

WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?
SELECTED SCRIPTURES

It seems that we live in a time when theological error is particularly thriving. There have always been false teachers. They just seem to abound today:

- ✓ There is confusion about the church and unity — should we embrace every entity that calls itself a church or should we be “divisive?”
- ✓ There is confusion about the gospel — what does it mean to be a Christian? Does praying a prayer save you? Does going to church? Can one intentionally engage in ongoing, unrepentant sin and still be a follower of Christ?
- ✓ Who is Jesus? (Easter is coming, get ready for another attack on His historicity or person.)
- ✓ Are there errors in the Bible? If there are errors, can it still be trusted?
- ✓ Did God create the earth in six literal 24-hour days? Does it matter? (Yes!)
- ✓ What does God know? Does God know everything we will do before we do it? Or does He adjust His plans very quickly to what we do?
- ✓ Is man inherently good or inherently bad? If he is inherently good (and most say he is), from where do all the bad things he does come?
- ✓ When does life begin and end? Does anyone have the right to determine when others should live or die?
- ✓ Is marriage restricted to one man and one woman? Does it matter? Who decides?
- ✓ How will the world end? Are things getting better (as the evolutionary model suggests)? If so, why are there so many murders and mass killings and greed...?

It’s hard to pick a theological debate that is worse than the rest. Certainly the questions of the gospel and Christ are the questions with the greatest eternal impact. Yet there is one more that stands out as significant. It is the question of the operation of the Holy Spirit. Who is the Holy Spirit, what does He do, and what are legitimate manifestations of His work?

It seems that the things that are getting attributed to the Holy Spirit’s work are just more and more bizarre: not only speaking in tongues and prophecies, and being slain in the Spirit, but people barking like dogs, laughing uncontrollably, roaring like lions and worse. I refuse (for the sake of keeping your consciences clean) to recount some of the sexual escapades that are happening not only here but in other continents in the name of the “Spirit.” It’s perverse and sickening and is wholly unhonorable.

What are we to think about these things?

One thing we are to recognize is that these things are not new. They have always existed. And a benefit of that is that the Scriptures recognize them and give us instruction.

For example, in 1 John 3:24, John writes,

The one who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. We know by this that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.

We can be sure of our salvation when we recognize the work of the Spirit in our lives.

That statement triggered in John the obvious question — “how do you tell the work of the genuine Spirit from false spirits?” So in 4:1-6 he answers that question. One of the statements he makes is “test the spirits to see whether they are from God...” (4:1). To conduct this test, however, we are going to have to know what the genuine Spirit looks like and what He does. So for the next few weeks I want to take a small detour that I’ve wanted to do for several years and consider with you the biblical teaching about the Holy Spirit. We’ll begin today by thinking about the topic, “Who is the Holy Spirit?” and then move to the questions, “What does the Holy Spirit do?” and “The Fruit and Gifting of the Holy Spirit.” We’ll address some common questions like, “What is the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit?” and “What about tongues and prophecy?”

Today we want to lay a foundation and answer the question, “who is the Holy Spirit?” and what is the uniqueness about this gift that John says in 3:24 has been given to us?

*THE HOLY SPIRIT IS NOT JUST ANY GIFT TO BELIEVERS (1 JN. 3:24);
WHEN GOD GIVES THE HOLY SPIRIT, HE GIVES HIMSELF.*

(We will be referring to *many* passages this morning, so be aware that the sermon notes will be online by the time you get home this afternoon and you can get all the references there.)

1. The Deity of the Holy Spirit: He is GOD

- ✓ We know the Holy Spirit is God because of His NAMES
- ✓ We know the Holy Spirit is God because of His ATTRIBUTES
- ✓ We know the Holy Spirit is God because of what He DOES

2. The Personality of the Holy Spirit: He is not a BIRD

3. The Holy Spirit and the Old Testament

*THE HOLY SPIRIT IS NOT JUST ANY GIFT TO BELIEVERS (1 JN. 3:24);
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1. The Deity of the Holy Spirit: He is GOD

- We know the Holy Spirit is God because of His NAMES. When we name our children we pick family names, or names of friends or others we want to honor, or names that sound good to our ears. When God names someone, He reveals something about his character. So it is with the Holy Spirit; we only know His names because of what we read about Him in Scripture. When God identifies the Holy Spirit, He is revealing something about Him.
 - ✓ One Spirit (Eph. 4:4) — there is only one of Him and He lives in each one in the same way — producing the same kind of fruit and the same kinds of gifts in each one; He baptizes, fills, coordinates, orchestrates, and empowers the entire Body of Christ and has the same goals for each believer (Eph. 4:12 — for the building up...). We all came to salvation through the same regenerating work of HS and have same Spirit residing...

***Eph. 4:4-6** There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.*

- ✓ The Lord, the Spirit (2 Cor. 3:18) — This is the title often attributed to Christ, “Lord” (κύριος)

***2 Cor. 3:18** But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.*

- ✓ Eternal Spirit (Heb. 9:14) — only God is eternal...

***Heb. 9:13-14** For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?*

- ✓ Spirit of Glory (1 Pt. 4:14) — Glory refers to the weightiness and essence of God; it is to reveal God for all that He is with all of His significance...

***1 Pet. 4:14** If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you.*

✓ Spirit of Life (Rom. 8:2) — He is the Spirit who gives spiritual life (cf. Jn. 3:4-8)

Rom. 8:2 *For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death.*

✓ Spirit of Strength, of wisdom, etc... (Is. 11:2) —

Is. 11:1-2 *Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse, And a branch from his roots will bear fruit.*

The Spirit of the LORD will rest on Him, The spirit of wisdom and understanding,

The spirit of counsel and strength, The spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.

✓ Spirit of God (Gen. 1:2; Rom. 8:9; 1 Cor. 3:16-17) —

○ **Gen. 1:2** *The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters.*

○ **Rom. 8:9** *However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.*

✓ Spirit of Truth (Jn. 14:17; 15:26; 16:13; 1 Jn. 4:6) —

○ **John 14:16-17** *“I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you.”*

○ **John 15:26** *“When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me...”*

○ **John 16:13** *“But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come.”*

○ **1 John 4:6** *We are from God; he who knows God listens to us; he who is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.*

✓ Spirit of Grace (Heb. 10:29) —

Heb. 10:29 *How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace?*

✓ Spirit of Holiness, Holy Spirit, Holy One (Rom. 1:4; Mt. 1:20; 1 Jn. 2:20) — 152 times!

✓ All of these characteristics are unique to God. To give the Spirit these titles is to recognize His deity.

- We know the Holy Spirit is God because of His ATTRIBUTES.
 - ✓ Omniscience (1 Cor. 2:11) — No one through any kind of reason or research or self-knowledge can know what the Spirit of God knows. For Him to know all God’s creative and redemptive plans He must be God because only God can know all that God knows. He never learns; He always has known and always knows.

1 Cor. 2:10-11 For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God.

- ✓ Omnipresence (Ps. 139:7-10) — He is not just with us; He is with all of us everywhere...

Ps. 139:7-10 Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence?

If I ascend to heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, You are there.

If I take the wings of the dawn, If I dwell in the remotest part of the sea,

Even there Your hand will lead me, And Your right hand will lay hold of me.

- ✓ Omnipotence (Job 33:4) — There is nothing too hard for God and the Spirit, who even gives life; NT writers affirmed that they performed miracles through the Spirit’s power.

- *Job 33:4 [Elihu] “The Spirit of God has made me, And the breath of the Almighty gives me life.*

- *Rom. 15:18-19 For I will not presume to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me, resulting in the obedience of the Gentiles by word and deed, in the power of signs and wonders, in the power of the Spirit; so that from Jerusalem and round about as far as Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.*

- *Heb. 2:4 God also testifying with them, both by signs and wonders and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will.*

- ✓ Wisdom (Is. 40:13) —

Is. 40:13 Who has directed the Spirit of the LORD, Or as His counselor has informed Him?

- We know the Holy Spirit is God because of His WORKS.
 - ✓ Creation (Gen. 1:2; Job. 26:13; Ps. 104:30) — the Spirit “moving” over the surface of the waters has the sense of “hovering” — “the picture is that of the Spirit of God hovering over all things as a bird hovers over its nest, so that the Spirit of God is holding all things in control.” [E. J. Young; quoted in MacArthur, 26-7.]

- **Gen. 1:2** *The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters.*
- **Job 26:13** *“By His breath the heavens are cleared; His hand has pierced the fleeing serpent.*
- **Psa. 104:30** *You send forth Your Spirit, they are created; And You renew the face of the ground.*

- ✓ Virgin birth of Christ (Mt. 1:20; Lk. 1:35) — “At the very moment God the Son entered the body, womb, and ovum of Mary, the Holy Spirit filled her and superintended the act of conception...The Incarnation was a divine work, a miracle. Only God could do it, and He did so through the overshadowing activity of the Holy Spirit...Mary passed on to Jesus Christ her human nature, but not her sinful inclination. The Holy Spirit prevented the transmission of sin, thus the divine-human Son of God is holy in all aspects of His personhood.” [Gromacki, 31.]

- **Matt. 1:20** *But when he had considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for the Child who has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.*
- **Luke 1:35** *The angel answered and said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy Child shall be called the Son of God.*

- ✓ Inspiration (2 Pt. 1:21) — Just as the Spirit superintended the incarnation of Christ, so He also superintended the writing of the Word of God. They wrote with their personalities, but because of His activity, they wrote with His accuracy and inerrancy. When God breathed out His Word (2 Tim. 3:16-17), He did it through the Holy Spirit.

2 Pet. 1:20-21 *But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one’s own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.*

- ✓ Regeneration of man (**Jn. 3:5-8**; Titus 3:5) — He is responsible for both physical and spiritual life — He is sovereign over both.

Titus 3:5 *He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit,*

- ✓ Comfort of man (Acts 9:31; Jn. 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7) — “Comforter/helper” is one who comes to the aid of another — perhaps as a lawyer/defender; gives strength to one who needs aid.

- **John 14:16** *“I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever;*
- **John 14:26** *“But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.*
- **John 15:26** *“When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me,*
- **John 16:7** *“But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you.*
- **Acts 9:31** *So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria enjoyed peace, being built up; and going on in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it continued to increase.*

✓ Sanctification of man (2 Thess. 2:13) —

2 Thess. 2:13 *But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth.*

✓ Intercessor for man in prayer (Rom. 8:26) — Christ is our intercessor, but so is the Spirit

Rom. 8:26 *In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words;*

- **SUMMARY:** The Holy Spirit is God. Most probably affirm that. But it also means that He is *fully* God. He is not an inferior member of the Trinity. He deserves our worship, love, and obedience. It also means that when God gives us the Holy Spirit (1 Jn. 3:24), He is giving us Himself. All the fullness of God’s deity indwells the believer, empowering, equipping, and assuring.

“As to the Holy Spirit, if he is not fully God, the implications for salvation are again serious. Scripture teaches that the Holy Spirit regenerates believers and indwells and fills them, but if the Holy Spirit is a lesser God or no God at all, how can we be sure that he can do any of these things? Moreover, unless he is coequal in being and purpose with the Father and the Son, what guarantees that even if he tried to do such things, the Father and the Son would recognize his actions as appropriate and relate to us accordingly?” [Feinberg, No One Like Him; quoted in Cole, He Who Gives Life.]

2. The Personality of the Holy Spirit: He is not a BIRD

- The Holy Spirit is a person. In fact, there are three persons in the one God. We have no trouble thinking about Jesus as a person, because he took on human flesh; He “looks” like a person to us. And God is often given characteristics and qualities that make it easier to think of Him as a person — He is Father, He adopts us, He is pictured as having a face, and a strong right arm... But we tend to think of the Spirit in different terms. He is the *Spirit*, so we think because He doesn’t have a body, He is not a person. But personality is not dependent on possessing a body. Though He does not have a bodily form does not mean the Spirit is less a person.
 - ✓ Some have suggested that the Spirit is a bird (Jn. 1:32ff — “as a dove...”).
 - ✓ Some have suggested that He is fire (Acts 2:3 — “as of fire...”).
 - ✓ These (and others pictures like clothing, wind, oil, water) are simply images; they are conveying a deeper reality, like the Spirit being sent from God, coming with power and purity, etc.
- The Spirit is a person because of His MIND
 - ✓ He has *intellect*. He is omniscient and knows all things — to the depths of the Father’s knowledge (1 Cor. 2:10-11). In order to teach (Jn. 14:26), testify (15:26), convict (16:8), guide (16:13), reveal (16:13), and glorify Christ (16:14), He must have intellect.
 - ✓ He has *emotions*. The Spirit can be grieved. (**Eph. 4:30**). The word *grieve* focuses on physical and emotional stress and its resultant pain and suffering. “To pollute, therefore, the souls of believers by suggesting irreligious or impure thoughts to them, is a profanation of the temple of God and an offence to the Holy Ghost....Not only is his holiness offended, but his love is wounded....To grieve Him...is to wound him on whom our salvation depends.” [Hodge, *Ephesians*] Cf. also Is. 63:10.
 - ✓ He has a *will* (Acts 16:6-11; **1 Cor. 12:11**). He operates and acts according to a will that is sovereign because He is a member of the Trinity of God.

1 Cor. 12:11 But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills.

- The Spirit is a person because of His FUNCTIONS.
 - ✓ He teaches (Jn. 14:26).
 - ✓ He testifies (Jn. 15:26; Rom. 8:16).
 - **John 15:26** “When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me...”

○ **Rom. 8:16** *The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God,*

✓ He guides (Rom. 8:14).

Rom. 8:14 *For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.*

✓ He convicts (Jn. 16:7-8).

John 16:7-8 *“But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you. And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment...”*

✓ He sends (Acts 13:4).

Acts 13:4 *So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they [Paul & Barnabas] went down to Seleucia and from there they sailed to Cyprus.*

✓ He intercedes (Rom. 8:26).

• The Spirit is a person because of His RELATIONSHIPS.

✓ He is in relationship with the Father and the Son — He comes from the Father through the request of the Son (Jn. 14:16; cf. also Mt. 28:18-20; 1 Pt. 1:2).

1 Pet. 1:1-2 *Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who reside as aliens, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, who are chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood: May grace and peace be yours in the fullest measure.*

✓ He can be obeyed (Acts 10:19-21a).

Acts 10:19-21 *While Peter was reflecting on the vision, the Spirit said to him, “Behold, three men are looking for you. But get up, go downstairs and accompany them without misgivings, for I have sent them Myself.” Peter went down to the men...*

✓ He can be grieved (Eph. 4:30).

✓ He can be resisted (Acts 7:51 — Stephen's sermon).

Acts 7:51 "You men who are stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears are always resisting the Holy Spirit; you are doing just as your fathers did."

✓ He can be lied to (Acts 5:3).

Acts 5:3 But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back some of the price of the land?"

✓ He can be blasphemed (Mt. 12:31).

Matt. 12:31 "Therefore I say to you, any sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven people, but blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven."

✓ He can be quenched (1 Thess. 5:19) — His influence "extinguished."

1 Thess. 5:19 Do not quench the Spirit...

✓ He can be insulted (Heb. 10:29).

Heb. 10:29 How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace?

- The Spirit is more than just a "power." (Lk. 4:14)

"Spell this out in capital letters: THE HOLY SPIRIT IS A PERSON. He is not enthusiasm. He is not courage. He is not energy. He is not the personification of all good qualities, like Jack Frost is the personification of cold weather. Actually, the Holy Spirit is not the personification of anything. He is a Person, the same as you are a person, but not material substance. He has will and intelligence. He has hearing. He has knowledge and sympathy and ability to love and see and think. He can hear, speak, desire, grieve, and rejoice. He is a person." [A. W. Tozer.]

Luke 4:14 And Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about Him spread through all the surrounding district.

- ✓ The verse means that the Spirit possesses power — “power of the Spirit” could be translated, “Spirit’s power.” It means that He is more than *only* power. He is not just raw power, but He is a person who possesses power. He is distinguished from the power He possesses.
- ✓ Cf. also Acts 10:38; Rom. 15:13; 1 Cor. 2:4.

- **SUMMARY:**

- ✓ The Spirit of God is not just a power. He is a personality — a person. And that means that we have relationship with Him. He is to be obeyed, enjoyed, loved, followed. He is given to provide us wisdom, guidance, comfort, spiritual fruit, and spiritual gifts.
- ✓ And it is for those very reasons God gave Him to believers. And that is what He is working in us. We do not need to fear Him. “He is not a dark, mysterious, ethereal thing. We need to see Him for who He is, not just what He can do in our lives.” [Gromacki, 19.]

“We have just seen that the Holy Spirit is a Person and the third Person of the divine Trinity. The establishment of this fact is what gives a deep interest to...His work in the human heart. Indeed, if the Spirit were merely a power coming from above, it would be at my disposal and I could use it at will. But if the Spirit is a Person, and more than that, if He is God Himself, it is I who should be at His disposal, and love and obey Him in all things. Besides, receiving into our hearts not only a blessing, but the presence of the Almighty God is to have within us the source of all grace and of all possibility. Let us beware of failing to recognize the true nature of the Holy Spirit.”

[Pache, The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit, 19.]

3. The Holy Spirit and the Old Testament

- While the Holy Spirit operated in different ways in the OT, He was not a different Holy Spirit.
 - ✓ He restrained sin (Gen. 6:3).

Gen. 6:3 *Then the LORD said, “My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, because he also is flesh; nevertheless his days shall be one hundred and twenty years.”*

- ✓ He empowered & equipped OT saints spiritually (and even “naturally”) (Num. 11:17; Ex. 28:3).
 - **Num. 11:17** *[national leaders] “Then I will come down and speak with you there, and I will take of the Spirit who is upon you, and will put Him upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with you, so that you will not bear it all alone.” [cf. also Saul (1 Sam. 16:14); David (Ps. 51:10-12)]*
 - **Ex. 28:3** *[craftsmen; also 31:1-11] “You shall speak to all the skillful persons whom I have endowed*

with the spirit of wisdom, that they make Aaron's garments to consecrate him, that he may minister as priest to Me.

- **Judg. 3:10** [Judges] *The Spirit of the LORD came upon him [Othniel], and he judged Israel. When he went out to war, the LORD gave Cushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia into his hand, so that he prevailed over Cushan-rishathaim.*
- **Judg. 6:34** [Judges] *So the Spirit of the LORD came upon Gideon; and he blew a trumpet, and the Abiezrites were called together to follow him. [cf. also Samson, Judg. 14-19]*
- **Ezk. 11:5** [Prophets] *Then the Spirit of the LORD fell upon me, and He said to me, "Say, 'Thus says the LORD, "So you think, house of Israel, for I know your thoughts...."'"* [also Micah 3:8]

✓ He inspired Scripture (2 Sam. 23:1-2; Neh. 9:30)

- **2 Sam. 23:1-2** *Now these are the last words of David. David the son of Jesse declares, and the man who was raised on high declares, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel, "The Spirit of the LORD spoke by me, and His word was on my tongue."*
- **Neh. 9:30** *"However, You bore with them for many years, And admonished them by Your Spirit through Your prophets..."*

• So how was the Holy Spirit's work different in the Old Testament?

- ✓ The Holy Spirit was limited in NUMBER: not every OT saint received the HS. Cf. Gen. 41:38 (Joseph); Judges 3:10: 6:34; 11:29; 14:26; 1 Sam. 10:10 (Saul); 16:13 (David); Dan. 4:9 (Daniel). It is clear that not every OT saint was indwelt by the Spirit of God.
- ✓ The Holy Spirit was limited in DURATION: once one received the Spirit, He did not necessarily stay for the rest of their lives. Cf. Judg. 16:20 (Samson); 1 Sam. 16:14 (Saul); Ps. 51:11 (David).
- ✓ The Holy Spirit was for special SERVICE: the HS came to equip men to do specific tasks, and then often left. Cf. Num. 11 (Moses); Judges.
- ✓ The Holy Spirit's saving work was INCOMPLETE — because Christ had not died and was not resurrected. So the Spirit could not make men members of the body of Christ; He could not baptize them into one body (1 Cor. 12:13).

• **SUMMARY:** We have been given a unique and special gift. When God says He has given us His Spirit as assurance, we have a gift that the OT saints did not have as we do.

"The thought is unspeakably full of glory, that God the Holy Ghost can come into my heart and fill it so full that the life of God will manifest itself all through this body which used to manifest exactly the opposite." [Oswald Chambers]

CONCLUSION:

Go back a couple days to Valentine's Day. Imagine ladies that your husband has come home with the expected flowers and dinner plans. And then he presents you with an unexpected gift. It's in a gift bag that has a theme that has your favorite colors and theme. It even has the color-coordinated tissue coming out of the top of the bag. He's obviously gone to a lot of work to prepare this gift. "Oh, sweetie, thank you so much," you say. "It's so kind of you to get something for me..."

And then you unpack the tissue and there's a gift at the bottom of the bag carefully and well wrapped. You slowly undo the wrapping and expose the gift — "Thank you, honey. I appreciate you thinking of me on this day..." "But," you add, "what is it?" Even looking at the box, you have no idea what he's given you. Now maybe if you were a mechanic, you might know, but you're more comfortable in the garden than bent over an engine. You don't have any idea what the tool is he gave you; and while you appreciate that he gave you a gift, it just doesn't seem to be particularly valuable or important.

Sometimes we think the same way of God's gift of the Holy Spirit to us. We know the gift comes from God so it must be important, but we just don't appreciate this gift very much — because we don't know who He is. But as we come to understand that the Spirit is God Himself, then we realize that when Christ asked for this gift from the Father for us, He was asking for Himself to indwell us. God not only with us as Immanuel, but God *in* us. And when He gave us the Spirit, He gave us One who is a real person and can identify with us in our personalities. He is all we need as a friend, Helper, and Comforter.

The Spirit is a gift from God that is exactly what we need to live the spiritual life. So don't think of the Spirit as "the little brother of Christ," who is ok, but not everything that Christ would be for us. The Spirit is God Himself and He is exactly what we need. He is not only a gift from God, but following our salvation, He is the best gift God could give.