Lesson 1

The Holy Spirit is a Divine Person

The Holy Spirit is vitally connected to the Christian life. His promised presence is the guarantee that one is truly a child of God. Yet, as Boles said, "There is much confusion and superstition about the Holy Spirit in the minds of people" (p. 27). Some think of the Holy Spirit as a mere power or influence.

A Person

A number of characteristics are assigned to the Holy Spirit which indicate He is a person. In Nehemiah 9:20, the Spirit is said to be good, or have goodness. Paul talks about the mind of the Spirit in Romans 8:27. His love is mentioned in 15:30. There are things of which he has knowledge (1 Corinthians 2:11).

Certain actions of the Holy Spirit clearly indicate He is a person. "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you" (John 14:26). "Now when they had gone through Phrygia and the region of Galatia, they were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia. After they had come to Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit did not permit them" (Acts 16:6-7). "Now the Spirit expressly says that in the latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons" (1 Timothy 4:1; Acts 8:29).

A Part of the Godhead

The word "Godhead" is found three times in the King James Version (Acts 17:29; Romans 1:20; Colossians 2:9). It actually describes deity or divine nature. Several verses let us know the Holy Spirit is very much a part of Deity. For instance, the Holy Spirit is omniscient. "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" (1 Corinthians 2:10-11).

The Holy Spirit is eternal. "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (Hebrews 9:14). He is also omnipresent. "Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence?" (Psalm 139:7).

Three Working Together

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Genesis 1:1). Though it is not
clear in the English translation, "God," as it is used in this passage, is plural. In verse 2, the Spirit is shown hovering over the water. John 1:1-14 reveals the Son was a part of the creation. So, Genesis 1:26 has God saying, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness...."

At the baptism of Jesus, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit can all be seen in action. As Jesus was coming up out of the water, the Spirit was descending like a dove and the Father was speaking from heaven (Matthew 3:13-17). Jesus reassured his disciples that they would not be left alone when he returned to heaven. In so doing, he made it clear there are three who work together. "But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who procceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me" (John 15:26).

The great commission contains instructions to baptize in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:18-20). Paul's final words to the Corinthians in his second letter to them expressed his clear desire for them. "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen" (13:14). He saw each member of the Godhead as active in behalf of the saints.

**His Works Declare His Deity**

The works of the Holy Spirit declare his Deity. Faith should lead one to believe God is the creator of all we see (Hebrews 11:3; Acts 17:24-28). The Holy Spirit certainly had a part in that creation. "By His Spirit He adorned the heavens; His hand pierced the fleeing serpent. Indeed these are the mere edges of His ways, And how small a whisper we hear of Him! But the thunder of His power who can understand?" (Job 26:13-14). "The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life" (Job 33:4).

When a man who was demon possessed was brought to Jesus, He cast out the demon. He expelled the demon by the Spirit of God (Matthew 12:22-28). Because the scribes accused Him of casting out devils by the power of Beelzebub, Jesus warned them the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit could never be forgiven (Mark 3:20-30). Clearly Jesus used the power of the Holy Spirit to accomplish such casting out of demons. It was also by the Holy Spirit that Jesus was raised from the dead (Romans 8:11; 1:4). The same Spirit is an agent in the spiritual birth of all Christians (John 3:1-8; 1 Corinthians 12:13).

**Conclusion**

Through careful study of scripture it can be seen the Holy Spirit is much more than an influence. He is a person, as his characteristics and actions demonstrate. He is a part of the Godhead, or Deity. He works with the Father and the Son in the best interests of lost mankind. His individual workings demonstrate His Divine nature. We need to learn more about His works since He is an agent in our spiritual birth into the family of God.
Discussion Questions

1. Before beginning this study, what did you think about the Holy Spirit?

2. What characteristics does the Holy Spirit have which indicate he is a person?

3. List some scriptures which show the Holy Spirit in action.

4. What type of things is the Holy Spirit said to have done? Could a mere influence produce such effects?

5. The King James Version uses the word "Godhead" in three places. List those and explain what the word means.

6. What characteristics does the Holy Spirit have which show he is Divine?

7. Why would the inspired writer use the plural word for God in Genesis 1:1?

8. Do you believe there is more than one person in the Godhead? Give scripture to support your answer.

9. What works of the Holy Spirit show he is Divine?
Lesson 2
The Holy Spirit and the Word

Some may think the Holy Spirit is only at work in the New Testament. However, such is far from the truth. He actually has been at work since the creation. In fact, without Him we would not have the written word.

Old Testament Spokesmen Were Inspired by the Spirit

Balak, king of the Moabites, tried to get Balaam to curse God's people. Balaam explained he could not go beyond the word of God. The third time he went to prophesy, the writer tells us, "And Balaam raised his eyes, and saw Israel encamped according to their tribes; and the Spirit of God came upon him" (Numbers 24:2). After Saul was anointed by Samuel to be the king of Israel, a group of prophets met him. "Then the Spirit of God came upon him, and he prophesied among them" (1 Samuel 10:10).

David said, "The Spirit of the Lord spoke by me, And His word was on my tongue" (2 Samuel 23:2). He also sang, "Do not cast me away from Your presence, And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me" (Psalm 51:11). Jesus and Peter confirmed that David spoke by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit (Mark 12:36; Acts 1:16).

The prophet Isaiah wrote, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, Because the Lord has anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound" (61:1). Similarly, Ezekiel reported that the Lord's Spirit told him to speak, telling the people the Lord said, "Thus you have said, O house of Israel; for I know the things that come into your mind" (11:5).

Peter Said the Prophets Were Inspired

Peter wrote his first epistle to Christians who had been scattered by persecution. He told them the Christian's goal is salvation in heaven, which is the end of our faith. Then he said, "Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, 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" (1 Peter 1:9-11).

We may never fully understand how the Holy Spirit inspired men to speak and write. However, Peter did explain 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" (2 Peter 1:20-21). In other words, prophecy was not a product of the prophet's own mind. Instead, they were carried along in their speaking, much as a
ship is carried along by the wind, by the Holy Spirit.

The Promised Comforter

Christ has now ascended into heaven and is seated on the throne (Acts 1:9-11; 2:32-33; Hebrews 1:3; 12:2). Before He ascended, Jesus told his disciples it was necessary for Him to go away so that He could send the Helper. That Helper, who is also called the Spirit of truth, was to guide them "into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come" (John 16:7, 13). His stated purpose was to testify of Christ so the apostles could bear witness (15:26-27).

The Spirit Inspired New Testament Spokesmen

Peter explained that the same Holy Spirit who inspired the Old Testament prophets inspired those who delivered the word to the scattered Christians. One might say the Holy Spirit foretold His own coming through the prophets and announced He was here through the apostles. Angels, apparently during the time of the prophets, had an intense desire to look into God's plan of salvation. Yet, it was not fully revealed until God, through the Holy Spirit, inspired New Testament speakers and writers to reveal His message (1 Peter 1:12).

On the day of Pentecost, it was the Holy Spirit who empowered the apostles to speak in languages they had never studied (Acts 2:4-21, 32-33). The Spirit gave them words to speak and guided their actions. It was the Spirit who directed Philip to overtake the chariot of the Ethiopian nobleman (8:29). He also told Peter to go with the men who had come from Cornelius (11:12).

Paul Was Inspired of the Spirit

Specifically, Peter said Paul "according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which those who are untaught and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures" (2 Peter 3:15-16). Notice Peter considered Paul's writings to be part of scripture, which is the God breathed, or spoken, word (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

Paul said, "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" (1 Corinthians 2:12-13). Peter recognized Paul's words were part of the unmerited favor God had bestowed upon him (Galatians 2:9).

Conclusion

The Holy Spirit has been at work throughout Bible history. His main function has been to reveal the will of God to the mind of man. To do this, He has inspired spokesmen in both the
Old and New Testaments. His directions and words have always been consistent with the will of the Father because He only speaks the words He has been given.

Discussion Questions

1. What Old Testament characters were inspired by the Holy Spirit? What evidence, other than their own word, will support their claims?

2. By what means did Peter say the Old Testament prophets were able to speak God's word?

3. What illustration from life does Peter use to help us understand inspiration?

4. Who did Jesus promise to send when He returned to heaven? What would the One sent do?

5. Do you believe there has ever been a time when a member of the Godhead was not helping man? Be prepared to discuss your answer.

6. By what means were the apostles able to speak God's word?

7. What apostle did Peter single out as being one inspired of God? What did Peter say about his writings? Have you ever felt the same?

8. By what Spirit did Paul claim to speak? What evidence would you offer to support his claim?
Lesson 3

The Work of the Holy Spirit in Conversion

"We believe and teach, that in conversion and sanctification there is an influence of the Spirit in addition to that of the Word, and distinct from it--an influence, without which the arguments and motives of the gospel would never convert and sanctify one of Adam's ruined race." So said N. L. Rice in his debate with Alexander Campbell in Lexington, Kentucky in December of 1843 (p. 628).

Ben M. Bogard affirmed that same position in his debate with N. B. Hardeman in Little Rock in April of 1938. The list of supporters extends to this very day. Though one hundred fifty years have gone by since Rice made his statement, large numbers of people still believe the Holy Spirit must work directly on the heart of a sinner to convert him.

The Need for Conversion

Sin was introduced to the world in the Garden of Eden. Man violated God's law and was cast out of the garden. Since that time, all men, who have reached an age of knowing the difference between right and wrong and have sinned (Romans 3:10, 23). God will not hear us because our sins, like those of Israel, have separated between us and him (Isaiah 59:1-2). Further, those sins condemn us to eternal death (Romans 6:23).

If man wants to avoid the lake of fire and brimstone, which is the second death (Revelation 20:14), he will have to be changed, or converted. "And Jesus called a little child to Him, set him in the midst of them, and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven'" (Matthew 18:2-3).

The Nature of Conversion

Conversion involves a turning from the path of sin to begin walking in God's way. Paul was thankful for the brethren of Thessalonica, in part, because the Lord's word had sounded out from them to everyone who heard of their faith. "For they themselves declare concerning us what manner of entry we had to you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God" (1 Thessalonians 1:9).

Conversion as taught in the New Testament involves the purification of the heart by faith as Peter said to the great conference in Jerusalem (Acts 15:9). He later wrote that such heart purification came through obedience to the truth (1 Peter 1:22). That obedience involves changing one's direction by repentance. "Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but
now commands all men everywhere to repent" (Acts 17:30). That obedience to the truth also involves a change of state or kingdoms when one puts on Christ in baptism and God translates him into the kingdom of his dear Son (Romans 6:3-4; Colossians 1:13-14; Galatians 3:27).

The Means of Conversion

Jesus promised to send the Helper after He had returned to the Father who sent Him. Among other things, the Lord said the Helper would "convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment; of sin, because they do not believe in Me; of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged" (John 16:5-11). One wonders how the Spirit was to convict those of the world. The means inevitably used in Acts is the preaching of the word of God.

That will not surprise anyone who remembers the Lord prayed God would "Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth." Earlier, He had said, "And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 17:17; 8:32). When Jesus was explaining the parable of the sower, He said, "The seed is the word of God" (Luke 8:11). The Psalmist sang, "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple" (19:7).

James said, "Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls" (1:21). These passages teach God's word is the means of planting the seed of the kingdom in the heart of the sinner and converting the soul. It is impossible to come to God without being taught the truth (John 6:44-45). God chose to save men by the proclamation of the word (1 Corinthians 1:21). Faith, which is absolutely necessary to please him, can only be produced by a hearing of the word (Hebrews 11:6; Romans 10:17).

God Chose Preaching

Men might have done it in a different way, but God chose preaching as the means of saving the lost. "For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe" (1 Corinthians 1:21).

"For 'whoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.' How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher" (Romans 10:13-14). It is evident Paul only knew of the Holy Spirit using the word of God to convert the lost. No special influence is mentioned outside the Bible.
Conclusion

Many believe the Holy Spirit must exert some force upon the sinner separate from God's word in order to convict him of sin. Clearly, man needs to be both convicted of and converted from the ways of sin. Sin only yields the second death as a reward. Conversion involves purifying the heart, changing direction in repentance and putting on Christ in baptism. The Holy Spirit uses the Bible to show men their sinfulness and convert them to God's way.
Discussion Questions

1. What do some people believe is necessary to convert sinners?

2. Discuss the introduction of sin into the world.

3. As each reaches an age of knowing right from wrong, what happens to his relationship to God?

4. Why is conversion important?

5. What takes place in conversion?

6. What purpose did Jesus ascribe to his sending a Helper?

7. How does the Holy Spirit accomplish that purpose?

8. What things are absolutely necessary to come to God in a way pleasing to him?
Lesson 4

The Holy Spirit's Use of the Word in Conversion

A lumberjack uses an axe to cut down the tree. The axe is the instrument used by a man to cut down the tree. Similarly, it might truthfully be said that the Holy Spirit converts a man from sin. The Bible is the instrument He uses to convert.

Born of the Word

Jesus told Nicodemus, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." He went on to explain, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (John 3:1-8).

The Holy Spirit inspired Peter, Paul and James to tell us by what means that birth occurs. Peter said Christians are born of the incorruptible seed, which is the word of God (1 Peter 1:23). The Corinthians were begotten "through the gospel," according to 1 Corinthians 4:15. James wrote, "Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures" (1:18). Clearly, the Holy Spirit uses the inspired word as an instrument to change the hearts of men.

Given Life Through the Word

Prior to becoming a Christian, one was dead in his sins. "And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins" (Ephesians 2:1). The only way out of that state is by being made alive again by God, which is a work of the Holy Spirit. In his second letter to the Corinthians, Paul said, "the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life" (3:6).

The Comforter uses the word as an instrument to make one alive. "This is my comfort in my affliction, For Your word has given me life....I will never forget Your precepts, For by them You have given me life" (Psalm 119:50; 93). The Lord said, "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life" (John 6:63).

Hearts Cut With The Sword

Paul instructed the Ephesian brethren to put on the armor of God. He described it, in part, by saying, "And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (6:17). The writer of Hebrews describes the word of God as "living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (4:12).
Peter used that very sword on the day of Pentecost. He quoted from Joel 2:28-32; Psalm 16:8-11; and 110:1. With those verses, he was able to show God had planned for Jesus to die and had raised Him from the dead. Then, he said, "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ." His hearers were cut to their hearts with the truth and asked what they must do to be saved. Instead of telling them to wait for a direct operation of the Spirit, he told them to "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit....Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them" (Acts 2:14-41).

The Conversion of the Samaritans

After the death of Stephen, the church at Jerusalem began to be greatly persecuted. "They were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles." Those who were scattered preached everywhere they went. Philip went to Samaria and "preached Christ to them." The people heard what he said and noted the miracles he worked, which confirmed he was a spokesman from God. "But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized" (Acts 8:1-12).

The Spirit's Role in Lydia's Conversion

If ever there was a case calling for direct operation of the Holy Spirit on the heart of a sinner, Lydia would seem to be that case. She lived far from the nearest preacher. She was devout, as is evidenced by her regularly going to the riverside on the Sabbath day for prayer. Yet, the Holy Spirit remained consistent by choosing to send men to bear the message.

The Holy Spirit did forbid Paul and his group to go to Asia. He also did not permit them to go to Bithynia. In a vision, Paul learned of the need for Macedonia to hear the gospel. Paul concluded the "Lord had called" them to preach the gospel to the people of Macedonia. While in Philippi, they went to the prayer gathering by the river. Lydia's heart was opened by the Lord through the preaching of Paul. Notice, Luke says she gave heed to "the things spoken by Paul. She was baptized as a result of hearing the words of the Spirit (Acts 16:6-15).

Conclusion

One must be born of water and Spirit to enter the kingdom of God. That birth is a result of one's obeying the words of the Spirit which are the seed of the kingdom. Spiritual life is also found in God's word. The Holy Spirit has never revealed himself directly to a sinner to tell him what to do to be saved. Instead, he has always used men, like Peter, Philip and Paul, to proclaim his word.
Discussion Questions

1. What did Jesus say one must do to enter the kingdom of God? How does such take place?

2. How does Paul describe those who are yet in sin?

3. What instrument does the Spirit use to change that condition?

4. What weapon did New Testament writers compare to God's word?

5. Describe a case of conversion that seems to match the use of such a weapon.

6. Do you believe God used the persecution after the death of Stephen to spread the gospel? Discuss reasons for your answer.

7. In what way, or ways, did the Holy Spirit act to open the heart of Lydia and cause her to be converted?

8. Do you think the Holy Spirit operates directly on the hearts of sinners to convert them? Why or why not?

9. What doctrine might lead one to believe in a need for a direct operation of the Holy Spirit on the hearts of sinners?
Lesson 5

Christ and the Holy Spirit

What do you think of when someone mentions the incarnation? Likely, Jesus giving up heaven and taking human form. Boles defines incarnation as "the assuming of a body of human flesh by a divine being" (p. 124). That is, after all, what Jesus did when he came to earth. The Word, which was with God in the beginning and through whom all things were made, "became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:1-14). Had you ever thought the Holy Spirit played a vital role in that process?

In the Incarnation

Gabriel, an angel, was sent by God to Mary in Nazareth. He told her, "And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS." Mary naturally wondered how that could happen since she was a virgin. Gabriel responded, "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" (Luke 1:26-38). This resulted in a baby being born who was uniquely the seed of woman, as God had promised in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:15; Galatians 4:4).

In Matthew's account, we learn it was also a means of fulfilling the prophecy of Isaiah 7:14. For Jesus to truly be "God with us," He had to be conceived of the Holy Spirit as the angel told Joseph. Mary did not have relations with any man, even Joseph, until Jesus was born, thus the Lord was born of a virgin (Matthew 1:18-25). To trace His legal lineage, Matthew had to go through Joseph, but he was careful to write, "And Jacob begot Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus who is called Christ" (1:16; Luke 3:23). He was born of Mary, not a begetting of Joseph.

At Christ's Baptism

Mark says Jesus "was baptized by John in the Jordan. And immediately, coming up from the water, He saw the heavens parting and the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove" (1:9-10; Matthew 3:16; Luke 3:22). John the baptizer witnessed, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him. I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.'" Because of that, he went on to say, "And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God" (John 1:29-34).

Immediately after the baptism, Matthew writes, "Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil" (4:1). Mark says, "And immediately the Spirit drove him into the wilderness" (1:12). Luke described Jesus as "being filled with the Holy Spirit"
In Christ's Earthly Ministry

Following the temptations in the wilderness, Luke writes, "Then Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and news of Him went out through all the surrounding region." He went into the synagogue in Nazareth on the Sabbath day. When they handed Him the book of Isaiah, He read chapter 61:1-2 and said, "Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing." By so saying, He claimed to be speaking by the Holy Spirit (Luke 4:16-21). Luke affirmed the same when he wrote, "The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen" (Acts 1:1-2).

When a dispute arose between John's disciples and the Jews about purification, he described Christ in an interesting way. "For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God does not give the Spirit by measure" (John 3:34). We would say Christ received the Holy Spirit without measure, or fully. After all, God had promised to put His Spirit upon His Servant as He declared the gospel which even the Gentiles would receive (Isaiah 42:1-4; Matthew 12:15-21). When the seventy returned joyfully from carrying out the limited commission, Luke says, "In that hour Jesus rejoiced in the Spirit" (10:21).

In Christ's Miracles

Peter told Cornelius, "How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him" (Acts 10:38). Matthew tells us, "Then one was brought to Him who was demon-possessed, blind and mute; and He healed him, so that the blind and mute both spoke and saw." The Pharisees accused Him of casting out demons by the power of Beelzebub, the ruler of the devils. Jesus showed it was not logical for Satan to cast out his own workers. Instead, He cast out demons "by the Spirit of God" (Matthew 12:22-30; Mark 3:20-30).

In Christ's Death and Resurrection

The writer of Hebrews, in 9:13-14, notes cleansing under the law of Moses was by the blood of goats and sacrifice of a heifer. "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"

The Holy Spirit's role in that great sacrifice did not end in Christ's death. Instead, we find, "But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you" (Romans 8:11; 1:4).
Conclusion

The Holy Spirit played an active role in the life of the incarnate Son of God. He caused Mary to be with child without having ever known a man. He descended from heaven at Christ's baptism. He led Jesus into the wilderness. He helped Jesus deliver the glorious message of God's plan to save man. Every miracle the Lord worked was through the power of the Holy Spirit. Even in the Messiah's death and resurrection, the Spirit played a critical role. Thank God for the working of the Holy Spirit in the life of Christ!

Discussion Questions

1. What part did the Holy Spirit play in the virgin birth?

2. Why was that role so necessary? List some promises of God fulfilled by that role.

3. Why did the Spirit descend at the baptism of Jesus?

4. What part did the Holy Spirit play in the miracles of Christ?

5. Discuss reasons you feel your answer to #4 was necessary. Give some scriptures to support your position.

6. How was the Spirit involved in the death of Christ?

7. How was He involved in the resurrection?

8. What comfort comes from your answer to #7?
Lesson 6

The Baptism of the Holy Spirit

The Baptism of the Holy Spirit

John the Baptist foretold that Jesus would baptize with the Holy Spirit (Matthew 3:11). God told John the one who would administer that baptism was the one "Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him" (John 1:31-34). No mere apostle could baptize someone with the Holy Spirit. It had to be the Son of God. Of course, that same Son must one day baptize some with the fire of judgment (Matthew 3:10-12; Revelation 20:14-15; 21:8).

Baptism involves an immersion or overwhelming. Paul helps one understand the meaning of baptism in Colossians 2:12. "Buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead." The apostle to the Gentiles viewed baptism as a burial.

The mother of James and John asked for her sons to be seated on Jesus' right hand. He asked if they were able to be baptized as he would be (Matthew 20:20-23). The context makes it plain he was speaking of a baptism of suffering. As Nichols says, "It was an overwhelming of suffering, and a submersion, as it were in what is figuratively referred to as an 'element' of suffering" (1 Peter 3:18). Similarly, when the word baptism is used in connection with the Holy Spirit, it "carries with it the idea (although figuratively expressed) of the amount of the Holy Spirit given and received in the case" (Nichols, p. 89).

Pentecost

The first feast of the Jewish year was passover. Passover was always on the evening of the fourteenth day of the month of Abib, which was the first month (Exodus 12:2; 13:4). The second feast followed fifty days later. In the New Testament it is called Pentecost (Acts 2:1; 20:16; 1 Corinthians 16:8). "This feast has three names in the Old Testament; they are 'feast of weeks' (Ex. 34:22; Deut. 16:10), 'feast of harvest' (Ex. 23:16), and 'day of first-fruits' (Num. 28:26)," according to Boles.

He went on to explain that "it came at the end of the reaping season, when all the wheat and barley had been cut and gathered. It was held at the central sanctuary. (Deut. 16:11.) The people were expected to assemble at the place of the altar and hold their celebration." Pentecost was a happy celebration of God's great provision. Freewill offerings were made with a special emphasis placed upon doing good for the Levites, strangers, orphans and widows (Deuteronomy 16:10-14).
The Promise of the Father

Just before His ascension to the throne in heaven, Jesus told His apostles to wait in Jerusalem "for the Promise of the Father, 'which,' He said, 'you have heard from Me; for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.'" He also promised they would receive power when the Holy Spirit came upon them. They would then be expected to go into all the world preaching the gospel (Acts 1:1-8; compare Luke 24:46-49). Since a pronoun always refers to its antecedent, one must go back all the way to verse 2 to discover the "you" of this passage refers to the apostles.

The first physical evidence the Promise had come was a sound like a rushing, mighty wind which filled the house in which the apostles were sitting. We know the "they" of 2:1 refers to the apostles because 1:26 tells us Matthias was numbered with the eleven. As a second evidence, divided tongues which looked like fire appeared to them and sat on each of them. Finally, each spoke in a language he had never studied. In these ways, the Holy Spirit's presence was made known. His coming was effectively confirmed by the witnesses who said they heard every man in the language in which he was born (Acts 2:1-8).

The Audience Reaction

The audience did not have to be told something unusual was happening. The apostles did not have to tell everyone that they had gotten the Spirit. Those from the fifteen nations mentioned by Luke heard them speaking in their own tongues, or languages. They also saw that which Christ poured out (Acts 2:9-13, 33).

Hearing the witnesses empowered by the Holy Spirit caused many to be pricked in their hearts. They asked what to do to be saved. They then heard the promise of salvation was available to all who would accept the Lord's call. An obedient hearing of those words caused them to be baptized and about 3,000 were added to the church (Acts 1:8; 2:37-41).

Cornelius' Household

Only one other group ever received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Those assembled in Cornelius' house, to hear all the things Peter had been commanded by God, were also baptized with the Holy Spirit. This was absolutely necessary for the prophecy of Joel 2:28-32 to be fulfilled. It also showed Peter the Gentiles had been granted the opportunity to receive eternal life in Christ (Acts 10:1-11:18).

Notice Peter said, "the Holy Spirit fell upon them, as upon us at the beginning" (11:15). Peter heard and saw the evidence of the baptism when they spoke in other tongues and glorified God. The only other time that happened was at the beginning of the church in Acts 2. Though a number of years, perhaps 10, had passed since Pentecost, Peter could not think of another instance like this one. It caused him to remember the Lord promised to baptize them with the
Further, it should be said they were not saved through the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Though it could now be said the Spirit had been poured out on all flesh, they still had to yield to Christ in water baptism to be saved. Their receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit was the way God chose to bare witness to the fact that Gentiles could obey God's word and be saved (Acts 15:6-11).

Conclusion

Both Jesus and John promised Jesus would baptize with the Holy Spirit. They were speaking of a submersion in the Holy Spirit. On the first Pentecost after the Lord's ascension, the apostles were immersed in the Spirit. They were able to speak in languages they had never studied. The reaction of the audience to the Spirit inspired witnesses shows it was plain God was at work. Thousands were pricked in their hearts because of the words spoken, with nearly three thousand being baptized.

Those assembled in Cornelius' house also were baptized with the Spirit. This was to fulfill the prophecy of Joel that said God's Spirit would be poured out on all flesh. Too, Peter was able to see God had also granted salvation to the Gentiles.

Note: Gus Nichols challenged my thinking on the baptism of the Holy Spirit by referring to the words of Paul in 2 Corinthians 11:5; 12:11-12; and Mark 16:14-20. Do these verses suggest Paul was also baptized with the Holy Spirit? Though no verse specifically says so, it certainly seems likely.

Discussion Questions

1. What did John the baptizer state about the baptism of the Holy Spirit?

2. What does "baptism" mean?

3. In what sense could the apostles be baptized in the Holy Spirit?
4. What other types of baptism are mentioned in Scripture?

5. Of what was the feast of Pentecost a celebration?

6. On what day did it occur?

7. What did Jesus promise the apostles if they would wait in Jerusalem?

8. Describe the audience reaction to the apostles who had been baptized with the Holy Spirit.

9. How did the audience know something had occurred?

10. What were they told to do to be saved? Why do you suppose they were not likewise told to wait for the baptism of the Holy Spirit?

11. What other group received this baptism? Why did they have to be baptized with the Holy Spirit?

12. What did they have to do to be saved?
Lesson 7

The Apostles and the Holy Spirit

In Jesus’ closing words to the apostles before He ascended into heaven, He commissioned them to preach repentance and remission of sins in His name among all nations. This was to be done by telling others the Old Testament had foretold his coming. Further, they would report the events they had witnessed which proved Jesus was the fulfillment of prophecy.

Jesus then directed them to wait in Jerusalem for the Promise of His Father. When they received the promise, Jesus said the apostles would be "endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:44-49). In Acts 1:4-5, Luke makes it plain the Promise of the Father would be theirs when they were baptized with the Holy Spirit. As we have already seen, they received the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the promised power on the first day of Pentecost after Christ's ascension.

Sufficient Ministers

Those opposing Paul in Corinth apparently came with letters of recommendation. They accused Paul of being a self-appointed spokesman who came with no letters of approval from anyone else. Paul argued that he did not need such letters. The work he had done in Corinth, and the brethren in particular, were adequate to show the effects of his preaching. Their lives had been changed from godless to godly.

Paul stated that the power to bring about such a change came from God. The Holy Spirit had inspired Paul so he could preach the truth. He was a sufficient minister because of the working of the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 3:1-6). "Truly the signs of an apostle were accomplished among you with all perseverance, in signs and wonders and mighty deeds" (12:12).

The Apostles Performed Miracles

The Holy Spirit guided the apostles into all truth (John 16:12-15). Each of them had heard the words of Jesus. The Spirit taught them and helped them remember the words of the Lord (14:26). He then bore witness to the truthfulness of the message they delivered through "signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts" (Hebrews 2:1-4).

The miracles the apostles worked were undeniable. The lame man Peter and John met at the temple gate called Beautiful was carried there daily to ask alms. He had been lame since birth. Once he was healed in the name of Jesus, he is described by Luke as walking and leaping. The people saw it and knew who he was. There was no doubt a miracle had been performed. Even the unbelieving rulers acknowledged a miracle had been performed in the questions they asked (Acts 3:1-11; 4:1-10).

Peter raised Dorcas from the dead after her body had been washed and laid in an upper
chamber (9:36-43). Paul did not die when a viper came out of the fire and bit him (28:1-6). Without the aid of the Comforter, the apostles could not have done these things.

The Spirit Foretold Coming Events

The Spirit's purpose was, in part, to tell the apostles things Christ said. The Lord said he would tell them things to come (John 16:13). For example, Paul told of an apostacy which would come before the Lord returned to earth. "Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God" (2 Thessalonians 2:3-4; compare 1 Timothy 4:1-5; 2 Timothy 3:1-9).

Paul gave early Christians some insight as to what would happen to the body during the resurrection (1 Corinthians 15). He consoled the brethren concerning their loved ones in Christ who had already died. In fact, he said they would be raised to meet the Lord before those who were still alive (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18). Such information could only come from God through the Spirit.

Conclusion

The apostles received power when the Holy Spirit came upon them on the day of Pentecost. They thus became sufficient ministers of the gospel and men were converted. They also were able to perform miracles which clearly confirmed they were God's inspired spokesmen. Too, the Spirit enabled them to foretell future events so the church might be better prepared to face them.
Discussion Questions

1. What did Jesus say with reference to the Holy Spirit in His closing words to the apostles according to Luke?

2. Describe the fulfillment of the Lord's prophecy and site the scripture where you found it.

3. Why did Paul say he did not need a letter of recommendation?

4. What part did the Holy Spirit play in making Paul a sufficient minister?

5. Describe some of the miracles the apostles worked?

6. Is this any different from what is currently being called a miracle?

7. What coming events did the apostles describe?

8. How could they foretell such? Give one instance demonstrating the accuracy of their prophecies.
Lesson 8

Miraculous Gifts

Jesus had the Holy Spirit without measure. The apostles were baptized with the Holy Spirit. Other Christians also had a measure of the Spirit. Some received miraculous gifts. These were to be used to build up the church, as we shall see.

The Samaritans

Because of intense persecution in Jerusalem, the church, excluding the apostles, was scattered throughout Judea and Samaria. They went forth preaching the gospel. A man named Philip, who was one of the seven named to take care of the needs of the Hellenist widows in Acts 6, went to the city of Samaria. The preaching of Christ was well received there, with men and women being baptized. Even a sorcerer named Simon, who had used trickery to deceive the people and cause them to give him special honor, believed and was baptized (Acts 8:1-13).

Having fulfilled the terms stated by Peter in Acts 2:38, the Samaritans were already pardoned members of the church. They also were in possession of the gift of the Holy Spirit. The apostles, after a time sufficient for this news to reach them, sent Peter and John to Samaria. They prayed and laid their hands on those baptized believers and they received the miraculous gift of the Holy Spirit. Luke, by inspiration, then writes, "Now when Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles’ hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money" (Acts 8:14-19).

Obviously, something visible and impressive had occurred to cause the sorcerer to offer money for such an ability to be his. Also, it is readily seen the apostles were the ones who were able to dispense this miraculous measure. Philip had worked miracles among them but could not give the gift to others.

The Twelve in Ephesus

Paul met twelve disciples of Jesus when he first came to Ephesus in Acts 19. But something unusual happened when he asked, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" They had not even heard whether there was a Holy Spirit. That fact made Paul realize there was something missing in the instruction they had received. Anyone scripturally baptized in the name of Jesus would have to be aware of the Holy Spirit because of the promise of Acts 2:38. It appears they had been taught by Apollos when he was teaching the way of the Lord, while knowing only John's baptism (18:24-25).

Paul commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Others who received John's baptism did not have to be baptized again. These did because their baptism had
taken place after the Lord's death, burial and resurrection. Once they had put on Christ in baptism, Paul laid hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit and were able to speak in tongues and prophesy (19:1-7).

**The Purpose of Spiritual Gifts**

In idolatrous worship, Gentiles had been accustomed to giving up their mind, emotion and will to an experience. They did many irrational things in worshipping an unspeaking idol. Paul wanted the Corinthian brethren to know spiritual gifts were not of an emotional, irrational nature. One of God's teachers would not, in the excitement of the moment, say Jesus was devoted to destruction.

Instead, different gifts were given by the Spirit to accomplish different tasks. All those services were rendered by Christians in behalf of their Lord. Each work performed by those miraculously endowed was done by God working through them. The purpose of gifts was not to give men reason for a false sense of pride but to benefit the entire church (1 Corinthians 12:1-11).

**The Ability to Reveal God's Will**

"The word of wisdom" would seem to be the gospel. If the church was to grow in maturity, it would need God's solutions to its problems. Inspired men revealed that word of truth to the church so that it might cope with each situation in a way pleasing to the Father. Remember, Peter said God's longsuffering leads to our salvation. This was achieved, in part, through the words written by Paul through the wisdom given to him (2 Peter 3:15).

"The word of knowledge" gift enabled a man to speak the truth. Until inspired penmen set down all of God's truth in writing, it was necessary for some to be able to relate accurately the facts of the gospel. Men like Stephen set forth principles God had been revealing through thousands of years in his dealings with man.

**The Ability to Work Miracles**

Miraculous faith would not be that which comes by hearing God's word (Romans 10:17). Apparently it was that which enabled one to work miracles. In 1 Corinthians 13:2, Paul refers to this kind of faith when he says, "though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains." Jesus may also have referred to this faith in Matthew 17:20.

Some were given the ability to heal the sick. It is possible the raising of the dead was associated with this gift as well (Acts 9:40; 20:9-12). Paul used this gift to heal the father of Publius on the island of Malta (Acts 28:7-10). As with all the gifts, this was used to confirm the message was from God. Paul urged Timothy to take a little wine for his stomach's sake and did not heal Trophimus (1 Timothy 5:23; 2 Timothy 4:20). It is likely he did not use the gift of
miraculous healing because it would not have fulfilled the confirmation function in those cases.

Lipscomb says the "working of miracles" literally "means the 'inworking' of powers. That is, the bestowing on persons the ability to impart the power of working miracles to others. Simon Magus offered Peter money for this power."

**Revealing the Heart of God and Man**

The ability to speak God's words through inspiration was called prophecy. This was one of the gifts given to the twelve in Ephesus. Prophecy was for edification, exhortation and comfort of the church (1 Corinthians 14:3). By it, unbelievers were able to see the secrets of men's hearts are known by God. They were convicted of sin and led to worship God (14:23-25).

Peter knew Ananias and Sapphira had lied about the money received from the sale of their property (Acts 5:1-11). He knew because of the gift of "discerning of spirits." Prior to the time God's word was fully set down in writing, it was absolutely necessary for the church to have a means of determining whether a teacher was speaking the truth. This gift enabled the Lord's body to do just that (1 John 4:1-6; 2 John 7).

**Languages and Interpretations**

Anyone who received the gift of tongues had the ability to speak in a language he had never studied (Acts 2:1-11). Before God's word was in writing and could be translated into other languages, it was essential for some to be able to speak to others in their native language so they could fully understand God's message.

Foreigners at times would come into the assemblies of Christians. If it was a Christian, he would need an interpreter to be understood when delivering a message from God. Similarly, those non-Christians from other nations who might enter the assemblies would need to understand and be understood. So, God gave some the gift of interpretation.

Like the various components assembled before one builds a house, the various gifts were only necessary until God's plan of revealing fully His will was complete. After that time, the parts were done away with because the completed will of God was available to all (1 Corinthians 13:8-13). Faith, hope and love are the only lasting gifts of God for all Christians.

The miraculous gifts naturally ceased when the apostles and all they had laid their hands on died. Any who wish for the return to the days of those gifts fail to appreciate fully the greatness of the revealed word of God as set forth in the pages of the Bible. In the Bible, the faith has been once for all delivered. Christians have all they need to help them be what God would have them to be and need not fall. All truth has been set forth for any to see (Jude 3; 2 Peter 1:1-11; John 16:13).
Mark 16:9-20

Numbers of people have used Mark 16:9-20 to show why they believe people can still work miracles and speak in tongues today. However, a close look gives rise to some serious questions about such a position. First, it should be noted Jesus was "manifested unto the eleven themselves." He told them to preach the gospel as they went into all the world. Then, He promised certain signs would accompany those who believed. Remembering the disbelief of these very men, it seems likely this is the specific group to which Jesus was speaking, which verse 19 confirms. The word "accompany" carries with the idea of going along with one on a journey, in this case, into all the world.

After the Lord's ascension, they carried out His instructions. "And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word by the signs that followed. Amen" (A. S. V.). When one compares Hebrews 2:1-4 with this passage, he realizes the precise purpose of the miraculous gifts was to confirm the message was, and is, from God. Once the word was completely delivered, the need for confirmation would obviously pass.

Conclusion

The miraculous gifts of the Spirit were given through the laying on of the apostles' hands. Both those in Samaria and Ephesus received them in exactly such a manner. Each of the gifts had a specific purpose. All of them were no longer needed once God had fully revealed His will in the Bible. The time for the parts is over because we have the completed work.
**Discussion Questions**

1. Through what teacher did the Samaritans learn of God's plan of salvation?

2. Through whom did they receive the miraculous gifts of the Spirit? Why do you suppose the preacher did not give them such gifts?

3. What observation did Simon the sorcerer make that Luke reveals?

4. Why had the twelve at Ephesus not heard of the Holy Spirit?

5. Why did they have to be reimmersed?

6. List the nine gifts of the Spirit found in 1 Corinthians 12 and give a brief description of each.

   1.
   2.
   3.
   4.
   5.
   6.
   7.
   8.
   9.

7. Do you believe miraculous gifts of the Spirit are still given to Christians today? Give scriptural reasoning for your answer.
Lesson 9

The Indwelling of the Spirit

Someone has well said, "Unless there is within us that which is above us, we shall soon yield to that which is about us." Since we cannot afford to yield to the world and its pleasures, it is imperative that we have God dwelling in us. Under the law of Moses, God promised, "I will walk among you and be your God, and you shall be My people" (Leviticus 26:12). Christ's law differs only in that God actually dwells in his people, or the church. "Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are" (1 Corinthians 3:16-17).

The Holy Spirit Indwells the Christian

There can be no denying that the Holy Spirit indwells the Christian. Jesus is the author of salvation to all that obey him (Hebrews 5:9). Peter said, "And we are His witnesses to these things, and so also is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him" (Acts 5:32). So, all the saved have the Holy Spirit given to them. The world cannot receive the Spirit because it does not obey the will of the Father (John 14:17; Jude 19).

That is why Paul described the bodies of individual Christians as the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). He explained to the Romans that those who did not have the Spirit of Christ were in fact not any part of Christ. In contrast, he told them those who have received the Spirit have the reassurance that the one who raised up Jesus will also raise them up (Romans 8:9-11). In the middle of pleading with the Thessalonian brethren to be pure, Paul said, "Therefore he who rejects this does not reject man, but God, who has also given us His Holy Spirit" (1 Thessalonians 4:8).

The Gift of the Spirit

Jesus told those who were thirsty to come to him and drink. He promised that those who believed on him would have rivers of living water flowing out of their hearts. "But this he spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified" (John 7:37-39). It appears Paul spoke of the promised gift when he said the Holy Spirit was given to Christians (Romans 5:5).

The writer of Hebrews warned of the danger of Christians falling away from God's grace. In so doing, he described them as those who were partakers of the Holy Spirit (6:4-6). This would seem to be a clear reference to the fact that those in Christ have received the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38). The expression, "the gift of the Holy Spirit" only occurs in two places, Acts 10:45 being the other. Though it deals with the baptism of the Holy Spirit, the wording is the same. In Acts 10, Peter said they received the Holy Spirit when the gift was poured out on
them, so the gift was the Spirit, not a gift from the Spirit. Unlike the baptism of the Holy Spirit which those in Cornelius' household experienced, those who repented and were baptized under the authority of Jesus for the remission of sins on the day of Pentecost, and since, do not receive miraculous power but the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

One does not have to have miraculous power because the Holy Spirit is in him. The angel who spoke to Zacharias told him John would "be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb" (Luke 1:15). Yet, "John performed no sign, but all the things that John spoke about this Man were true" (John 10:41).

Only Through the Word?

Some have suggested the Holy Spirit only dwells in the Christian through the word. However, certain problems seem to arise with such a view. For instance, Peter told those on Pentecost they would receive the gift of the Holy Spirit after they had been baptized for the remission of sins. Yet, they gladly received the word before they were baptized. If receiving the word is equivalent to receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit, they got that gift before baptism.

James also put the receiving of the word before salvation (James 1:21). Jesus said, "Those by the wayside are the ones who hear; then the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved" (Luke 8:12). Surely the wayside hearers do not have the gift of the Holy Spirit. Hearing the word occurs before faith but the gift of the Spirit comes after faith (Ephesians 1:13). One becomes a child of God when he is baptized. "And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, 'Abba, Father!'" (Galatians 3:26-27; 4:6).

The Individual Is Still In Control

Even those prophets who spoke God's will miraculously had control. "And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets" (1 Corinthians 14:32). The indwelling of the Holy Spirit means the Christian has given up sin's control of his life. As long as he allows the Spirit's directions to help him live a righteous life, the Spirit will abide with him. In fact, Paul warned, "And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption" (Ephesians 4:30). "Do not quench the Spirit" (1 Thessalonians 5:19).

To keep the Spirit of God in our lives, we must set our minds on things the Spirit has revealed. "For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit" (Romans 8:5).

Conclusion

There is no doubt the Bible teaches the Holy Spirit dwells within the Christian. Such begins when one obeys God and is added to the saved. To a soul once lost in the dry desert of sin, God's Spirit is like a river of water. While he does not cause one to perform miracles today,
he does comfort God's children and help them express their deepest hurts in prayer. The Spirit cannot enter the life of a Christian exclusively through the word, since the word enters the hearer's heart before he obeys. Instead, God sends the Spirit into our hearts after we are baptized. Then, the individual Christian encourages the Spirit to remain with him by living a righteous life.

**Discussion Questions**

1. Where is God said to dwell under the law of Christ?

2. To whom has God given the Holy Spirit?

3. Can one be part of Christ without the Spirit of Christ?

4. What reassurance does Paul give those who have received the Spirit?

5. How did Jesus describe the effect of the Spirit on the heart of believers?

6. What is one of the things those who fall away are said to have experienced?

7. Does one have to have miraculous power if he has the Spirit in him?

8. Do you believe the Holy Spirit only dwells in the Christian through the word? Why or why not?

9. Does the Christian totally yield control of his life when the Spirit indwells him?
Lesson 10

Bearing The Fruit of the Spirit

Seed Planted in the Heart

There are many works of the flesh, but only one fruit of the Spirit. That fruit has nine different characteristics (Galatians 5:22-23). It is produced by the seed of God's word (Luke 8:11). Remember, the Spirit speaks through the written word (2 Samuel 23:2; Acts 1:16; Hebrews 3:7-11).

Gus Nichols was questioned by a man who believed each person's destiny is already determined. The man asked, "Could the wayside soil keep from being wayside soil? Could the thorny ground soil have made itself some other kind? Could the good ground have kept from being good ground?" Nichols's answer pointed to some important facts about the production of the fruit of the Spirit.

Like a farmer preparing soil for planting, we must prepare our hearts to receive God's word. It is essential that we cast out the rocks and thorns of sin and worldliness from our hearts (James 4:8; Ezekiel 18:30-32). When King Hezekiah and the people kept the Passover, he noticed many in the congregation were not sanctified. "But Hezekiah prayed for them, saying, 'May the good Lord provide atonement for everyone who prepares his heart to seek God, the Lord God of his fathers, though he is not cleansed according to the purification of the sanctuary'" (2 Chronicles 30:18-19). So, it might be said one needs to prepare his heart to receive the seed of God's word and produce the fruit of the Spirit.

God Is The Vinedresser and Christ is the Vine

When Jesus told about the vine and the branches, He said "My Father is the vinedresser" (John 15:1), or the one who owns and tends the vine. The Lord vividly depicted the Father cutting off any branch which did not bear fruit. Whereas, He showed fruitful branches being cleansed so they could bear even more fruit. Such cleansing, according to Christ, took place through the word (John 15:1-3).

The only true, God planted, vine is Jesus Christ. Throughout history, others have claimed to be God's spokesman, or prophet, but only Jesus has the stamp of approval from the Eternal Father. When Peter wanted to build three tabernacles, one for Moses, one for Elijah and one for Jesus, Matthew recorded the Father's testimony. "While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!'" (Matthew 17:1-5, also see 3:13-17). Interestingly, the only way Jesus can bear fruit is through the branches in Him!
The Christian's Purpose Is To Bear Fruit

From what we have already seen, it should be obvious that God expects individual Christians to bear fruit. Too, anyone who would bear fruit for the Father must be a part of Jesus the vine (John 15:4). Six times in John 15:1-8, Jesus emphasizes the importance of being "in Me." Those who would strive to please God while abiding outside of Christ will meet with destruction. As Jesus said, "If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned" (verse 6).

In the previous verse, the Lord said one must stay in Him to bear fruit. These two verses suggest it is possible for one to leave Christ. The way for one to avoid being outside of the Savior is for him to let the word abide in him, or, obey the word. Remember, the goal of any true disciple of the Lord is to bear fruit, which can only be accomplished while one remains in Christ (John 15:8, 4)!

The Fruit One Bears Announces Clearly To Whom He Belongs

When Jesus taught the people on the mount, He warned them of false prophets who would come to them wearing sheep's clothing. Yet, inside that gentle exterior, hid the vicious wolf who would like to fill his belly by feasting on the flesh of the Shepherd's sheep. Jesus gave a simple way to identify their true, inward, nature.

You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles? Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Therefore by their fruits you will know them (Matthew 7:15-20).

So, it should come as no surprise that those who pursue fleshly desires will, according to Paul, produce the works of the flesh. While those who pursue the will of the Spirit, bring forth the fruit of the Spirit in their lives (Galatians 5:19-23).

Conclusion

The fruit of the Spirit is produced by the seed of God's word, which the Holy Spirit inspired men to write. To receive the seed and produce the fruit, one must prepare his heart. Each branch, Christian, must please the owner of the vine, God, by producing fruit, which can only be accomplished in Christ. To do this, one must continue in Christ by obeying the word. While one might try to hide whose he is, it will be clearly seen in the fruit born in his life. So, our goal must be to bear the fruit of the Spirit to the glory of God!
Discussion Questions

1. How is the fruit of the Spirit produced?

2. Why is it important to prepare my heart to receive God's word?

3. To what did Jesus refer when He spoke of the vine? The branches? The vinedresser?

4. Can one please God apart from Jesus?

5. What does God expect of the Christian?

6. Where must he be to achieve this desired result?

7. How can he remain there?

8. What sure test is there to show whether one is good or bad?

9. Why do you suppose there are multiple works of the flesh but only 1 fruit of the Spirit?
Lesson 11

Love, Part of the Fruit of the Spirit

God Is Love

Certain characteristics in an individual may be so strong that they instantly come to mind when the individual's name comes up. Mention one man and "egotistical" comes to mind. Mention another and we may think "stern." Still another name may cause us to think "cold."

With God, the dominant characteristic would have to be "love." "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God, for God is love" (1 John 4:7-8). It was God's love which opened the door to our salvation (John 3:16).

Love, a Natural Response

John made it clear that love ought to naturally grow out of a proper relationship with God. Loving is a means of our participating in the nature of the Father. As Jesus indicated, the loving response begins with the keeping of the commandments (John 14:15). Rather than viewing such as some ritualistic form of rules keeping, Christians should see it as pursuing the loving Father's will for their lives. In fact, when asked what was the greatest commandment in the law, Jesus summarized all of the law and the prophets effectively in one word, love.

Jesus said to him, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets" (Matthew 22:36-40).

Our love for God is most frequently shown through our love for one another. Failure to love one another indicates we do not really love God (1 John 4:9-11, 19-21). Of course, Christians should not only love those who love them. In fact, like our heavenly Father, our love should extend even to our enemies.

But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life (Romans 5:8-10; Matthew 5:43-48).
The Nature of the Love Commanded

Anyone who has listened very much to the radio may be confused about the nature of love. The same word is used for acts as far apart as uncontrolled, lusty, desire and complete self-sacrifice. The Greeks made it much easier to understand what was being discussed by using 4 separate words to describe various types of love.

The first, *eros* describes a desire one might have for a person or thing. Though this word is not specifically used in the New Testament, I suspect it was what motivated Herod when Herodias' daughter danced for Herod and pleased him so much that he swore to give her whatever she might ask (Matthew 14:6-7). In contrast, *storge*, according to Vine, is "'love of kindred,' especially of parents for children and children for parents" (p. 16). Only the negative form of this word appears in the New Testament. Paul uses it as a description of the types of people who would be a part of the upcoming perilous times (2 Timothy 3:1-5, esp. 3). He also used it of the downward spiral into sin that characterized the Gentiles who had rejected the knowledge of God (Romans 1:18-32, esp. 31).

Vine tells us that *phileo*, the third type of love, basically represents "tender affection" (p. 382). It is the word used for brotherly love. The city of Philadelphia, it may be remembered, is called the city of brotherly love. The final type of love, *agape*, is the one most often commanded. It describes an intellectual commitment to the best interests of the object of its love. One who has this type of love will set aside his/her personal interests in order to provide for the needs of the other.

Christian love, whether exercised toward the brethren, or toward men generally, is not an impulse from the feelings, it does not always run with the natural inclinations, nor does it spend itself only upon those for whom some affinity is discovered. Love seeks the welfare of all, Rom. 15:2, and works no ill to any, 13:8-10; love seeks opportunity to do good to 'all men, and especially toward them that are of the household of the faith,' Gal. 6:10. See further 1 Cor. 13 and Col. 3:12-14 (Vine, p. 382).

Conclusion

As we have already seen, love will cause one to keep God's commandments. It will drive one to consider the needs of others before the needs of self. Those who love will always think the best of others and be inclined to overlook the faults of others. It tries to believe the very best about others and patiently waits for them to change when they are in the wrong. Love makes burdens seem light and time to fly (John 14:15; 1 Corinthians 13:4-8; Genesis 29:20). In short, motivated by the Father, who is the very embodiment of love, Christians should live a life totally dedicated to fulfilling the needs of others. Their lives could be described as love in action.
Discussion Questions

1. What one word did John use to describe what God is?

2. If one loves Jesus, what will he do?

3. How did Jesus sum up all the Law and the Prophets?

4. How does one's love for his fellow man demonstrate his love for the Father?

5. How did God show His love for lost mankind?

6. Name and describe the four types of love.

   a.

   b.

   c.

   d.

7. Which of these is the type of love Christians are to have for God, fellow believers and other men?
Lesson 12

The Fruit of the Spirit Includes Joy

It seems significant that joy was a central theme in the life of Christ and its purpose for the lives of men. When an angel appeared to shepherds in the field to announce the birth of the Christ child, he said, "Do not be afraid for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people" (Luke 2:8-10). After the Lord was raised, He greeted the disciples by saying, "Rejoice!" (Matthew 28:9).

Salvation from Sin Produces Joy

Joy belongs to the Christian because he has been released from his past sins. The Ethiopian learned about Jesus through Philip's preaching out of Isaiah 53. He realized he needed to be baptized in order to have his sins remitted, so he asked Philip, "See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?" After he stopped the chariot, they both went down into the water and the eunuch was baptized by him. Then, Luke writes, "Now when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing" (Acts 8:26-39).

Paul and Silas were praying in a Philippian jail at midnight with the other prisoners listening to them. Suddenly, a great earthquake shook open all the prison doors and released all those bound in stocks. Believing his prisoners had escaped, the jailor prepared to kill himself rather than face the torturous Roman judgment. Paul stopped him by crying out that they were all there and he should not harm himself.

The jailor called for lights, leaped into the prison in trembling fear, fell before Paul and Silas, brought them out and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" The inspired response was, as in other cases (Acts 2:37-38; 22:10, 16), based on the current condition of the one asking the question. The jailor was told, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household." Then, they spoke the word of the Lord to him so that faith could be produced (Romans 10:17). The same hour of the night, he washed their stripes, which is clear evidence of repentance. Immediately afterward, he and all the members of his household were baptized. Then, and only then, "he rejoiced, having believed in God with all his household (Acts 16:25-34).

Faithful Christians Should Experience Joy

It is interesting that Jesus ties our loving obedience to our joyfulness. "If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full" (John 15:10-11). Paul said, "For the kingdom of God is not food and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Romans 14:17).
Those who have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. To those who had done so in Philippi, Paul wrote, "Rejoice in the Lord." Later in the same epistle, the apostle went on to say, "Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I say, rejoice!" (Philippians 3:1; 4:4).

**Sorrow Can Produce Joy**

Oddly enough, sorrow can prepare one to experience a greater joy. As Jesus helped the disciples get ready for His impending death, He explained this wonderful fact of life.

Most assuredly, I say to you that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; and you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned into joy. A woman, when she is in labor, has sorrow because her hour has come; but as soon as she has given birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that the human being has been born into the world. Therefore you now have sorrow; but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you (John 16:16-24).

The disciples experienced a greater joy at being in the presence of the Lord after they suffered through losing Him in the death on the cross.

Similarly, suffering we may endure because we wear the name of Christ can bring us to experience even greater joy through the patience, character and hope coming out of enduring such trials (Romans 5:1-5).

**Conclusion**

Christians have many reasons for rejoicing. One of the greatest is the salvation from sin we enjoy in Christ. Further, there is a special joy at being in the Lord and enjoying all the blessings attendant to that position. Surprisingly, even sorrow can lead to joy for the one who knows he can overcome in the Lord.
**Discussion Questions**

1. Why do you think the Ethiopian Eunuch rejoiced?

2. What do you think motivated Paul and Silas to be singing and praying in a prison at midnight, even after being beaten?

3. Why did the Philippian jailor rejoice?

4. How do you think joy arises out of obedience?

5. What blessings do you find in the Lord which cause you to rejoice?

6. Describe a time of sorrow which led to joy.

7. How can suffering for the name of Christ lead to joy?
Lesson 13

More of the Spirit's Fruit

In addition to love and joy, the Spirit's fruit includes peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Like the various parts of an apple (stem, peel, meat, husks and seeds), each of these has its own unique characteristics. Of course, they are all products of our allowing the Spirit, through the power of the word, to permeate our beings. Over the course of time, the follower of Christ will find each of these growing within.

Peace

Inward peace, no matter what the outward circumstances, belongs to Christians because God is guarding their hearts (1 John 5:4; Philippians 4:6-7; Isaiah 26:3). Jesus gave His life to justify those who came to Him for salvation. "Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:1). Jesus told his disciples, "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (John 14:27).

Longsuffering, Kindness and Goodness

Longsuffering, kindness, and goodness are things needed in the Christian's relationships with other men. God is longsuffering toward man because He does not want to see him lost (2 Peter 3:9). Christians need to be like Him as they deal with others, knowing we need the same to reach heaven (1 Corinthians 13:4). For true unity to exist in the church, longsuffering must be an ever present friend. "I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to have a walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love" (Ephesians 4:1-2).

Kindness describes a sweetness of demeanor which causes one to be a ready servant of others. Paul told the Ephesian brethren, "And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ also forgave you" (4:32; John 13:1-17). Brotherly kindness is one of the essential virtues in the life of one who would "never stumble" (2 Peter 1:5-11).

Goodness is also shown in one's treatment of others. It arises from the readiness to serve. Paul expressed his confidence that the Roman Christians had this trait. "Now I myself am confident concerning you, my brethren, that you also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another" (Romans 15:14; Galatians 6:10).

Faithfulness

Our belief in God and conviction He will reward those who diligently seek Him is faith. Such belief will cause the Christian to remain faithful throughout life (Hebrews 11:6; Matthew
In part, one's faithfulness can be measured by his active telling of the good news (2 Timothy 2:2). If need be, it will also cause one to refuse to deny Christ, even in the face of death (Revelation 2:10).

**Gentleness and Self-control**

Jesus pronounced a blessing on the meek saying they would inherit the earth (Matthew 5:5). James Meadows says the word "meekness is associated with lowliness (Ephesians 4:1-2), a quiet spirit (1 Peter 3:4) and gentleness (Titus 3:2)." In fact, the gentleness Paul lists as a part of the fruit of the Spirit comes from the same root as the meekness Jesus commended.

Self-control is the same as temperance. We must exhibit self-control if we would go to heaven (Philippians 2:1-8; 2 Corinthians 10:5; Proverbs 16:32). Paul asked the Corinthians, "Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize?" He went on to urge them to run their lives in a fashion that would assure their obtaining the prize. "And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown." He then described his own attitude. "Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified" (1 Corinthians 9:24-27).

**The Need to Produce**

Neither man, nor certainly God, has a law against these good works that are the fruit of the Spirit. Boles wrote, "All faithful Christians bear the same kind of fruit; hence, all Christians are like Christ. Some church members are such drivel believing that they do not let the Holy Spirit produce fruit in their lives. Christians may 'quench' the Holy Spirit (1 Thess. 5:19) and are warned against such." They are also warned against grieving the Spirit (Ephesians 4:30). Any follower of Christ who fails to produce the fruit of the Spirit in his life would clearly be guilty of both and in danger of losing all in eternity.
Discussion Questions

1. How is the fruit of the Spirit produced? Give verses to support your answer.

2. List the nine characteristics of the fruit of the Spirit and briefly explain what each is.
   1.  
   2.  
   3.  
   4.  
   5.  
   6.  
   7.  
   8.  
   9.  

3. What characteristic would be vital if we would truly be the children of God? Explain why you answered as you did.

4. In what way does the gospel produce joy and inward peace?

5. Why is it important for Christians to produce the fruit of the Spirit in their lives?
Bibliography


Revealing God

A Study of the Holy Spirit

by Gary C. Hampton

... you also, who have heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and have believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit ...

Ephesians 1:13

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