

Session 3

The Holy Spirit

Activities of the Holy Spirit in relation to Christ

“And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness:

God was

- * manifest in the flesh
- * justified in the Spirit
- * seen of angels
- * preached unto the Gentiles
- * believed on in the world
- * received up into glory”

2 Timothy 3:16

The verse summarises the manifestation of God in this world, in the person of the Son. The Holy Spirit had His part in this manifestation.

Coming into the world:

- Mary was found with child of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 1:18)
- The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee..... Therefore also that holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God (Luke 1:35)

Anointing:

“And Jesus, when He was baptised, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting on Him: And lo a voice from heaven saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased”.

(Matthew 3:16-17)

See also Mark 1:9-11

and Luke 3:21-22

Note also how John's Gospel adds the thought of remaining or abiding, to that of alighting on the Person of Jesus

“I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon Him and I knew Him not: but He that sent me to baptise with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, the same is He which baptized with the Holy Ghost. And I saw and bare record that this is the Son of God.”

(John 1:32-34)

The wilderness days

“And Jesus being full of the Holy Spirit returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, being forty days tempted of the devil.....”

(Luke 3:1-2a)

“And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee.....”

(Luke 3:14a)

Years of public ministry

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me.....”

(Luke 4:18a, from Isaiah 61:1-2)

On that occasion, in Nazareth, Jesus read only as far as “the acceptable year of the Lord, omitting the day of vengeance of our God”. Perfect application of the Spirit's writings led by the Spirit's different purposes for a day of grace cf a day of vengeance.

**In more than three years of public ministry,
the Spirit's presence was constant.**

“How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with Him.”

(Acts 10:38)

The witness of the Holy Spirit is a blessing for those who believe, but a solemn consideration for those who do not.

- There were those who said that the Lord Jesus was casting out demons by the power of Beelzebub. The Lord Jesus pointed out that it was by the Spirit that He did these things – which meant the Holy Spirit was present among them.
- While words spoken against “the Son of man” may be forgiven, words of blasphemy contrary to the Holy Spirit may not be forgiven. (Matthew 12:22-32)
- People today speculate about “the sin against the Holy Ghost” that cannot be forgiven. It is not a mystery, nor is it a particular sin that is so bad that its evil would be obvious. It was in fact the ‘blasphemy’ of the Spirit, i.e. the rejection of the power of the Spirit working in Christ.

The Holy Spirit working through Christ in times past

“...by the Spirit, by which also He went and preached unto the spirits in prison; which sometimes were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is eight souls were saved by water.”

(1 Peter 3:19-20)

- This verse is often misunderstood.
- It does not mean that Christ went down into hades and preached!
- (There is a great gulf fixed... Luke 16:26)
- In the days of Genesis 6, Christ spoke through Noah by the enabling power of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit working through Christ in times past

The Holy Spirit has been active in every dispensation

- David: “...take not Thy Spirit from me....” (Psalm 51:11)
- Samson: “And the Spirit of the Lord began to move him at times, in the camp of Dan...” (Judges 13:25)

Death

The Spirit's presence in leading

“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)

Resurrection

The power of GOD

The Lord Jesus was raised from among the dead by the power of God (Acts 2:32),

- in fulfilment of prophecy, Psalm 16:9-11 Psalm 132:11
- and of the Lord's own words, Matthew 20:19 Mark 10:34 Luke 18:33
- He was “quickenened by the Spirit” (1 Peter 3:18)

The power of One in whom all the fulness was pleased to dwell

See again, how in John's Gospel, Jesus himself has power to lay down His life and power to take it again

The Holy Spirit's part in resurrection?

First the Holy Spirit is God, and God is One Second, in resurrection Jesus received the promise of the Father (Acts 2:33)

But the circumstances of the resurrection morning were surely shaped by the Spirit's leading:

- the stone rolled away (Matthew 28:2, Mark 16:4, Luke 24:2)
- the angel (Matthew 28:2)
- or men in white, or shining garments (Mark 16:6, Luke 24:4)
- the meeting with Mary of Magdala
- and the later meetings on the road to Emmaus, and in the upper room in Jerusalem, surely are self-evidently in line with the Spirit's purpose

The Holy Spirit shed forth by the Lord Jesus Christ

- “The promise of the Father.....” (Luke 24:49)
- “.....power from on high” (do)
- Fulfilled on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4)
- Baptised on that day into one body (1 Corinthians 12:13)
- Promise of the Holy Spirit to the Jews who would repent and believe (Acts 2:38)
- Form and following of a practical unity (Acts 2:42)
- The Gentiles also received the Holy Spirit (Acts 10:44)
 - “all them which heard the word”
 - added to the one body

The activity of the Holy Spirit is all-pervasive in relation to the early church, including

- Separating Barnabus and Saul for their work (Acts 13:2)
- and sending them on their way (Acts 13:4)
- working in them (Acts 13:9)
- directing where the work was to be done (Acts 16:7-10)