

Holy Spirit 3

by William MacDonald

The Holy Spirit performs three main ministries: regeneration, baptism, and indwelling, which are essential for a believer's spiritual growth and salvation.

Duration: 35:15

Scripture: Matthew 3:7

Topics: "Holy Spirit"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares the story of a man named Eric who had no knowledge or acknowledgment of God in his upbringing. However, as a child, he had a neighbor who told him Bible stories, which sparked a respect for God and the Bible in him. As Eric grew older, he became wild and rebellious, but one day, a girl approached him and shared the gospel with him. Although he didn't get saved at that moment, it was a significant step in his journey towards salvation. The speaker also discusses the difference between the treatment of believers in the Old Testament and the New Testament, emphasizing the adoption of sons and the believer's ability to call God their father. Additionally, the speaker mentions the Holy Spirit's role in regeneration and sealing the believer.

Transcript

He regenerates, John 3, 5, Titus 3, 5. Regeneration is a mysterious, supernatural work of the Spirit of God. It really is. Mysterious, it's supernatural.

It can be imitated, but it can't be duplicated. One of the things we're going to be doing in heaven is listening to testimonies of what the grace of God has done in human lives. You know, if we could take the time, which we can't do at a conference like this, if we could take the time to hear of God's working in your life, it's really marvelous.

Just let me share the story of one of our fellows out there, a fellow that's very dear to me and his wife and little baby. His name is Eric Shorkin. Eric was brought up in a home where his father died when he was young.

His mother, a German lady, raised him and his brother and sister, and there was no mention of God from one end of the week to the other. No acknowledgments of God. There was a little girl in the neighborhood that Eric used to play with, and she used to tell him Bible stories.

Isn't that interesting? Well, he thought it was interesting. He used to listen to the Bible stories, and they developed a respect in him for God and for the Bible. As he grew up, he got wilder and wilder.

One day he and his brother and sister were walking down a shopping mall near us, and a young lady, a girl, walked up to them and said, Have you heard the word of the Lord? Now there's an approach for some of you to use. That was quite an approach, wasn't it? Have you heard the word of the Lord? Well, the brother and sister started to mock, but Eric said, No, what is it? And she took him aside and explained the gospel to him. Well, he didn't get saved, but it was a link in the chain of his salvation.

Eric became really a wild man. He was a motorcyclist. He had a motorcycle.

It was a classic. It was taken to motorcycle shows. He had a fiberglass board giving all the details about it, and he had the word hellbound painted on the side of it.

The word hellbound and picture the devil with a pitchfork and the tails and the horn and the whole bit. One day at campus, when Eric was going through Chabot Junior College, one of our interns met him, began to work with him, and had the joy of leading him to the Lord. A transformation in that fellow's life.

He changed instantly, and he started to try to sell the motorcycle, but he couldn't sell it. He went on a gospel crusade down to Mexico. While he was down there, he was telling another of our interns, Jim McCarthy, how he was trying to sell this motorcycle, and he couldn't sell it.

And Jim said to him, Eric, would you sell a motorcycle? Now that you're a Christian, would you sell a motorcycle with the word hellbound on it? Eric, he said, I never thought of that. So he came home from the Mexico crusade, and he started to work on the paint job, and the Lord enabled him to get that top layer of paint off so perfectly that the underlayer was exactly the way the motorcycle came from the factory. Eric said, God is working in my life.

That was one of the first ways he knew that God was working in his life. The second way was that the motorcycle sold the next day, and he got the full price for it. I tell you, that's wonderful, isn't it? And you know, from the day that fellow trusted Christ as a Savior, he has never turned back.

When he was a boy, he used to love to play in bushes and wooded areas, jungle work. He loved the jungle. And since he got saved, God has called him to go down to Brazil to work in the Amazon jungle.

He was down there two years ago, spent the summer there, and the missionaries there told me that they never had a fellow come down that could rough it like Eric. And in the will of God, he'll be leaving in the spring of next year to go down to Brazil to work in the Amazon jungle. What a story, isn't it? Listen, only the Spirit of God can do that.

That's not reformation. That's not putting a new suit on a man, is it? Putting a new man in the suit. And Eric is a new man.

He's a real worshipper. I don't think Eric ever talks to me without talking about the coming of the Lord. That's remarkable, isn't it? His mother does nothing but nag him.

His brother has been in trouble with the law. Nothing. She never says anything about the brother.

Sister's been living in sin. That's perfectly all right. She just can't give Eric peace.

Why? Because his life is so convicting to hers. That's why. So if you think of it, you might pray for dear Eric and his wife Sandra and their little baby.

Eric was back with me. Eric and his wife were back with me at the missionary conference with their 13-day-old baby, breaking the baby in young. Regeneration.

You know, if there's someone here and you're troubled about your soul, and you're not sure you ever had this marvelous work of regeneration in your heart, we should speak to us afterwards. I'd love to talk to you. It's up to show you how you can know the new birth through the Spirit of God.

Okay, the third thing is, the third ministry of the Holy Spirit of God is that he baptizes believers into the body of Christ. He baptizes believers into the body of Christ. Please turn to 1 Corinthians chapter 12 and verse 13.

1 Corinthians chapter 12 and verse 13. I'll begin back at verse 12. 1 Corinthians 12, 12.

For as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. Notice, four by one Spirit, where we all baptize into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free, and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. Now please look at verse 13 carefully and tell me, what is the baptism of the Holy Spirit? If you were taking an exam and the question was, what is the baptism of the Holy Spirit? How would you answer that question? Well, it seems very clear to me that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is that ministry of his, which places a believer in the body of Christ.

Isn't that what it says? The baptism of the Spirit is that ministry of the Holy Spirit, which places believers in the body of Christ. Notice what the verse says, for by one Spirit were we all, we all. In other words, all believers in the Lord Jesus Christ are baptized by the Spirit into the body of Christ.

We all. If you want to know who we all is, you turn back to 1 Corinthians chapter 1, verse 2. Paul makes it very clear. He's writing unto the church of God, which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints with all that notice, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, both theirs and ours.

So he's speaking to all believers and he says, we were all baptized. We were all placed in the body of Christ. For us, this takes place at the time of conversion, doesn't it? At the time of conversion.

Actually, the initial baptism of the Holy Spirit took place at Pentecost. I often like it to the formation of an army. Sometime in the past in the United States, a law was passed establishing an army.

That was the beginning of the army. And since then, people have been joining that army. Well, it's that way with the baptism of the Spirit.

It took place initially at the day of Pentecost, but it takes place for us when we trust the Lord Jesus as our Savior. And it includes all believers in the Lord Jesus. Now I do want to stop here and say the baptism of the Spirit should not be confused with the filling of the Spirit.

They're different. And we're going to be talking about the filling of the Spirit later. And the baptism of the Spirit should not be confused with the baptism of fire either.

A lot of people think they're the same because there were tongues of fire at Pentecost. They equate the baptism of the Spirit with the baptism of fire. I'd like to show you that they're not the same.

John 1, verse 33. I'm going to begin back in verse 29. It says, The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me, for he was before me. And I knew him not, but that he should be made manifest to Israel. Therefore am I come baptizing with water.

And John bear record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode on him. And I knew him not, but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining on him, the same as he which baptizes with the Holy Spirit. And I saw and bear record that this is the Son of God.

Notice in this passage of scripture, in verse 33, it mentions the baptism of the Holy Spirit, period. Now turn back to Matthew 3, verses 11 and 12. But I'm going to begin again back at verse 7, and you'll see why in a minute.

Verse 7, But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he saith unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits, meat for repentance. And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father. For I say unto you that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire. I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance.

But he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear. He shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. Let me finish reading.

Whose fan is in his hand, and he will cruelly purge his floor and gather his wheat into the garner, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire. Now, in the first passage I read to you in John's gospel, he shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit. In Matthew 3, he shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

Why the difference? Let me just, before I give you the answer, let me just say something. Every difference in the gospel is significant. God gave us four gospels.

And you know what man does? He writes harmonies of the gospel. That's just what God didn't intend him to do. God never intended us to write harmonies of the gospel.

The Holy Spirit seldom repeats himself. He usually has a reason for every difference. And I can't give you the reason, but I think I can in this case.

If you'll notice in Matthew's gospel, it was a mixed audience. It was believers and unbelievers. How do you know? It says the Pharisees and the Sadducees came to him.

He said, O generation of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath that comes? Believers and unbelievers. When you come to John, there's no mention of unbelievers. No mention of unbelievers in that passage.

He shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit. What is the baptism with fire? Let the scripture explain itself. It says, verse 12 of Matthew 3, whose fan is in his hand and he will truly purge his floor.

He will gather his wheat into the garnet and he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire. What is fire? It's judgment. That's what it is.

It's the judgment of God, which leads me to say, beloved Christian friends, don't pray for the baptism of fire. You don't have to pray for the baptism of the spirit, because if you're saved, you've already received it. You're already in the body of Christ.

But whatever you do, don't pray. Of course, God would know your innocence in praying for the baptism of fire, and he wouldn't give it to you if you're a believer. But I think it's important to see that type of thing.

Actually, this quotation is found in all four Gospels, and wherever there's a mixed multitude, he shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire, wherever there's believers and unbelievers. But where there's just believers, he shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit. I tell you, these differences in the Bible are really wonderful.

Another ministry of the Holy Spirit, which we've already mentioned, but we'll mention it again, he indwells believers and the Church. We saw in John 14, verses 16 and 17, when a person is saved, the Spirit of God comes and he indwells in that person forever. He'll never leave.

And 1 Corinthians 6, 19 says that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. That's really wonderful, isn't it, when you think of it, when you think that in these lowly bodies, these bodies of our humiliation, the Holy Spirit actually resides. I think it'd be a good thing for every one of us at the beginning of every day, Lord, this next 24 hour period, help me to remember that my body is the temple of the Holy Spirit.

It would change our lives, wouldn't it? It would affect where we go. It would affect what we do. It would affect every aspect of our life if we're consciously practicing the presence of the Holy Spirit of God.

The Holy Spirit indwells all believers. It's automatic. It takes place at the time of conversion.

Notice Romans chapter 8, verse 9. Romans chapter 8, verse 9. It said, But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit. If so, be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. But if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

The distinguishing mark is the presence of the Holy Spirit of God. The man doesn't have the Holy Spirit, doesn't belong to God. And this is good, too, because some people say, Well, I just grew into Christianity.

When did you become a Christian? Well, I just kind of grew into it. No, you didn't. There was a moment when the Spirit of God came into your life that you're really saved.

Incidentally, how do you know that? Well, you know it by the Word of God. When you got saved, did you feel the Holy Spirit coming? No, you didn't feel it, probably. But you know it because the Bible says so.

Which leads me to say that in your Christianity, don't go too much by your feelings. They're very undependable. Go by the Word of God that never changes from day to day.

Say the same thing to you tomorrow as today. I think one of the big sneers today among Christian people is trusting their feelings instead of trusting the scriptures. I speak from experience.

I was telling somebody here that when I was brought up in a Christian home and I heard all these marvelous testimonies of miraculous transformations of drunkards and thieves and adulterers and all the rest of them, they became saved and they would get up and testify and say, Therefore, if any man is in Christ, he's a new creature. All things are passed away. Behold, all things become new.

And I just figured when I got saved that that's what would happen to me, that the lights would go on, the bells would ring, and I'd get nervous shivers in my system. And when I did trust the Lord, nothing happened, but I could feel and I guessed I wasn't saved. And I went on in misery for months, looking to my feelings to tell me that I was saved, and they never did.

Then I got a hold of a little booklet by George Cuttings, Safety, Certainty, and Enjoyment. He said, It's the blood that makes you safe. It's the word that makes you sure.

And then I read what Ironside said. He said, I don't know I'm saved because I feel happy, but I feel happy because I know I'm saved. See, I was putting the cart before the horse, wasn't I? Let me say that again.

I don't know I'm saved because I feel happy, but I feel happy because I know I'm saved. And how do you know you're saved, Dr. Ironside? Because the Bible tells me so. And then I read what Martin Luther, what Martin Luther King, Martin Luther said.

Martin Luther, somebody asked him, Mr. Luther, do you feel your sins have been forgiven? He said, no, but I'm as sure of it as that there's a God in heaven. For feelings come and feelings go and feelings are deceiving. My warrant is the word of God, not else is worth believing.

And then I read that statement by Dr. Scofield. I think that was the greatest of all for me. He said, justification takes place in the mind of God and not in the nervous system of the believer.

That was wonderful. See, I was expecting to feel it. I was expecting electrical impulses to go through my body to tell me I was saved.

They never did. But when I went to the word of God and when I read John 5, 24 and 1 John 5, 13, these things have I written unto you that believe in the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life, even ye that believe in the name of the Son of God. I got assurance of salvation and I've never doubted it since.

Wonderful, isn't it? Assurance through the word of God. So how do we know the Spirit of God indwells us? Because the Bible says so. We don't feel it.

Although I do say this, after we're saved a while then the evidence has become a new love for holiness, a new hatred for sin, an appetite for the word of God, a new love for Christian people. We know we pass from death unto life because we love the brethren. There are evidences along the way that confirm it, but immediately you can know through the word of God that he indwells.

When the Spirit of God does indwell a person, he makes a change in that person's life. There's no question about it. I don't care whether you are brought up in the strictest Christian home.

When you're saved, a change comes in your life. Now there is a verse in the New Testament that might be a little confusing to some. That is in the King James, but you won't find this in your modern versions.

It says in Acts chapter 19, this has to do with a group of men known as John's disciples. Acts chapter 19, verse 1, it came to pass that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul, having passed through the upper coast, came to Ephesus and finding certain disciples, said unto them, now it says in the King James, have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? It's an unfortunate translation. If you have a more modern version of the Bible, it accurately says, did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed? You with me? You got the King James, the old King James, it says, have you received the Holy Spirit since you believed? That makes it sound as if the coming of the Holy Spirit was subsequent to salvation, which the New Testament doesn't bear out at all.

It really should read, did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed? Just want to mention that in case somebody is hung up on that verse of scripture. Okay, we go on to another ministry of the Holy Spirit, and that is that he gives the believer a consciousness of sonship. He gives the believer a consciousness of sonship.

Galatians chapter 4, verse 6. Galatians chapter 4, verse 6. Well, I'm going to go back again. I'm going to go back to the first verse. This is very important.

Now I say that the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant as a slave, though he be Lord of all, but is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father. Even so, we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world. But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his son, it should say born of a woman, born under the law.

He wasn't made. Jesus is not a created being. He was born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem them which were under the law that we might receive the adoption of sons.

And because ye are sons, God has sent forth the spirit of his son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Now, this is very, very interesting. What it really means is that when a person is saved, the Holy Spirit creates an instinct in that person to look up and call God, Father.

It's an amazing thing, isn't it? I don't know if you've ever heard of it, but it's a wonderful thing. I remember out during the war years in Hawaii, we had the blackout there. At night, all the windows had to be blackened out.

No light must get out at all for fear of Japanese planes or subs. And I remember in a Bible class there, one night a fellow stayed behind. He wanted to be saved.

And we dealt with the fellow, and then we got down on our knees. And it was the first prayer I guess he had ever prayed. You know what he said? He said, Father, I've been in a blackout up until now, but now I see the light.

The first word was Father. Who taught him to say that? Spirit of God taught him to say that. That's an amazing thing, isn't it? But that fellow, a newborn child of God, should immediately look up into the face of God and say, Father.

That's what I mean when I say that the Holy Spirit gives us a consciousness of sonship. Now what this passage that I read is doing is comparing believers in the Old Covenant and in the New Covenant. In the Old Testament, you never find, I don't think you'll ever find an individual believer ever speaking to God as Father.

Can you think of any? I believe that collectively Israel said God was their Father, but I don't think you'll ever find an individual ever calling God Father in the Old Testament. What this text is saying that under the law, they were treated like slaves. And a slave doesn't call the master Father.

Master, huh? But when the fullness of time came, the Lord Jesus was brought forth, born of a virgin, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem them which were under the law that we might receive the adoption of sons. What does that mean? Well, it means that when you're saved, you're placed in the family of God as a mature adult son. Not as a baby, not as a slave, but as a mature adult son.

There are two things in the New Testament where children of God and we're sons of God, the same thing. No, they're not the same thing. Children of God means we're members of God's family.

Sons of God means we're placed in the family of God as mature adult sons. And this refers to women as well as men, with all the privileges and responsibilities of sonship. We could probably compare it to what happens in a human family.

Here's Junior and he's six years of age. Someday he's going to inherit all Dad's wealth. He's going to get it all someday.

In the meantime, poor kid, he's just treated like a slave. Get on your pajamas, brush your teeth, go to bed. His life is one series of orders after another.

But then he reaches his majority in life, let's say. Let's say he's 18 now and he comes home. What does his mother say? Put on your pajamas, brush your teeth.

She doesn't say that. She treats him like an adult in the family. And that's the difference between the Old Testament and the New Testament, the way believers were treated then and the way believers are treated now.

This is the adoption of sons. And with the adoption of sons comes that instinct in the life and heart of the believer to look up and call God his father. It's really something very beautiful.

And maybe we just have time to look at one more ministry of the Holy Spirit, and that is he seals the believer. The Holy Spirit himself is the seal. Let's look at some of these verses.

2 Corinthians chapter 1, verse 22. 2 Corinthians chapter 1, verse 22. Verse 21, Now he which establisheth us with you in Christ and hath anointed us is God, who hath also sealed us and given the earnest of the Spirit in our heart.

Ephesians chapter 1, verses 13 and 14. The seal and the earnest are often spoken of together, although we're going to look at them separately. Ephesians 1, 13 and 14.

In whom ye also trusted after that ye heard, and once again that should be in whom ye also trusted, having heard the word of the truth of your salvation, in whom having also believed, not after ye believed, having also believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession unto the praise of his glory. The seal in the Bible has three meanings to it. It means security, it means ownership, and it means destination.

The Holy Spirit is the seal. When you are saved, the Lord gives you the Holy Spirit. That marks you as belonging to God.

It's something like the brand mark that they used to put on cattle, or probably still do in the United States, or the dye that they put on the wool of the sheep. It's a seal, it's a mark of ownership. That sheep belongs to a certain farmer, that steer belongs to a certain owner.

Well, it isn't a brand mark in the body of the believer, it's a person indwelling the believer, and that's the seal. Ownership, and then security. The seal speaks of security.

Those that he seals are his forever, and it speaks of destination until the redemption of the purchased possession. It takes place at conversion, as I read in the revised version here, and it is until the day of redemption. That's a wonderful thing, isn't it? The believer in the Lord Jesus Christ is as sure of heaven as if he were already there.

That is one who's truly been born again. He's as sure of heaven as if he were already there. We sometimes think more happy, but not more secure, the souls of the blessed in heaven.

That's true. People in heaven are happier than we are, but they're not more secure than we are. Praise the Lord for that.

And so this is a wonderful ministry of the Holy Spirit. The seal of the Spirit marking us out as belonging to God, assuring us of security, and it's until the redemption of the purchased possession. And that refers to the glorified state, doesn't it? When we'll get our glorified bodies.

What a wonderful thing that is. We're presently in bodies of humiliation, and aren't they too? Bodies of our humiliation, but one day they're going to be fashioned like his glorious body. And the very fact that you have the seal of the Spirit tonight assures you of that glorified body.

Shall we look to the Lord in prayer? Father, we thank you for your word. It truly is a mine of wealth to our souls. Inexhaustible.

You think of your great heart of love that planned all of these things for unworthy sinners. We thank you for your marvelous grace that sought us until it found us and brought us to the fold. Help us to love you more, serve you more faithfully, so we see the Savior face to face.

We ask in his worthy name. Amen.

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