

Doctrine of the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is God (Matt.28:19-20). He is the third person in the divine Trinity, no less than God the Father or Jesus, yet distinct from the Father and the Son (Eph. 2:18). The Holy Spirit is a divine person of the Godhead whose eternal procession came from the Father (John 15:26) through the Son (Eph.2:18). The Spirit of God implicitly prepares us in the Old Testament for the explicit revelation of himself as a distinct person of the one God in the New Testament.

In the Old Testament the Spirit of God is seen actively involved in creation (Gen.1:2). The Spirit gives life and sustains life (Gen.6:3, Job 27:3); he grants gifts such as wisdom (Exod.28:3, 31:3; Isa.11:2), prophecy (Num.24:2; Isa.61:1-2; Ezek. 2:2-4, 12-16), and craftsmanship (Exod.28:3, 31:3; 35:31). The Spirit of God anoints Kings (1Sam. 16:12-23), empowers judges (Judg. 3:7-10, 6:34, 11:29, 13:25), and instills a Messianic hope in the people of God (Isa.11:2-3, 42:1; 61:1).

The work of the Spirit which began in the Old Testament is continued and elevated in the New Testament. Jesus promised his disciples that he would send them a *parakletos*, a helper, another Counselor, the Spirit of Truth (John14:16-17) to continue his ministry. The Holy Spirit was promised to teach the apostles all things, gave them supernatural memories (John 14:26), and inspired them to write the New Testament (1Pet.1:10-12; 2Pet. 1:21).The same Spirit, who now dwells within believers (John14:17, Rom.8:9-11; 1Cor. 3:16,19), teaches us by opening our minds and hearts to the truths of Scripture (John 14:26, 16:13, Luke 12:12). The Spirit bears witness about Christ (John 15:26), glorifies Christ (John 16:14), and helps believers to walk in righteousness and in fellowship with Christ (Rom.8).

The Spirit is an active agent of salvation by convicting the world of sin, false righteousness, and judgment (John 16:8-11) and by calling the repentant unto faith (Eph.4:4). He is the agent of regeneration, rebirth, and renewal (John3:3-8; Titus 3:5), at which time the new believer is baptized with the Spirit through Christ (Matt.3:11; 1Cor.12:13), enabling believers to be adopted into the family of God, not as slaves, but as sons, co-heirs with Christ (Rom.8:15, 23; Gal.4:5; Eph.1:5). The Spirit provides assurance of salvation by bearing witness to the believer's spirit that he is God's child (Rom.8:16; 1John 3:24), by providing his seal of authenticity (2Cor. 1:22; Eph.1:13-14), and issuing his guarantee of our inheritance (Eph.1:14; 2Cor 1:22) as we wait patiently for our adoption (Rom.8:23).

The Spirit is the agent of sanctification, enabling believers to walk in a particular way. Believers are to be filled with the Spirit (Acts 2:4, 4:8, 7:55), who empowers them to walk in obedience, power, and boldness (Luke 1:35; Acts 1:8). The Spirit convicts (1Thess. 1:5), purifies (1Cor.6:11), anoints (Acts 4:27; Heb.1:9) and calls the believer unto ministry (Acts 13:1-4). Believers are to live by the Spirit (Gal.5:16), walk according to the Spirit (Rom.8:14), remain under the control of the Spirit (Gal.5:22-23), and to produce the fruit of the Spirit (Gal.5:22-23). We are to pray in the Holy Spirit (Jude20; Eph.6:18) who teaches us what to pray and intercedes for us in accordance to God's will (Rom.8:26-27). The Spirit empowers us to carry the gospel to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8).

The Spirit is also a companion of the church. The church is the domain of the Holy Spirit, as we are his temple (1Cor.6:19). The Spirit helps the church by unifying Christians in the one body of Christ (Acts15:22, 25, 28; Col.1:7-8; Phil.1:27, 2:1-2) by granting gifts for the common good. The Spirit equips the church with spiritual gifts to edify, unify, and build up the body of Christ (1Cor.12-26). There is great diversity evident in the various gift lists but their purpose is the

same, to build up the body and to glorify God (Rom.12:6-8; 1Cor.12:8-10, 28-30; Eph.4:11; 1Pet.4:10-11). The listed gifts may be loosely classified as speaking (official), service, and sign (miraculous) gifts. The official gifts include: apostles, prophets, evangelist, pastors, and teachers and the related activities of prophecy, exhortation, ruling, and teaching. Among the service gifts are administration, giving, showing mercy, and helps. The miraculous gifts include word of wisdom, word of knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, discerning of spirits, tongues, and interpretation of tongues. The “cessationist” view argues the miraculous gifts were for confirming, authenticating, corroborating, or substantiating the apostolic message (Heb.2:3b-4) and are no longer used by the Spirit within the church. The “non-cessationist” view argues that these gifts are intended for use today and are still practiced within the contemporary church.

The Spirit helps the church by endowing all Christians with the fruit of the Spirit including: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self control (Gal. 5:22-23) and also with theological virtues such as faith, hope, and love the greatest of which is unending and selfless love (1Cor. 12:31; 13:13; 14:1). The Spirit guides the church as revealer and teacher (John 14:26; 16:13-15) enabling the church to understand the truth contained within the very Word He inspired. The Spirit aids the church in worship as we are called to worship in Spirit and in truth (John 4). The Holy Spirit empowers the church to be His witness in a fallen world (Acts 1:8), boldly proclaiming the Word of God to the nations (Acts 4:31). In general, the Holy Spirit applies the salvation the Father provided and the Son achieved.