

The Work and Ministry of the Holy Spirit

Adapted from a Study on the Subject by Dr. Tod Kennedy, Spokane Bible Church

I. DOCTRINE OF THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

1. First, note the activity of the TRINITY in Genesis.
 - 1) Man was created in the likeness of God. *Genesis 1:26, "Let US make man in OUR image, after OUR likeness....."*
 - 2) *Genesis 11:7, "Go to, let US go down, and there confound the language....."*
2. Second, the Holy Spirit was active at the very beginning, in the creation of the material universe.
 - 1) *Genesis 1:2, ".....and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."*
 - 2) *Job 26:13, "By His Spirit He hath garnished the heavens....."*
 - 3) *Psalm 33:6, "By the Word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the BREATH (Spirit) of His mouth."*
 - In both the Old and New Testaments, the Holy Spirit is presented as the agent of God's power.
 - While verses like *Colossians 1:16-17* and *Hebrews 1:2* attribute the work of creation to Christ (God the Son), it is clear that all three members of the Trinity worked together in forming the universe.
3. Third, the Holy Spirit was directly involved in the creation of mankind. In scripture, the BREATH of God is often used interchangeably for and to illustrate the work of the Holy Spirit of God.
 - 1) *Genesis 2:7, ".....God.....breathed into his nostrils the breath (Spirit) of life; and man became a living soul."*
 - 2) *Job 33:4, "The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life."*

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II. THE WORKS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

1. He shared in the creation of the material universe and of man. ([Genesis 1:2; 2:7](#))
2. He strived with sinners and, thus, “restrained” evil. ([Genesis 6:3](#); Please compare with [2 Thessalonians 2:6, 7](#)) Here also, the restrainer is the Holy Spirit.
3. He INDWELT BELIEVERS.
 - 1) [Genesis 41:38](#), “.....a man in whom the Spirit of God is.”
 - 2) [Psalm 51:11](#), “.....take not thy Holy Spirit from me.”
 - 3) [1 Peter 1:11](#), “.....what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which is IN them did signify.....”
 - 4) [Numbers 27:18](#); “.....Joshua.....IN whom is the spirit.....”
4. He came *UPON* believers and gave them great power.
 - 1) Upon Eldad and Medad – and they prophesied. ([Numbers 11:26-29](#))
 - 2) Upon Othniel – who judged and made war. ([Judges 3:10](#))
 - 3) Upon Gideon – who won a great victory. ([Judges 6:34](#))
 - 4) Upon Samson – who by hand tore a lion. ([Judges 14:6](#))
 - 5) Upon David – from that day on. ([1 Samuel 16:13](#))
 - As in the New Testament, the *UPON* ministry of the Holy Spirit is always associated with preaching (prophesying) or some demonstration of power. ([Acts 1:8](#)) It is important to remember this.

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5. He FILLED some believers.

- 1) Bezaleel ([Exodus 31:3](#) and [35:31](#))
- 2) Joshua ([Deuteronomy 34:9](#)) *“And Joshua.....was full of the spirit.....”*
- 3) Elijah ([Luke 1:17](#)) He was filled just like John the Baptist.
- 4) Those who made Aaron’s garments ([Exodus 28:3](#))

The above references teach that in the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit gave wisdom and skill. ([Exodus 31:2-5](#)), granted special strength ([Judges 14:6](#)) and empowered individuals to prophecy and to do great things. ([2 Samuel 23:2](#) and [Judges 15:14](#))

Bear in mind that in the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit operated according to His own sovereign will. He filled and came upon whomsoever He would. There were no instructions given to Israel as to HOW they might receive the Spirit or His power. The promise was held out to them that He would be poured out upon all flesh at the future date. ([Isaiah 44:3](#); [Joel 2:28](#))

III. THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN RELATION TO THE SCRIPTURES

1. *“All scripture is given by inspiration of God.....”* ([2 Timothy 3:16](#)) The word for INSPIRATION is *“theop eustos”* or *“God-breathed.”*
2. AND, who did the breathing? ([2 Peter 1:21](#)) *“.....holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.”*
 - Here again, God’s “breath” symbolizes the invisible, yet powerful ministry of the Holy Spirit.
 - The above scriptures do not imply that the Old Testament and the New Testament authors were denied their individuality or their literary style. These verses simply mean that God miraculously directed what they wrote so that it accurately revealed the mind, will, and purpose of God. The scriptures, as God gave them in their original manuscripts, are as absolutely accurate and free of error as though God Himself wrote them.

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3. The words of Revelation chapters two and three are the words of the Spirit. ([Revelation 2:11,17; 3:6, 13, 22](#))
4. The Spirit guided New Testament writers into “*all truth*” and showed them “*things to come*”. ([John 16:13](#))

IV. THE MINISTRY OF THE SPIRIT IN RELATION TO THE LIFE OF CHRIST

1. His miraculous conception in Mary was by the power of the Holy Spirit. ([Matthew 1:20; Luke 1:35](#))
2. The Spirit came *UPON* Him at His baptism. ([Luke 3:22; Matthew 3:16](#))
3. This is when “*God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with Power*”. ([Acts 10:38](#))
4. Christ was full of the Spirit and was led by the Spirit (Luke 4:1, 14), and performed His miracles in the power of the Spirit. ([Luke 4:18; Matthew 12:28](#))
5. The Holy Spirit was the source of Christ’s wisdom in the days of His flesh. ([Matthew 12:17-21](#))
6. Christ was raised from the dead by the Spirit’s power. ([Romans 1:4; 8:11](#))
7. Christ instructed His apostles through the Holy Spirit after His resurrection. ([Acts 1:2](#))
8. As a man, Christ was completely dependent upon the Holy Spirit for wisdom, direction and power. And He is our example. ([1 Peter 2:21](#))
 - If Christ needed to depend upon the Holy Spirit to live and minister, how much more need we depend upon Him.
 - Let’s not fail to claim our blessings. All that the Spirit did for Christ, He can do for us. We, too can be anointed, filled, led and empowered by the Spirit.

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V. THE MINISTRY OF THE SPIRIT IN RELATION TO UNBELIEVERS

1. IT IS A Christ-Revealing, Christ-Exalting Ministry.

- 1) [John 15:26](#), *“But when the Comforter is come.....he shall TESTIFY OF ME.”*
- 2) [John 16:13-14](#), *“When He the Spirit of Truth is come.....He shall not speak of Himself.....He shall glorify me: for He shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.”*
- 3) [Acts 5:22](#), *“And we are His witnesses of these things (of Christ); AND SO IS ALSO THE HOLY SPIRIT, whom God hath given to them that obey Him.”*

- Any ministry or teaching regarding the Holy Spirit that fails to magnify Christ should be regarded with suspicion.

2. [John 14:17](#); [15:26](#); AS THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH, He testifies of Him who is the TRUTH. ([John 14:6](#))

- While the Spirit may reveal Christ independently to the sinner, He normally works through believers to whom HE was sent and given. ([John 15:26](#); [16:7,8](#)) What a privilege! What a responsibility that we as believers have to make Christ known in this world. Yet we must ever remember that it is not our witness or power that causes man to believe – it is the power of the Spirit alone! Only by the Holy Spirit do men call Jesus, Lord. ([1 Corinthians 12:3](#))

3. It is a Sin-Convincing, Sin-Convicting Ministry.

- 1) [John 16:8-11](#), He convicts the world:
 - OF SIN (relating to man) for failure to believe on Christ.
 - OF RIGHTEOUSNESS (Relating to Christ) that is, Christ’s righteousness, proven by His return to the Father.
 - OF JUDGMENT (relating to Satan); that is, of Satan who was judged at the cross. ([Colossians 2:15](#); [Hebrews 2:14](#))

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2) The convicting of the sinner is through the preaching of the Word in the power of the Spirit.

- Compare [Acts 2:4](#) with [2:37](#). The disciples were “filled with the Holy Spirit”, and sinners were “pricked in their heart.”
- Compare [Acts 4:8](#) with [4:13](#). Peter was “filled with the Holy Spirit”, and marveled.

3) The convicting of the Spirit is such that leads to repentance and faith.

- Compare [Acts 2:38-39](#). What shall we do? “Repent, and be baptized every one of you.....”
- [Romans 10:17](#), faith comes through the Word. But we must always remember THE WORD is THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT, and only when it is wielded by His power does it convict men of sin and cause them to repent and turn to God.