

## The Work of the Holy Spirit, an Overview.

John 14:15-18 (HCSB)<sup>1</sup>

“If you love Me, you will keep My commands. 16 And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another • Counselor to be with you forever. 17 He is the Spirit of truth. The world is unable to receive Him because it doesn’t see Him or know Him. But you do know Him, because He remains with you and will be in you. 18 I will not leave you as orphans; I am coming to you.”

**Economy of the Trinity:** They are one, yet have different, sometimes overlapping roles.

## The Holy Spirit’s role is to... AP!

- manifest the presence of God, and
- apply the work of God<sup>2</sup>
  - *and we see the Holy Spirit, in tandem with the Son and Father, manifesting and applying their work to everything He touches...*
  - It did so first in **creation**, where the Father spoke, the Son created (Jn 1:3; Col 1:16) and the Spirit hovered as the manifestation of God’s immediate presence in creation and His searing purity, active power and reaching love
  - It does so in **redemption** where the Father sends the Son to demonstrate the Father’s love (Rom 5:8) and save us by dying on the Cross for us and the Spirit regenerates us and makes us new, draws us into that act of love through repentance and faith, sanctifies and makes us holy, indwells us and causes us to cry out “Abba, Father” in our spirits and pours the love of the Father out in our hearts (Rom 5:5)
  - It does so at the end, in the **renewal** of all things where in the ultimate triumph of God’s love the Son returns, heaven and earth kiss and the Son delivers up the kingdom to the Father (1 Cor 15:24) and the Spirit says along with the church (in anticipation of this love), “Come” (Rev 22:17)

The Holy Spirit manifests and applies. But how does he do this with people?

## He works on and in people (method)

ON: regeneration, rebirth, repentance, special tasks (more on this later)

IN: God’s eternal desire to inhabit a people called by His Name

God’s eternal purpose (3:11) is to dwell/inhabit!

BIBLICAL THEOLOGY. The word *biblical* is often associated with “correct.” But *Biblical Theology* is an area of study that refers to the overarching storyline and themes of Scripture rather than the doctrines that make up that story, which is known as *Systematic Theology*.

Overarching Narrative: Garden-person-nation-tabernacle-temple-Jesus-CHURCH-everything

- Ephesians 1:22-23 “And He put everything under His feet and appointed Him as head over everything for the church, which is His body, the fullness of the One who fills all things in every way.”
- Ephesians 2:21-22 “The whole building, being put together by Him, grows into a holy sanctuary in the Lord. You also are being built together for God’s dwelling in the Spirit.”

God is passionate about dwelling.

The Spirit of God creates the dwelling,  
and manifests the presence

---

<sup>1</sup> all passages are from the HCSB unless otherwise noted

<sup>2</sup> Sinclair B. Ferguson comments, “the activity of the divine *ruach* [Spirit] is precisely that of extending God’s presence into creation in such a way as *to order and complete what has been planned in the mind of God*” (authors’s emphasis) *The Holy Spirit: Contours of Christian Theology*. (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Press, 1996). 21

## What does the Holy Spirit work towards? (goals) AP!

### 1. Exaltation of Christ (in my heart?)

- John 14:26 "I have spoken these things to you while I remain with you. But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit —the Father will send Him **in My name**—will teach you all things and **remind you of everything I have told you.**"
- John 15:26 "When the Counselor comes, the One I will send to you from the Father —the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father —**He will testify about Me.**"
- John 16:13-14 (ESV) "When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. **He will glorify me**, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you."
  - No where do you ever see the Holy Spirit making much of Himself!

### • The Holy Spirit's obsession AP!

- Acts 1:8 "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come on you, and **you will be My witnesses.**"
- 1 Corinthians 12:3 "Therefore I am informing you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus is cursed," and **no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit.**"
- 1 John 4:2 "This is how you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit who **confesses that Jesus Christ has come** in the flesh is from God."
- The Holy Spirit's work in Scripture
  - Luke 24:25-27 "He said to them, "How unwise and slow you are to believe in your hearts all that the prophets have spoken! Didn't the Messiah have to suffer these things and enter into His glory?" Then beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, He interpreted for them **the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures.**"
- The Holy Spirit's work in salvation
  - regeneration is our uniting to Christ
  - 2 Corinthians 4:6 "For God who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of God's glory **in the face of Jesus Christ.**"
- The Holy Spirit's indwelling presence
  - Ephesians 3:16-17 "I pray that He may grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power in the inner man through His Spirit, and **that the Messiah may dwell in your hearts** through faith."

- The Holy Spirit is so obsessed with Jesus that an author wrote a book called...

### 1. Shy Member of the Trinity, Bruner (deference)

1. Frederick Dale Bruner: "I do not honestly believe that a new Spirit-centeredness is what our churches need. I do believe, however, that the Spirit's sign, desire, and work is that we be overcome again, thrilled again, excited, impressed and gripped again by the wonder, the majesty, the earthiness, and the relevance of Jesus and His Word to our world"<sup>3</sup> (The Holy Spirit: Shy Member of the Trinity)
  1. He is not the bitter middle child; he delights in this!

---

<sup>3</sup> Frederick Dale Bruner and William Hordern. *The Holy Spirit: Shy Member of the Trinity*. (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1984). 16

## 2. Pursuit of holiness<sup>4</sup> by the Spirit of holiness<sup>5</sup>

### 1. The Holy Spirit unites us to Jesus<sup>6</sup> (and breaks the power of sin)

- READ Romans 6:6-11

- so to continue in sin is to deny our basic identity in Jesus<sup>7</sup>

### 2. The Holy Spirit enables us to enjoy Jesus (desire for holiness)

“The love of the world cannot be expunged by a mere demonstration of the world’s worthlessness...the only way to dispossess [the heart] of an old affection, is by the expulsive power of a new one.”<sup>8</sup> -Thomas Chalmers, *The Expulsive Power of New Affection*.

He expels your slavery to sin by giving you a love for holiness, which comes when you are enjoying Jesus!

- 2 Corinthians 3:18

We all, with unveiled faces, are looking as in a mirror at the glory of the Lord and are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory; this is from the Lord who is the Spirit.

### 3. The Holy Spirit leads us to live like Jesus (conformity)

- Romans 8:9-11 “You, however, are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God lives in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him. Now if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. And if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead lives in you, then He who raised Christ from the dead will also bring your mortal bodies to life through His Spirit who lives in you.”
- Romans 8:29 “For those He foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brothers.”

## 3. Engagement in mission

- *Acts of the Apostle’s* should be called *Acts of the Holy Spirit* because it’s about his work of exalting Christ among the nations)
- mission teaches us that the work of the Holy Spirit is experiential, but it is also *outward*-focused.

## Three ways to think of *mission*

### 1. World is a mission field.

Luke 24:44-48

Then He told them, “These are My words that I spoke to you while I was still with you —that everything written about Me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms must be fulfilled.” Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures. He also said to them, “This is what is written: The Messiah would suffer and rise from the dead the third day, and repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And look, I am sending you what My Father promised. As for you, stay in the city until you are empowered from on high.”

---

<sup>4</sup> Ferguson: “Man was made as the image of God and bore his likeness (Gn. 1:26-27). He was called to express it in every aspect of his being. But he fell from that high estate. Salvation, and its outworking in sanctification, consequently have in view the restoration of man as the image of God.” Sinclair B. Ferguson. *The Holy Spirit*. 139

<sup>5</sup> Rom 1:4

<sup>6</sup> see also Romans 8:23-29 for a description of the Spirit’s work in making us like Christ.

<sup>7</sup> Sinclair B. Ferguson. *The Holy Spirit*. 146

<sup>8</sup> Thomas Chalmers. *The Expulsive Power of a New Affection*. (Minneapolis, MI: Curiosmith, 1855). 17-19

Acts 1:8

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come on you, and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

## **2. Church is a mission field.**

Fellowship, volunteering, full-time vocation.

Mark 3:31-35

Then His mother and His brothers came, and standing outside, they sent word to Him and called Him. A crowd was sitting around Him and told Him, “Look, Your mother, Your brothers, and Your sisters are outside asking for You.” He replied to them, “Who are My mother and My brothers?” And looking about at those who were sitting in a circle around Him, He said, “Here are My mother and My brothers! Whoever does the will of God is My brother and sister and mother.”

Ephesians 5:18-21

And don't get drunk with wine, which leads to reckless actions, but be filled by the Spirit: speaking to one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making music from your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another in the fear of Christ.

Galatians 6:11

Therefore, as we have opportunity, we must work for the good of all, especially for those who belong to the household of faith.

## **3. Vocation is a mission field.**

1 Corinthians 7:20

“Each person should remain in the life situation in which he was called.”

1 Thessalonians 4:10b-11

But we encourage you, brothers, to do so even more, to seek to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you, so that you may walk properly in the presence of outsiders and not be dependent on anyone.

Miroslav Volf

“If we must understand every specific function and task of a Christian in the church and in the world charasmatically, then everyday work cannot be an exception. The Spirit of God calls, endows, and empowers Christians to work in their various vocations”<sup>9</sup>

Enablement for mission...

John 16:7-11

Nevertheless, I am telling you the truth. It is for your benefit that I go away, because if I don't go away the Counselor will not come to you. If I go, I will send Him to you. **When He comes, He will convict the world about sin, righteousness, and judgment:** About sin, because they do not believe in Me; about righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you will no longer see Me; and about judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged.

“Your non-Christian friends...the Holy Spirit is working in them *right now*.

*Mission* is partnering with what the Holy Spirit is already doing.

---

<sup>9</sup> Miroslav Volf. *Work in the Spirit: Toward a Theology of Work*. (Eugene OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1991). 113

## The drive behind God's mission: a desire to share Himself (of which it is the special task of the HS)

Michael Reeves,

"The Father so enjoyed loving the Son that he wanted his love to be in others...the Son went because he so loved his Father (and wanted *that* love to be shared and enjoyed)...The Spirit catches us up to share their pleasure, and it is that delight in them that fuels us to *want* to make them known."<sup>10</sup>

The Holy Spirit's work is obsessed with exalting Jesus, the pursuit of holiness, and empowering for mission. Yet in accomplishing these things, the Holy Spirit does not treat us like cogs in a wheel...but we share in his delight. In giving us a greater view of Christ, a hunger for holiness, and a desire to live for something greater than ourselves, the Holy Spirit gives us a taste of heaven in this life: to share in the divine dance of the Trinity---caught up in the endless participation of the love that God experiences in Himself, between Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

### Romans 5:5

This hope will not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

The Holy Spirit is a gift to God's people.  
The Holy Spirit's work is to give you more of God.

As we can see, the Holy Spirit's work is magnificent and monumental.

We cannot do anything worthwhile in the narrative of God, anything holy by the standard of God, anything fit for our new identities, anything glorifying to Christ, anything to accelerate His Kingdom, anything that will satisfy our own thirsty souls, *without the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit!*

And yet with the Spirit... ALL OF THESE THINGS!

The question we should be asking ourselves today:

1. does the work of the Holy Spirit cause you to live differently than if he were not present?
2. if the Holy Spirit were to depart from you right now...*would anyone be able to notice?*
  1. would you?

Point: The Holy Spirit is the person of the Trinity who comes upon and works within people for the exclusive purpose of exalting Jesus, pursuing holiness, and empowering for mission.

App: We need the power and presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives *all the time* so we can enjoy Jesus and teach others how to do the same.

---

<sup>10</sup> Michael Reeves. *Delighting in the Trinity: An Introduction to the Christian Faith*. (Downers Grove, IL: IV Press, 2012). 106