

## “THE PROMISED HOLY SPIRIT”

Joel 2:28,29; Acts 2:1-21

The Holy Spirit has been virtually invisible in the Church. That may sound like a foolish statement since a spirit, by definition, is invisible. By invisible I mean ignored. How many sermons have you heard about the Holy Spirit?

Consider the creeds of the Church. The Apostles' Creed says simply, “I believe in the Holy Spirit.” The Nicene Creed has more, “We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets.” The phrase “who proceedeth from the Father and the Son” has been a major obstacle in relations with the Orthodox Church. They say “who proceedeth from the Father” is the wording adopted by the Council of Nicea. It is.

In the *Confession of Augsburg*, the historic Lutheran confession and in the original *Westminster Confession* there were not an article or a chapter on the Holy Spirit. There was also no article on the Holy Spirit in the original *42 Articles* of the Church of England. However, the *39 Articles* adopted in 1571 included Article V “Of the Holy Ghost”. At some time the Presbyterian Church, US added Chapter IX “Of the Holy Spirit” to the *Confession* and in 1903 the Presbyterian Church, USA added Chapter XXXIV “Of the Holy Spirit.”

One sad result of ignoring the Holy Spirit in teaching has been ignorance by the members. This has opened the door for false teachers to lead many Christians into errors attempting to recreate the Pentecost experience which God intended to be a one-time event.

1.) The Holy Spirit is found many places in the Old Testament. He is mentioned in the second verse of Genesis:

The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. (Genesis 1:2 NKJV)

Of the thirty-nine books of the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit is mentioned in half of them. He is said to have given the artisans who worked on the Tabernacle the skill to do their work, to have given Joshua the ability to lead men into battle. He gave King Saul authority to rule. David in a Psalm pleads, "take not Your Holy Spirit from me."

Abraham and every other saint "who believed God and it was accounted to him as righteousness" received saving faith by the working of the Holy Spirit in their heart. Also, the prophets "spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit."

In the Old Testament the Holy Spirit was active in creation. He gave skill, abilities, authority to various persons. He gave the gift of saving faith to the righteous. He inspired the writers of Scriptures.

Nevertheless, the Old Testament contains promises of the coming of the Holy Spirit as a new thing.

For I will pour water on him who is thirsty, And floods on the dry ground; I will pour My Spirit on your descendants, And My blessing on your offspring; (Isaiah 44:3 NKJV)

"I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them. (Ezekiel 36:27 NKJV)

'And I will not hide My face from them anymore; for I shall have poured out My Spirit on the house of Israel,' says the Lord GOD." (Ezekiel 39:29 NKJV)

"And it shall come to pass afterward That I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your old men shall dream dreams, Your young men shall see visions. And also on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days. (Joel 2:28-29 NKJV)

"And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn. (Zechariah 12:10 NKJV)

## 2.) The Work of the Holy Spirit in the Gospels

When the angel came to Zacharias and told him that his aged and barren wife would have a son (who grew up to be John the Baptist):

"And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth. For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb." (Luke 1:14-15 NKJV)

Joseph and Mary were told Mary would conceive by the Holy Spirit.

"And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS.... Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I do not know a man?" And the angel answered and said to her, "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 1:31,34-35 NKJV)

John the Baptist said of the Christ whose coming was imminent:

"I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. (Matthew 3:11 NKJV)

Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist the Holy Spirit was seen as a dove descending from heaven, alighting on Jesus. After the baptism, Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. (Matthew 4:1 NKJV)

In His ministry Jesus acknowledged the Spirit was working in Him:

"But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you"...."Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come." (Matthew 12:28,32 NKJV)

At the Last Supper Jesus' discourse to the disciples about His going away kept returning to the Holy Spirit whom He would send to them. He is the Spirit of truth; He will teach them all things and bring to their remembrance all the things Jesus said to them.

Jesus rose from the dead, appeared to the disciples in the Upper Room, breathed on them and said "Receive the Holy Spirit." And yet "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; ..." (Acts 1:8a)

### 3.) The Promised Coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost

As the disciples gathered around Jesus just before His ascension:

And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait 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." (Acts 1:4-5 NKJV) They obey Him and When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. (Acts 2:1 NKJV)

How was the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost different from all the other ways we have seen He came before Pentecost?

At Pentecost the Holy Spirit constituted believers into a body, the body of Christ. After Christ ascended into heaven and was glorified, He was made the Head of the Church and all of its members constitute His body. That could not happen while He was still on earth and in a human body.

And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all. (Ephesians 1:22-23)

Previously, the Holy Spirit had come to individuals and enabled them to perform service for God or to believe in Him. At Pentecost the Holy Spirit came on all the assembled believers. "they were all with one accord in one place", "divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them", "they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."

When the Tabernacle was completed and dedicated to God, the glory of the LORD came down and filled the Tabernacle. The same thing occurred when Solomon completed the Temple. Jesus' coming was announced by a glorious Star. At Pentecost God made the beginning of the Church a memorable and miraculous event.

