

Third Person of the Trinity

by Chuck Smith

Chuck Smith's sermon explores the personhood of the Holy Spirit and the mystery of the Trinity, emphasizing their significance in Christian faith and practice.

Scripture: John 14:16, 1 Timothy 3:16

Topics: "The Holy Spirit", "The Trinity"

Description

Chuck Smith emphasizes the significance of the Holy Spirit as the third person of the Trinity, highlighting His personality and divine attributes. He shares the testimony of R.A. Torrey, who experienced a profound transformation after being baptized with the Holy Spirit, illustrating the Spirit's active role in empowering believers. Smith explains the mystery of the Trinity, affirming that while God is one, He exists in three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, each fully God and co-equal. The sermon encourages believers to seek a personal relationship with the Holy Spirit, who guides, comforts, and empowers them in their Christian walk.

Transcript

It is the purpose of this series of studies to bring you into a close, intimate, personal relationship with the Holy Spirit. Our study last Thursday night dealt with the person of the Holy Spirit showing that, from the Scriptures, He has all the characteristics of personality and He is referred to with the personal pronouns. Thus He is not an it. He is not an essence. He is not just a force, but He is the person of the Holy Spirit. Tonight we purpose to show to you that He is the third person of the Godhead.

Before we get into those Scriptures, I would like to read to you the testimony of R. A. Torrey, who was the founder of the Bible Institute of Los Angeles, commonly known today as Biola University. He was an associate of Dwight Moody and in his book, *The Baptism with the Holy Spirit*, he recounts that he had been in the ministry for some years before he came to the place that he realized he had no right to preach until he was definitely baptized with the Holy Spirit. He told a friend that he was never going to enter the pulpit again until he knew that he had been baptized with the Holy Spirit, or until God, in some way, had told him to go. He then shut himself in his study alone and he spent the time continually on his knees, asking God to baptize him with the Holy Spirit. He said that he had mapped out in his mind what would happen--

But what Torrey had mapped out in his mind did not happen. He said he recalled the exact spot where he was kneeling in prayer in his study. It was a very quiet moment--one of the most quiet moments he had

ever known. Indeed, he thought one reason he had to wait so long was because it took that long before his soul could get quiet before God. Then God simply said to him--not in an audible voice, but in his heart--"It is yours. Now, go preach." And he went and preached. And he was a new minister from that day on. He was then the pastor of a very obscure church, though he had taken two degrees at Yale and had studied at two German universities. But from that time his field began to wonderfully enlarge until at last, he had preached the gospel around the world and had seen hundreds of thousands converted to Christ (Torrey 266-267).

He recalls that sometime after that experience, while sitting in his room one day--that very same room--he does not remember what he was thinking about, but suddenly he was struck from his chair unto the floor and he found himself shouting. He said that he was not brought up to shout and that it was not his temperament. But he shouted like the loudest shouting Methodist. He was shouting, "Glory to God! Glory to God! Glory to God!" He said that he could not stop. It was like some other power, other than his own, was moving his jaw. These are the experiences of R. A. Torrey as recorded in the book, *The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit*.

As we look at the subject of the Trinity or the triunity of God, we first of all recognize from the Scripture, that it indeed is a mystery. In 1 Timothy 3:16 Paul said,

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.

So, God the Father was manifested in the flesh and Jesus Christ is justified in the Spirit.

I have no intention of trying to explain to you the Godhead. It is beyond the boundaries of the human mind to understand the nature of the infinite God. There is one God and yet He is manifested in three persons--that of the Father, and the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

G. Campbell Morgan declared,

The idea of one essence subsisting after a three-fold manner and in a trinity of relationships, finds nothing in the phenomena of nature upon which it can fasten as a sufficient symbol.

We are always trying to give some kind of a symbol by which we can then make an analogy to the Godhead, but as G. Campbell Morgan said, there just is not any symbol that can tie together what we understand about the Trinity (or the triunity of God.) Because it is a mystery, we cannot expect to reduce it to logical precepts. To our finite minds the doctrine is a contradiction.

How can you have one God and yet three persons? Some have tried to say that it is the three masks that the one God wears. The denial of the Trinity always brings with it the denial of the deity of Jesus Christ and the personality of the Holy Spirit. Some have suggested that the Trinity is a mathematical absurdity--one plus one plus one, they point out, equals three. However, one times one times one equals one--so that mathematically you cannot disprove the Godhead.

Paul, in speaking to the elders of the church at Ephesus in Acts 20, beginning with verse 28, said,

Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

Notice the three there--"the Holy Spirit has made you the overseers of the church of God, which He purchased with His own blood." Paul said,

For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore, watch. (Acts 20:29-31)

So, he is telling them that it is their duty to watch and to take heed over this charge that they were given by the Holy Spirit to feed the church of God.

Now the triunity (or the Trinity of God) is manifested in the Old Testament not nearly as clearly as it is in the New Testament. But in the Old Testament, we surely have indications, hints, and declarations of the three aspects of the Godhead.

In Genesis 1:1, "In the beginning God..." the word translated "God" in Hebrew is Elohim and Elohim is a plural noun. The singular form in Hebrew is El, while the plural is Elohim. It is interesting that "in the beginning God," the first mention of God, would be plural rather than singular. Some seek to explain the use of this plural, Elohim, as what they call the plural of majesty or the plural of emphasis. But that is only an excuse that has been offered to explain away the fact that Elohim is plural and it is the name for God in Genesis 1.

The other Hebrew word for Lord is Adonai, which also is a plural. In Genesis 1 is the first mention of the Holy Spirit.

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

So the first mention of the Holy Spirit is right in Genesis 1:1-2.

And then when we get down to verse 26, "And God said, [that is, Elohim (the plural again) said] Let us [plural pronoun] make man after our own likeness and image." And here, plural pronouns are used concerning God, which wipes out that concept of the plural of majesty.

The Scriptures teach us that all three persons of the Godhead were active in the creation.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. And all things were made by him and without him was not anything made that was made. (John 1:1-3)

So John declares that Jesus was in the beginning with God; that He was the Word, the Eternal Word, and that He was with God; that He was God and that all things were made by Him. "Without Him was not anything made that was made."

Paul said, "For by Him were all things created [Him being Jesus.] And He is before all things and by Him all things consist" (Colossians 1:16-17).

The Son is in creation.

Also in Psalm 33:6, we read about the part of the Holy Spirit in creation.

By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the hosts of them by the breath [or the ruach] of his mouth.

The word ruach in Hebrew is breath, wind, or spirit. So the translation of Psalm 33:6 could very well read: "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made [and of course Jesus is the Word of the Lord] and all of the hosts of them by the Spirit [breath, ruach] of His mouth."

In Deuteronomy 6:4 is that which is called the Shema of the Hebrews. It is that which was chanted over, and over, and over again during their worship time at the temple--especially during the feast days. They would cry out over and over the Shema, "Yishrael Yahweh Elohim ekad Yahweh." Over and over they would chant that. And that was the whole basis of the monotheistic Hebrew religion--the oneness of God. But in looking at the Shema, it is interesting that the Yahweh (or Jehovah) Elohim--again the plural for God--is combined with ekad Yahweh--one Yahweh (or one Jehovah.) This means: Israel, Jehovah Gods [plural]--one Jehovah. Not only is it interesting that the Elohim [plural] is used, but so is the use of the word ekad--for the word ekad in Hebrew is a compound unity. When God created Eve out of Adam, He said, "And the two shall be [ekad] one flesh"--compound unity.

There is another Hebrew word for "one" that is an absolute one, and that is yakad. And had, in the Shema, they declared, "Yishrael Yahweh Elohim yakad Yahweh," then you would have no basis to try to make an argument for the Trinity. But the fact that the Elohim is plural and the ekad is a compound unity--even within the monotheistic chant of the Hebrews--is a suggestion of the triunity of God.

Moses commanded how Aaron and his sons were to put the blessings of God upon the people. According to Numbers 6:24-26, they were to say:

The LORD [Yahweh] bless thee and keep thee: The LORD [Yahweh] make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: The LORD [Yahweh] lift up is countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.

Notice the threefold declaration of Yahweh--one Yahweh, yet why would it be repeated three times? "Yahweh bless thee and keep thee. Yahweh make His face shine upon thee and be gracious unto thee. And Yahweh lift up His countenance on thee and give thee peace."

And thus, the Lord said, you will put My name, the name Yahweh, on the children of Israel, and I will bless them. This is the trinity of the blessing in unity.

We also find when Isaiah saw his vision of the Lord high and lifted up, sitting on the throne, he heard the seraphim as they were saying, "Holy, holy, holy." Why three times? It is the Lord of hosts--the threefold holiness.

In the prophecy of the Messiah, in Isaiah 48:16, the Lord said,

Come ye near unto me, hear ye this; I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time that it was, there am I: and now the Lord GOD, and his Spirit, hath sent me.

Notice, "the Lord God and His Spirit hath sent Me"--Jesus the Messiah. It is the Messiah speaking in verse 16.

Come ye near unto me. Hear ye this; I have not spoken in secret from the beginning. From the time that it was, there am I. (Isaiah 48:16)

"In the beginning was the Word" and now, "The Lord God and His Spirit sent Me." The Revised Standard Version reads: "The Lord God hath sent Me and His Spirit" and that is more literal from the Hebrew. We find first of all, it is a prophecy of the coming of the Messiah and then the coming of the age of the Holy Spirit. So,

The Lord GOD hath sent me and his Spirit. (Isaiah 48:16 RSV)

Of course in the New Testament, we have the triunity of God all the way through. At the baptism of Jesus in Matthew 3:16,

And Jesus, when he was baptized, 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 upon him.

Notice that Jesus was being baptized and there was then the Spirit of God descending like a dove. And then a voice from heaven was saying, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well-pleased." We see Jesus baptized, the Spirit descending, and the Father speaking from heaven declaring His pleasure in His Son.

Now there is a sect that is called the Jesus Only sect. They are quite strong in the southern part of the United States and they have spread as far west as Arizona. There are a smattering few of them here in California, but not many. This Jesus Only sect has taken up the error of the early heresy in the church that was known as Sabellianism, which denied the separateness of the three persons of the Godhead. The Jesus Only sect declares that Jesus is the only God, that He is the Father, that He is the Son, and that He is the Holy Spirit--that He is all three.

Well, this particular passage of Scripture in Matthew 3:16 would seem to me to provide sort of a problem for them. Jesus would have to be some kind of a magician bringing forth a dove to land upon Himself--the Holy Spirit. And then He would have to be a ventriloquist throwing His voice up to heaven as He declared, "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. Hear ye Him."

In John 14:16-17 Jesus said,

And I will pray the Father and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth him: but you know him; for he dwelleth with you, and he shall be in you.

So the Spirit of Truth, the Comforter, was sent at Jesus' request to the Father.

Also in John 14:26, we have, "The Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name"-- so again, all three.

When Jesus commissioned His disciples to go and to teach all nations, He said, "baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit"--all three again.

When Paul wrote his letter to the Ephesians he said,

There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. (Ephesians 4:4-6)

So, the Trinity being one Spirit, one Lord, one God--one times one times one.

It is interesting that most generally the Spirit is mentioned third--Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. That is why He is commonly said to be the third person of the Trinity, because usually He is the third one mentioned. It is in nowise a reflection of inferiority, because surely, the Scripture teaches the co-equal aspects of the Godhead. But here the typical formula is reversed--the Spirit is mentioned first, Jesus second, and God third.

In Romans 15:30 Paul said,

Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that you strive together with me in your prayers to God for me.

So notice the three again, but this time Jesus is first, the Holy Spirit is second, and the Father is third. When we refer to the Spirit, as I mentioned, as the third person of the Godhead, there is no thought of inferiority. The Westminster Confession, says

There is but one only, living, and true God. In the unity of the Godhead there be three persons, of one substance, power, and eternity; God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. (The Westminster Confession, II:i,iii)

As Jesus was talking with His disciples in John 15, He said,

But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me. (John 15:26)

These personal pronouns are referring to the Holy Spirit. But the Comforter was sent to them from the Father at the request of Jesus.

In Paul's benediction in his second letter to the Corinthians, he said,

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. Amen. (2 Corinthians 13:14)

Paul notes the grace of Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit--the three in one.

In Peter's message in Acts chapter 10 to the group that had gathered at the house of Cornelius, he declared how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit--all three are mentioned.

How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost 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)

In 1 John 5:7, we have the strongest declaration of the Trinity in the New Testament.

For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.

Now there is an objection by some who say that this particular Scripture does not exist in the original manuscript. The interesting thing of course, is that we do not have any original manuscripts. We are not certain what is in the original manuscript. For a person to say that it is not in the original manuscripts cannot be spoken in certainty, because we do not have original manuscripts that we can examine and look at. The oldest manuscripts that we have--and in my opinion they are rather poor manuscripts to say the

best--are the Codex Sinaiticus, the Codex Alexandrinus, and of course, the Codex Vaticanus. And these are all from the same school of manuscripts. And it is true that this passage is not in these manuscripts. Nor is the latter portion of Mark's Gospel, from 16:7 on. They are not in those manuscripts. However, those manuscripts are dated about A.D. 412, which would be some 300 years after the original manuscripts. So, you have an intervening time of 300 years in which we have many, many other manuscripts and portions of manuscripts.

This particular verse in 1 John is not in the majority of the manuscripts. However, it is quoted by some of the early church fathers, who wrote in the second century, as is the latter part of the Gospel of Mark 16. So, the fact that it is quoted by early church fathers who lived in the second century some 150 to 200 years before the Codex Sinaiticus, they must have been quoting from some manuscript that was older than the Codex Sinaiticus. And so, the argument that it does not appear in the oldest, full manuscripts--and the Codex Sinaiticus is not really a full manuscript--it really does not bear that much weight. And I think that that is one of the major mistakes of the Westcott and Hort text. They relied almost completely, over ninety-five percent, on the codices Sinaiticus, Alexandrinus, and Vaticanus. But that is only for you who are interested in the textual criticism.

But even without 1 John 5:7, which of course is very strong--

There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit and these three are one.

--even without this particular text, surely there are enough other texts in the New Testament where the three are coupled together, as we have already demonstrated, that the evidence is conclusive that there are three persons and yet one God.

Now divine names are given to the Holy Spirit. In Acts 5:3,

But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back part of the price of the land?"

You remember Ananias's wife, Sapphira, sold some land and they brought a portion of the money earned and laid it at the apostles' feet. Now this was a bit of hypocrisy because Ananias was acting like he was giving everything--giving all, you know. And Peter says,

Why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit in that you have kept back part of the price of the land?

And then he said,

Look, you did not have to give anything. While it remained was it not your own? And after you sold it, it was in your own power. You could do with the money whatever you wanted. But why have you conceived this thing in your heart?

This was deception. And then he said,

You have not lied unto men, but unto God. (Acts 5:3-4 KJV)

Now, in the previous verse he said you have lied to the Holy Spirit and now he said you have lied to God. And so there is a geometrical theorem that applies here. It has been too long since I have had my

geometry to remember the theorem. But it is something about equal sides and equal angles. If you have lied to the Spirit and then you have lied to God, then it makes them equal. It means they are the same.

In 2 Corinthians 3:18, Paul speaks of our being transformed from glory to glory by the Spirit of the Lord. Now the phrase, "the Spirit of the Lord," has been translated in the newer versions more correctly and more literally from the Greek, "by the Lord, the Spirit." And it is in the Greek, hapo kurios numetous--the Lord the Spirit.

The Holy Spirit possesses divine attributes. He is eternal. Hebrews 9:14 says,

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?

Again the Trinity--the blood of Christ, through the eternal Spirit, purges your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

The Holy Spirit is omnipresent. Psalm 139:7-10 says,

Wither shall I go from thy spirit? or wither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.

The Spirit is omnipresent. In heaven, He is there; in hell, He is there; and in the uttermost parts of the sea, He is there. I cannot flee from the Spirit.

He is omniscient. 1 Corinthians 2:10 says,

But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit, for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

He knows all things--the deep things of God.

For what man knoweth the things of man save the spirit of man which is in him. Even so, the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. (1 Corinthians 2:11 KJV)

He knows--as with God--all things. He is omniscient.

The Holy Spirit is omnipotent. When the angel was promising to Mary that God had chosen her as the vessel to bring the Messiah into the world, she questioned,

How can this be since I am really a virgin? I have not had relationships with a man.

The angel answered and said unto her in Luke 1:35,

The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee. [The Holy Spirit is the power of the highest.] Therefore also that Holy One, which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God.

All three are there--the Holy Spirit, the power of the Highest, and the result is the Son of God.

The Holy Spirit is identified with Jehovah of the Old Testament. Verses in the Old Testament that are described to Jehovah are ascribed, in the New Testament, to the Holy Spirit. In Isaiah 6:8 for instance:

Also, I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send and who will go for us?" Then said I, "Here am I. Send me." And he said, "Go and tell this people, Here ye indeed, but understand not. See ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat and make their ears heavy and shut their eyes, lest they see with their eyes, hear with their ears, and understand with their heart and convert and be healed." (Isaiah 6:8-10)

Another example is found in Acts 28:25 with Paul the Apostle:

When they had agreed not among themselves, he departed. And after that Paul had spoken one word, well spake the Holy Spirit by Isaiah the Prophet unto our fathers saying, "Go unto this people and say, hearing ye shall hear and shall not understand, and seeing ye shall see and not perceive." (Acts 28:25-26)

So, that which the Lord spoke to Isaiah, Paul ascribes to the Holy Spirit in the Book of Acts.

Jeremiah 31:31 says,

Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah, not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, which my covenant they brake, although I was a husband unto them, saith Jehovah. But this shall be the covenant that I shall make with the house of Israel after those days, saith Jehovah, I will put my law in their inward parts. I will write in their hearts. And I will be their God and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor and every man his brother saying, Know Jehovah, for they shall know me from the least of them to the greatest of them, saith Jehovah, for I will forgive their iniquity. I will remember their sin no more. (Jeremiah 31:31-33)

Hebrews 10:15 says,

Whereof the Holy Ghost also is witness to us. For after that he had said before, "This is the covenant that I make with them after those days, saith Jehovah. I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them. And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." (Hebrews 10:15-17)

So, the Holy Spirit is declared to be the one who inspired the prophet Jeremiah, though Jeremiah said it was Jehovah who spoke to him these things. The Holy Spirit is the one who inspired the writing of the Bible.

In Mark 12:36,

For David himself said by the Holy Spirit, "The Lord said to my lord, Sit thou on my right hand till I make thine enemies thy footstool."

David said this by the Holy Spirit.

In Acts 1:16 Peter said,

Men and brethren, this Scripture must needs have been fulfilled which the Holy Spirit by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was a guide to those that took Jesus.

This is acknowledging that David was speaking through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

And Peter tells us in 2 Peter 1:21,

For prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

He was the one who inspired the writings of the holy men of old, which we call the Bible--the Scriptures.

But not only that--Jesus said He was the one who would inspire the apostles. And so, after telling them that they were going to be brought before the synagogues and to the magistrates and the powers, Christ says in Luke 12:12,

Take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer or what ye shall say. For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what you ought to say.

Do not take any forethought. Do not worry about it, for in the same hour the Holy Spirit will give you what you need to say. Inspired, the Old Testament writers would be the inspiration to the apostles and to the servants of Jesus Christ when brought before the judges, the magistrates, and the councils.

Now, the fulfillment of this is clearly seen in Acts 7, when Stephen was arrested and brought before the council and he began to give his defense of his faith. And the latter part of Acts 6 says,

And all that sat in the council, looking steadfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel. (Acts 6:15)

And then the high priest asked Stephen, "Are these things so?" And Stephen began to preach to them one of the most masterful sermons ever preached. He started out on the common ground, speaking of their favorite subject: their fathers, their illustrious fathers. They were a very proud people--proud of their national heritage. They were always saying, "Well, our fathers..." and boasting in the illustrious, glorious fathers of the Hebrew nation. So he pointed out to them how that their fathers sold Joseph for twenty pieces of silver; deciding not to kill him, they sold him as a slave for twenty pieces of silver and he was carried away to Egypt. They were so hard-hearted they were not moved by his tears and all.

When Joseph was being taken away to Egypt, they did not realize that God had indeed ordained him to rule over them. They did not recognize that the first time around with Joseph. But the second time around, when they came to Egypt and they were all bowing before him when he was giving them a bad time, then they recognized that Joseph was ordained by God to the position that he had. They rejected it the first time with Joseph, but the second time they saw, they acknowledged, they recognized.

Their illustrious fathers turned their backs on Moses and he had to flee. And Moses thought that surely they understood that God had chosen him to lead the children of Israel out of the bondage in the Egypt. He knew the call of God and when he first tried to fulfill it, they rejected him. They cast him out; He had to flee to the wilderness, but the second time around, they recognized that, yes, he is God's ordained leader.

Can you see what he is building to? The first time around, they rejected Jesus, just like their fathers rejected Joseph--just like their fathers rejected Moses. But the second time around they recognized what God was doing. And so he is saying basically, "Hey, next time around you will know that you were more stupid than your fathers."

But then Stephen went on to say, "Which of the prophets did not your fathers kill? I mean, they were ignorant. But you have done the worst of all because you have killed the one whose coming the prophets all declared." And that really burned them. I mean, the truth cuts and hurts.

And so, they would not listen and they stopped their ears. They began to gnash their teeth--screaming. They drug him out and stoned him to death because they could not stand the truth. But how masterful to show them that they were following the pattern that had long-existed in the nation: that of missing God's Anointed the first time around, but recognizing Him the second time around. Inspired by the Holy Spirit!

We read that Peter was standing before the council being asked a leading question that could lead to his being stoned. It says, "But Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit said, 'Ye men and rulers of Israel...'" He was filled with the Holy Spirit and thus speaking to them. And when he was through, it says they wondered. They were marveling because of the wisdom--because they perceived that they were ignorant and unlearned men. The Jewish council was thinking these guys do not have any college degrees, and yet, the wisdom with which they spoke! Why? Because it is the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is a person, the third person of the Godhead. He is the gift that God has given to you and to me--to His church. And He will come to be a Comforter, Parakletos. He will come alongside of you to help you in your Christian walk. He will come alongside of you to guide you in the way of truth. He will come alongside of you to strengthen you. He will indwell you that you might be empowered to be conformed into the image of Jesus Christ.

As we continue our study in this most important subject--the Holy Spirit and you--we are going to talk more about the indwelling and the out flowing of the Holy Spirit; the gifts of the Holy Spirit; the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer; the work of the Holy Spirit in the church; the gifts of the Holy Spirit in the church; and the work of the Holy Spirit in the world. Shall we pray?

Father, how we thank You for the gift of the Holy Spirit that has been given through the request of Jesus--given to the church and that we have now this blessed privilege of our bodies becoming the temple of the Holy Spirit to dwell in us. And so Lord, we wish to present our bodies to You as living sacrifices. And we invite the Holy Spirit to come and to take residence within us. We yield ourselves to be controlled by the Spirit, filled with the Spirit, baptized in the Spirit. Lord, work in our hearts by Your Holy Spirit, as He conforms us into the image of Jesus Christ and as He gives us the power to bear witness of Jesus Christ to a dark and dying world. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

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