

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

WEEK 5: THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT: PART 1

INTRODUCTION¹

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- Anthony Hoekema put it like this: “The Holy Spirit brings to completion the plan of the Father, through the application of the Word and the benefits of the Son, by acting upon and in the creature.”
 - Regarding this quote, I think that it is helpful to understand what he is saying:
 - **First**, it helpfully highlights the work of the Spirit in a Trinitarian way.
 - Too often the work of the Spirit is divorced from the work of the Father and the Son. The Spirit is dubbed as that mysterious but exciting member of the Trinity. But biblically the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are not doing different things. Rather, they are working out the one plan of God.
 - We see this clearly in texts like John 15:26 “When the Counselor comes (Spirit), whom I (Jesus) will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me.”
 - Broadly speaking, the Father authors, the Son accomplishes, and the Spirit applies. They’re three persons, but one God, and their activities represent a unified work.
 - **Second** reason that definition from Hoekema is helpful: it highlights the work of the Spirit as Christological. In other words, the Spirit’s work is centered on Jesus.
 - The chief role of the Holy Spirit in our salvation is to make us one with Christ. He unites us to Christ, and all the blessings that come with that union (regeneration, conversion, adoption, etc.). That’s why the Holy Spirit is called the Spirit of Christ (Rom 8.9; 1Pet 1.11), and the Spirit of God’s Son (Gal 4.6). To participate in the Spirit is to participate in Christ (Rom 8.9-11).
 - Any understanding of the Spirit that isn’t Trinitarian and Christological in this way, far from uplifting the Spirit — dishonors him. It simply isn’t Christian. That’s why we begin biblically defining what the Spirit is.
 - When we think of the Holy Spirit it is helpful to understand that He is still working in the world today.
 - As we will see today, the Holy Spirit was active in both the Old and New Testaments working to accomplish the will of God.
 - When we talk about the *work of the Holy Spirit*, I think it is best to classify it into two categories²:

¹ <https://www.capitolhillbaptist.org/resources/core-seminars/series/systematic-theology/>

² David Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *God the Holy Spirit* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1997), 22.

- His work in general apart from the application of redemption and then His specific work in the application of redemption.

THE WORKS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE OLD TESTAMENT³

- “Questions regarding the Holy Spirit are usually answered on the basis of the New Testament. This is as it should be up to a point, for the New Testament has much to say concerning the Third Person of the God head. The Old Testament, however, also has much to say about concerning the Holy Spirit, and its testimony should not be overlooked.”⁴

Creation

- **Genesis 1:1-3** “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters. Then God said, ‘Let there be light’; and there was light.”
 - Two things the text says are present: 1) the Spirit of God and 2) the Word of God.
 - God speaks, “Let there be light” and it comes into being by the power of His Spirit.
 - God creates by His Word through His Spirit. The Spirit brings about the Father’s will in creation – bringing order out of chaos, creating what is, out of that which was not (Gen. 1:2, Heb. 11:3).
 - In other words, the work of the Spirit in creation is to extend God’s presence into creation in such a way as to order and complete what has been planned in the mind of God.
- But, still more strikingly, in Psalm 104 you will find that magnificent description of creation, which is, perhaps, quite unsurpassed anywhere in the Bible. The psalmist makes the point that if the Lord withholds Himself or His power of His Spirit from creation, it all begins to droop and to wane, to perish and to die. He puts His Spirit back again and it all revives. It is the Holy Spirit that sustains creation. Now you will find statements in the Scripture which say that the Son does that and the answer is, of course, that the Son does it through the Holy Spirit. So the Holy Spirit has been active from the commencement in sustaining and maintaining the universe.⁵

Guiding the People of God

- The Holy Spirit shows up throughout the OT in similar fashion. The divine presence that guided God’s people in the Exodus out of Egypt – a pillar of cloud by day and fire by night (Ex. 13:21-22) – was the Holy Spirit (Isa. 63:10-14).

³ <https://www.capitolhillbaptist.org/resources/core-seminars/series/systematic-theology/>

⁴ Leon Wood, *The Holy Spirit in the Old Testament*, 11.

⁵ David Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *God the Holy Spirit* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1997), 23–24.

- Isaiah 63:10-14 “But they rebelled and **grieved His Holy Spirit**; Therefore He turned Himself to become their enemy, He fought against them. Then His people remembered the days of old, of Moses. Where is He who brought them up out of the sea with the shepherds of His flock? Where is He who put **His Holy Spirit in the midst of them**, Who caused His glorious arm to go at the right hand of Moses, Who divided the waters before them to make for Himself an everlasting name, Who led them through the depths? Like the horse in the wilderness, they did not stumble; As the cattle which go down into the valley, **the Spirit of the LORD gave them rest**. So You led Your people, To make for Yourself a glorious name.”

Gifts for Service to the Lord (many in the O.T.)

- The Old Testament is filled with references to the Spirit’s work, but on the whole, the Spirit’s activity in the OT was certainly more external, selective and seemingly sporadic.
- “The Old Testament speaks frequently of the Spirits empowering important people for divinely assigned tasks. These people fall into four groups: judges, craftsman, prophets (temporary and regular), and civil leaders. The tasks were of major significance and each required special abilities above what was normal for the people concerned.”⁶
- For Gideon to defeat Israel’s enemy.
 - Judges 6:34 “So the Spirit of the LORD came upon Gideon; and he blew a trumpet, and the Abiezrites were called together to follow him.”
- To prophesy against unbelieving Israel.
 - Micah 3:8 “On the other hand I am filled with power-- With the Spirit of the LORD-- And with justice and courage To make known to Jacob his rebellious act, Even to Israel his sin.”
- To lead Israel.
 - Numbers 27:18 “So the LORD said to Moses, ‘Take Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the Spirit, and lay your hand on him...’”

Author of Scripture

- 2 Samuel 23:2 “The Spirit of the LORD spoke by me, And His word was on my tongue.”
- We will see this more in the New Testament, but the Holy Spirit was speaking through the prophets even as they were writing it all down.

⁶ Leon Wood, *The Holy Spirit in the Old Testament*, 145.

THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

- The entire New Testament message is addressed to sinners who do not love God by nature, who do not love one another, and who need to be radically changed by the Holy Spirit before they will be able to do what is pleasing in God’s sight.⁷
- New Testament revelation about the Holy Spirit far exceeds that of the Old Testament. The Greek word *pneuma* occurs 379 times in the New Testament (almost the same as in the Old Testament), yet it refers to the Holy Spirit on over 245 occasions (65 percent), triple the number of Old Testament occurrences. Of the combined Old Testament and New Testament references to the generic English translation “spirit,” about 43 percent (324 of 757 occurrences) refer to the Holy Spirit.⁸
 - *Pneuma* appears in twenty-five New Testament books (93 percent), being absent from only 2 and 3 John. It refers to the Holy Spirit in twenty-three books (85 percent)—Philemon, James, 2 John, and 3 John excepted.
 - The Holy Spirit appears throughout the New Testament from Matthew 1:18 to Revelation 21:10. The Holy Spirit is mentioned most frequently in Acts (56 times), Romans (28 times), and 1 Corinthians (22 times). One of the most dominant themes is that the Holy Spirit is a gift from God to every believer (Rom. 5:5; 2 Cor. 1:22; 5:5; Gal. 3:5; Eph. 1:13–14; 1 Thess. 4:8; 1 John 3:24; 4:13).

In relation to Scripture

- 1 Peter 1:10-11 “Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow.”
- 2 Peter 1:19-21 “And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; 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.*”
- You can clearly read that it was men of God writing and speaking, but it was the Holy Spirit who was moving them along to do so.

⁷ Anthony A. Hoekema, *Created in God’s Image* (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1994), 150.

⁸ John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue, eds., *Biblical Doctrine: A Systematic Summary of Bible Truth* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2017), 334.

- ***He brings illumination and authentication of God’s Word into the hearts and minds of believers.***
 - 1 Corinthians 2:10-13 “But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.”
 - Ephesians 1:16-18 “...do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints...”
 - Romans 4:6 “...just as *David also describes* the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works...”
 - Romans 8:14 “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.”

In Relation to Christ

- ***He was there for the conception of Christ.***
 - Luke 1:35 “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.’”
- ***He confirmed the ministry of Christ.***
 - Acts 10:38 “You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and how He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.”
 - Matthew 3:16 “After being baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove and lighting on Him...”
 - John 1:32-33 “John testified saying, ‘I have seen the Spirit descending as a dove out of heaven, and He remained upon Him. I did not recognize Him, but He who sent me to baptize in water said to me, He upon whom you see the Spirit descending and remaining upon Him, this is the One who baptizes in the Holy Spirit.’”
 - Luke 4:1 “Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led around by the Spirit in the wilderness...”

- Jesus was both full of the Holy Spirit and led by Him.
- ***He participated in the resurrection of Christ.***
 - Romans 8:11 “But 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.”
 - 1 Peter 3:18 “For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit...”

In relation to the New Testament believers in the church⁹.

- ***Regeneration:***
 - Titus 3:5-7 “He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, ***by the washing of regeneration*** and renewing by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.”¹⁰
 - 1 Corinthians 6:11 “Such were some of you; but ***you were washed***, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.”
 - Regeneration is a one-way street; you cannot be regenerated and then un-regenerated. This is a work that the Holy Spirit does in our hearts to bring us into the family of God.
 - You are now a new creature and have become new.
- Salvation comes only by God’s will, not by human will (John 1:13; Eph. 2:8–10; James 1:18). While all three members of the Godhead make unique contributions to the effort of regeneration, Scripture emphasizes that it is by the complementary interaction of God’s Spirit (John 3:3, 5–7; Gal. 3:2–3, 14; 1 Thess. 1:5; Titus 3:5) with God’s Word (Rom. 1:16; 1 Thess. 1:5; 2:13; 1 Pet. 1:23) that regeneration takes place.
- Therefore, regeneration involves the triune God’s instantaneous impartation of eternal spiritual life to people who were formerly spiritually dead but have embraced Christ by faith because of God’s grace. This act of efficacious grace is effected entirely, without human aid, by the Holy Spirit through the Word of God. This creation of new life results in believers being new creations with a new nature, new abilities, new desires, new relationships, and new responsibilities—forever.¹¹

⁹ Justin McKitterick, *Systematic Theology I*, The Expositors Seminary, p.184.

¹⁰ This is the only text in the Bible that speaks of someone actually being regenerated.

¹¹ John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue, eds., *Biblical Doctrine: A Systematic Summary of Bible Truth* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2017), 351.

- After God’s Spirit regenerates those who were previously dead in their sins (Eph. 2:1–3) so that they inherit eternal life, at least six significant spiritual enhancements involving the Spirit occur simultaneously:
 - Christ *baptizes* the believer with the Spirit into the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13).
 - The Father *seals* the believer with the Holy Spirit as a show of ownership and a guarantee of one’s salvation (Eph. 1:13).
 - The Spirit *indwells* the believer (1 Cor. 3:16).
 - The Spirit *fills/controls* the believer (Eph. 5:18).
 - The Spirit *produces* spiritual fruit in the believer’s life (Gal. 5:22–23).
 - The Spirit *gifts* the believer for service in the church (1 Cor. 12:4).¹²
 - All six of these operations happen concurrently with salvation, but as we read in Scripture, they are handled individually.
 - How do we know that we have been regenerated?
 - *There is an intellectual enlightening that comes upon a person.*
 - 1 John 2:20 “But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you all know.”
 - We can now know God, His will and His Word.
 - *There is a liberation of our will.*
 - Romans 6:17–18 “But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.”
 - We have new hearts that can say no to sin and yes to righteousness.
 - *There is a cleansing and renewal that takes place.*
 - 2 Corinthians 5:17 “Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is *a new creature*; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.”
 - The old things are gone, the old man, the old nature, the old way of thinking. Not only are they gone but *new things have come*.
 - **Baptized into Christ’s body:**
 - This is the placing of the new believer into the body of Christ by spiritual baptism.
 - There are four other New Testament texts that speak of baptism in such a vague way that commentators hold significantly divergent opinions. A few brief observations are in order:¹³

¹² John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue, eds., *Biblical Doctrine: A Systematic Summary of Bible Truth* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2017), 353.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 356–357.

- Romans 6:3: “baptized into Christ.” This passage addresses a Christian’s union “with Christ”; therefore, it would not refer to water baptism.
- Galatians 3:27: “baptized into Christ.” This text teaches the same truth as Romans 6:3. The Greek preposition *eis*, not *en*, is used, meaning “an inseparable union with and total submission to.”
- Ephesians 4:5: “one baptism.” Very possibly this text refers to water baptism “in Christ.” It seems that this applies without exception to every Christian.
- Colossians 2:12: “buried with him in baptism.” This language is quite similar to Romans 6:3–4, and Paul therefore most likely means a Christian’s union “with Christ.”
- In the highest likelihood, all four of these Pauline statements refer to a Christian’s union “with Christ.”
- In order to be clear about what Spirit baptism is and is not, the following list provides a series of contrasting positive and negative statements:¹⁴
 - Spirit baptism is a gracious gift from God; it is not something to be sought after, agonized over, or prayed for.
 - Spirit baptism is exclusively associated with regeneration/salvation; it is not normative for it to be associated with the temporary sign gift of tongues or with other miraculous gifts limited to the apostolic era.
 - Spirit baptism is a permanent, one-time event; it is not a reversible or recurring event.
 - Spirit baptism is evidence of one’s salvation; it is not by itself the measure of one’s spiritual maturity.
 - Spirit baptism is an initial blessing and an enduring result of salvation; it is not a second work of grace or second blessing.
 - Spirit baptism is inseparably linked to salvation; it is not detached from or subsequent to salvation.
 - Spirit baptism is sovereignly initiated by Christ; it is not obtained by any act of a believer.
 - Spirit baptism is assumed by the New Testament to be the Christ-provided experience of every believer; it is never commanded of believers to acquire or retain it.
 - Spirit baptism is experienced by every Christian from Pentecost to the present time; it was not an experience of either Old Testament or Gospel-era believers.
 - Spirit baptism includes every believer; it is not limited to the spiritually mature.

¹⁴ Ibid., 357–358.

- Spirit baptism freely grants entrance into the universal body of Christ; it is not based on subsequent individual spiritual achievement.
 - Spirit baptism is distinct from, though associated with, indwelling and filling; it is not to be equated with either one.
- “Spiritual baptism into one Body is the essential difference between the Spirit’s relationship to the Old and New Testament believers.”¹⁵
- **Being sealed**...this is the pledge of guarantee that the believer will enter into his completed redemption at the return of Christ.
 - 2 Corinthians 1:21-22 “Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and anointed us is God, **who also sealed us** and gave us the Spirit in our hearts as a pledge.”
 - 2 Corinthians 5:5 “Now He who prepared us for this very purpose is God, **who gave to us the Spirit as a pledge.**”
 - Ephesians 1:13–14 “In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation--having also believed, **you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise**, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory.”
 - Ephesians 4:30 “Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, **by whom you were sealed** for the day of redemption.”
 - ***This sealing that happens in the life of the believer is not something that one must seek after or even pray for.*** If we read Ephesians 4:30 correctly, the reason for the negative command (do not grieve the Spirit) is because of the positive reality, you are sealed with the Spirit already.
 - The sealing is also proof that we are saved by God. If we have the Spirit living in us, then we are property of God’s.
 - We should not look for emotional experiences to help us believe our new reality, we should trust in the promises of God that He has done this work in us.

¹⁵ George Zemek, *Theology I*, The Expositors Seminary, p. 185.

CONCLUSION

- I want to spend next week talking about several practical things in the life of the Spirit filled Christian:
 - How our relationship with the Holy Spirit aids in our own Sanctification.
 - We are going to discuss what the indwelling and filling of the Holy Spirit is and is not.
 - We are going to discuss the gifts of the Spirit and how we are to use them in service to God.
 - Lastly, we are going to be discussing what some of the false teachings, false beliefs and false practices are in accordance with the Holy Spirit.