

***WHAT DOES THE HOLY SPIRIT DO?***  
***SELECTED SCRIPTURES***

Last week we began a short series on the Holy Spirit. It sprang from what John says in 1 John 3:24,

*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 last week we asked and answered the question, “Who is the Holy Spirit?” This week we’ll start to answer the question, “What does the Holy Spirit do?” And what I want to particularly consider this week is what theologians call the monergistic work of the Spirit — monergism = mono (single/one) + ergos (work), so the singular work of the Spirit, apart from any effort of man. This is what God alone does in man apart from any effort on our part. (Next week we’ll begin considering some of the synergistic [working together] aspects of the Spirit.)

The Spirit is given by God to us to indwell us, baptize us, and seal us. These are God’s provisions to empower us with His strength, identify us with Christ, and keep us for all eternity.

*THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IS GOD’S PROVISION TO EMPOWER US WITH HIS STRENGTH,  
IDENTIFY US WITH CHRIST, AND KEEP US FOR ALL ETERNITY.*

- 1. The Holy Spirit INDWELLS EVERY Believer (Jn. 7:37-39; 2 Cor. 1:22)**
- 2. The Holy Spirit BAPTIZES EVERY Believer Into Christ (1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 4:4-6)**
- 3. The Holy Spirit SEALS EVERY Believer (Eph. 1:13-14; 4:30)**

## 1. The Holy Spirit BAPTIZES EVERY Believer Into Christ (Rom. 6:2ff; 1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 4:4-6)

- The facts about baptism —
  - ✓ Spirit baptism is a NT concept; it isn't anywhere in the OT (and only about a dozen times in NT).
  - ✓ Definition: the baptism of the Holy Spirit is the means by which the Holy Spirit unites the believer to Christ and to Christ's body, the church.
  - ✓ Baptism identifies every believer with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection (**Rom. 6:2ff**).
    - What happened when Christ died?
      - ... He physically died and was placed in a tomb.
      - ... He actually absorbed the full wrath of God against sin.
      - ... He died as a sin-bearer (substitute) — He did not die for His own sin.
      - ... He was resurrected as the sin-conqueror (**vv. 5, 9-10**)
    - What happened when we were baptized into Christ's death?
      - ... We did not physically die.
      - ... Christ absorbed God's wrath against us. We were liberated from the Law so that we no longer attempt to please God on the basis of our own achievements (e.g., Phil. 3:5-8). At the cross, "The self-righteous, self-centered man dies."
      - ... **vv. 6-7**. N. B. (This is key!) And we were liberated from sin. We were freed not to sin (vv. 11-12 only make sense if something spiritual actually happened to us at the cross).
    - This is true of *every believer* — cf. **all of us** (v. 3; **we**, v. 4ff; also, 5:18ff; 6:2)
  - ✓ Baptism identifies every believer with Christ's body, the church (**1 Cor. 12:13**)
    - All believers have been baptized by the Holy Spirit — **we were all...**
    - This baptism places every believer into the one church of Christ — to unify us (Eph. 4:4-6)
    - This baptism is a work that is done for us; it is not something that we do for ourselves — **were baptized** (passive — someone — the Holy Spirit — did it to us).
    - This baptism is irrespective of socio-economic distinctions — **whether...** (also Gal. 3:27f); it eliminates all human distinctions.
    - This baptism is a reality — not an experience; it is dependent solely on God's work through the Spirit, completely independent of our obedience and actions. It is something God does for us without our knowledge of it at the time.
    - This baptism is not evidenced by speaking in tongues — every believer is baptized (12:23), but not every believer had the gift of tongues while they were operational (12:30).
  - ✓ Baptism is not filling, indwelling, or sanctification (which have all been falsely taught). It is the means by which the Spirit unites us to Christ and His church at salvation.

- The implications of baptism —
  - ✓ Because of our baptism into and identity with Christ, we can live the kind of life He did by saying “no” to sin and “yes” to righteousness (Rom. 6:6-7, 11-12).
  - ✓ Not only are we baptized into one body by one Spirit (1 Cor. 12:13), but we are also ***all made to drink of one Spirit***. That means that we have been connected to Christ so that we might draw on the Spirit’s power and guidance as we minister together to one another. This image of “drinking the Spirit” is a metaphor that indicates our dependence upon the Spirit and His provision for us (and alludes to the need to be filled, Eph. 5:18, which is next week’s topic).
  - ✓ Because we have been unified with each other — we are one body connected to one Head, Christ — then our lives together should reflect unity with and love for each other (**Eph. 4:4-6**). Why should we be diligent to preserve the unity of the church?
    - Because we are one body.
    - Because we possess one Spirit.
    - Because we have the one same hope.
    - Because we have only one Lord and Master.
    - Because we have only one gospel.
    - Because we have one baptism.
    - Because we have one sovereign God who is our gracious Father.

## 2. The Holy Spirit INDWELLS EVERY Believer (Jn. 7:37-39; 2 Cor. 1:22)

- The facts about indwelling —
  - ✓ Jesus promised that the Spirit would be given to every believer (**Jn. 7:37-39**; Jn. 14:16)
  - ✓ The indwelling presence of the Spirit is a gift (we do not gain His presence through our own work) (Jn. 7:39; 1 Jn. 3:24; 4:13).
  - ✓ This gift is only for believers, not for the world (unbelievers) (Jn. 14:17)
  - ✓ The Spirit indwells all believers immediately at the time of salvation (Gal. 3:1-3; Rom. 8:9-11).
  - ✓ The Spirit indwells even sinning believers (e.g. the Corinthians, 1 Cor. 6:19; 2 Cor. 1:21-22).
  - ✓ The Spirit indwells all believers eternally; He cannot be taken away and He will not remove Himself, e.g., Ps. 51:11. (Jn. 14:16)
- The implications of indwelling — Why was the gift of the Holy Spirit to individuals so significant? (He was present in the OT, but not permanently within every believer all the time.)
  - ✓ He is a sign of the New Covenant (Ezk. 36:27; Acts 2:18) — Holy Spirit marks inauguration of that covenant signaling that “the end is near” — God is close to completing His redemptive plan.

- ✓ He is a mark of the abiding presence of God — and inward “temple” (2 Cor. 6:16) and the constant presence of God (“God with us”). The importance of the Spirit’s indwelling us is not the location of the Spirit, but the effect of the Spirit on us. John Stott has made the statement, “If we claim to be Christian, we must be like Christ.” Yet there is a measure of futility to that statement. “How can I, who have sinned with regularity and still sin regularly, be like the One who is sinless?” The truth of the indwelling of the Spirit is the answer. The writer William Temple has said —

*“It’s no good giving me a play like Hamlet or King Lear and telling me to write a play like that. Shakespeare could do it; I can’t. And it is no good showing me a life like the life of Jesus and telling me to live a life like that. Jesus could do it; I can’t.  
“But if the genius of Shakespeare could come and live in me, then I could write plays like his.  
And if the Spirit of Jesus could come and live in me, then I could live a life like His.”*

- ✓ This is why Jesus said it was to the advantage of His followers if He departed — so that He could send the Spirit of God to be with them always (Jn. 16:7).
- ✓ This Holy Spirit not only provides security of salvation (Eph. 1), but also produces His work in the life of the believer — an abundant flowing of His power in and through the believer’s life that produces His fruit, becoming a channel (river!) of blessing to others (Jn. 7:37-39).

### 3. The Holy Spirit SEALS EVERY Believer (Eph. 1:13-14; 4:30)

- The facts about sealing —
  - ✓ A seal is a mark of authentication and it identifies ownership. Like a brand on cattle and a license plate on a vehicle, and a wedding band on a finger, the seal indicates to whom someone belongs. So the Spirit is given to believers as a mark of authentication and ownership that they belong to God.
  - ✓ How sealing was used in Scripture:
    - Security — e.g., Daniel in lion’s den — sealed with king’s seal (Dan. 6:17) — secure
    - Authenticity — Jezebel wrote letter with Ahab’s seal to steal Naboth’s vineyard (1 Kg. 21:6ff)
    - Ownership — Jeremiah purchased land and the contract was secured with a seal (32:10)
    - Authority — King Ahasuerus wrote a decree with his seal encouraging the Jews to defend themselves against evil Haman’s plot against them (Esth. 8:8-12)
    - SUMMARY = For something to be sealed means it is owned (and kept and made safe) by another. The one who is sealed is protected and secured.

- ✓ The sealing work of the Spirit is done at the time of salvation — *having believed you were sealed* = “as soon as you believed you were sealed...”
  - ✓ The sealing work of the Spirit is done apart from any action on our own — *sealed* is a passive; it happened to us apart from our initiation.
  - ✓ The sealing work of the Spirit is only for believers — *having believed...* (cf. also 2 Cor. 1:21-22).
  - ✓ Like indwelling and baptism, sealing is not a process; it is a one-time event — *were sealed*. (And there is no further command that we seal ourselves or seek to be sealed again.)
  - ✓ The Spirit is both the One who seals and He is Himself the seal (*with the Holy Spirit*; cf. 2 Cor. 1:22 — *gave us the Spirit*).
  - ✓ The purpose of the seal is not only to identify us as God’s but to serve as a promise of God’s future, full redemptive work for us — *with a view to the redemption* (cf. also 4:30). The gift of the Spirit and His sealing work is a reminder that while life is immeasurably better now with Him; there is yet a full completion of His work that is still future (we need that hope!).
- The implications of sealing —
    - ✓ Because we have been sealed, we are secure. We belong to God. All this work is what He has done for us; it is a down-payment of the future work of redemption that He will yet complete. So when John says, *we have been given the Spirit*, it is not only a statement of fact, but a reminder of a promise — whatever change God has worked in you so far, there is a future completion of your salvation that is still coming. You can be sure of it.
    - ✓ Because we have been sealed by the Holy Spirit, we are enabled to live like Christ (that’s indwelling), but we also know *how* we are to live — He sealed us for the purpose of living for Him and the Triune Godhead (Eph. 4:30) — so we know not to grieve Him by disobedience.
    - ✓ At a wedding, “you may kiss the bride” may seem “anticlimactic, but it serves as a seal.
      - At one wedding, in an editing error, I forgot to include this in my rehearsal notes — the groom got worried when I skipped that part!
      - What is the real value of the kiss? The vows have already been made and rings exchanged.
      - The kiss authenticates the promise, provides the security of the commitment, demonstrates ownership of the other — it is a “seal of affirmation...”
      - Similarly, the HS seals believers — we are kept by God, but His inward presence is a seal of His ownership of us and our future with Him. The Spirit is given to us to seal us, making us secure for day of redemption.

## CONCLUSION: