

THE HOLY SPIRIT – 2



1. THE PURPOSE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

We have already looked at the person of the Holy Spirit (the tape is available). Today we'll look at His purpose or role, as described in the Scriptures.

2. TOOK PART IN CREATION

Everyone thinks that God as Father was the one responsible for Creation. In fact, the whole Trinity was involved. The Spirit of God was the 'agent', i.e. He was the 'doer':

Gen 1:1-3 *"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. 2 Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. 3 And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light."*

Col 1:16 *For by Him [Jesus] all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.*

3. CAME TEMPORARILY IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

The Holy Spirit came upon certain, chosen individuals to empower or enable them to serve God. Some examples are: Joseph, Samson, Bezalel and Joshua. Of course, there are many others, but these four demonstrate this point.

a. Joseph

Gen 41:38 *So Pharaoh asked them, "Can we find anyone like this man, one in whom is the spirit of God?"*

b. Samson

Judg 13:24,25 *The woman gave birth to a boy and named him Samson. He grew and the LORD blessed him, 25 and the Spirit of the LORD began to stir him while he was in Mahaneh Dan, between Zorah and Eshtaol.*

Judg 14:6 *The Spirit of the LORD came upon him in power so that he tore the lion apart with his bare hands as he might have torn a young goat. But he told neither his father nor his mother what he had done.*

c. Bezalel

Exo 31:2-5 *"See, I have called by name Bezalel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah. 3 And I have filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship, 4 to design artistic works, to work in gold,*

in silver, in bronze, 5 in cutting jewels for setting, in carving wood, and to work in all manner of workmanship.”

d. Joshua

Num 27:18 *So the LORD said to Moses, “Take Joshua son of Nun, a man in whom is the spirit, and lay your hand on him.*

4. COMES PERMANENTLY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

In the New Testament times, everything changed. No longer was the Spirit of God for a few chosen people. Now, the prophecy of Joel was to be fulfilled, and everyone who receives Jesus as Lord and Saviour can now receive the Holy Spirit in salvation and also in power. Note, this applies to every Believer – young, old, man, woman, educated, uneducated.

Joel 2:28-32 “And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. 29 Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days. 30 I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and billows of smoke. 31 The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD. 32 And everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved; for on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there will be deliverance, as the LORD has said, among the survivors whom the LORD calls.”

The Coming of the Holy Spirit

Jesus emphasised that it was essential that He must leave and return to the Father. First, if He hadn't risen and ascended there would be no salvation. Secondly, the 'Counsellor' or 'Advocate' could not come (John 16:7). Because of this, we can pray to Jesus at any time, in any place and we can serve the Lord in the power of the Holy Spirit.

John 14:16,17 And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Counsellor to be with you forever -- 17 the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for He lives with you and will be in you.

John 16:13 But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; He will speak only what He hears, and He will tell you what is yet to come.

John 16:7 But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counsellor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.

Luke 11:13 “If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”

So, now in the New Testament period, the Holy Spirit has come permanently to all God's people. So, what does He do now that He is here on this Earth? He actually does many things, some of which we discuss below, where He:

a. Brings salvation

The Holy Spirit opened the door to the earthly life of the Saviour, without whom there could be no salvation.

Mat 1:18 *This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit.*

1) The need for the Holy Spirit in the work of salvation

John 3:5,6 *Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. 6 Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit.*

2) Salvation comes through the action of the Holy Spirit

2 Cor 5:17 *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!*

Eph 1:13 *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.*

Titus 3:5 *He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of His mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.*

b. Empowers His people

John the Baptist made the first promise of the coming Holy Spirit in the New Testament period. He was sent by God to be the forerunner, the announcer, of the new covenant that would be established through Jesus Christ.

Mat 3:11 *"I baptise you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and with fire."*

Jesus confirms this promise, Himself:

The promise wasn't made so we could have a nice experience. It was given to enable Believers to obey the 'Great Commission' of Jesus. Many say this is an impossible task. So it is in our own power and ability. However, we don't need do this in our own power, for when we ask, we receive Holy Spirit power, the same power that raised Jesus from the grave.

Luke 24:49 *"I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high."*

Acts 1:5 *"For John baptised with water, but in a few days you will be baptised with the Holy Spirit."*

Acts 1:8 *"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."*

c. Comes to strengthen and empower the Church

The promise of the Holy Spirit was completely fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost. The full prophecy of Joel happened on this day, a wait of over 800 years.

Acts 2:2-4 Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. 4 All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

d. Distributes His Gifts

The Holy Spirit, alone, is responsible for distributing the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. We have no right, nor any ability to demand specific gifts. The Holy Spirit knows what is needed for any situation and can provide the resources we need.

1 Cor 12:3-6,11 Therefore I tell you 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. 4 There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. 5 There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. 6 There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men. 11 All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and He gives them to each one, just as He determines.

e. Gives us special abilities

The first Scripture is from the Old Testament, and though initially for the Lord, it applies to us, His servants. Remember, Jesus said about us, *"I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He [the Believer] will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father."* (John 14:12). So, we need the Holy Spirit upon us if we are to do greater things than Jesus, these scripture apply to us:

Isa 61:1 The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners.

Deliverance is in the hands of believers who will obey the Word, *"But if I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you."* (Mat 12:28)

We never need to use excuses like, *"I don't know enough of the Bible to ..."* Jesus says in Mark 13:11, *"Whenever you are arrested and brought to trial, do not worry beforehand about what to say. Just say whatever is given you at the time, for it is not you speaking, but the Holy Spirit."*

f. Brings direction, 'proving' and protection

We know the Holy Spirit leads us, but He can also put us through a period of testing. Sometimes for us to be effective servants of God we must be tested to know if we have the capacity to succeed. We can never claim exemption from this, as the Lord Himself went through such a testing.

Mat 4:1 Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil.

He also prevents us from entering into danger, provided we are prepared to listen and obey Him. Consider the example of Paul:

Acts 16:6,7 Paul and his companions travelled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia. 7 When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to.

g. Identifies those called to serve

The following Scripture is important, as it teaches us about a Believer's ministry and his relationship with the Holy Spirit.

Acts 13:2, 'While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."'

Note: The Holy Spirit identifies those whom Christ wants in His service, but the Holy Spirit requires man to ordain and commission these Brothers and Sisters. So the person who says, "I'm ordained by God not man!" is un-Biblical. Why does the Spirit select, then cause Man to ordain? So that we are held accountable to Christ's Church and not to ourselves. This is how 'church hoppers' or independent ministries try to justify themselves, whilst remaining unaccountable to anyone else. Remember, the God-given principle is:

Luke 7:8,9 "For I myself am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I tell this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and that one, 'Come,' and he comes. I say to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it." 9 When Jesus heard this, he was amazed at him, and turning to the crowd following him, he said, "I tell you, I have not found such great faith even in Israel."

h. Brings judgement

So many in the Church, these days, think that God is **only** love. God is indeed love, but that is not His sole character. God's judgement is not limited to the Old Testament; if you have problems with that, then read Paul's letters and the book of Revelation. Even at the start of the Church, God's judgement was evident, as we see in Acts 5:

Acts 5:3-11 Then Peter said, "Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land? 4 Didn't it belong to you before it was sold? And after it was sold, wasn't the money at your disposal? What made you think of doing such a thing? You have not lied to men but to God." 5 When Ananias heard this, he fell down and died. And great fear seized all who heard what had happened. 6 Then the young men came forward, wrapped up his body, and carried him out and buried him. 7 About three hours later his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. 8 Peter asked her, "Tell me, is this the price you and Ananias got for the land?" "Yes," she said, "that is the price." 9 Peter said to her, "How could you agree to test the Spirit of the Lord? Look! The feet of the men who buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out also." 10 At that moment she fell down at his feet and died. Then the young men came in and, finding her dead, carried her out and buried her beside her husband. 11 Great fear seized the whole church and all who heard about these events.

The next teaching in this series will concentrate on the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, and their meaning to the Church of today.

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