

Significance of the Holy Spirit

by Mike Attwood

This sermon emphasizes the importance of recognizing and honoring the Holy Spirit as a divine person who is often neglected. It highlights the fellowship believers have with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the life, love, grace, and truth the Spirit brings, and the need to be led by the Spirit rather than relying on human effort. The speaker urges listeners to be attentive to the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit and to avoid neglecting or ignoring Him.

Scripture: John 14:16, 1 John 4:13, Hebrews 10:29, John 16:13, Galatians 5:18, 1 Corinthians 6:19, 2 Corinthians 13:14, Isaiah 63:10, 2 Samuel 23:2

Topics: "Holy Spirit", "Divine Fellowship"

Description

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Transcript

Come on now. Good. Well, it's a joy to be with you and share with you from the Word of God.

Thank you for coming for this day, and certainly be praying for your stamina. We've got five sessions before us, and so we're certainly going to need divine help to get through today and stay fresh in our hearts and minds. I'd like you to turn with me, please, to the gospel of John and chapter 7. Our theme is The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit.

I want to maybe title it slightly differently. I want to call it The Neglected Person of the Godhead, because I do believe that quite often he is neglected, certainly, I would say, in our own circles, perhaps not given the attention that the Word of God would give to him. And so we want to really kind of redress the balance today.

So, The Neglected Person of the Godhead. So, beginning to read John's gospel, chapter 7, verse 37. John 7, 37, I'm going to read just down to verse 39.

It begins this way. It says, In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his

belly shall flow rivers of living water.

But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive. For the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified. And so, again, God will bless that introductory reading.

We'll look at many Scriptures today, but this is the introductory verse, perhaps going to be the theme verse of our conference together. And it's interesting, as you read the Bible, sometimes you read a Scripture, you've read it a hundred times, and you read it for the hundred and first time, and it jumps off the page at you and speaks to you in a way that it has never spoken to you before. And I remember reading this and just asking myself the hard questions.

But sometimes we need to ask questions of ourselves from the text. And so, the Lord Jesus says, If anybody's thirsty, let him come to me and drink. And of course, the context is this last great day of the feast.

This is day eight of the Feast of Tabernacles. And so, what we could say is the Jewish people have been involved in religious activity for seven days. Now it's day eight, and he asks them a simple question, Are you thirsty? Anybody thirsty? And what it's telling me is this, that actually religion itself cannot satisfy a man.

It leaves him thirsty. This was the highlight of the Jewish calendar, in a sense, because the Feast of Tabernacles was a harvest festival, and it was the last of the harvest festival, and it was the wine harvest that had come in. And of course, wine is symbolic of joy.

And it was supposed to be a time of great rejoicing, and they were told to rejoice. They couldn't mourn on that day. It was a time of rejoicing.

And yet, the Lord said, Are you still thirsty? And what he's saying is, You know, religion can't satisfy, only I can satisfy. Only Christ can satisfy. Religion leaves you dry.

Christ satisfies. And so, as I thought about this, and then he says that if we are thirsty and we come to him and drink, and then he says, implying what drinking means, he that believes on me. And so, I thought, well, yeah, that was me.

I was religious. I grew up in a religious home, and I was thirsty. And there was a point where I came to Christ, and I believed on him.

Thank God that I did that. But then it says, he that believes on me, out of his belly shall flow rivers, and not just a sprinkle, not just a stream, rivers of living water. And it speaks of a life, this life that has come to Christ that is overflowing with refreshment in a barren world.

And I asked myself the question, is that a description of me? Now, the believe on him part, I can honestly say, yeah, that's me. But have I had that kind of life that is overflowing, bringing refreshment to a barren and thirsty world? And I had to be honest and say, I don't think so. Now, sometimes it's hard to be honest sometimes, but we've got to be honest.

No, I can't say that that's me. And then I thought, well, what's wrong? It says, this is referring to the Spirit of God, this spake of the Spirit. And then he says, which they that believe on him should receive.

And I know that when I was saved, I did receive the Holy Spirit. I know that on conversion, the Spirit of God comes and takes up residence in the life of a believer. We'll talk more about that as we develop this through the weekend.

But somehow, it almost seems that, yeah, he came, he lives within me, but it almost seems like there's a blockage. You know, at best, there's a trickle coming out. There's something blocking the outward flow, in a sense, of refreshment from me to this world.

And so, it caused me to do a study, and so I decided I would read through the Bible, and I would pay attention to every reference to the Holy Spirit in Scripture, which is a wonderful way to actually read your Bible. I try to read through the Bible a couple of times a year, and each time I read through, I try and look at a fresh theme. So one year, I might look at the grace of God, every reference to that.

Not that I'm ignoring other parts of Scripture, but you're just focusing in. Another time I read through, looking at the holiness of God. That's very challenging, but to go through and look at every reference to the Spirit of God.

And that's what I did, and so this series is kind of a result of that. So how do we have that overflowing? We might say abundant life. That's what we were talking about, the abundant life.

The Lord Jesus promised that, right? That he would give us life, and life more abundantly. And many believers don't seem to be living the abundant life, or the refreshing life, or the overflowing life. It almost seems there's a major blockage.

And I think part of it is our neglect of this blessed person called the Holy Spirit. Now, let me just say a few more things. This is just kind of the preamble before we get into the Constitution.

It's the preamble before it. But sometime I was asked to speak at a conference, and there were three of us speaking, and the way they had worked it out was that I was given the doctrinal section, and then they said, we'll have another brother, and he'll do the practical section, and then another guy, he'll do the devotional section. And it all sounds fine and dandy, except I had to object.

Now, I don't want to be a curmudgeon, you know, a kind of a grumpy old man, but the implication is that doctrine somehow is not devotional, and it's not practical. We'll get the doctrine out of the way first, and then we'll move on, you know, to the devotional. And I said, I'm sorry, but I believe doctrine, rightly understood, will produce devotion and is incredibly practical.

Anyway, we went ahead with the conference as planned, but I hope to show you today and over this weekend how incredibly practical doctrine is and how it will produce genuine devotion in our hearts. So that's the goal, and certainly we're going to be looking particularly at the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. Now, a couple of quotations before we dive into the topic in detail that would basically add to my thesis that somehow the neglect of this person is having a definite negative effect on our testimony.

This is a quote from a Bible teacher from New Zealand now, along with the Lord, actually, H.C. Hewlett, written a couple of excellent books, one on the Holy Spirit, the other one on the person of the Lord Jesus. His books are well worth reading. But he says this, How much of our poverty as believers, of our weakness in testimony and of our lack of rejoicing is due to our slowness to appreciate the worth of the person and the ministry of the Holy Indweller.

So, his thinking is this. It's causing weakness in testimony, it's causing poverty in the lives of believers, and it's certainly causing lack of joy in the lives of believers. Now, some of you know, we've just come back from the conference in Texas, the Believers Bible Conference, and, you know, conferences are interesting.

There's a public ministry dimension to a conference, but there's also a private dimension to a conference. And over the course of the days we were in Texas, a lot of people came up and talked to us, and some people are really hurting, deeply hurting. And I suppose that we're considered to be non-threatening, so people share things with us.

And there were several people, really brokenhearted. And, you know, as I thought about each particular case, I came to the conclusion that all of their heartache and all of their sorrow comes down to one thing, the flesh, the flesh. That if—not necessarily in them, in other believers—they were suffering as a result of the way that other believers had treated them, but what was behind it, it was people were acting in the flesh, not under the control of the Holy Spirit.

And I would say that probably 90, 95—I'd go even higher—maybe 99 percent of all problems in assemblies is directly connected to believers acting in the flesh. And if we could just learn to walk in the Spirit, it would eliminate most of our pastoral issues. If we could just learn that, right? If every believer was really walking under the control of the Holy Spirit, a lot of these petty issues in our assemblies would be solved immediately.

So I think this is really an important topic, and one that we need to grasp its significance. And that's part of this opening session, is the significance of the Holy Spirit. So let's think about his neglect.

We'll think about why is he neglected now, but we want to go back a little bit into the history of the church to show that this has been a common problem in the history of the church, has been neglect of this blessed person, the Holy Spirit. And so let's just look at some examples. One is, during the 16th century, there was a man called Sosinius.

I love these names—Faustus Sosinius. Like, we don't call kids' names like that anymore, do we? I mean, isn't that a fabulous name? Faustus. I like that.

I didn't call any of my kids that, by the way, but I do think it's interesting. Faustus Sosinius, he lived from 1539 to 1604, and he was from Siena in Italy, and he propagated this doctrine that came to be known as Sosinianism. And basically it was this, that the Holy Spirit is simply an it.

He is merely the outflowing of the eternal God. He's really, he's not really a person at all. He's just, this is just kind of almost like this energy that emanates from God.

He's not a real, he's just an it, not a real person. And Sosinianism continues to this day under, if you ever see a church called a Unitarian Church, right, they're not so popular anymore, but there's still a few of them around, but they are followers of Faustus Sosinius. Okay? So, they don't really believe in, they don't believe in the deity of Christ, and they certainly do not believe in the personality and deity of the Holy Spirit.

He's just an outflow of God, an it. And certainly, no attribute of God, because they would say maybe an attribute of God, something like that, ever functioned as creator. And one of the things we'll see about the Spirit of God is that he's involved very much in creation as other members of the Godhead.

Turn with me to the book of Job. We'll be amazed at how many references we're going to see from the book of Job during this study. But the book of Job in chapter 33, we read a very interesting statement, which show that this blessed person is creator.

He says in Job 33 verse 4, the Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life. And so here, the Spirit of God has made me. He's creator.

Now, so that's one individual. Another individual was a man called Arius. He's the father of Arianism, and he goes back even further.

This is back further than Sosinius. We have to go back to the 320s AD. So, in 325 AD, there was a church council called the Council of Nicaea.

And it was assembled because this man, Arius, although his doctrine was off, he was very eloquent. And he was winning people over, right? Because eloquence can sweep the masses. Think of Hitler, right? I mean, whatever you think of him, he was eloquent, and he was able to wow the masses.

And so, in the early church, here's this man, Arius, and again, he taught that the Spirit was the exerted energy of God. Now again, his teaching still continues today through the Watchtower Bible Entrapped Society, the Jehovah's False Witnesses, right? They are followers of Arius. So, this church council, 325 AD, there's much discussion.

He basically denied, again, the deity and personality of the Holy Spirit, but he also denied the deity of the Lord Jesus. And so, there's this big debate going on, and his nemesis was a man called Athanasius. So, you've got Arius and Athanasius.

Athanasius has got the truth, but he's not very eloquent. Arius has got lies, but he's eloquent. And so, it seems like at this council that it's going to go in favor of Arius, and the church is going to accept what became the teaching of the Jehovah's Witnesses.

However, in the midst of all of this, there was an African brother who dressed in a leopard skin, and he jumped into the middle of the arena, and he removed the leopard skin and showed his back, and his back, there was all the scars. You see, he was one of those that had been thrown in the arena to the wild animals, remember, in Rome when they were Christians, and survived. And his back was covered in scars.

And what he said to the crowd was this, all the bishops supposedly that were attending, he said this, he said, If Jesus is not God, and the Holy Spirit is not God, all this was in vain. That was his simple statement, and the crowd recognized. People have died because they believed that Jesus was God and the Spirit was God.

And as a result of it, favor tipped in the way of Athanasius, and so the Athanasian creed basically, well, Nicene creed came out of that. And so again, all we can say, it's been neglected, this subject of the Holy Spirit has been neglected. Let me just suggest to you that today, the reason the teaching of the Holy Spirit is neglected is that it's not that we deny that he's a real person, or that we deny that he's a divine person.

But it's almost like we live as if he doesn't exist. Our neglect, I believe, is a pendulum swing reaction to the charismatic movement. And you know what I mean by how a pendulum—it goes from one extreme to another, doesn't it? We go from one pole to another.

So you've got these people in the guise of teaching about the Holy Spirit who do all kinds of weird things—barking in the Spirit, vomiting in the Spirit, I mean, laughing, you know, holy laughter, all this. And you look at some of this stuff, and it's very deeply disturbing. And so the average Christian says, I don't want anything to do with that.

And so what do they do? They get as far away from it as they possibly can, and so it's almost to the point where he's ignored. Well, truth is never in a ditch. It's always in the middle, right? So we can't throw him out and say, I don't want anything to do with this person, because the Word of God has lots to do with this blessed person, and has a lot to say about it.

We can't ignore it. But on the other hand, we can't say, I don't want that stuff. That's crazy.

I don't want to be identified with those crazies. And they are. It's just bizarre, the stuff that goes on.

Truth is not in either place. And so we need to be people who are balanced in our understanding of the Word of God. Now, another reason that he's neglected is because of a verse in the Gospel of John, and John 16—we want to look there, please—John chapter 16 and verse 13 and 14.

John 16, verse 13 and 14. Lord Jesus is preparing his disciples for his absence. One of the things that he tries to tell them is going to be a comfort to them is that he's going to send another just like himself who's going to be with them forever.

Yes, he's leaving, but another is coming. And so there's much teaching in the Upper Room Discourse, John 13 through 17, about the person and work of the Holy Spirit, preparing them for this glorious age. And so he says in verse 13, how be it when he, the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth, for he shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak.

And he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine and shall show it unto you. Now, all we're doing is we're arguing the idea that—reasons why he's neglected.

And one of the reasons he's neglected is because, I believe, a misinterpretation of this verse. We say, well, look, it says, he shall not speak of himself. So, he doesn't want attention.

In fact, he shall glorify me. His purpose is to glorify Christ, right? So, we take that, and we run with that, and so we're not going to talk about the Holy Spirit, because he's not going to speak of himself, so we're not going to speak of him either. He wants to glorify Christ.

We want to glorify Christ. Well, there's a bit of a difficulty with that. Is that what it means when it says, he shall not speak of himself? Is that really what it means? He's just not going to speak of himself? Or does it mean something different? Let's look back, please, at John's gospel, chapter 14 and verse 10.

John 14 verse 10, Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? Jesus is saying, The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself. So, the Holy Spirit says, I speak not of myself. Jesus says, I speak not of myself.

But the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. And so, what the Lord Jesus is saying is not that he didn't ever talk about himself, but everything he says are the words the Father's given him to say. That's the idea, right? He says what the Father's given him.

Same with the Holy Spirit. He doesn't speak of himself. He's not speaking independently of the other members of the Godhead.

That's the idea, right? He speaks what the Father gives him to speak. So, there's unity in the Godhead. But let's go a step further.

He doesn't speak of himself, we might say, but he does speak for himself. Now, I'm not trying to make this difficult, but he doesn't speak of himself, but he does speak for himself. And I want you to see how much he has to say in the life of the early church—the Holy Spirit speaking of himself.

So, let's look at some references in the book of Acts and see the Holy Spirit speaking for himself. Acts 10, to begin with. Acts 10, verse 19, we read this, While Peter thought on the vision, so remember, he's seen this net come down from heaven with all these creatures in it.

While Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men seek thee. Arise therefore, and get thee down, and go with them, doubting nothing, for I have sent them. So, here we've got the Holy Spirit, and he's surely speaking, isn't he? He's speaking for himself, in a sense.

He's telling Peter, I sent these guys, you go with them, right? He's giving direction. He's a real person, and he's communicating, and he's got a message to speak. Acts 13.

Acts chapter 13 and verse 2. As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, they laid their hands on them, they sent them away. So they, being sent forth of the Holy Ghost, departed from Seleucia, and from thence they sailed to Cyprus.

The Spirit of God clearly speaking. Acts 15 verse 28. Acts 15 verse 28.

We read this. As they're debating, you see, all these Gentiles are getting saved, and the Jews, some of them are struggling with this, and they're saying, in order for them to be truly the people of God, they have to become like us. They need to get circumcised, and they need to follow the law of Moses.

You see, they need to be like us, the Jews. And so the church is debating, what do we do with all these Gentiles that are getting saved, by the way? What a great problem to have, isn't it? Wouldn't you love that problem? What do we do with all these people that are getting saved? How do we deal with them? That's a great problem to face. May God give us problems like that rather than problems of the flesh and fighting amongst each other.

That would really help us. And so notice what it says in verse 28. As they come to a conclusion of their discussion and debate, it says, For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things.

I like that. Seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and who are we to argue with him? If it's good for him, it's good for us, right? The Holy Spirit's making his will known, isn't he? Is he speaking? He's giving direction. Seems very good to us.

Book of Revelation, we don't have to turn there, but again and again and again, you read in the Book of Revelation these words, He that has ears to hear, let him hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches. Who's speaking? Holy Spirit's speaking, right? Do we have ears to hear? And so it's a very important

issue, right? He's speaking for himself. He's giving direction to the church very clearly.

And I hope this weekend we will have ears to hear what the Spirit of God would have to say to us. Did you come with an expectancy that the Spirit of God might say something to you this weekend? I hope you did. And one of the things that I think he's going to say to us this weekend is, stop neglecting me.

Give me the place that I deserve in your life and in the life of the church. Stop crowding me out. Let me in.

I can make huge differences to your life, your fruitfulness, your assembly testimony, if you just let me in. But we're neglecting him, and we have neglected him. So let's deal with some questions, because at least historically, some people have questioned, is he really a person, or is he just an it? They've also questioned the idea of, is he really God? So we want to address—this is the kind of the doctrinal section—we want to address the fact that he is a real person, and secondly, that he is a divine person.

And then we want to think of the implications of that for you and I, that he is a real person, that he is a divine person. And so as we consider his personality, that he's a real person. What makes a person a person, I suppose, you might ask that question.

Well, certainly we would say that in terms of—generally, there are aspects of personality that would include intellect, emotion, and will. Okay? Intellect, emotion, and will. Those are things that are characteristics of personality.

And so as we think about the Holy Spirit, we might ask the question, does he have intellect? Does he have emotion? Does he ever get emotional? That's a good question. And then does he have a will? And so as we address those things, we'll begin with the intellect, and we look at 1 Corinthians 2, and we look at verses 10 and 11, 1 Corinthians 2, thinking about the Spirit of God and his—I want to suggest to you massive—intellect. It says in verse 10, But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit.

For the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the Spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. So just this little simple statement, the Spirit searches the deep things of God.

Now if you've ever studied any kind of theology, you realize that it can be intellectually stretching at times. Okay? So let's talk about the doctrine of the Trinity. I believe it with all my heart, right? I believe the Scripture teaches that God eternally exists in three persons, Father, Son, Holy Spirit, but there's one God.

I believe that. Can I get my mind around it fully? No, I'm just believing revelation. I believe what God has revealed about himself.

Do I fully understand it? No, I can't wrap my mind around things like that. But the Spirit of God has no difficulty. The deep things of God, he searches them out, and they're not difficult for him.

That's partly because he is God. But all I'm just saying is he has a massive intellect that can take in things that I can't take in, the deep things of God. They're not difficult for him, and he communicates truth to us.

Let me tell you something. It's not your intellect ultimately that will give you understanding of the Scriptures. It's going to be the Spirit of God.

He's the one that's going to reveal the truth to you. So he's the one who ministers this. No man knows the things of God except the Spirit of God reveals them to us.

And so, again, he's got intellect. We'll just leave there. Emotion.

Ephesians, Book of Ephesians 4.30. And again, some of these things we'll be revisiting, because we want to look at this topic in more detail of grieving the Holy Spirit. Just for now, I want you to see, it says, Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby you are sealed to the day of redemption. And all we need to know is this, that grief is an emotion.

When my father died, and I was taking part in his funeral, and my son James had opened in prayer—this was in the Catholic Church. This was a remarkable opportunity. I always wanted to preach in the Catholic Church.

I have done it twice, both at my parents' funerals. But when my father had passed away, my son James had prayed, and it was such a moving prayer that I began to weep, kind of loss of my dad just listening to what James had said. And then I got up and I'm trying to preach, and tears are just running down my cheeks.

I could hardly get my words together, right? And it's an emotion. It's a good emotion. Actually, tears is a good emotion.

It's a safety mechanism. It's for our benefit that we do that. But here's the amazing thought.

It says, Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God. Isn't it amazing that I have the capability of causing grief to a member of the Godhead? I don't know if you ever think about that. I wonder how many times he's grieved over me.

My stubbornness, my slowness to believe the Word of God, my waywardness. How many times have I caused him to be grieved? But it's proper purpose. He's got intellect.

He has emotion, and he has will. Look at 1 Corinthians chapter 12 in verse 11 as we consider his will. And I don't know who's in charge of the thermostat, but if it's as hot out there as it is up here, it would be nice if we five sessions in heat may not be a good recipe.

So, not that shivering is going to help us either, but we need something a little bit cooler. Verse 11, it says, speaking of the gifts, and if you look at the context, it says, verse 9, To another faith by the same Spirit, to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit, so on and so forth. Verse 11, all these worketh at one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally or individually, as he will.

So, when it comes to your spiritual gifts that you got at conversion, this is a topic we'll look at later, but just for our purposes now, it wasn't a case of, well, I really want this gift. You got the gift that the Holy Spirit willed for you. Not that you willed for yourself, but he willed it for you.

Because he knows you better than anybody. He knows your personality. He knows exactly the right gift.

He knows where you are and what gift is needed. So, he's the one who, according to his will, determines who gets what gift. And so, again, all we're saying is, everything to do with personality, he has it.

And the Word of God uses personal pronouns to speak of him over and over again. So, when the Lord Jesus is preparing the disciples, he uses a masculine pronoun to describe the comforter that is going to come. So, just let's look at some of these.

John 14, now, preparing the disciples for his coming, and he uses the personal pronouns to describe how we would describe a person. And so, he says, for instance, in John 14, 16, it says, 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 shall be in you.

Now, we could go through a lot more references, but just next time you read through John 14 through 16, pay attention to the masculine pronouns that are used to describe the person of the Holy Spirit. He's a person, and he is given male gender. Even though the word spirit—you know, when we say the Holy Spirit—the word spirit is neuter.

It's neither male nor female. But the words of the Lord Jesus say, When he, the comforter, shall come. Male, masculine pronoun.

Personal pronoun. And of course, he acts as a person. We've already seen, he speaks.

He does things that a person does. He's the comforter. He comforts.

He can be grieved. He can be insulted. He makes intercession.

We'll look at some of these things in detail. But I just want to say, he does things—he bears testimony. He does things that a person does.

And so, I think we can conclude. And again, how do we come to doctrinal positions? Basically, what we do is we look at how God has revealed himself in the Word of God, and we gather that information together, and it gives us what God wants us to know about this person. And so, what we can say is, I think without fear of contradiction, is the Bible reveals the Spirit of God to be a real person who has intellect, emotion, will, and is described using personal pronouns, masculine personal pronouns.

He, the comforter. So, I think it's true that he's a real person. And he does things that a person does.

He acts as a person. But what about his deity? He's a person, but we want to say he's a divine person. Okay? He's a divine person.

And how do we come to that conclusion? Well, we come to that conclusion because there are certain things that are what we would call attributes of God that we don't have. Right? We're persons, but we're not like God in the sense of omnipresence. God can be everywhere present, is everywhere present at once.

We can't do that. We'd love to be. Wouldn't it be nice to be in more than one place at once? I mean, I'd love to be with my kids in Ireland, and I'd love to be with my kids and grandkids in Norway, and with my wife in Springfield, and I'm glad to be here as well, but I can only be in one of them.

Right? God is everywhere. Isn't that encouraging? I find that encouraging that he's everywhere. I think it's limiting that we're not, but that's not God's plan for us.

We're not divine. So, one of the attributes of God is that he is omnipresent, that he's everywhere present. So, look at Psalm 139 as we consider the Spirit of God to see does he have attributes that are usually designated as attributes of God.

Psalm 139 verse 7 through 10, Whither shall I go from thy spirit, or whither 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.

So, where shall I go from thy spirit, where shall I flee from your presence? And that's both comforting and frightening at the same time. If you're not grieving the Spirit of God, it's wonderful to know that wherever you are, he is. But if you're a rascal and you're trying to do something that you shouldn't be doing, that's also convicting, isn't it? He's there too, right? But he's everywhere.

He's everywhere present. He's omniscient. He knows everything.

Now, remember we saw that in 1 Corinthians 2, we won't have to turn there again, but he searches out the deep things of God. He knows what God knows. And so, God knows everything.

He knows everything. He's the only one that can search out all the deep things of God. He knows them.

He's eternal. That's one of the attributes of God—no beginning, no ending. Hebrews 9. This is, by the way, a powerful verse in terms of what we would say the Trinitarian view—one God eternally existing in three persons, all working together for the same purpose.

And so, in Hebrews 9 verse 14, we read this, How much more shall the blood of Christ—so, there's the Lord Jesus—who through the eternal Spirit—there's the Holy Spirit—offered himself without spot to God? There's the Father, right? Three persons, right there in one verse. But for our purposes, we're not studying the Trinity Knight now, although we're kind of touching on that subject. But what we're saying is, the attribute of eternity is given to the Spirit of God.

He is the eternal Spirit. The eternal Spirit without spot to God. And so, he's eternal—no beginning, no ending.

Omnipotence, all-powerful. Well, when we think of the Holy Spirit, what do we think of? Power, don't we? And, of course, we've already seen his involvement in creation. We'll see later on his involvement in resurrection.

We'll see his involvement in so many areas. But if you want a Scripture reference, look at one that we probably looked at over this Christmas period, and that's Luke's gospel chapter 1, where again we see power as something attributed to the Spirit of God. In Luke 1 verse 35, it says, "...the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the highest shall overshadow thee.

Therefore that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." And so, there we have power certainly designated as to the Holy Spirit. One other one that we'd look at, Acts 1 verse 8, again, that he's all-powerful, Acts 1 verse 8, one we're very familiar with in terms of Great Commission verses, Acts 1 verse 8, "...but you shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and you shall be witnesses unto me in Jerusalem, and Judea, and Samaria, to the uttermost parts of the earth." And so, again, power being attributed to the Holy Spirit. Another attribute of God is holiness, and perhaps the most common designation that goes along with the Holy Spirit is the word holy.

He's holy. And a great verse for this, and a very challenging verse, is 1 Thessalonians chapter 4 and verse 8. 1 Thessalonians 4 and verse 8, where we read this, "...he therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man,

but God, who hath also given unto us his Holy Spirit." Now, what's the context here? The context, verse 3, this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that you should abstain from sexual immorality, from fornication, that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel, speaking, I believe, of his body, in sanctification and honor, not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles that know not God, that no man go beyond them, defraud his brother in any matter, because the Lord is the avenger, so on and so forth. God has not called us to uncleanness, but to holiness.

He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given to us his Holy Spirit. So, let me just put it in context. So, in the society, the pagan world, like our own day, sexual immorality was rampant, right? It was a very immoral society.

And the Thessalonians were saved out of that background, most of them from a pagan background, and the temptations were like our temptations, and especially to sexual immorality. And so, he tells them that God's will for their lives is that they be holy, they be sanctified, they be set apart for God, and that they should abstain from sexual immorality. And he says, if you don't like this teaching—and some of them probably didn't, because they were used to an immoral way of life.

And so, he says, if you despise it, you're not despising man, you're despising God, who has given to us the Holy Spirit. And in other words, your involvement in this sin is involving the Holy Spirit, too, who is holy. And you're saying, I despise you, God, because I'm involving you in this thing.

And so, it's pretty serious stuff. So, basically, the attributes of God are seen as the attributes of the Holy Spirit. He's associated, as we've seen already, with God in creation.

In more than one scripture—let's look at a few others, Psalm 104, just to see. And again, this is by very nature, this is more of a topical study, because we've got to bring a lot of scriptures together. Psalm 104, verse 30, thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created, and thou renewest the face of the earth.

We saw that in Genesis 1, verse 2, the Spirit of God moved over the face of the deep. And so, he's involved in the work of creation. He's involved in the work of creation in a particular way, which I find very interesting.

Again, in the book of Job, Job 26, Job 26, and verse 3. I don't know what other translations say of this verse, but in this, my translation, sorry, verse 13, it says, By his Spirit he hath garnished the heavens, and his hand hath formed the crooked serpent. Well, these are parts of his ways. And so, this idea of a garnish.

Before I was a preacher, I started my career as a chef. And I worked in a five-star hotel, and we used to charge a lot of money for a little bit of food. And how we could do that is, it always looked pretty.

And we would, the garnish is those squiggly bits on your plate, you know, and then those kind of displays of greenery that kind of hide your steak, which is minuscule anyway. But, you know, that's what we would do. And it looked good, right? It was appealing to look at.

That's the garnish, those little finishing touches. And so, the idea is this, that God says that his Spirit, the Spirit of God, is the one who garnished the heavens. He put all those finishing touches.

So, next time you look at the sky and you see the starry heavens—now, we just say, he made the stars also. But actually, the finishing touches, the Spirit of God did it. He did the garnish.

Did he do a good job? He sure did, didn't he? How creative he is that he could do that. This is the Spirit of God. He's involved in creation.

He's involved in regeneration, right? The idea of the new birth. Again, anybody that's born again is born of the Spirit. That's something only God can do, right? Generation is giving life.

Regeneration is life again, new life. Where does that come? The Spirit of God. He's involved in regeneration.

These are things associated with God. He's involved in resurrection. The Lord Jesus, risen.

The Father rose him from the dead. He says, you destroy this body, I'll raise it up again. And then we read about the Spirit of God being involved directly in raising Christ from the dead.

Look at Romans chapter 1, for instance. Romans 1 and verse 4. Speaking of the Lord Jesus, it says, verse 3, Concerning his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead. And so, again, the Spirit of God is seen in that term, the Spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead.

But not just that. Romans 8 verse 11. Romans 8 verse 11.

His involvement in resurrection. It says, But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. The Spirit that raised up the Lord Jesus can also raise you up, too.

So there's just a lot of evidence that the works of God, things that are associated that only God can do, the Holy Spirit is said to have been involved in doing those things. He's linked with other members of the Godhead in terms of unity and in terms of working together. So, let's just look at a few references.

I want to start with Matthew's gospel chapter 12. Now, again, we're going to look at this in a different context as we go, but we want to just see another evidence of him being a divine person. It says, Whoever speaketh a word against the Son of Man, this is Matthew 12, 32, Whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him.

But whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall never be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come. Now, what is that sin that is just being committed? Look at verse 31. Wherefore, I say unto you, all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven to men, but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.

So, my thought is simply this, that the sin of blasphemy is speaking in a negative way of a divine person, right? Blasphemy is speaking ill of God, right? That's blasphemy. Well, if you can blaspheme the Holy Spirit, what does that mean? It must mean that he's a divine person, right? So, just, again, we're just putting evidence together. Prove that he's a divine person.

But he certainly connected in many ways with other members of the Godhead. Matthew's Gospel chapter 28, the Great Commission. Amazing scriptures here.

Verse 19 of Matthew 28 simply says this, Go therefore, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Now, notice it says baptizing them in the name,

singular, and then it talks about Father, Son, Holy Spirit. Don't you love baptisms? I mean, to me, baptism is such a marvelous confession and object lesson at the same time.

The confession is, when you're baptized, you're baptized in the name, singular, of Father, Son, Holy Spirit. What does that mean? You're saying, I believe in one God who eternally exists in three persons, right? That's a pretty significant confession, because that's how you're baptized, right? In the name of the Father, Son, Holy Spirit. Also, as you're being baptized, you're saying you believe in the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, right? Because when he died, I died with him.

When he was buried, I was buried with him. And when he rose, I rose with him to a new life. So, you're acting out that as well.

So, it's a tremendous opportunity to both confess and in a very public way act out what you really believe is reality that's happened in your own experience. It's a marvelous thing. It's a shame that so many of our baptistries are homes to spiders, not saints that are getting baptized.

We need to pray. Lord, I don't know if you've got one here, the one under there. Should we look in and see if there's any spiders in there? See, that's what we're doing, right? They're homes for spiders, because we're not seeing many people saved and baptized.

Lord, help us. We need to see this happen. So, we're looking at the verses where the three persons are linked.

2 Corinthians 13, great verse, 2 Corinthians 13, and verse 14, last verse of this great epistle, and the apostle gives a closing greeting to them, and he says, The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all. Amen. Now, do we ever see the three persons together in the Old Testament like we do in the New Testament? Well, yes, we do.

I'm going to show you two places where you see the triunity of God in the Old Testament mentioned together. Isaiah, the prophet, chapter 63, and verses 7 down to verse 14. He says, I will mention the loving kindness of the Lord and the praises of the Lord according to all that the Lord hath bestowed on us and the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies and according to the multitude of his loving kindness.

For he said, Surely they are my people, children that will not lie, so he was their Savior. In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them. In his love and in his pity he redeemed them, he bared them and carried them all the days of old.

But they rebelled and vexed his Holy Spirit, therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought against them. Then he remembered the days of old, Moses and his people saying, Where is he that brought them up out of the sea, and the shepherd of his flock? Where is he that put his Holy Spirit within him, that led them by the right hand of Moses with his glorious arm, dividing the water before them to make himself an everlasting name, that led them through the deep as a horse in the wilderness, that they should not stumble? And as a beast goeth down in the valley, the Spirit of the Lord caused him to rest. So didst thou lead thy people to make thyself a glorious name.

So, we have the Lord, or Jehovah. We have the angel of his presence, which is always the Lord Jesus in the Old Testament, the angel of his presence. And then you have the Spirit of the Lord mentioned several times there.

So there, again, we have the triunity of God. Let me look at 2 Samuel with you just for a second. 2 Samuel 23, and verses 2 and 3, again, a triunity of verses.

2 Samuel 23 verse 2, it says, The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, David claiming inspiration for his writings. His word was in my tongue. The God of Israel said, The rock of Israel spake to me.

He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God. So you've got the Spirit of the Lord speaking through him, you've got the God of Israel, and then you've got the rock of Israel. Well, who's the rock? Well, 1 Corinthians 10 verse 4, That rock which followed them was Christ.

Right? So there, again, we have the three persons mentioned in the Old Testament. So I want to just kind of wrap this session up by mentioning some important principles that we miss out on if we neglect the Holy Spirit. First of all, I want you just to think with me a minute about fellowship.

One of the wonderful things about the teaching of the New Testament is this, that you and I have been called into fellowship with divine persons. Now think about that. I don't know why God would ever want my fellowship, but he does.

Right? That's one of the marvels. Maybe you're used to this stuff, but to me, when I know who I am and what my heart is, why would God want my fellowship? But he does. And so we read in 1 John chapter 1, very familiar words, verse 3, that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you that you also may have fellowship with us, and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.

So you and I have been called into fellowship with the Father and the Son, but what about the Holy Spirit? Well, we already read it, didn't we? 2 Corinthians 13 and verse 14, that closing verse where we saw the three persons mentioned together. But notice what it says, the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. Now again, we all know about the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Our hymns often speak of the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, don't they? Wonderful grace of Jesus, greater than all my sin. We could go on and on. Do we know anything of the love of God? Well, yeah, we've got a lot of hymns about that too, the love of God is greater far.

We could just go on and on, couldn't we? But what about the communion, that's the same word, fellowship, koinonia, of the Holy Ghost? Interesting. So you've been called into fellowship with the Father and with the Son and the communion of the Holy Ghost, all three persons. What an amazing thing.

What does the Spirit bring to the life of a church? He certainly brings life. He's the life-giving Spirit. And there's so many scriptures that speak of the life that he brings to a church.

2 Corinthians 3 and verse 6, who also made us able ministers of the New Testament, not of the letter, but of the Spirit. For the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life. So he brings life.

He brings love. The love of God has been shed abroad in our hearts, how? By the Holy Spirit that was given us. The fruit of the Spirit is love, right? In other words, if you want to be in a meeting that's full of life and full of love, you can't have that kind of meeting if you don't have the Holy Spirit working in your life.

He produces that love. He's the one that gives that dynamic life, right? Life and love, very important things. He's the Spirit of grace.

Hebrews 10, 29 talks about people who despise the Spirit of grace. So that atmosphere of grace, where does it come from? Instead of a judgmental, legalistic background, the Spirit of grace comes from the Spirit of God. He's the Spirit of grace.

He's the Spirit of truth. When he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will teach you all things. He's the Spirit of liberty.

Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. See, isn't there a great danger? Look with me at Galatians for a moment. The book of Galatians, in chapter 3, we read some very stirring words.

Verse 1, O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you? Who's cast their spell on you? Who's put you under this spell that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ has been evidently set forth, crucified among you? Let me just get sidetracked there. I love this verse, because I think of how the gospel must have come to Galatia, and he says, when the gospel was presented to you Galatians, it was like Jesus Christ was set forth crucified among you. Like, they weren't there when he was crucified, but Paul and his companions preached in such a way it was almost like they were there at the cross.

He was set forth crucified. Don't you love that kind of gospel preaching, where you just feel like you're there, witnessing it? And you're called to make a decision. What are you going to do with this one hanging on the center cross? What will you do with him? And it's just like you're there.

Well, that was their experience. How did that experience come? He says, This only would I learn of you, received you the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith. How did they get saved? By the works of the law? No, by the hearing of faith.

And as a result of that, they received the Holy Spirit. And then he says this, Are you so foolish, having begun in the Spirit, are you now made perfect by the flesh? Isn't that a challenging verse? See, I would say that when you look at the history of the revival of New Testament assemblies, they were there in the New Testament, but men confused things, clutter things, complicate things. So the church got complicated, got buried in layers and layers of tradition.

And then there was almost like a divine work of the Spirit that showed people again, the simplicity that is in Christ. And it was a massive move of the Holy Spirit. It really was.

It was spontaneous. It was happening in all different places, all over the world. People wanted to get back to simplicity.

And it was a work of the Holy Spirit. And I believe that if the Apostle Paul could be around today and visit our assemblies, he would say exactly what he said to the Galatians. He'd say, Oh, foolish assembly Christians.

Who's bewitched you? You began as a move of the Spirit. Do you think you're gonna be made perfect in the energy of the flesh? No, the flesh is gonna destroy us. It's gonna tear us apart.

It's gonna wreck everything. You see, we've begun in the Spirit. If we're gonna move forward, we have to move forward in the energy of the Spirit, not in the energy of the flesh.

It's folly to think we could do that. Now, just a quick illustration to close with. See, if we really believe what we've been saying, one of the things the Bible teaches is this, that your body is the temple of the Holy

Spirit.

Now think about this. You have living within you an indwelling heavenly guest. I like to try and remember that, right? Living within us, individually and corporately when we're together.

You are the temple of God when we come together. Habitation of God by the Spirit. So let me just ask the question.

You see, I spend a lot of my life in other people's homes, traveling, and so I'm a guest in other people's homes. And I imagine that I was invited to a home, and they completely ignored me the whole time I was there. They didn't tell me where my bed was.

They didn't tell me where the shower was. They just didn't speak to me. I walked in the house, and they ignored me completely.

Even a weekend would be a long weekend, wouldn't it, if your guests completely ignore your presence? And yet you have living within you a real person. You have living within you a divine person. How much attention do you pay to your indwelling heavenly guest? How much consciousness is there that you have a guest? Does he feel comfortable? Does he feel at home? Does he feel welcomed? Or does he feel slighted and ignored? And I would suspect, because of the neglect of this person, that maybe some of us are ignoring the reality of the indwelling heavenly guest.

And if this weekend does nothing else, hopefully it might awaken us to the reality of what Scripture says is true of us. That's where he lives—in you, if you're a believer, and in me. And I don't want to spend my days ignoring this blessed person.

I think it would be a terrible mistake to ignore him. And I certainly don't want him to feel uncomfortable. But that's where he is.

But do we realize the reality? Well, as we go on, we'll see more of what that looks like in a practical way. Let's pray, and then our brother's going to come with a closing hymn. Our Father, we again just are thankful for the help given in this first session.

Lots of information, but Lord, we do ask that as a result there would be transformation, that we would pay more attention to this blessed person, that we'd be more attentive to his voice as he gave direction in the early church, very definitely speaking and leading and directing men. Oh, Lord, we know that one of the marks of sonship from the Word of God is this, that he that is led by the Spirit, he is the Son of God. Lord, we want to be led by the Spirit.

We want to know more of his workings in us, more conscious of his presence. And we don't want to be foolish like those Galatians to try to do the work of God in the energy of the flesh. Deliver us from such nonsense, and we'll give thee the glory in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Amen.

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