

**§ 6. Doctrine of God: Holy Spirit**  
**Lecture 3**  
**More Ministries of the Holy Spirit /**  
**Role of the Holy Spirit in the Old and New Testament**

We closed last time by talking about the prominent ministries of the Holy Spirit. We saw that the Holy Spirit was involved in the creation of a habitable planet on the Earth, that he was involved in divine revelation and the inspiration of the Scriptures, that he was responsible for the virginal conception of Jesus, and that in our lives it's through the Holy Spirit that we experience the new birth – regeneration – to spiritual life. We are indwelt by the Holy Spirit when we become a Christian and baptized by the Holy Spirit into the body of Christ.

Continuing on.

7. The Holy Spirit *gives us the assurance of our salvation*. Look at Romans 8:14-16. Paul says,

For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the spirit of sonship. When we cry, “Abba! Father!” it is the Spirit himself bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ . . .

So it is through the witness of the Holy Spirit in our hearts that we have confidence and assurance that we are in fact saved, that we belong to Christ and that we are children of God.

8. The Holy Spirit *gives enablement for spiritual living*. It is through the Holy Spirit that we are enabled to live a godly life. Galatians 5:16-18, 25. Paul says,

But I say, walk by the Spirit, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you would. But if you are led by the Spirit you are not under the law. . . . If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.

So as Christians we are not to be merely indwelt by the Holy Spirit but we're to be walking daily in the power of the Holy Spirit. This will help us to overcome the sinful desires of our fallen human nature that would drag us down, pull us back, and mire us in sin. It is through the enablement of the Holy Spirit we are able to transcend our fallen human nature and to live godly lives that honor Christ.

9. The Holy Spirit is *the source of spiritual gifts for building up the body of Christ*. 1 Corinthians 12:4-11. Here Paul describes some of the gifts that the Holy Spirit gives. He 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. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.<sup>1</sup> All these are inspired by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.

According to Paul, the Holy Spirit has gifted the church with all of these special spiritual abilities distributed according to his will to operate for the building up of the body of Christ. That means that you have a spiritual gift that the Holy Spirit has bestowed upon you which you are to be exercising in the context of your local Christian community.

10. The fruit of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit *produces spiritual fruit in our lives*. Galatians 5:22-24. After listing the works of the flesh, Paul then goes on to say in verse 22,

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

So the manifestation of the Holy Spirit is not properly speaking these spiritual gifts. Everyone is given a spiritual gift for serving the body of Christ, but the way the Holy Spirit is manifested in the life of someone who's walking in the Spirit is the production of these character qualities, these virtues, that are produced in the person like love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, gentleness, and so forth. These are the real fruit or signs of the filling of the Holy Spirit in a person's life.

You look at this list of prominent ministries of the Holy Spirit and I think you can't help but ask yourself, how in the world could the Holy Spirit have ever become the forgotten person to the Trinity? He's just there right from the beginning and is absolutely vital in every respect of the Christian life.

## **START DISCUSSION**

*Student:* One other ministry for those of us that believe that you cannot lose your salvation is Ephesians 1:13,

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<sup>1</sup> 5:17

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, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory.

*Dr. Craig:* Good, thank you! Regardless of how you interpret the perseverance of the saints, as you say, the sealing of the Holy Spirit is right here in Scripture. So every Christian is not only indwelt by the Holy Spirit, he is sealed by the Holy Spirit for the day of redemption. Good point. Thank you.

*Student:* There is a really interesting article<sup>2</sup> that I saw going around on Facebook recently that says, “Survey finds most American Christians are actually heretics.” This is not like nominal Christians – different groups. This is actually evangelicals. I was trying to find the exact statistic here but a shockingly high number of people actually said . . . yeah, it says,

Everyone expected them to perform better than most Americans. No one expected them to perform worse. Seven in ten evangelicals—more than the population at large—said that Jesus was the first being God created. Fifty-six percent agreed that “the Holy Spirit is a divine force but not a personal being.” They also saw a huge increase in evangelicals (28 percent, up from 9 percent) who indicated that the Third Person of the Trinity is not equal with God the Father or Jesus, a direct contradiction of orthodox Christianity. The Holy Spirit is, of course, used to being overlooked. But sources say he seemed bummed about these results.

*Dr. Craig:* So 56% think that the Holy Spirit is an impersonal force rather than a person.<sup>3</sup>

*Student:* Right, he is a divine force, not a personal being, and he is not even actually part of the Trinity. It seems they are some sort of binitarian believers. He is not even God.

*Dr. Craig:* My suspicion is that what this reflects is the kind of new mode of evangelical Christianity in this country that's focused on emotional worship experiences, entertainment, being seeker-friendly, being contemporary, but has very little instruction. Sunday School classes for adults are a rare thing these days. People are not taught Christian doctrine. They just go weekly and get their fix in the worship service and what they actually believe as Christians is allowed to slide. J. P. Moreland, my colleague at Talbot, in his book *Love Your God With All Your Mind* has warned that the church is in danger (as he puts it) of becoming its own grave digger because in another generation people raised in those kinds of churches cannot but help slip away and do all sorts of heretical and non-Christian doctrines. In seeking to swell its numbers by accommodating

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<sup>2</sup> See <https://thefederalist.com/2016/10/10/survey-finds-american-christians-actually-heretics/> (accessed October 19, 2016).

<sup>3</sup> 10:00

itself to contemporary culture the church will actually commit a kind of suicide. That's very sobering.

*Student:* I think last week you mentioned that the Holy Spirit is a source of wisdom for believers. Maybe you put that under divine revelation in your outline.

*Dr. Craig:* It is not in my notes. Perhaps I said it.

*Student:* Just to comment on that. 1 Corinthians chapters 1 through 3, Paul lays side-by-side what he calls "the wisdom of the world" (of the Greeks) and Christian wisdom. He seems to say – and he is talking back to the Corinthians where he has been according to Acts 18 for a year and a half – that the Greeks consider spiritual wisdom that Paul is espousing to be foolishness. The Gentiles seem to be hard-headed empiricists. He says in 1 Corinthians 2:14 a natural man does not accept the things of the spirit of God, they are foolishness to him. He cannot understand them. You cannot empirically test, you can't perceive through the five senses, the work of the Holy Spirit to produce wisdom. But Paul says that true wisdom is from God. In chapter 2 of 1 Corinthians he says that the Spirit knows the mind of God, the thoughts of God. Somehow Christians can partake in that through their relationship with Christ. It seems to me it is worth emphasizing that that is a source available to all Christians. I think in the passage on the gifts of the Spirit (1 Corinthians 12) it mentions a word of wisdom as being a gift given to some, maybe not to all. But wisdom here in 1 Corinthians 1 through 3, I think, is available to all Christians. It is something we are encouraged to take advantage of even though . . . when Paul was in Athens in Acts 17 some of the philosophers said that he was an idle babbling and was preaching strange deities. They couldn't understand what he was talking about. It seems to me it is worth emphasizing that this is a different source of wisdom than what Paul is talking about – the wisdom of the world.

*Dr. Craig:* I think Paul probably would have thought that those Epicurean and Stoic philosophers that he met in Athens were, in God's sight, foolish. The kind of philosophy that they had was godless philosophy that took no cognizance of God's creation of the world and that this really did represent the foolish wisdom of the world. But doing philosophy from a Christian perspective with Christian assumptions and presuppositions, as Paul says, this is the wisdom of God even if in the eyes of the world they think that it is foolish to believe in God and Christian truth. You are right, this is a kind of wisdom that is not a gift of the Spirit in the sense of spiritual gifts, but this is to all Christians who have this kind of wisdom that is found in Christ.<sup>4</sup>

## **END DISCUSSION**

We want to turn now to a discussion of the role of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament in contrast to the role played by the Holy Spirit in the New Testament.

Prior to Pentecost, which is the sort of hinge of history with regard to the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the world, the Holy Spirit would come upon persons to indwell them to perform some special specific purpose – some appointed task that God had in mind for them. There are numerous examples of this in the Old Testament. Let's just read about some of these.

Exodus 31:1-3 and then Exodus 35:30-35,

The LORD said to Moses, "See, I have called by name Bezalel the son of Uri, son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah: and I have filled him with the Spirit of God, with ability and intelligence, with knowledge and all craftsmanship."

It goes on to describe how God had gifted this man in order to be the designer and constructor of the tabernacle. This is expanded on in Exodus 35:30-35:

And Moses said to the people of Israel, "See, the LORD has called by name Bezalel the son of Uri, son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah; and he has filled him with the Spirit of God, with ability, with intelligence, with knowledge, and with all craftsmanship, to devise artistic designs, to work in gold and silver and bronze, in cutting stones for setting, and in carving wood, for work in every skilled craft. And he has inspired him to teach, both him and Oholiab the son of Ahisamach of the tribe of Dan. He has filled them with ability to do every sort of work done by a craftsman or by a designer or by an embroiderer in blue and purple and scarlet stuff and fine twined linen, or by a weaver – by any sort of workman or skilled designer."

Here in a very practical way God had filled with his Holy Spirit these men to do artistic crafts in wood and gems and stone and cloth for the equipping and decoration of the tabernacle. This would be a good example of a specific place where the Holy Spirit was put upon someone to carry out a specific job and giving him the ability to do that.

Now turn over to Numbers 11:16-17, 25. Here Moses needs help in judging the people of Israel settling their disputes:

And the LORD said to Moses, "Gather for me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom you know to be the elders of the people and officers over them; and bring them to the tent of meeting, and let them take their stand there with you. And I will come down and talk with you there; and I will take some of the spirit which is upon you and put it upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with you, that you may not bear it yourself alone." . . . Then the LORD came down in the cloud and spoke to him, and took some of the spirit that was upon

him and put it upon the seventy elders; and when the spirit rested upon them, they prophesied. But they did so no more.

Here you see how the Spirit of God comes down and anoints the seventy elders to do the same work that God had anointed Moses to do by his Holy Spirit.

During the period of the judges prior to the monarchy in Israel there was a series of judges that would arise in Israel that would serve to deliver the people from their enemies, to bring them back to the true way.<sup>5</sup> These judges were typically anointed by the Holy Spirit of God to do what God had called them to do. So look, for example, at Judges 3:9-10:

But when the people of Israel cried to the LORD, the LORD raised up a deliverer for the people of Israel, who delivered them, Othni-el the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother. The Spirit of the LORD came upon him, and he judged Israel; he went out to war, and the LORD gave Cushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia into his hand; and his hand prevailed over Cushan-rishathaim

So here Othni-el would be one of these judges upon whom the Spirit of the Lord came so that he could prevail over the enemies threatening Israel.

Turn over to Judges 6:34 for another example. This is one of the most famous of the judges – Gideon: “But the Spirit of the LORD took possession of Gideon; and he sounded the trumpet, and the Abiezrites were called out to follow him.” Then it describes the great triumph that Gideon and his small army had over the enemies of Israel. So Gideon was also anointed by the Spirit of the Lord to do what God called him to do – to deliver Israel.

Judges 11:29. This is the case of Jephthah. “Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon Jephthah, and he passed through Gilead and Manasseh, and passed on to Mizpah of Gilead, and from Mizpah of Gilead he passed on to the Ammonites.” Jephthah also defeats the enemies of Israel.

Judges 13:24-25. This is the part of the story of Samson who was also one of the judges.

And the woman bore a son, and called his name Samson; and the boy grew, and the LORD blessed him. And the Spirit of the LORD began to stir him in Mahaneh-dan, between Zorah and Eshta-ol.

Here the Spirit of the Lord comes on Samson to do the great deeds that he was called upon to do. Some of these are described, for example, in Judges 14:5-6.

Then Samson went down with his father and mother to Timnah, and he came to the vineyards of Timnah. And behold, a young lion roared against him; and the

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<sup>5</sup> 20:08

Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him, and he tore the lion asunder as one tears a kid; and he had nothing in his hand.

Here Sampson, barehanded, rips this lion to pieces because the Spirit of the Lord had come upon him to equip him to do that. Then in verse 19 we see again how he conquers over the enemies of Israel. Verse 19:

And the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him, and he went down to Ashkelon and killed thirty men of the town, and took their spoil and gave the festal garments to those who had told the riddle.

Finally in Judges 15:14-15,

When he came to Lehi, the Philistines came shouting to meet him; and the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him, and the ropes which were on his arms became as flax that has caught fire, and his bonds melted off his hands. And he found a fresh jawbone of an ass, and put out his hand and seized it, and with it he slew a thousand men.

Here's the famous slaughter with the jawbone of an ass that Samson does because, again, the Spirit of the Lord had come mightily upon him.

This is the pattern in the Old Testament. The Holy Spirit would come upon appointed individuals for a specific task and a limited time to enable them to do that task to which God had called them.<sup>6</sup>

## **START DISCUSSION**

*Student:* The Numbers quote that you used. It sounds like the Spirit came upon Moses in a mighty way and the other people in a lesser way. The idea of the Spirit being a person versus a force, you can kind of see how people might get that idea it is a force when you say it comes on in lesser degrees.

*Dr. Craig:* Very much so. Here it does sound like a force – doesn't it? – in these passages I read. But I don't think that is inconsistent with saying that the Holy Spirit operates more mightily in some cases than in others. In the case of someone like Moses, you could imagine that the Holy Spirit would work tremendously through him, but with the seventy elders that were his underlings it is not as though they had the same sort of powerful anointing that Moses did. I think you are right. Probably, again, no Jewish person who's ignorant of Jesus and the teachings of the New Testament would think that we are talking here about a separate person – the Holy Spirit – reading these texts in isolation. It's only when you read them in retrospect through the lens of the church that you can see how the Holy Spirit is already at work in the old covenant.

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<sup>6</sup> 25:06

*Student:* The other thing I find a little bit odd about some of those passages in Exodus is that it talks about *taking part of the Spirit which is upon you, Moses*. That seems a little bit odd language if he is a person.

*Dr. Craig:* I think that was the same point the previous questioner was making. Yes, it does sound like a power – I am going to take a portion of the Spirit that is on you and put it on these other people. But I think that is not inconsistent with saying what they means is that the Holy Spirit operates more mightily through some people than through others. Granted, if you read these in isolation from Christian revelation, I could see where one would take it that way.

*Student:* Have you read any rabbinical commentary on these passages? How do Jews view them?

*Dr. Craig:* I haven't. That would be very interesting, but I've not been sufficiently motivated to read rabbinical commentaries on these passages. That would be worth doing.

*Student:* I heard that God deals with Abraham according to his faith, and he deals with the children of Israel according to the law. It is almost like Abraham has an agreeable spirit with God, so the fruit of the Holy Spirit is that you don't need any law. Teaching is an act of imparting one's spirit. I was wondering whether the Old Testament was the Holy Spirit dealing with people according to the law because there's no indwelling of the Spirit. Then in the New Testament through Jesus we have an indwelt Spirit and so it is according to the faith.

*Dr. Craig:* OK. I see what you're getting at now. At first I was a little bit resistant to what you were saying, but I think there's truth in what you are saying. When you look at the old covenant, as I say the Spirit of God was not the permanent daily possession of the average believer. His anointing would come upon people to carry out special tasks but then it would leave them. They wouldn't have that anointing anymore. By contrast in the New Testament, we have the permanent indwelling and anointing of the Holy Spirit to help us. One of the contrasts between the old covenant in the new covenant is spoken of very eloquently by Jeremiah where he says, *I will put my laws into their hearts and write them on their minds*. So there will be that inner sort of motivation and willingness and ability to do what God wants us to do. It is not as though the law is contradictory with the righteousness of Christ, but I do think there is an internalization that Jeremiah talks about with respect to the new covenant that would come through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.<sup>7</sup> So you're not just obeying an external law under your best abilities; you are being internally empowered and motivated to live as God wants you to. That's why Jeremiah

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can say, *They won't say in that day 'Know the Lord' for they will all know me from the least of them to the greatest.* That's the description of the church.

### **END DISCUSSION**

What we will do next time is look more closely at the contrast between the Old Testament and the New Testament. I think we will see that what corresponds to the temple in the Old Testament (where the glory of God, the power of God, dwelt most specifically) is in the new covenant the believer's body. We are the temple of the Holy Spirit. We'll see that contrast next time.<sup>8</sup>