

"You and Your Beliefs"--Pneumatology, part 1

[after finishing Christology, part 2—we ran out of time on 3/1/06]

So often people view the Christian life as a lifestyle. Being a Christian means we do certain things and don't do other things. Granted, if we are a Christian we will do certain things and avoid others. But fundamentally, being a Christian is a *relationship* between a person and the Living God.

Who is this person with whom we have a relationship? He is a Triune being.

Discuss: What does *Triune* mean?

For the past two weeks we have been seeking to get to know the person of God better. Last week we ran out of time as we were considering the person and work of Christ. We'll begin there this evening, and then break new ground in the study of God the Holy Spirit.

Unfinished Material from Last Time: Begin session by finishing Christology, part 2

What are the works of Christ? [See the first three works which we saw last time...] Here's where we left off...

D. Jesus Christ is building and protecting His Church. (Mt 16:18)

1. *He gave gifts to His Church.* (Eph 4:8; Rom 12:5-6)

2. *He intercedes for His People.* (1 Jn 2:1; Heb 4:14-16)

Discuss: How does this truth affect you?

What will Christ do in the future? The Bible explains...

E. Jesus Christ promised He would come again. (Jn 14:1-4)

What will Jesus do at His second coming to earth? The following...

1. *He will rescue and reward His people.* (1 Cor 3:14; 15:51-58;

II Cor 5:10; I Thes 4:13-18)

2. *He will judge the world.* (Rev 4-21)

3. *He will rule the world in His Messianic Kingdom. (Rev 20:4)*

4. *He will create a new heaven and new earth. (Rev 21:1; II Pt 3:13)*

5. *He will restore the redeemed universe to the Father. (I Cor 15:28)*

Discuss: Why does the Bible tell us ahead of time what Jesus is going to do?

Application: How should this knowledge of Christ's work affect our lives today?

1. We must *believe* Him and *submit* to Him.
2. We should *worship* Him.
3. We should *tell others* about Him.

New Material: The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit, part 1

There is great confusion about the Holy Spirit today. Unfortunately that has led to a neglect of His Person and Work by many in our circles.

Discuss: What do you think of first when you hear the mention of the Holy Spirit?

We want to take two weeks to get to know better the wonderful person of the Holy Spirit. This week we'll explore what the Bible says about *who He is*, and next time we'll examine *His works*.

I. Who is the Holy Spirit?

Discuss: If your 5 year old asks you, "Who is the Holy Spirit?" what would you say?

Let's examine the Scriptures to answer that question...

A. The Holy Spirit is a Person, not a "thing" or a "force."

The Holy Spirit is not an impersonal force. He is a person. He is the third person of the Triune God. He has existed throughout eternity in perfect fellowship with God the Father and God the Son.

Gen 1:2 "And the earth was w/o form...And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."

Gen 1:26 "And God said, Let US make man in OUR image..."

As a Person, the Holy Spirit is also vitally involved in relationships with people. He indwells His people, as we'll see later. As a person, He can be grieved (Eph 4:30). He can be lied to (Acts 5:3).

Caution: We shouldn't call the Holy Spirit "It." Why not?

B. The Holy Spirit is God.

Problem: Some have denied the Deity of the Holy Spirit. Arius, a presbyter of Alexandria in the fourth century, did. He taught that God is One Eternal Person, that He created Christ, who in turn created the Holy Spirit. Is that true? No. Though that teaching gained a stronghold in the church, it was countered by the Nicene Creed in AD 325.

Key: The Holy Spirit is God. How do we know?

For starters, He is called "God" in Acts 5:3-4. Furthermore...

1. His Attributes

The attributes ascribed generally to God in the Bible also reflect the character of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is...

--Holy (Eph 4:30)

--Eternal (Heb 9:14)

--Omniscient (I Cor 2:10)

--Loving (Rom 15:30)

--Good (Neh 9:20)

2. His Names

--**Paraclete** (Comforter, Counselor) = one called alongside

Jn 14:16-17 "And I will pray the Father...another Comforter..."

Greek Word = Paraclete = an advocate who takes up one's case; an ally fighting on one's side; someone who strengthens and encourages

The Holy Spirit is a Personal Agent. Jesus calls Him "Another" Paraclete. That is, Jesus was the first. The Spirit is the second. The Holy Spirit is just as much a Person as the Lord Jesus.

--The **Earnest** of our Inheritance

Eph 1:13-14 "ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit...who is the earnest of our..."

II Cor 1:22 "Who hath also sealed us, and given us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts." (also: II Cor 5:5)

Key: We live between the two comings of Jesus Christ, the Age of the Spirit. The Spirit is the Earnest, the Downpayment, the Guarantee, the "Engagement Ring." Successful Christian living demands we cooperate with the

Holy Spirit.

Gal 5:16 "Walk in the Spirit..."

Rom 5:5 "...the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who is given unto us."

3. *Emblems of the Holy Spirit in the Bible*

--Wind

Jn 3:8 "The wind blows where it will...so is every one that is born of the Spirit."

--Dove

Discuss: Can you think of passages in the Bible where all three persons of the Trinity appear together? eg-- Jesus' baptism (Mt 3:16-17)

C. Where is the Holy Spirit?

1. *He is everywhere (Ps 139:7-10).*

2. *He is in His Temple .*

What and where is the Temple of the Spirit? It's a two-part answer...

a. The Temple is the Church (I Cor 3:16)

I Cor 3:16 "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God , and the Spirit dwells in you."

Note: "You" is plural. The Spirit dwells in His people, the Church.

b. The Temple is individual believers (I Cor 6:19-20).

I Cor 6:19-20 "What? Know ye not that your body is the temple...?"

Challenge: It's a serious thing what we do with God's Temple . What are some ways we can misuse His temple and thereby dishonor Him?

--overeating?

--abusing it with alcohol or nicotine or caffeine?

Application: Discuss the following two questions...

1. Respond to the statement, "I want to go to a church where I can feel the Spirit."

What is often meant by this statement? What is the person looking for? Is there validity in his desire? Is there danger?

2. How should it affect us knowing the truth about the Holy Spirit we've seen from God's Word in this study?

Challenge: Cooperating with the Holy Spirit is vital for successful Christian living? Gal 5:25 says, "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit." (NIV "Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.")

Are you keeping in step with the Spirit? That raises the question, *how do we do it?* A soldier who keeps in step follows his commander. Obedience is vital.

Problem: Dr. Victor Matthews suggests there are 2 basic sins against the Spirit.

1. The Sin of Passivity

2. The Sin of Pretense--pretend that things are OK when they are not

Application: Here's the problem (acc to Matthews). Why are so many Christians characterized by mediocrity? It boils down to a refusal to cooperate with the ministry of the Holy Spirit. There's a lack of obedience. The bottom line is this. Cooperating with the Holy Spirit is not high on our priority list. It doesn't mean very much to us. We're passive.

If we could cut away the religious cloak from our lives, do you know what we'd discover in many of our lives? The Christian life is not really important to us. We're willing to sacrifice for things that are really important.

Eg--Go to school full time, and work full time to get an Education

Eg--Burn the candle at both ends to get a business started

We may claim we would die for Jesus, but we won't live for Him! Many of us try to do the least, the minimum we can do to get by in the Christian life.

That grieves the Holy Spirit. He desires to transform our lives. He has a great and gracious work He aims to accomplish in us, to the honor of Jesus Christ.

Q: Is it a priority in your (my) life to cooperate with the Holy Spirit?

Next week...

II. What is the Work of the Holy Spirit?

[\[1\]](#) These unedited notes were prepared for use in a Wednesday evening, discussion-oriented Bible study at Wheelersburg Baptist Church in Wheelersburg , Ohio . Although the notes are in draft form, I trust the seed thoughts contained will be used by our gracious God for your edification. –Pastor Brad Brandt