

Chad Hester

SESSION 2: Our Divine Helper— Broad work of the Holy Spirit

If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you. John 14:15-17

“The work of the Holy Spirit is to manifest the active presence of God in the world, and especially in the church.”¹

I) Creation

II) Regeneration

III) Illumination

IV) Sanctification

V) Guidance

VI) Assurance

Overarching Theme: Work of the Spirit brings glory to the Father and makes us more like the Son.

I. The Spirit's Work in Creation

A. Present at Creation

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. (Gen. 1.1; cf. Ps. 104.30-31; Job 34:14-15)

B. Active in Creation

“Part of the Spirit’s work is to “hover” over creation, keeping things intact. In this regard we see the Spirit as the divine Preserver and the Protector. *The Spirit works to maintain what the Father brings into being.* Most striking in the Genesis passage is the Spirit’s role as Orderer of creation. The Spirit brings order out of disorder. His presence precludes the possibility of chaos...It is because of Him that we have cosmos instead of chaos.”²

¹ Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 64.

² R.C. Sproul, *The Mystery of the Holy Spirit*, 85.

II. The Spirit's Work in Regeneration

A. Prophesied in the Old Testament

And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules. —Ezek. 36:26-27

B. Essential Work of the Spirit

Jesus answered him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.” Nicodemus said to him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?” Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, 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 the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.”

—John 3:3-6

We must see and appreciate the fundamental role of the Spirit in the plan of redemption at large and in our salvation in particular. There would be no salvation apart from the Holy Spirit.

C. A Trinitarian Act

- Planned by the Father
- Accomplished by the Son.
- Applied by the Holy Spirit.

III. The Spirit's Work in Illumination

A. Illumination of the Gospel

Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of your law. —Psalm 119:18

Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, *that we might understand the things freely given us by God*. And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual. The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and *he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned*. The spiritual person judges all things, but is himself to be judged by no one. —1 Cor. 2:12-15

B. The Revelation of God

I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. 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. All that the Father has is mine; therefore, I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you. —John 16:12-15

IV. The Spirit's Work in Sanctification

A. Agent of Transformation to Christlikeness

And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit. —2 Cor. 3:18; cf. Rom. 12:1-2

But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. —Gal. 5:16

For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. —Rom. 8:13

B. The Fruit of the Spirit

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. -- Gal. 5:22-23

We cannot separate any element of the Christian life or Biblical doctrine from the goal of growing to look more like Christ which is brought about by the Spirit of God.

V. The Spirit's Work in Guidance

A. In Everyday Life

1. Read the Word
2. Pray

And the Spirit said to Philip, "Go over and join this chariot." —Acts 8:29
For it has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay on you no greater burden than these requirements... —Acts 15:28

In the same way the Spirit also helps in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words; and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. —Rom. 8:26-27

3. Pursue Obedience

For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God.
—Rom. 8:14

4. Get Counsel

5. Examine My Motives

With these biblical categories and criteria in place, a believer can trust that they will discern the will of God for their lives. There can be a place for the more subjective sense of God's leading, but it will never be contrary to what is clearly taught in God's Word.

But when they hand you over, do not worry about how or what you are to say; for it will be given you in that hour what you are to say. For it is not you who speak, but it is the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you. —Matt. 10:19-20

VI. The Spirit's Work in Assurance

- The confirmation of the Spirit that we are God's children (1 John 4:13; Romans 8:15-16)
- Faith in the promises of God
- Conviction of sin
- A desire to be like Christ
- Progress in Christlikeness/Manifesting the Fruit of the Spirit

Conclusion

- A. Let us fight to be more aware of the broad and dynamic activity of God though the Holy Spirit in our lives, in our local church, and in the world at large.
 - B. What peace and empowerment comes from knowing that the same Spirit who raised and walked with Christ now indwells us!
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