
2. He intercedes (Rom 8:26).
3. He commands (Acts 16:6-7).
4. He can be insulted (Heb 10:29).
5. He can be lied to (Acts 5:3).

II. The Deity of the Holy Spirit

A. Divine Names:

The Holy Spirit is called "God" (Acts 5:3-4). The believer is the "temple" of God because the Spirit dwells within (1 Cor 3:16; 6:19-20).

B. Divine Attributes:

He is Eternal (Heb 9:14). He is Omnipresent (Ps 139:7-10). He is Omnipotent (Lk 1:35). He is Omniscient (1 Cor 2:10-11).

C. Divine Works:

He is involved in Creation (Gen 1:2). He is involved in Regeneration (Jn :5-8). He is involved in Resurrection (Rom 8:11). He is involved in Restraining sin (Gen. 6:3; 2 Thes. 2:6-7).

D. Divine Association:

He is referred to in the Baptismal "formula" (Matt 28:19). He is referred to in the Apostolic benediction (2 Cor 13:14).

III. The Work of the Holy Spirit

A. In Relation to the Lost:

1. Through Conviction

The Holy Spirit "reproves the world of sin..." (Jn 16:7-11). This does not mean to accuse or to scold, but *to show forth in a clear light, or to give demonstrative proof and evidence* to the sinner of the fact of his sin; *to convince* mankind of his sin. The word used of the Holy Spirit in John 16:7-11 is the same word Jesus used when asking, "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" (Jn 8:46). Jesus was asking, "Who of you can present any evidence of sin against me?"... no one. Yet, the Holy Spirit is able to continually present evidence of sin against each and every person's life!

The ministry of Conviction is a necessity because of the total depravity of the human heart and the power of Satanic blindness (Rom 3:11; 2 Cor 4:4).

2. Through Regeneration

This is that divine act of the Spirit of God whereby He imparts eternal life to the believing sinner “by the washing of regeneration” (Tit 3:5; cf. Matt 19:28). Jesus referred to it as being “born of the Spirit” (Jn 3:8). Just as the Spirit brought about the conception and birth of Jesus Christ, so we are born by the Spirit.

Regeneration is completely the act of God (Jn 1:12-13). The Father is said to have part (Jas 1:17-18), the Son is said to have a part (1 Jn 5:12), and the Spirit is said to have a part (Jn 3:3-7). (The focus of this study is that the Holy Spirit is involved in the regeneration of sinners.)

B. In Relation to the Saved:

1. The Indwelling of the Holy Spirit

At the moment of salvation every believer is indwelt with the Person of the Holy Spirit. Regardless of how weak or immature a believer is, the Holy Spirit will always live within him—even the “carnal” Corinthian believers were all indwelt by the Holy Spirit of God (1 Cor 3:16; 6:19-20).

The Holy Spirit’s indwelling of believers appears to be a NT truth. Jesus made a distinction between the OT and NT ministry of the Holy Spirit: “And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth... ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you” (Jn 14:16-17).

2. The Sealing of the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit “seals” the believer at the moment of salvation, thereby giving him a *guarantee* of safe-keeping and future redemption (Rom 8:22-23). The seal signifies security, safety and ownership. The great significance in the sealing of the Holy Spirit is the eternal security of the believer (Eph 1:13; 4:30).

3. The Baptism of the Holy Spirit

The baptism of the Holy Spirit is not an experience, but a positional truth that occurred at salvation—not to be confused with “the filling of the Spirit,” which is experiential and continual. This baptism is not to be sought after or prayed for, but it is that act by which the Holy Spirit places the believer into the Body of Christ at the moment of salvation (1 Cor 12:13; Rom 8:9).

4. The Filling of the Holy Spirit

While the other ministries mentioned are one-time acts performed at salvation, the filling of the Spirit should be the daily experience of the child of God. This has to do with the *empowering*, or *controlling* ministry of the Holy Spirit. When one is filled, he will evidence the fruit of the Spirit in his life (Eph 5:18; Gal 5:22-23). This is spirituality; not following rules, but being totally controlled by the influence of the Holy Spirit.

IV. The Gifts of the Holy Spirit

A. The Meaning of the Term:

A spiritual gift is a special enablement or ability given by the Holy Spirit to a believer(s). These are not natural abilities.

It would seem that every believer is given at least one or more “gifts” (1 Pet 4:11).

B. The Purpose of Spiritual Gifts:

Ephesians 4:12 gives a three-fold purpose: “[1] for the perfecting of the saints, [2] for the work of the ministry, [3] for the edifying of the body of Christ.” 1 Peter 4:11 further explains that this is so “that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ.”

C. The Bestowing of Spiritual Gifts:

The spiritual gifts are sovereignly bestowed and are not properly the objects of men’s seeking—the Spirit “divides to ever man severally as he will” (1 Cor 12:11). Because they are sovereignly bestowed, it follows that it is not a question of spirituality. Every believer has one or more gift(s), but no believer receives every gift (1 Cor 12:7, 28-30).

D. Temporary Gifts:

(a summary list is compiled from Acts 1:21-22; 2:8-11; 1 Cor 12:8-10; 13:8; 2 Cor 12:12; Eph 2:20; 3:5)

The temporary spiritual gifts (often called “sign gifts”) had the same purpose as the permanent spiritual gifts. However, they also had another “temporary” purpose—to authenticate the message of the Gospel and the establish the Church (Mk 16:20; Heb 2:4).

When these gifts were being exercised in the early Church, the Scriptures were not completed—nobody possessed a “Bible.” God used “signs” to confirm His message and messengers (Cf. Jn 3:2; 20:30; Rom 15:18; 2 Cor 12:12; Heb 2:4; Mk 16:17-18). As the aspect of the new revelation of the Gospel and the Church were temporary, so too were the “sign” gifts. They ceased... as Paul had said some would (1 Cor 13:8-13).

1. Apostles
2. Prophets
3. Miracles
4. Healings
5. Tongues

6. Interpretation of Tongues

7. Knowledge

E. Permanent Gifts:

(a summary list from Eph 4:11; 1 Cor 12:8-10, 28 and Rom 12:7-8)

1. Evangelist

2. Pastor

3. Teacher

4. Exhortation

5. Ministry (service)

6. Administration

7. Giving

8. Faith

9. Wisdom

10. Discerning spirits