

The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit

Lesson 4

I. Introduction

A. Some have shied away from such a study because of the controversy surrounding His work in the Church today.

B. This is unfortunate and as will be demonstrated, the ministry of the Holy Spirit is vital for both salvation and godly living.

C. We will consider the Uniqueness of the Holy Spirit, Work of the Spirit in the Old and New Testaments, the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, His gifts as well as a few other selected works He performs.

II. The Uniqueness of the Holy Spirit

A. The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Godhead and who has often been difficult for believers to properly understand.

1. Paul Enns highlights this issue stating, “The problem in the minds of many people is that personality can exist only in human beings, as though personality can relate only to finite beings but not to the infinite.”¹

2. This is in no way the fault of the Scriptures but rather a demonstration of how difficult it is for humans to comprehend that which is not material.

3. As will be seen in the following paragraphs the Holy Spirit is fully God, possessing the full expression of personhood.

B. He Is a Person

1. The third person of the Trinity should properly be referred to as a person and not a force, energy or some other impersonal description.

a) The Holy Spirit is revealed in Scripture in such a way that the only reasonable conclusion to make is that He is the third person of the Godhead.

¹ Paul P. Enns, *The Moody Handbook of Theology*, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1989), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 245.

b) On this topic Matthew Barrett states that, “Not only is the personhood of the Spirit evident in his divine works, but also in the personal qualities designated to Him, including intelligence, will, and affections, which have historically been identified as three basic characteristics of personhood.”²

2. The writers of Scripture speak of Him as having intelligence (1 Cor 2:10).

1 Corinthians 2:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ But God has revealed *them* to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.

3. He is also one who has emotion and can be grieved (Eph 4:30), and someone who can be lied to (Acts 5:3). He gives guidance and speaks to people (John 16:13).

Ephesians 4:30 (NKJV) ³⁰ And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

Acts 5:3 (NKJV) ³ But Peter said, “Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back *part* of the price of the land for yourself?”

John 16:1–3 (NKJV) ¹ “These things I have spoken to you, that you should not be made to stumble. ² They will put you out of the synagogues; yes, the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service. ³ And these things they will do to you because they have not known the Father nor Me.

4. Lastly the Holy Spirit is seen as one who exercises His will (Acts 16:6).

Acts 16:6 (NKJV) ⁶ 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.

5. J.I. Packer writes of this personhood, “The Spirit, then, “is “He,” not “it,” and He must be obeyed, loved, and adored along with the Father and the Son.”³

6. The importance of rightly attributing personality to the Holy Spirit is realized at the Council of Nicea in A.D. 325.

a) There John Arius was condemned as a heretic for teaching that, “the Holy Spirit was only an influence emanating from the Father.”⁴

² Matthew Barrett, ““We Believe In The Holy Spirit”: Revisiting The Deity Of The Spirit,” – *Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 16, no. 4 (Winter), WORDsearch CROSS e-book: 34.

³ J. I. Packer, *Concise Theology: A Guide to Historic Christian Beliefs* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1993), 144.

b) Sadly, this error continues to be espoused by cults such as the Jehovah Witnesses.

C. He Is God

1. The Holy Spirit is not only a person but He is God. This truth is well established in Scripture.

2. **First** the Holy Spirit is called God. Peter rebuked Ananias and Sapphira for their sin of “lying to the Holy Spirit” (Acts 5:3).

a) A few verses later he again charges them with lying but in the second charge he declares that they have lied to God (Acts 5:4).

b) Packer states of this incident, “The divinity of the Spirit appears in the declaration that lying to the Spirit is lying to God (Acts 5:3–4), from the linking of the Spirit with the Father and the Son in benedictions (2 Cor. 13:14; Rev. 1:4–6) and in the formula of baptism (Matt. 28:19).”⁵

3. When Jesus was announcing His soon departure He promised that He would send a helper who would be another (ἄλλος) just like Him (John 14:16).

John 14:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ And I will pray the Father, and He will give you **another** Helper, that He may abide with you forever—

a) The Complete Biblical Library gives important information on the choice of this Greek word.

On the one hand *heteros* (“other, another,”) can express a qualitative difference between the things being compared. While on the other hand, *allos* only signifies a quantitative difference, an addition in number. *Allos* usually means “another of the same kind” while *heteros* denotes “another of a different kind or nature.” This distinction is theologically significant, especially in a passage like John 14:15ff. where Jesus promised to send *allon paraklēton*, that is, a Comforter of the same kind and in addition to himself, not “another” (*heteros*) of a different kind.⁶

⁴ Enns, *The Moody Handbook of Theology*, 245.

⁵ Packer, *Concise Theology*, 144.

⁶ Thoralf Gilbrant, ed., “241. ἄλλος,” in *The Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary* – *Alpha-Gamma*, (Complete Biblical Library, 1991), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, Under: “241.

b) The παράκλητος (helper) that Jesus promised to send was not just any παράκλητος but one who shared the very same essence as Jesus and the Father—divinity.

4. A third truth that helps to understand the deity of the Holy Spirit according to Millard Erickson is that, “the Holy Spirit possesses the attributes or qualities of God.”⁷

a) Charles Ryrie notes the following attributes in establishing the deity of the Holy Spirit, “omniscience (Isa. 40:13; 1 Cor. 2:12), omnipresence (Ps. 139:7), and omnipotence by virtue of His work in Creation (Job 33:4; Ps. 104:30).”⁸

b) The Scriptures clearly teach that the Holy Spirit is a person and is fully God.

III. The Holy Spirit in Old Testament

A. In this section, further development of the deity of the Holy Spirit will be considered noting His works in the Old Testament.

B. Creator

1. One clearly defining work of God is that of creation.

a) God exists before all things and is the source of all that we see.

b) The Old Testament Scriptures are clear in their assigning of creative works to the Holy Spirit.

c) In Genesis 1:2, Moses writes of how the world was created and states “the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.”

d) Isaiah 42:12–14 and Job 33:4 also attribute creation to the Spirit of God.

C. Revelation

⁷ M. J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013), 782.

⁸ Charles Caldwell Ryrie, *Basic Theology: A Popular Systematic Guide to Understanding Biblical Truth* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1999), 397.

1. The revelation that was delivered in both the Testaments is unmistakably the work of the Holy Spirit.
2. The apostle Peter states, “for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit” (2 Pet 1:21).
3. One would be hard pressed to find any clearer statement about the revelatory ministry of the Holy Spirit than this passage.
4. Prophets understood as they ministered that it was the Holy Spirit who was leading them along in their ministry (2 Sam 23:2; Micah 3:8).
5. Truth in the Old Testament came by men who were moved along by the Holy Spirit to declare God’s revelation.
6. Jesus understood and taught that it was the Holy Spirit who was inspiring writers of the Scripture (Matt 22:43–44).

Matthew 22:43–44 (NKJV) ⁴³ He said to them, “How then does David in the Spirit call Him ‘Lord,’ saying: ⁴⁴ ‘The LORD said to my Lord, “Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool” ’?”

D. The Spirit’s Work in Relation to People

1. The day of Pentecost marked a new day for how the Holy Spirit would minister to men (John 16:7–8; Acts 2:15–18).

John 16:7–8 (NKJV) ⁷ Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. ⁸ And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:

Acts 2:15–18 (NKJV) ¹⁵ For these are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is *only* the third hour of the day. ¹⁶ But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: ¹⁷ ‘And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your young men shall see visions, Your old men shall dream dreams. ¹⁸ And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; And they shall prophesy.’

2. That being the case how was it that God worked prior to this significant event at the beginning of the Church?

a) Erickson states that the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament conveyed, “**certain necessary skills for various tasks.**”⁹

b) Men like Bezael were especially noted as having been gifted by the Holy Spirit to help with construction of the tabernacle (Exod 31:3–5).

Exodus 31:3–5 (NKJV) ³ And I have filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, in knowledge, and in all *manner of* workmanship, ⁴ to design artistic works, to work in gold, in silver, in bronze, ⁵ in cutting jewels for setting, in carving wood, and to work in all *manner of* workmanship.

c) In a similar enabling Zerubbabel was gifted by the Spirit to help reconstruct the temple in Jerusalem (Zech 4:6).

Zechariah 4:6 (NKJV) ⁶ So he answered and said to me: “This *is* the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: ‘Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,’ Says the LORD of hosts.

d) Other examples of men who were endowed with the Spirit are Samson (Judges 14:19) and King Saul (1 Sam 10:10).

Judges 14:19 (NKJV) ¹⁹ Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon him mightily, and he went down to Ashkelon and killed thirty of their men, took their apparel, and gave the changes *of clothing* to those who had explained the riddle. So his anger was aroused, and he went back up to his father’s house.

1 Samuel 10:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ When they came there to the hill, there was a group of prophets to meet him; then the Spirit of God came upon him, and he prophesied among them.

3. Beyond the enabling of the Holy Spirit as noted above the Holy Spirit is also seen in the Old Testament as giving instruction (Neh 9:20).

Nehemiah 9:20 (NKJV) ²⁰ You also gave Your good Spirit to instruct them, And did not withhold Your manna from their mouth, And gave them water for their thirst.

4. Although the ministry of the Holy Spirit is more fully developed in the New Testament it is clear that the work of the Spirit abounded in the Old Testament.

a) Whether considering the creative works of the Holy Spirit, His inspiration of Scripture or His work in the lives

⁹ Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 791.

of people it should be readily noted that the Spirit provided an indispensable ministry among men.

IV. The Holy Spirit in the New Testament

A. As significant as the ministry of the Holy Spirit was in the Old Testament, He without question, is more fully revealed in the New Testament.

1. Let us now consider the Holy Spirit's work in the life of Christ, inspiring Scripture, indwelling, sealing, baptizing and gifting believers.

B. In Relation to Christ

1. In the New Testament, the role of the Holy Spirit is quite significant beginning with Jesus.

2. The physical conception of Jesus was a work of the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:35).

3. Erickson writes of the Spirit's ministry that, "In Jesus's life we find a pervasive and powerful presence and activity of the Spirit. Even the very beginning of His incarnate existence was a work of the Holy Spirit."¹⁰

4. Further, the work of the Spirit is evidenced as Jesus' public ministry began with a special endowment of the Spirit at His baptism (Matt 3:16-17).

5. This empowerment of the Spirit is how the Lord Jesus did ministry while on earth (Luke 4:18).

Luke 4:18 (NKJV)¹⁸ "The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed;

6. Jesus said of the enabling of the Holy Spirit that,

John 3:34–35 (NKJV)³⁴ For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God does not give the Spirit by measure.³⁵ The Father loves the Son, and has given all things into His hand.

¹⁰ Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 793.

7. The ministry of the Holy Spirit continued all the way through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead (Rom 8:11).

8. Jesus looked to the ministry of the Holy Spirit to conduct ministry thus providing an example of how vital dependence of the Holy Spirit should be (Mark 1:8).

Mark 1:8 (NKJV) ⁸ I indeed baptized you with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

C. Revelation and Inspiration

1. In the previous section, it was noted that it is the Holy Spirit who inspired the prophets as they wrote (2 Peter 1:21).

2 Peter 1:21 (NKJV) ²¹ for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke *as they were* moved by the Holy Spirit.

2. This aspect of the ministry of the Spirit continued into the New Testament.

3. Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would “guide you into all truth” (John 16:13).

John 16:13 (NKJV) ¹³ However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you 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.

4. Paul states in Ephesians 3:5 “it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets.”

5. Both the Old and New Testament is the result of the revelation and inspiration given by the Holy Spirit.

D. The Spirit Indwelling

1. One of the great blessings of salvation is the universal indwelling of the Holy Spirit in all believers (1 Cor 6:19).

1 Corinthians 6:19 (NKJV) ¹⁹ Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit *who is* in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?

2. This new ministry of the Holy Spirit is distinctly different than the previous means of ministering to the believer in the Old Testament.

3. This distinction of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is a work that Jesus prophesied would take place, **John 14:17 the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.**

4. **This indwelling of the Spirit is synonymous with salvation and every believer receives this abiding presence of the Holy Spirit at the moment of salvation.**

E. The Spirit Sealing

1. In three New Testament passages (2 Cor 1:22; Eph 1:13; Eph 4:30) Paul writes of the believer being sealed as a way for them to know that they indeed are part of the family of God.

2 Corinthians 1:22 (NKJV) ²² who also has **sealed** us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.

Ephesians 1:13 (NKJV) ¹³ In Him you also *trusted*, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were **sealed** with the Holy Spirit of promise,

Ephesians 4:30 (NKJV) ³⁰ And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were **sealed** for the day of redemption.

2. With regard to timing Ryrie believes, **“theologically, believing and sealing must be simultaneous. Otherwise it would be possible to have unsealed believers.”**¹¹

3. Enns provided a helpful cultural nuance on this subject writing, **“In Old Testament times a seal was used in various ways: a seal authenticated a document (e.g., a marriage contract); it authenticated a transfer of power from one ruler to another.”**¹²

4. This ministry of the Holy Spirit is meant to provide confidence that we belong to God or as Ben Witherington III writes, **“It is the first installment and thus surety that God plans to complete his work of salvation in the believer.”**¹³

¹¹ Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, 415.

¹² Enns, *The Moody Handbook of Theology*, 268.

¹³ Ben Witherington III, *The Letters to Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on the Captivity Epistles* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2007), 237.

F. Baptism with the Holy Spirit

1. The subject of the Baptism with the Holy Spirit and His filling of believers is one that is of vital importance both doctrinally and practically for the Church.

2. It is clear that the early Church went forth in great power doing the work of evangelism.

3. In the midst of this most important topic is a debate of what terms should be used, what these terms mean and whether or not the believer today should expect any further working of the Holy Spirit beyond the moment of regeneration.

4. We at CCL believe that in the same manner and experience of the Holy Spirit that was available in the early Church is still available to the believer today.

a) As to what this subsequent work of the Holy Spirit should be called is a difficult task to nail down.

b) Simply supplying one defining term is an oversimplification which often fails to consider the context of Scripture where this work is being discussed.

5. The Baptism of the Holy Spirit is an experience promised by Joel, John and Jesus (Mark 1:8; Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8) and realized after the ascension of Jesus (Acts 2, 8, 10, 19).

a) First in seeking to define this experience it should be noted that this one experience is referenced by Luke using a variety of terms.

b) Lloyd Jones likewise agrees that there is an interchangeable use of terms on this topic.¹⁴

c) For instance, Luke references this experience by referring to it as: the Baptism with the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8), the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38) the promise of the Father (Acts 1:4; Acts 2:39), being filled with the

¹⁴ David Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *God the Holy Spirit* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1997), 236.

Spirit (Acts 2:4), receiving the Spirit (Acts 8:17) and the falling upon of the Spirit (Acts 8:16; Acts 10:44).

d) All of these terms refer to the same experience with the Holy Spirit and provide a multifaceted understanding of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.

e) Any attempt to define this experience that fails to consider all these descriptors will provide an incomplete understanding.

f) Any single defining element for the Baptism with the Holy Spirit is insufficient.

6. There are three elements of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit that are important to note in Scripture.

7. The first element of the Baptism with the Holy Spirit is a work of bringing believers into the Body of Christ (Acts 2, Acts 8 Acts 10, 1 Cor 12:13).

a) Second, it is an event that gives power for service (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8).

b) Lastly, it is an identifiable experience that God gave believers to provide undeniable evidence of acceptance by Him (Acts 11:17–18; Acts 19:2; Gal 3:2).

8. We at CCL do not dispute that the events of Acts 2, 8 and 10 are events where the Church was being formed. That these were events that were meant to communicate that all people were being brought into God's plan of salvation under the New Covenant.

a) Every believer is brought into the Body of Christ at the moment of salvation once and for all.

b) This is not a work that the New Testament provides any evidence of happening a second time.

9. The Second element highlights the receiving of power for service.

a) It is important to note that this empowering was not limited to a single experience by believers.

- b) In Acts 1:8 Jesus told His disciples to wait for the Baptism of the Holy Spirit where they would receive power for ministry.
- c) In Acts 2 the fulfilment of Acts 1:8 is realized and the believers were filled with the Holy Spirit.
- d) In Acts 4 Luke tells the reader that the believers (most of whom were part of the Acts 2 experience) were filled with the Holy Spirit again.
- e) Grudem believes “it is appropriate to understand filling with the Holy Spirit not as a one-time event but as an event that can occur over and over again in a Christian’s life.”¹⁵
- f) The book of Acts shows believers repeatedly being filled with the Spirit when facing ministry tasks (Acts 4:8, 31; Acts 7:55; Acts 13:9, 52).

Acts 4:8 (NKJV) ⁸ Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, “Rulers of the people and elders of Israel:

Acts 4:31 (NKJV) ³¹ And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.

Acts 7:55 (NKJV) ⁵⁵ But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God,

Acts 13:9 (NKJV) ⁹ Then Saul, who also *is called* Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him

Acts 13:52 (NKJV) ⁵² And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.

- g) Thus, the empowerment element of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit is an event that happened to believers repeatedly after salvation.

10. The third element of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit is the unmistakable encounter believer had with God.

- a) The outpouring out of the Holy Spirit on the Gentiles made it undeniable that God had, “granted to the Gentiles repentance to life” (Acts 11:18).

¹⁵ Wayne A. Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; Zondervan Pub. House, 2004), 782.

Acts 11:16–18 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Then I remembered the word of the Lord, how He said, ‘John indeed baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’ ¹⁷ If therefore God gave them the same gift as *He gave* us when we believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could withstand God?” ¹⁸ When they heard these things they became silent; and they glorified God, saying, “Then God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life.”

b) That this experience is an identifiable experience is further illustrated in Acts 19:2.

Acts 19:2 (NKJV) ² he said to them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?” So they said to him, “We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit.”

(1) Here Paul asked the disciples of John whether or not they had received “the Holy Spirit when they believed.”

(2) It is debated whether these men were followers of Christ or not.

(3) However, Paul does expect that if they were believers and had been baptized with the Holy Spirit they would know it.

c) A third illustration that New Testament believers were able to identify that experience is found in Galatians 3:2.

Galatians 3:2 (NKJV) ² This only I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?—

d) Lloyd-Jones offers the following observations from that passage,

In effect, Paul was saying to the Galatians, ‘You’ve received the Holy Spirit and you know that; now did you receive the Holy Spirit as the result of your works of righteousness, works under the law, or by the hearing of faith?’ They knew that they had received the Spirit, otherwise Paul’s question was pointless.¹⁶

e) According to the Apostle Paul an important aspect of the believer’s life is their experience of being baptized with the Holy Spirit.

f) The baptism of the Holy Spirit has at its essence becoming part of the Body of Christ (1 Cor 12:13) but

¹⁶ Lloyd-Jones, *God the Holy Spirit*, 238.

Lloyd-Jones adds, “there is also the subsidiary meaning. It includes also the consciousness of that fact.”¹⁷

g) This birthright experience is not one that was limited to a transitional period in the early days of the Church.

(1) For consider what Peter declared in Acts 2:38-39, “and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.”

h) Lloyd-Jones offers a needed historical reminder of men who had this undeniable experience,

Furthermore, you will find that this is something to which the saints of the centuries have testified. Everybody remembers the story of how this happened to John Wesley in Aldersgate Street in London in 1738, but many people have never heard of it as it happened in a still more striking manner to George Whitefield before that. We have heard of it in the case of Moody, walking down the street in New York City one afternoon, when suddenly he became aware of the glory of God in such an overwhelming manner that he felt that even his strong body was on the point of being crushed, and he held up his hands and asked God to stop. It is true of Finney and Jonathan Edwards and David Brainerd. It is something to which many ordinary Christians, whose names we do not know, have testified and for which they have thanked God: this sense of the glory of God, the reality of the Lord; this love towards Him; this indescribable experience of these things.¹⁸

11. In the end, what is important is that people understand their privileged place in the Body of Christ, individual believers minister in the power of the Holy Spirit and followers of Christ walk in the certainty of salvation provided by the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.

G. The Spirit Gifting

¹⁷ Ibid., 238.

¹⁸ Lloyd-Jones, *God the Holy Spirit*, 239–240.

1. Another important work of the Holy Spirit is the gifting that He provides the Church to edify one another (1 Cor 12:7).

1 Corinthians 12:7 (NKJV) ⁷ But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all:

- a) Ryrie writes that “a spiritual gift is a God-given ability for service.”¹⁹
- b) These gifts or *charisma* must be functioning if the Church is going to operate as designed.
- c) The gifts of the Spirit are distinct from our natural talents.
- d) However, when a natural talent is coupled with a spiritual gift it provides a wonderful blessing to the Body of Christ.

2. These gifts are spoken of in the New Testament primarily in 1 Corinthians 12–14, Romans 12 and Ephesians 4.

- a) What is important to know about these gifts is that they represent the tools that God has provided to build His Church.
- b) A helpful designation in considering these spiritual gifts is to place them into the following categories; the power to do, the power to know, the power to speak and the power to lead.

3. One significant discussion with regard to spiritual gifts is whether or not the gifts granted to the early Church are all still available for the Church today.

- a) These two groups are Cessationists who believe that some sign gifts have ceased and Continuists who believe the use of all gifts continue on the Church to this day.
- b) Among some of the gifts that are cited as having ceased are tongues, interpretation of tongues, word of knowledge, miracles and prophecy.

¹⁹ Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, 423.

c) An often-cited biblical text to support this exodus of spiritual gifts is 1 Corinthians 13.

(1) Specifically, 1 Corinthians 13:8–10 where it is read, “Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away.”

(2) In this passage, many have made an ill-fated attempt to say that once the New Testament Scriptures were complete these temporary sign gifts will pass away.

(3) This interpretation is arrived at by stating that the word “perfect” is a reference to the completion of Scripture.

d) David Lowery, although a Cessationist, does not use this text for this position.

e) However, he correctly evaluates this interpretation in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary* stating, “**One suggestion is that perfection described the completion of the New Testament. But verse 12 makes that interpretation unlikely.**”²⁰

4. The case for accepting all Spiritual gifts is supported by a faithful exegesis of Scripture.

a) **While 1 Corinthians 13 does not support the Cessationist’s position, this passage fully supports the Continuists assertion that all the gifts are available for use in the Church today.**

b) The question to be explored is what is meant by the “perfect” in 1 Corinthians 13:10. For when this “perfect” has come then the stated spiritual gifts will cease.

²⁰ David K. Lowery, “1 Corinthians,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 536.

c) 1 Corinthians 13:10-13 make it quite clear that the “perfect” that is being referred to is when the believer is in the presence of Jesus.²¹

1 Corinthians 13:10–13 (NKJV) ¹⁰ But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away. ¹¹ When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things. ¹² For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known. ¹³ And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these *is* love.

d) Ciampa and Rosner writing for *The Pillar New Testament Commentary* concur with this conclusion stating, “The context (esp. v. 12) makes it abundantly clear, however, that the point at which Paul expects the gifts to pass away or disappear is when we see the Lord ‘face to face’ and ‘know [him] fully, even as [we are] fully known.’”²²

e) Wayne Grudem believes that this passage teaches, “the time of the cessation of imperfect gifts like prophecy: they will ‘be made useless’ or ‘pass away’ when Christ returns. And this would imply that they will continue to exist and be useful for the church, throughout the church age, including today, and right up to the day when Christ returns.”²³

5. Another passage that teaches the current relevance of what has been termed “sign gifts” are those that were poured out on the day of Pentecost—prophecy, tongues, visions and dreams.

a) These gifts are said to be the very gifts that the Holy Spirit would pour out in the last days (Acts 2:14–8).

Acts 2:14–18 (NKJV) ¹⁴ But Peter, standing up with the eleven, raised his voice and said to them, “Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and heed my words. ¹⁵ For these are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is *only* the third hour

²¹ D. A. Carson, *Showing the Spirit: A Theological Exposition of 1 Corinthians 12-14* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1987), 71-72. If it is true that the word for “perfection” is nowhere else used for the entire state of affairs brought about by the parousia, it is also true that it almost always occurs as an adjective. Only here is it a neuter, articular substantive, probably created precisely to serve as a contrast, to “the partial” or “the imperfect.”

²² Roy E. Ciampa and Brian S. Rosner, *The First Letter to the Corinthians*, *The Pillar New Testament Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2010), 656.

²³ Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 1034.

of the day. ¹⁶ But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: ¹⁷ *'And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your young men shall see visions, Your old men shall dream dreams.* ¹⁸ *And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; And they shall prophesy.*

b) Far from teaching that tongues or prophesy will cease Paul clearly commands that these tongues and prophecy should not be forbidden but wrote,

1 Cor 14:39–40. Therefore, brethren, desire earnestly to prophesy, and do not forbid to speak with tongues. Let all things be done decently and in order"

c) Likewise, Paul warned the Thessalonians not to despise prophecy which would be to quench the Holy Spirit (1 Thess 5:19–21).

1 Thessalonians 5:19–21 (NKJV) ¹⁹ Do not quench the Spirit. ²⁰ Do not despise prophecies. ²¹ Test all things; hold fast what is good.

d) Additionally, Paul spends several verses in 1 Corinthians 12:12–26 exhorting the believers to refrain from stating they have no need of a particular gift.

6. The abuse of spiritual gifts should not surprise us and it certainly is not a biblical basis for dismissing them as invalid.

a) Everything that the Church holds dear and precious has been twisted and corrupted.

b) A valid concern of Cessationist's is that of preserving the revelation of God found in Scripture.

c) It is true that the Church is not looking for any further revelation of truth.

d) However, the common argument presented that the sign gifts have ceased because the New Testament is complete is unnecessary.

e) It is easily proven that many who functioned in these so-called sign gifts never contributed to the writing of Scripture (Acts 2:17; 6:8, 10:46; 1 Cor 14:1–3).

Acts 2:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ *'And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your young men shall see visions, Your old men shall dream dreams.*

Acts 6:8 (NKJV) ⁸ And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and signs among the people.

Acts 10:46 (NKJV) ⁴⁶ For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God. Then Peter answered,

1 Corinthians 14:1–3 (NKJV) ¹ Pursue love, and desire spiritual *gifts*, but especially that you may prophesy. ² For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands *him*; however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries. ³ But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men.

f) Furthermore, nowhere in the New Testament are these gifts ever associated exclusively with the penning of Scripture.

7. We believe that there is a unique class of apostles and prophets whom the Lord used to lay the foundation of the Church functions today (Eph 2:20).

Ephesians 2:20 (NKJV) ²⁰ having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief *cornerstone*,

a) While this unique office of receiving doctrine and writing Scripture was limited to these selected men of the early Church, the general gifting of apostle and prophet still function today.

b) The general gifting of apostle has its equivalent in missionaries and Church planters (Rom 12:6; 16:7; Phil 2:25).

Romans 12:6 (NKJV) ⁶ Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, *let us use them*: if prophecy, *let us prophesy* in proportion to our faith;

Romans 16:7 (NKJV) ⁷ Greet Andronicus and Junia, my countrymen and my fellow prisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me.

Philippians 2:25 (NKJV) ²⁵ Yet I considered it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, fellow worker, and fellow soldier, but your messenger and the one who ministered to my need;

c) The general gifting of the prophet may find its equivalent in guiding the Church in steps of faith (Acts 13:1-3) and or in the gifting of the pastor who brings comfort, exhortation and edification to believers (1 Cor 14:4).

Acts 13:1–3 (NKJV) ¹ Now in the church that was at Antioch there were certain prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. ² As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, “Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to

which I have called them.”³ Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent *them* away.

I Corinthians 14:4 (NKJV)⁴ He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church.

d) The balanced position with regard to these gifts is to accept that which was given to the Church using only the Word of God as a guide for the practice of them within the Church.

e) This should be exercised while remaining vigilant against any false teaching making it's way into the Church.

V. Other Ministries of the Holy Spirit

A. The role of Holy Spirit in the life of the believer and Church is quite deep and broad.

B. Jesus taught that the Holy Spirit would bring conviction into this world (John 16:5–11).

C. The Holy Spirit teaches believers bringing them into all truth (John 16:12-15).

D. Additionally, the Holy Spirit provides the believer His guidance (Rom 8:14).

1. This work is clearly seen in the book of Acts (Acts 8:29; Acts 13:2).

2. As Paul traveled about Asia minor preaching the gospel, the Holy Spirit is seen as forbidding certain travel plans and at other times He is actively guiding Him to new cities (Acts 16:6–10).

VI. Conclusion

A. It is quite evident from the above study that the ministry of the Holy Spirit is an indispensable necessity to live this Christian life.

B. From understanding that the Holy Spirit is a person to realizing He is God divine.

C. From reviewing His ministry in the Old and New Testaments it is seen that the Spirit of God is actively working in revelation, salvation and assistance to His creation.

D. There remain areas of debate in the Church today of exactly how many gifts are in operation and what experiences believers should expect to have but it is clear that the Holy Spirit should be looked to for bringing the individual and the Church into full maturity.