



“The Holy Spirit: Allied Helper ”

John 14:16-31; 16:5-15

Lesson 10

In A Nutshell

Did you ever know anyone who did a lot of work behind the scenes but never seemed to seek or receive much credit for his work? I fondly remember my mother when I think of this outstanding quality. Precious Mom never seemed to get half the credit she deserved, but she always was willing lovingly to do more.

The Holy Spirit seems to operate this way throughout the pages of Scripture. We learn about the Spirit of God because we see Him carrying out the desires of the Father and Son and caring for the needs of men. Little space is given over to a systematic discussion of Him. Consequently, the doctrine of the Holy Spirit is often given little attention from God's people. We are the poorer for it.

A second problem we face when studying the doctrine of the Third Person of the Trinity is the word *Spirit* in His name, worse yet the word *ghost* in the King James Version. It is easier to understand the names *Father* and *Son* than it is to understand the name *Spirit*, because fathers and sons are entities we know we normally see. Spirits are certainly a normal part of our lives, but we do not normally think of them as spirits when we meet them.

Finally, much misunderstanding in this area of theology is due to the fact that the Holy Spirit's ministry to the believer is especially immanent. As we shall learn, He dwells within believers. Nevertheless, we must remember that He is also transcendent above His creation. We do not arrive at an understanding of the Holy Spirit through subjective feelings or experiences. We do not find Him by “looking within.” We come to know Him the way we do the other members of the Godhead, through His self-revelation in the Scripture, our only rule of faith and practice. There we learn to know and love Him aright.

Important texts of this kind come to us from John's account of Jesus' Upper Room Discourse the night of His crucifixion (John 14:16-31; 16:5-15). Jesus tells His disciples there about the “Paraclete.” That is a Greek term, which is translated a number of different ways in English translations, as indicated by the approach taken by the Amplified Bible: “Helper (Comforter, Advocate, Intercessor—Counselor, Strengthened, Standby).” The Greek word's roots are the verb *to call* and the preposition *along side of*. It means *one called along our side for our aid*. If the aid we need is truth, we might call such a person a counselor. If it is strength, we might call him a comforter (cp. *forte*) or strengthener. If our need is legal help, we might call our paraclete an advocate. In all these ways and more, the Holy Spirit is our Allied Helper.

To The Testimony!

The Holy Spirit's nature: what He is like.

Acts 5:1-6 1. In Acts 5 Ananias and Sapphira tell a lie, and they then lose their lives. Peter understood the severity of their sin. What made this lie so severe according to Peter (v. 4)? To whom did Ananias lie according to verse 3? Was Peter trying to say that two were lied to, or that one was lied to? Can you find evidence that the Holy Spirit is God in the other passages listed?

Isa. 42:8
Matt. 28:19

2. Read Isa. 42:8 and then Matt. 28:19, two passages that refer to God's name. Who, along with the Son, is sharing the glory of the Father's name in Matt. 28:19? What must also be true about those who share the glory of the Father's name according to Isa. 42:8?

John 14:16

3. Many passages of Scripture refer to *the Spirit of God* (Gen. 1:2, Exod. 31:3, 35:31, Num. 24:2, Rom. 8:14) or to *the Spirit of the Lord* (Judg. 3:10, 2 Sam. 23:2, Mic. 3:8, Acts 5:9). These titles can be understood logically in two different ways. They either refer to a part of God the Father—His Spirit—or Someone distinct from God the Father, the person of the Holy Spirit, who is also worthy to be called God and Lord. God the Son clears this question up for us in John 14:16. What is His answer there? Is the Holy Spirit a part of God the Father or a person distinct from the Father who is also God and Lord?

John 14:18
16:5-7

4. The truth that the Holy Spirit is a person means that we must grow to know Him personally. Sorrow had filled the hearts of the disciples in their Passover time with the Savior (16:6). What caused the sorrow, what was Jesus's solution for that sorrow, and what does this say about the kind of relationship we should seek to have with the Holy Spirit?

The Holy Spirit and the Christ.

Luke 4:17-19
John 3:34
Heb. 9:14
Rom. 1:2-3
Isa. 61:2b-6
2 Thess. 2:7-8

5. Jesus is called *the Christ* because of the role of the Holy Spirit in His ministry. *Christ* means *Anointed One*. It is the Greek way of saying *Messiah*. As the Messiah/Christ, Jesus was anointed for His ministry by the Holy Spirit in much the same way Old Testament ministers of God were anointed with oil. God's Spirit was active in His incarnation (Luke 1:31-35), in His earthly development (Luke 1:40), in His earthly ministry (Matt. 3:13-17; John 1:29-36; Luke 4:1), and in His role as our Mediator, the go-between between God and man. It is as Mediator that Jesus fulfills a ministry that parallels Old Testament ministers who were anointed with oil. Using the passages listed, what are those three offices of ministry, and what does Christ do for us as the One Anointed by the Holy Spirit in each?

The Holy Spirit and the world.

John 16:8-15
Acts 1:8
2:1-21

6. The prophet Joel foretold the day in which God would pour out His Spirit on all flesh (Acts 2:16-20). In Old Testament language, *all flesh* refers to the whole world. Peter explains that this outpouring began on the Day of Pentecost when the 120 disciples, numbered as belonging to that first local church of Jerusalem, experienced the gift of tongues and prophecy. In John 16 Jesus anticipates this outpouring of revelation after the coming of God's Spirit. What three things does He say this true work of the Spirit's outpouring would accomplish, and what does this say about the nature of a gospel ministry to the world that is truly Spirit-filled?

The Holy Spirit and the Church

7. The church was born the day Jesus began to pour out the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. We will say more about that truth in Lesson 12 when we study the doctrine of the church. Here we want to understand the work of the Holy Spirit in the church. In one way, that work is not a new thing the way the church is, for it is the work that has saved every believer who has ever lived, no matter the age in which they lived. This is the following works of God's Spirit in the individual human heart: illumination, regeneration, indwelling, and sanctification (filling/walking in the Spirit). In another way, the Spirit's work is a new thing, for He now works to make us Christ's church, which is a new program in the plan of God executed by His Spirit in the local congregation. Here we will focus on that first category of His work in the individual heart of the believer. Look up the passage that defines each of these works of the Spirit, and provide a definition of your own.

The Spirit's Work	Scripture	Definition
Illumination	1 Cor. 2:13-15, Acts 16:14, Luke 24:15-45	
Regeneration	John 3:1-8, Tit. 3:5, Gal. 2:20	
Indwelling	Rom. 8:9, 1 Cor. 6:18-20, John 14:20	
Sanctification	2 Cor. 3:18, Gal. 5:16-26, Eph. 5:17-21	

Eph. 4:7-16
Rom. 12:1-10

8. Now let's take a look at that second work of God's Holy Spirit, which is new with the advent of Pentecost and unique to the experience of the local church congregation. Paul explains that, when Jesus ascended, He gave gifts to men as He poured out the Holy Spirit (Eph. 4:7-16). List some of these gifts, and consider what gift the Holy Spirit may have given you for the edification of His church. How might we better use our gifts for our local church?