

## “The Holy Spirit: Allied Helper”

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

### Purpose:

Your students will learn of the deity and personhood of the third member of the Trinity and come to appreciate and depend on His ministry as the believer’s and the church’s Helper.

### 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 correctly.

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, Strengtheners, 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 Cor. 12:4-6  
3:16-17

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?

**Answer:** The severity of the lie lay in the fact that it was a lie told to God according to verse 4. We also learn that it was a lie told to the Holy Spirit in verse 3. Although many were lied to that day, Peter is obviously focused on what made the lie severe in both verses – namely, that this was a lie told to God, not merely to man or someone less than God (v. 4). He was not referring to two, but to one, because in both verses he is referring to the same severity of the lie.

In 1 Cor. 12:4-6, Paul uses parallel construction to list two sets of three synonyms--words which mean basically the same thing. The first list consists of *gifts* (v.4), *ministries* (v.5), and *works* (v.6). These all mean basically *spiritual work* or *service*. He also includes a second list of words that are synonymous because they refer to the same category, the Godhead: *Spirit* (v. 4), *Lord* (v. 5; a reference to the Son), and *God* (v. 6; a reference to the Father).

1 Cor. 3:16-17 refers back to the Old Testament concept of the temple. What made the grand building that Solomon built a temple according to 1 Kings 8:12-13 was that God dwelt there. What makes our churches a temple according to Paul is that God’s Spirit dwells within us. Therefore, the Holy Spirit is God, for it is only God’s dwelling place that is designated a *temple* in Scripture.

**Application:** These passages not only demonstrate the divine nature of the Holy Spirit, but also they help us understand what it means to say that He is the *Holy Spirit*. He is holy in the same sense that God is holy. It is His work in our church to make us holy. He deals with sin and the influence of Satan on believers in Acts 5 to keep His church holy. He expects unity and not division in 1 Corinthians 3 because His church is holy. It must not be destroyed by division. The Spirit’s help is help to be sanctified and unified as God’s church.

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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?

**Answer:** Those who share the glory of God’s name must themselves be God, for Isa. 42:8 declares that the Lord does not share the glory of His name with anyone else.

**Application:** Reading Matt. 28:19 in the light of Isa. 42:8 not only informs us that the Holy Spirit and the Son are members of the Godhead, but also it helps us understand how important the ordinance of baptism is to the Godhead. We are baptized in the glorious name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost as those who count it a privilege to bear that name and identify as disciples of the One who bears it. It is not possible to be led fully by God’s Spirit while refusing to identify with His sacred name through the ordinance of believers’ baptism.

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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?

**Answer:** The Holy Spirit is clearly distinct from the Father, not a part of Him, in John 14:16. The Son asks the Father to give His disciples the Spirit. His titles *the Spirit of God* and *the Spirit of the Lord* throughout Scripture are therefore titles of the deity referring to the Holy Spirit.

**Application:** Jesus refers to the Holy Spirit as *another Helper*. In Greek *another* can be either a word meaning *another of the same kind (allos)* or one meaning *another of a different kind (heteros)*. Here Jesus uses the word for *another of the same kind (allos)*. Two members of the Godhead are called paracletes for the believer in Scripture. The Holy Spirit is the same kind of ally that Jesus is. Jesus is a Helper when we need an advocate before the Father’s wrath against our sin (1 John 2:1-2). The Holy Spirit is a Helper when we need a response of greater love for Jesus Christ reflected in a willingness to obey His commandments (John 14:15).

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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?

**Answer:** The cause of the disciples' sorrow was the news that Jesus was to leave them soon. His solution to their sorrow over the news of His leaving was the news that the Holy Spirit would come to be His replacement in their lives. He even says that it will be better for them to have the Holy Spirit instead of Himself (v. 7). What this says about the kind of relationship we should seek to have with the Holy Spirit is that it should be similar to and even more helpful than the intimate relationship the privileged twelve disciples were able to have with Jesus Christ.

**Application:** The word translated *comfortless* in John 14:18 is ordinarily translated as *orphans* by newer translations and as *the fatherless* in another place in the KJV, where it refers to orphans (James 1:27). So Jesus literally tells His disciples in that passage that He was not going to leave His disciples like twelve abandoned orphans. The first fulfillment of that promise would be His own resurrection appearances (John 14:19). But its ultimate fulfillment would be the coming of the Comforter, which probably accounts for the KJV's translation. It is the manifestation of the Holy Spirit's presence since Pentecost that keeps us from being abandoned orphans, which means that He has a parenting role in our lives today. Do we live like orphans, or like the loving children well cared for in the home of the Holy Spirit?

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***The Holy Spirit and the Christ.***

Luke 4:17-19  
John 3:34  
Heb. 9:14  
Rom. 1:1-4  
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 2:40), 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?

**Answer:** The offices are prophet (Luke 4:17-19; John 3:34), priest (Heb. 9:14), and King (Rom. 1:1-4; Isa. 61:2b-6). As the Anointed Prophet, Jesus declared to us the acceptable year of the Lord. He showed us the Father, and He called us to repentance and faith in Him. As the Anointed Priest, he offered Himself as the sacrifice for our sins. And as the Anointed King, He has promised a final victory over every enemy and the ultimate blessing of His people as He rules over them from Zion.

**Application:** Jesus saw a parallel between His work and that of His disciples empowered by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit had been with them in the Anointed Christ, but He would soon be in them as the Anointed Body of Jesus Christ (John 14:17). For this reason, it was advantageous for the Son to go away and for the Spirit to come (16:7).

That we take up the work of the Christ as Christians should remind us that we must be empowered by God's Spirit for that work. This entails abiding in Christ, which is the topic of John 15's metaphor of the vine and the branches. We abide in the vine and remain fruitful, when His words abide in us (15:7). If we despise special revelation, we are in danger of quenching the Spirit and grieving the Spirit (2 Thess. 5:16-22; Eph. 4:20-30). Without the powerful anointing of the Holy Spirit, we can do nothing (John 15:4-5).

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### ***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?

**Answer:** Jesus explains that this outpouring of the Spirit, this work of new revelation, would affect the world in three ways. First, the world would be convicted of sin; second, of righteousness; and third, of judgment to come (John 16:8-11). What this says about the nature of a gospel ministry to the world that is truly Spirit-filled is that it will be one that tells sinners what these three things are. It will preach the difference between sin and righteousness, and it will preach the justice of God in condemning sin and rewarding righteousness.

**Application:** God’s revelation has always been about condemning sin and rewarding righteousness. This is our witness (Acts 1:8). This began with the Law of Moses, which Paul explains is a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ (Gal. 3:24). This is so that we might be justified by faith, as Joel said and Peter reminded his Pentecost audience, “And whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Acts 2:21). Peter would go on to condemn the sin of Jerusalem, which was to crucify their own Messiah (vv. 22-23), and next to speak of the reward of righteousness that this Messiah had achieved in spite of their opposition (vv. 24-36). It was when they heard this that they were pricked in their heart and asked, “What shall we do?” (v. 37). Peter called them to repentance and faith in Christ for salvation. This is the kind of gospel ministry that is Spirit-filled, that causes men to be pricked in their hearts and to ask, “What shall we do?” It reproves of sin, righteousness, and judgment to come. It speaks of the condemnation of man’s sin, and the reward of Christ’s righteousness. It then explains that to pass from one to the other, we must repent and believe. This is a far cry from the popular word-of-faith-prosperity and seeker-sensitive-postmodernist preaching of our day.

**Notes:** So Spirit-filled ministry also has nothing to do with supernatural revelatory gifts in our day and age, which in Corinth brought confusion about the distinction between right and wrong. Here would be a good place for an excursus that is beyond the scope of this survey of theology, in which the teacher should help his students understand that the supernatural revelatory gifts of 1 Corinthians 12 ceased when the completed New Testament revelation came to fruition (1 Cor. 13:8-13). See my study, “Has the Gift of Tongues Ceased?” available at <http://www.newbostonbaptist.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Have-Tongues-Ceased.pdf>, Robert L. Reymond’s, *What About Continuing Revelations and Miracles in the Presbyterian Church Today? A Study of the Doctrine of the Sufficiency of Scripture* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1977), or Bruce Compton’s “1 Corinthians 13:10 and the Cessation of Miraculous Gifts” in *The Mid-America Conference on Preaching: The Ministry of the Holy Spirit* (Allen Park, MI: Detroit Baptist Theological Seminary, 2003).

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### ***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 11 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 miracles 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.

<u>The Spirit's Work</u>	<u>Scripture</u>	<u>Definition</u>
Illumination	1 Cor. 2:13-15, Acts 16:14, Luke 24:15-45	The work of the Holy Spirit by which the natural man, blind to spiritual truth, is enabled to understand that truth.
Regeneration	John 3:1-8, Tit. 3:5, Gal. 2:20	The work of the Holy Spirit by which a sinner, spiritually dead in trespasses and sins, is made spiritual alive with life eternal.
Indwelling	Rom. 8:9, 1 Cor. 6:18-20, John 14:20	The work of the Holy Spirit by which He claims the spirit and body of a believer as His holy dwelling place for the manifestation of His presence among men and for the seal of His promise.
Sanctification	2 Cor. 3:18, Gal. 5:16-26, Eph. 5:17-21	The work of the Holy Spirit by which He causes the spiritual life of a believer to grow into ever greater Christlikeness.

**Application:** Illumination: The natural man counts the truths of the Spirit of God as foolishness. It is the Spirit's work of illumination that causes them to be understood as the wisdom of God. Unbelievers require this before they can come to faith in Christ (Acts 16:14), and they can reject the results of that work even after experiencing its blessing (Heb. 6:4-6). But even as believers, our eyes have a natural inability to understand God's truth without the Spirit's help. The same opening that Lydia experienced was necessary for the two on the road to Emmaus before they could understand what Jesus was teaching them (Luke 24:31). We should always prayerfully rely on the help of the Holy Spirit to give us an understanding of His truth when we study His Word. Without it, we do not have ears to hear or eyes to see.

Regeneration: To be born again is to have everlasting life, which can never end (John 3:16; 1 John 5:11-12). Though once spiritually dead in trespasses and sins, the Holy Spirit makes us alive when we believe (Eph. 2:1-9). This includes sharing in the divine nature in the sense that the new spiritual life we are living is actually the resurrection life of Jesus Christ, with whom we are risen (2 Pet. 1:4; Col. 2:11-13). This work has made us an entirely new creation in Christ Jesus (2 Cor. 5:17), created to do good works foreordained by God that we should walk in them (Eph. 2:10).

Indwelling: The indwelling of God's Spirit makes his human spirit and body the temple of God (1 Cor. 6:18-20). This means that our human spirit and body should be holy, entirely separate from what is unclean (2 Cor. 6:16-7:1). It also means that we are sealed by God's stamp – an identifying mark that is the earnest of the promise of our redemption (Eph. 1:13-14). Through the Spirit's indwelling presence, we are in union with Christ and one another.

Sanctification: The new life within is designed to grow our nature into complete Christlikeness (Phil. 1:6). This is a gradual process, whereas regeneration is instantaneous. A thing is alive or dead in an instant, but living things take time to grow. That growth requires being filled with the Spirit and walking in the Spirit. When we do that, we sing a certain way (Eph. 5:19-20; Col. 3:15-16) and we live a certain way (Col. 3:17; Gal. 5:22-26). The commands to be filled by the Spirit and to walk in the Spirit are present-tense commands. They describe the ongoing existence that allows one to grow into greater Christlikeness. It is the process by which the old man is put off, and the new man is put on (Eph. 4:22).

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?

**Answer:** Ephesians lists apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastor-teachers. Then Romans lists prophecy, ministry, teaching, exhortation, giving, ruling, and mercy. The gift of apostleship went only to twelve. This is clear to us from John's description of the New Jerusalem, which includes 12 foundation stones named after the 12 apostles of the Lamb (Rev. 21:14). Prophecy has in one sense passed away (1 Cor. 13:8-13). The term *prophecy* was probably used as a label for three distinguishable gifts – that of new revelation, that of teaching, and that of music (1 Cor. 14:26). Paul is probably referring to music when he says prophecy in Rom. 12:6. Other gifts listed there are ministry or service – working with our hands, teaching, exhorting – the ability to encourage others, giving, ruling – leadership skill, and mercy – having a special compassion for those who are suffering. Undoubtedly, there are others. Spiritual giftedness is as many-faceted as the parts of the body (Rom. 12:5).

**Application:** These passages are clear about the fact that every local church needs its gifted members to use those gifts to build up one another. Some important things have to be true of a believer before he or she will be able to achieve this purpose for their gifts. Almost too obvious to point out, we can begin with the fact that we have to be members of the body. We have to belong to a local church (Rom. 12:4-5). If we do not assemble with a local church, we will not minister to that church our gift.

Second, we have to be living sacrifices that are not conformed to this world or age (Rom. 12:1-2). We want our church to be a first-century Christian church, not a contemporary or modern church. We have to emphasize holiness and separation from the world in order to use our giftedness to build one another up as the church.

Third, love has to be the motive for the exercise of every gift. We must avoid the pride that comes from carnal comparisons (Rom. 12:3), and instead let our love be without hypocrisy while we use our gifts for the spiritual good and blessing of one another.

To be engaged in this work is to be doing what Christians are anointed of the Holy Spirit to do. Christ was faithful as the Anointed One for us. Will we be for Him?