

The Holy Spirit: 'Sovereign Lord and Life-Giver'

by Greg Herrick

The Holy Spirit is the sovereign Lord and life-giver who fulfills the promises of the Abrahamic, Davidic, and New Covenants, and transforms believers into Christ's likeness.

Scripture: Genesis 12:1, 2 Samuel 7:12, Jeremiah 31:31, Zechariah 4:6, Ephesians 1:13

Topics: "Holy Spirit", "Trinity Salvation"

Description

Greg Herrick preaches on the Spirit's ministry, emphasizing the fulfillment of Old Testament promises through the Abrahamic, Davidic, and New Covenants. The coming of the Spirit is intricately connected to Jesus' work, God's plan to bless the world, and the Trinity's unified purpose in salvation. The Spirit empowers believers, transforms them into Christ's likeness, gives spiritual gifts, and guarantees their future with the Lord.

Transcript

Not by power, nor by might, but by my Spirit says the Lord Almighty (Zechariah 4:6)

Meditation: The God Who Gives Life! The Spirit's Ministry Now Is A Fulfillment of OT Promises 1. Read Genesis 12:1-3. What did God promise to do for Abraham and his descendants? 2. What is the ultimate scope (i.e., who will receive) of the blessing envisioned in Gen 12:1-3? Compare Acts 1:8; 3:25, and Galatians 3:29. 3. Read 2 Samuel 7:12-16. For how long will God establish David's kingdom and his throne? What does a throne symbolize? 4. Note: For a future Israelite to fulfill the promise to David in 2 Samuel 7, he must be of the line of Judah, of David, in particular.

Question: If the blessing promised in Genesis 12:1-3 is intended to be universal (i.e., for all people) and David's throne in 2 Sam 7:12-16 is to be established forever, what do you think the connection is between the two? Read Acts 13:23ff and Romans 1:3-4. 5. God promised to make Abraham and his descendants great and bless the entire world through them. He decided to develop that promise through the Israelite kings as they obediently ruled under his authority. But Israel, as all people are, was disobedient and so the question emerges as to how God can fulfill his promises (with sinful people) to bless the entire world (cf.

Heb 8:7-8a). The answer: The New Covenant. Read Jeremiah 31:31-33. What is the term in Jeremiah 31:31 that God uses to describe this new promise he's establishing? What does the term covenant mean?

Look in an English dictionary. 6. The new covenant contains many interrelated promises. What does God promise regarding the Law in Jeremiah 31:32-33? What does he promise with respect to his people? What does the Lord say the new covenant will establish with respect to knowledge of Him?

What does the new covenant teach with regard to the forgiveness of wickedness and sin? 7. The New Covenant in Ezekiel involves the Spirit. Read Ezekiel 36:27. How will God enable us to obey him? 8. Read Luke 22:19-20. On what basis did God enact the New Covenant? Compare Hebrews 9:15-22. 9. Read Acts 2:32-33. After his death and resurrection Jesus ascended to the right hand of God (i.e., to a place of power and authority) and from there he poured out the promised Holy Spirit in fulfillment of the New Covenant.

Compare 2 Corinthians 3:6, 7-18. He now reigns in fulfillment of the promises made to David, dispenses the Spirit as the fulfillment of the promises made to Jeremiah and Ezekiel, and does so universally (i.e., to all who believe, not just Jewish people) in fulfillment of the promises made to Abraham. Do you see how the Abrahamic, Davidic, and New covenants all relate to each other? 10. Read 1 Peter 2:4-10. How does this passage relate to the theme of "being God's people and he being our God"--an important theme we saw in Jeremiah 31:33? 11.

Read 1 Corinthians 12:13. How are we brought into this new people of God and what is the name Paul gives to the new people of God? Read Ephesians 2:22 as well. How does Paul refer to the church? Summary of OT Promises and the Coming of the Spirit The promise in Genesis 12:1-3 establishes God's plan to bless the nations through Abraham and his descendents. In the progress of revelation we find in 2 Samuel 7:12-16 and later in Acts 13:22-23 that the fulfillment of the Abrahamic promise involves the fulfillment of another promise to David regarding a future king and kingdom.

We saw that the NT writers claimed that Jesus fulfilled this by his death, resurrection, and exaltation. It is here that we also see the fulfillment of the New Covenant as the Spirit is given to all believers by the exalted Christ, on the basis of his death and resurrection. The point of our brief survey was to help the reader understand that the coming of the Spirit is inextricably connected to Jesus' coming and God's plan to bless the entire world. This is made especially clear by the apostle Paul in texts like Galatians 3:14.

The Spirit's Ministry Is To Be Understood in Connection with the Work of the Trinity 1. Read Ephesians 1:3-11. What is the word Paul uses in v. 3 to describe what God has done for us in salvation? According to the rest of the letter to the Ephesians, what are some of blessings Paul has in mind? 2. What does the Father do to secure our salvation in v. 4? When was this choice made? 3. What did the Son do to secure our salvation (v. 7)? Clue: What is the reference to Christ's blood an allusion to (cf.

Colossians 1:21-22)? How does this relate to the provisions of the New Covenant in Jeremiah 31:33? 4. What does the Spirit do in our salvation (vv. 13-14)? 5. Read Ephesians 1:4 and Romans 8:29. For what ultimate spiritual and ethical goal has God chosen us? Cf. Romans 8:30 and Colossians 3:9-10. 6. Summary: We have seen that the coming of the Spirit is in connection with the fulfillment of the Abrahamic, Davidic, and New Covenants. We have also seen that the work of the Spirit is integrally related to the work of the Father in choosing the elect and the Son dying for those persons.

He has come to apply the benefits of the Son's death to those whom the Father has chosen in eternity past. There has been, therefore, an integrated historical outworking of God's eternal purposes and the three persons of the trinity are carrying out God's plan in unison. The Spirit's Ministry of Glorifying Christ and Empowering Us 1. Read Titus 3:5. What does the Spirit do to begin our experience of salvation? Cf.

John 3:5-8; John 7:37-39. 2. Read 1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:19-20, and Romans 8:9.

Where does the Spirit come to reside? According to 1 Corinthians 3:16, the Spirit indwells us. On this basis how does Paul refer to believers? How does this relate to the OT and Ezekiel 36:27? 3. We saw above that the Spirit gives us life and permanently indwells us. Now, given that this is true, what, according to John 16:13-14, is his primary ministry to believers? How do you think that relates to Romans 8:16? The Spirit's Ministry of Transforming Us 1. Read 2 Corinthians 3:18 (cf.

Philippians 1:19). In keeping with the goal of our election and the reason for the Son's death, the Spirit is working to what end in this passage? What word does Paul use to describe the essential nature of the Spirit's work here? In a short sentence, explain what this word means. Use other Bible passages if you like 2. Read Romans 8:1-17. In v. 13 (and other verses in Romans 8) how does Paul describe the nature of our "transformation"? 3. Read Galatians 5:16-26. Should we as believers who love the Lord expect a conflict during the process of our transformation into Christ's likeness?

Explain. How is the fruit of the Spirit related to God's purpose in choosing and calling us (Eph 1:4)? 4. Read Ephesians 4:30. How does our sin impact the Holy Spirit who is transforming us? Certainly the Holy Spirit is deeply grieved over all our sin, but which sins does Paul specifically mention in the context, i.e., v. 29, 31? Compare 1 Thessalonians 5:19. 5. Read Ephesians 5:18. This passage is better translated, "be filled by means of the Spirit." What is the command here?

Who does the filling? With what are we to be filled? Compare Ephesians 1:23; 3:18-19. What are the results of being filled with the Spirit as outlined in 5:19-21? Again how does this relate to God's choosing us for holiness, that is, to be conformed to the image of his Son? These are crucial questions that profoundly affect one's view of sanctification and the Christian life. They should not be passed over lightly. 6. Read 2 Timothy 1:7-8; 1 Corinthians 2:4-5; 1 Thessalonians 1:5.

How does the Spirit enable us to minister the gospel to others? The Spirit's Ministry of Giving Spiritual Gifts 1. Read Romans 12:1-8; 1 Corinthians 12:7-11, 27-21; Ephesians 4:1-16, and 1 Peter 4:10-11. What are some of the spiritual gifts given by the Spirit? 2. According to 1 Corinthians 12:11, who determines who gets what gift(s)? 3. Why does the Spirit give gifts? Read Ephesians 4:12; 1 Corinthians 12:7. 4. Read 1 Corinthians 13:1-14:1. What is the ideal community context for the proper functioning of the spiritual gifts?

The Spirit's Ministry of Guaranteeing Our Future 1. Read 2 Corinthians 1:21-22; 5:5, and Ephesians 1:13-14. How does Paul refer to the Spirit in these passages? 2. In what way does our current possession of the Spirit relate to the certainty of our future with the Lord? 3. Try and summarize the main points of this lesson in a sentence or two. Meditation: What Does This Mean for My Life? The Need To Think Consistently The Spirit works in conjunction with the work of the Son and the Father.

The Father chooses certain ones for salvation and the Son dies to save them. The Spirit then gives new life to the ones God has chosen on the basis of the death and resurrection of the Son. How does this larger salvation framework help you understand the Spirit and his ministry better? What implications does this have for what God is doing in your life right now?

Understanding the Battle Within

We know that our salvation is so secure that Paul could speak of our glorification (i.e., when we get to heaven and are perfect) in the past tense, as if it were already accomplished (Romans 8:30). It is a done deal, resting as it does on the integrated work of the Trinity. But, at the present time we experience struggles and sometimes a lot of pain and suffering come our way. In terms of the inner struggles, how does this relate to the ministry of the Spirit? Why is there this conflict at times? What are we to do about it (Romans 8:13, 26-27)? Up until now, how have you generally dealt with trials?

Experiencing the Power of the Spirit

We should never think about the Spirit simply in terms of power. It is true that He is the One who gives us incredible spiritual power to worship God, face our sin head on, experience spiritual joy, serve others, and share the gospel with words and acts of kindness. But we must never reduce the third person of the Trinity to a force of some kind! May it never be! He is a divine person having come to mediate the presence of God in Christ to us. How does this relate to your current understanding of the Spirit and his ministry?

Discerning and Using Our Spiritual Gifts

What spiritual gift(s) do you have? Why did God give it (them) to you? How will you exercise it (them) so that many will benefit? Is your church a place where the gifts can be used and where the context is one of love? If not, how can you prayerfully discuss this issue with the leadership? How can you humbly be a part of a solution if there are problems balancing truth, love, and unity in your church? Blessed are the peacemakers!

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