

“The Biblical Miracle’s Muscle”

Zechariah 4:6

August 30, 2020

INTRO: Ever tried to get 2 people to like each other?

- You KNOW they’d be great together...
- You do your best to describe them to each other

CONTEXT:

- A. Message
- B. Motive
- C. Miracle**
- D. Messiah
- E. Muscle**
- F. Mission
- G. Methods

BIG IDEA: The Holy Spirit is the Messiah’s miraculous Muscle.

PREVIEW:

- I. The Holy Spirit is God
- II. The Holy Spirit Empowers Life
- III. The Holy Spirit Purifies & Sanctifies
- IV. The Holy Spirit Reveals & Illuminates
- V. The Holy Spirit Advocates for Christians
- VI. The Holy Spirit Anoints God’s Children
- VII. The Holy Spirit Unites & Unifies the Church
- VIII. The Holy Spirit Witnesses to the World

T/S: Let’s meet the Muscle!

Joel 2:28a

after that, I will pour out My Spirit on all mankind

Zechariah 4:6

"This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel, 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' says the LORD of hosts...'

I. The Holy Spirit is God

The work of the Holy Spirit is to manifest the active presence of God in the world, and especially in the church. This definition indicates that the Holy Spirit is the member of the Trinity whom the Scripture most often represents as being present to do God's work in the world.... ...after Jesus ascended into heaven, and continuing through the entire church age, the

Holy Spirit is now the primary manifestation of the presence of the Trinity among us. He is the one who is most prominently present with us now. - **Grudem**

➤ Attributes of God:

- He is **creating** (Genesis 1:2)
- He is **eternal** (Hebrews 9:14)
- He is **omniscient** (1 Cor. 2:10-11)
- He **applies salvation!**

Galatians 4:6

Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!"

II. *The Holy Spirit Empowers Life*

➤ See **Ephesians 2:1-10!!!**

Jesus stood at the tomb of Lazarus, who had been dead for four days, and shouted in a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out” (John 11:43). When Jesus spoke those words, Lazarus’ heart instantly began to beat and pump blood. Brain activity resumed. Life returned to the body, and he came forth from the tomb. That is exactly what happens to us in our rebirth.

The same Spirit who brought life out of the abyss and who brought Lazarus back from the grave raises us from spiritual death by causing us to be born a second time.” - **R.C. Sproul**

From the very beginning of creation, we have an indication that the Holy Spirit’s work is to complete and sustain what God the Father has planned and what God the Son has begun... And at Pentecost, with the beginning of the new creation in Christ, it is the Holy Spirit who comes to grant power to the church (Acts 1:8; 2:4, 17-18). - Grudem

➤ Empowered **Living**

“It is the Spirit who gives life...” - John 6:63

➤ *“If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit which dwells in you” - Rom. 8:11*

➤ Empowered **Witnessing** (Acts 1:8)

➤ Empowered **Preaching**

➤ Empowered **PRAYER** (Rom. 8:26)

“We do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words”

- Empowered **Serving**
- Empowered **Hearing** (Heb. 3:7; 10:15)
- Empowered **Spiritual GIFTS** (Giver v. gifts now)

III. *The Holy Spirit Purifies & Sanctifies*

*“You were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ **and in the Spirit** of our God” (1 Cor. 6:11; see also Titus 3:5).*

After the initial break with sin... He brings forth the **“fruit of the Spirit”** within us (“love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control,” Gal. 5:22-23), those qualities that reflect the character of God.

Sanctification comes by the power of the Holy Spirit (2 Thess. 2:13; 1 Peter 1:2; cf. Rom. 8:4, 15-16)

“being changed into his likeness...” “comes from the Lord who is the Spirit” (2 Cor. 3:18).

He is called the Holy Spirit because there is more than one kind of spirit. *“Do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God” (1 John 4:1a).*

“The Holy Spirit never entices us to do something that is unholy. Neither does the Holy Spirit ever incline us to embrace a lie.”

IV. *The Holy Spirit Reveals & Illuminates*

“The Spirit awakens in us a sensibility to the excellence of the things of God. But He does not operate against the Word of God. The Spirit works in the Word, with the Word, and through the Word. In other words, He takes us to the revelation of God and shows it to us in such a way that He overcomes our natural hostility or bias against the truth of God and shows us the loveliness of it.” - Sproul

➤ Revelation to the Prophets & Apostles

i. **2 Timothy 3:16-17**

ii. **2 Peter 1:21** - *“men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit”*

➤ He gives evidence of God’s presence

- He reveals His desires to us so that we can be led by those desires and follow them (**Rom. 8:4-16; Gal. 5:16-25**).
- He gives gifts that manifest his presence (**1 Cor. 12:7-11**).
- He works miraculous signs and wonders (**Hebrews 2:4; cf. 1 Cor. 2:4; Rom. 15:19**).

➤ He guides & directs God’s people

- **Jesus** (wilderness), **Peter, Philip, Paul, Antioch**

➤ The illuminates & enables us to understand:

“We have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is from God, that we might understand the gifts bestowed on us by God” (**1 Cor. 2:12**).

V. *The Holy Spirit Advocates for Christians*

“A parakletos was someone who was called to stand alongside another. It usually was applied to an attorney, but not just any attorney. Technically, the parakletos was the family attorney who was on a permanent retainer. Any time a problem arose in the family, the parakletos was on call, and he would come immediately to assist in the struggle. That is the way it is in our relationship with the Holy Spirit.”

“The Holy Spirit comes to the people of Christ not to heal their wounds after a battle but to strengthen them before and during a struggle. The idea is that the church operates not so much as a hospital but as an army... So, the Holy Spirit comes to empower and strengthen Christians, to ensure victory or conquest.”

- Sproul

VI. *The Holy Spirit Anoints God's Children*

“The prophet **Joel wrote**: *“And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh...”*

every person in the fellowship of God would be so endowed.

Jesus had told the disciples this would happen in Acts 1...

On the day of Pentecost, the Spirit indeed came upon the disciples with power

“After that anointing by the Spirit, the disciples were changed men. They began to preach that Jesus was the Christ, the Savior, and they would not be silenced even by threats of execution. Soon, they began to take the message of the gospel everywhere, just as Jesus had commanded them, and soon it was said of them that they had “turned the world upside down” (Acts 17:6). Such is the power of the anointing the Spirit gives to each and every person who trusts in Jesus Christ under the new covenant.” - R.C. Sproul

VII. *The Spirit Unites & Unifies the Church*

When the Holy Spirit was poured out on the church at Pentecost, Peter proclaimed that the prophecy of **Joel 2:28-32** was fulfilled: (see Acts 2:16-18 & 41-47)

- **Ekklesia** - *“by your love for one another...”*
- **Koinonia!**
- **Homothoomodon**

There is an emphasis on the Holy Spirit coming on a community of believers—not just a leader like Moses...

“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all” (2 Cor. 13:14).

VIII. *The Spirit Witnesses to the World*

Many examples in both the Old and New Testament indicate that the Holy Spirit will bestow or withdraw blessing according to whether or not He is pleased by the situation...

- Do not grieve the Holy... **Eph. 4:30**
- Do not quench the Spirit **1 Thess. 5:19**
- Do not outrage the Spirit **Heb. 10:29**

REVIEW: The Holy Spirit is the Messiah's miraculous Muscle.

CLOSE:

Uniting the Spirit's witness with OUR witness:

To be filled with the Holy Spirit is to be filled with the immediate presence of God himself, and it therefore will result in feeling what God feels, desiring what God desires, doing what God wants, speaking by God's power, praying and ministering in God's strength, and knowing with the knowledge which God himself gives. – **Grudem**

Let's PRAY!

Research Notes:

Zechariah 12:10

"I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn.

Wayne Grudem:

"Systematic Theology"

*We may define the work of the Holy Spirit as follows:
The work of the Holy Spirit is to manifest the active presence of God in the world, and especially in the church. This definition indicates that the Holy Spirit is the member of the Trinity whom the Scripture most often represents as being present to do God's work in the world.*

Although this is true to some extent throughout the Bible, it is particularly true in the new covenant age. ...after Jesus ascended into heaven, and continuing through the entire church age, the Holy Spirit is now the primary manifestation of the presence of the Trinity among us. He is the one who is most prominently present with us now.

Grudem's Outline:

- I. The Spirit EMPOWERS
 - a. He gives life
 - b. He gives power for service
- II. The Spirit PURIFIES
- III. The Spirit REVEALS
 - a. Prophets & Apostles get revelation
 - b. Evidence of God's presence
 - c. Guides & directs God's people
 - d. Creates God-like atmospheres
 - e. Gives assurance
 - f. Teaches & Illuminates
- IV. The Spirit UNIFIES
- V. The Spirit WITNESSES

From the very beginning of creation we have an indication that the Holy Spirit's work is to complete and sustain what God the Father has planned and what God the Son has begun... And at Pentecost, with the beginning of the new creation in Christ, it is the Holy Spirit who comes to grant power to the church (Acts 1:8; 2:4, 17-18). Because the Holy Spirit is the person of the Trinity through whom God particularly manifests his presence in the new covenant age, it is appropriate that Paul should call the Holy Spirit the "first fruits" (Rom. 8:23) and the "guarantee" (or "down payment," 2 Cor. 1:22; 5:5) of the full manifestation of God's presence that we will know in the new heavens and new earth (cf. Rev. 21:3-4).

Even in the Old Testament, it was predicted that the presence of the Holy Spirit would bring abundant blessings from God: Isaiah predicted a time when the Spirit would bring great renewal.

God prophesied through Isaiah to Jacob, “For I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon your descendants and my blessing on your offspring” (Isa. 44:3).

By contrast, the departure of the Holy Spirit removed the blessing of God from a people: *“But they rebelled and grieved his holy Spirit; therefore he turned to be their enemy, and himself fought against them” (Isa. 63:10).*

Nonetheless, several prophecies in the Old Testament predicted a time when the Holy Spirit would come in greater fullness, a time when God would make a new covenant with his people

(Ezek. 36:26-27; 37:14; 39:29; Joel 2:28-29).

We may distinguish four aspects of the work of the Holy Spirit to bring evidence of God’s presence and to bless: (1) the Holy Spirit empowers; (2) the Holy Spirit purifies; (3) the Holy Spirit reveals; (4) the Holy Spirit unifies. We will examine each of these four activities below.

Finally, **we must recognize that these activities of the Holy Spirit are not to be taken for granted, and they do not just happen automatically among God’s people. Rather, the Holy Spirit reflects the pleasure or displeasure of God with the faith and obedience—or unbelief and disobedience—of God’s people.**

2. The Spirit EMPOWERS

- i. He gives life....

1. this is the role of the Holy Spirit to give us new life in regeneration. Jesus told Nicodemus, “That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, “You must be born anew”” (John 3:6-7; cf. vv. 5, 8; 6:63; 2 Cor. 3:6). He also said, “It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing” (John 6:63 NASB; cf. 2 Cor. 3:6; Acts 10:44-47; Titus 3:5)
 2. “If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit which dwells in you” (Rom. 8:11).
- ii. He gives power for service:
1. In the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit frequently empowered people for special service
 2. The Holy Spirit also protected God’s people and enabled them to overcome their enemies
 3. The empowering work of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament is seen first and most fully in his anointing and empowering of Jesus as the Messiah.
 4. There are several specific examples of the Holy Spirit’s empowering the early Christians to work miracles as they proclaimed the gospel (note Stephen in Acts 6:5, 8; and Paul in Rom. 15:19; 1 Cor. 2:4).
 5. But the Holy Spirit also gave great power to the preaching of the early church so that

when the disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit they proclaimed the Word boldly and with great power (Acts 4:8, 31; 6:10; 1 Thess. 1:5; 1 Peter 1:12).

The New Testament ends with an invitation from both the Holy Spirit and the church, who together call people to salvation:

***“The Spirit and the Bride say, “Come.”
And let him who hears say, “Come””
(Rev. 22:17).***

In fact, not only in the preaching of the gospel message, but also in the reading and teaching of Scripture, the Holy Spirit continues to speak to people’s hearts each day (see Heb. 3:7 and 10:15, where the author quotes an Old Testament passage and says that the Holy Spirit is now speaking that passage to his readers).

Another aspect of empowering Christians for service is the Holy Spirit’s activity of giving spiritual gifts to equip Christians for ministry.

After listing a variety of spiritual gifts, Paul says, “But one and the same Spirit works all these things distributing to each one individually just as He wills” (1 Cor. 12:11 NASB). Since the Holy Spirit is the one who shows or manifests God’s presence in the world, it is not surprising

that Paul can call spiritual gifts “manifestations” of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:7). When spiritual gifts are active, it is another indication of the presence of God the Holy Spirit in the church.

In the prayer lives of individual believers, we find that the Holy Spirit empowers prayer and makes it effective.

“We do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words” (Rom. 8:26). And Paul says that we “have access in one Spirit to the Father” (Eph. 2:18). One specific kind of prayer that the New Testament says is empowered by the Holy Spirit is the gift of prayer in tongues (1 Cor. 12:10-11; 14:2, 14-17).

Yet another aspect of the Holy Spirit’s work in empowering Christians for service is empowering people to overcome spiritual opposition to the preaching of the gospel and to God’s work in people’s lives.

The gift of “distinguishing between spirits” (1 Cor. 12:10), given by the Holy Spirit, is also to be a tool in this warfare against the forces of darkness, as is the Word of God, which functions as the “sword of the Spirit” (Eph. 6:17) in spiritual conflict.

3. The Spirit PURIFIES

Since this member of the Trinity is called the Holy Spirit, it is not surprising to find that one of his primary activities is to cleanse us from sin and to “sanctify us” or make us more holy in actual conduct of life.

when people become Christians the Holy Spirit does an initial cleansing work in them, making a decisive break with the patterns of sin that were in their lives before. Paul says of the Corinthians, *“You were washed, you were sanctified you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God” (1 Cor. 6:11; see also Titus 3:5).*

After the initial break with sin that the Holy Spirit brings about in our lives at conversion, he also produces in us growth in holiness of life. He brings forth the “fruit of the Spirit” within us (“love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control,” Gal. 5:22-23), those qualities that reflect the character of God.

As we continually “are being changed into his likeness from one degree of glory to another,” we should be reminded that “this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit” (2 Cor. 3:18).

Sanctification comes by the power of the Holy Spirit (2 Thess. 2:13; 1 Peter 1:2; cf. Rom. 8:4, 15-16), so that it is “by the Spirit” that we are able to “put to death the deeds of the body” and grow in personal holiness (Rom. 8:13; see 7:6; Phil. 1:19).

4. The Spirit REVEALS

a. Revelation to the Prophets & Apostles

- i. 2 Timothy 3:16-17
- ii. 2 Peter 1:21 - “men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit”

b. He gives evidence of God’s presence

- i. He bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God (Rom. 8:16), and cries, “Abba! Father!” (Gal. 4:6). He provides a guarantee or a down payment of our future fellowship with him in heaven (2 Cor. 1:22; 5:5), and
- ii. reveals his desires to us so that we can be led by those desires and follow them (Rom. 8:4-16; Gal. 5:16-25).
- iii. He gives gifts that manifest his presence (1 Cor. 12:7-11). And from time to time he works miraculous signs and wonders that strongly attest to the presence of God in the preaching of the gospel (Heb. 2:4; cf. 1 Cor. 2:4; Rom. 15:19).
- iv. when the Holy Spirit works in various ways that can be perceived by believers and unbelievers, this encourages people’s faith that God is near and that he is working to fulfill his purposes in the church and to bring blessing to his people.

c. He Guides and Directs God’s People

- i. Scripture gives many examples of direct guidance from the Holy Spirit to various people.
- ii. In the Old Testament, God said that it was sin for the people to enter into agreements with others when those agreements were “not of my Spirit” (Isa. 30:1).

- iii. In the New Testament, the Holy Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness for his period of temptation (Matt. 4:1; Luke 4:1)

In other contexts the Holy Spirit gave direct words of guidance to people, saying to Philip, for example, “Go up and join this chariot” (Acts 8:29), or telling Peter to go with three men who came to him from Cornelius’ household (Acts 10:19-20; 11:12), or directing the Christians at Antioch, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them” (Acts 13:2).

Scripture talks rather about a day-to-day guidance by the Holy Spirit—being “led” by the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:14; Gal. 5:18), and walking according to the Spirit (Rom. 8:4; Gal. 5:16).

Moreover, the idea of being “led” by the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:18) implies an active personal participation by the Holy Spirit in guiding us. This is something more than our reflecting on biblical moral standards, and includes an involvement by the Holy Spirit in relating to us as persons and leading and directing us.

There are specific examples of the Holy Spirit guiding people directly in the book of Acts.

- **After the decision of the Jerusalem council...**

- On Paul's second missionary journey, Luke writes that they were "forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia"
- Later, when Paul is on his way to Jerusalem, he says, "I am going to Jerusalem, bound in the Spirit not knowing what shall befall me there; except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that imprisonment and afflictions await me" (Acts 20:22-23).
- the Holy Spirit said to some in the church at Antioch, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them" (Acts 13:2).

d. He Provides a Godlike Atmosphere When He Manifests His Presence

e. He Gives Us Assurance

The Holy Spirit bears witness "with our spirits that we are children of God" (Rom. 8:16), and gives evidence of the work of God within us: "And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit which he has given us" (1 John 3:24). "By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his own Spirit" (1 John 4:13). The Holy Spirit not only witnesses to us that we are God's children, but also witnesses that God abides in us and that we are abiding in him. Once again more than our intellect is involved: the Spirit works to give us assurance at the subjective level of spiritual and emotional perception as well.

f. He Teaches and Illumines

- i. **Jesus promised this teaching function especially to his disciples when he said that the Holy Spirit “will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you” (John 14:26), and said,**
- ii. **“he will guide you into all the truth” (John 16:13).**
- iii. **when his disciples were put on trial because of persecution, the Holy Spirit would teach them at that time what to say (Luke 12:12; cf. Matt. 10:20; Mark 13:11).**

The illuminating work of the Holy Spirit is seen in the fact that he enables us to understand:

- *“We have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is from God, that we might understand the gifts bestowed on us by God” (1 Cor. 2:12). Therefore...*
- *“The unspiritual man does not receive the gifts (literally, things) of the Spirit of God” but “The spiritual man judges all things” (1 Cor. 2:14-15).*

We should pray that the Holy Spirit would give us his illumination and thereby help us to understand rightly when we study Scripture or when we ponder situations in our lives.

5. The Spirit UNIFIES

When the Holy Spirit was poured out on the church at Pentecost, Peter proclaimed that the prophecy of Joel 2:28-32 was fulfilled:

*But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:
“And in the last days it shall be, God declares,
that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh,
and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
and your young men shall see visions,
and your old men shall dream dreams;
yes, and on my menservants and my maidservants in those days
I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy.” (Acts 2:16-18)*

There is an emphasis on the Holy Spirit coming on a community of believers—not just a leader like Moses or Joshua, but sons and daughters, old men and young men, menservants and maidservants—all will receive the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in this time.

In the event of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit created a new community which was the church. The community was marked by unprecedented unity,

And all who believed were together and had all things in common; and they sold their possessions and goods and distributed them to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they partook of food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. (Acts 2:44-47)

“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all” (2 Cor. 13:14).

- **It is significant that in this trinitarian verse he especially attributes the deepening of fellowship among believers not to the**

Father or the Son but to the Holy Spirit, a statement consistent with the overall unifying work of the Spirit in the church.

- This unifying function of the Holy Spirit is also evident when Paul tells the Philippians, *“If therefore there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation of love, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit... make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose”* (Phil. 2:1-2 NASB).
- When he wants to remind them of the unity they should have as Christians he exhorts them to be *“eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace”* (Eph. 4:3).

differing gifts, Paul tells us, are empowered by “one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills” (1 Cor. 12:11), so that in the church, “To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good” (1 Cor. 12:7).

In fact, *“in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit”* (1 Cor. 12:13, author’s translation).

The idea that the Holy Spirit unifies the church is also evident in the fact that “strife... disputes, dissensions, factions” (Gal. 5:20 NASB) are desires of the flesh that are opposed to being “led by the Spirit” (Gal. 5:18; cf. v. 25).

The Holy Spirit is the one who produces love in our hearts (Rom. 5:5; Gal. 5:22; Col. 1:8), and this love “binds everything together in perfect harmony” (Col. 3:14). Therefore when the Holy Spirit is working strongly in a church to manifest God’s presence, one evidence will be a beautiful harmony in the church community and overflowing love for one another.

6. The Spirit WITNESSES

Many examples in both the Old and New Testament indicate that the Holy Spirit will bestow or withdraw blessing according to whether or not he is pleased by the situation he sees.

It is noteworthy that Jesus was completely without sin and the Holy Spirit “remained on him” (John 1:32) and was given to him without measure (John 3:34). In the Old Testament the Holy Spirit came mightily upon **Samson** several times (Judg. 13:25; 14:6, 19; 15:14), but ultimately left him when he persisted in sin (Judg. 16:20). Similarly, when **Saul** persisted in disobedience the Holy Spirit departed from him (1 Sam. 16:14). And when **the people of Israel** rebelled and grieved the Holy Spirit he turned against them (Isa. 63:10).

Also in the New Testament the Holy Spirit can be grieved and cease to bring blessing in a situation.

Stephen rebuked the Jewish leaders, saying, “You always resist the Holy Spirit” (Acts 7:51).

Paul warns the Ephesian Christians, “Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God in whom you were sealed for the day of redemption” (Eph. 4:30),

“Do not quench the Spirit” - 1 Thess. 5:19

Hebrews warns those who are in danger of falling away that severe punishment is deserved by the man “who has spurned the Son of God, and profaned the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and outraged the Spirit of grace” (Heb. 10:29). For such a person there only remains “a fearful prospect of judgment” (Heb. 10:27).

It is possible so to offend the Holy Spirit that his convicting work will not be brought to bear again in a person's life.

- Matthew 12:31-32
- Romans 1:16ff

On the other hand, in the life of Christians whose conduct is pleasing to God, the Holy Spirit will be present to bring great blessing.

- The Holy Spirit was “poured out” in fullness at Pentecost (see Acts 2:17-18) and

- he now dwells within all true believers, making them temples of the living God (1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19-20).
- We can know close fellowship and partnership with the Holy Spirit in our lives (2 Cor. 3:14; Phil. 2:1).
- He entrusts gifts (1 Cor. 12:11) and truth (2 Tim. 1:14) and ministries (Acts 20:28) to us.
- In fact, so full and abundant will be his presence that Jesus could promise that he will flow out of our inmost being like “rivers of living water” (John 7:38-39).
- Peter promises that his presence especially rests on those who suffer for the sake of Christ: “If you are reproached for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the spirit of glory and of God rests upon you” (1 Peter 4:14).

Therefore, *it is important that all our ministry be done in the Holy Spirit that is, that we consciously dwell in the Godlike atmosphere created by the Holy Spirit—the atmosphere of power, love, joy, truth, holiness, righteousness, and peace. But greater than these characteristics of the atmosphere created by the Holy Spirit is the sense of the presence of the Holy Spirit himself—to be in the Holy Spirit*

is really to be in an atmosphere of God's manifested presence.

This is why people in the New Testament can walk in the comfort of the Holy Spirit (Acts 9:31), and why it is possible just to be “in the Spirit” as John was on the Lord’s day (Rev. 1:10; cf. 4:2).

It is surprising how many particular activities are said in the New Testament to be done “in” the Holy Spirit:

- it is possible to rejoice in the Holy Spirit (Luke 10:21),
- to resolve or decide something in the Holy Spirit (Acts 19:21),
- to have one’s conscience bear witness in the Holy Spirit (Rom. 9:1),
- to have access to God in the Holy Spirit (Eph. 2:18),
- to pray in the Holy Spirit (Eph. 6:18; Jude 20), and
- to love in the Holy Spirit (Col. 1:8).

In the light of these texts, we might ask ourselves, for how many of these activities during each day are we consciously aware of the Holy Spirit’s presence and blessing?

It is also possible to be filled with the Holy Spirit (Eph. 5:18; cf. Luke 1:15, 41, 67; 4:1; Acts 2:4; 4:8; 6:3, 5; 7:55; 9:17; 11:24; 13:9).

To be filled with the Holy Spirit is to be filled with the immediate presence of God himself, and it therefore will result in feeling what God feels, desiring what God desires, doing what God wants, speaking by God's power, praying and ministering in God's strength, and knowing with the knowledge which God himself gives.

Therefore, in our Christian lives it is important that we depend on the Holy Spirit's power, recognizing that any significant work is done ***“Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit says the Lord of hosts”*** (Zech. 4:6).

Therefore we are to walk according to the guidance of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:12-16; Gal. 5:16-26) and set our minds on the things of the Spirit (Rom. 8:4-6). All our ministry, whatever form it may take, is to be done in the power of the Holy Spirit.

R.C. Sproul:
“Who Is The Holy Spirit?”

Sproul's Outline:

- I. The Spirit is: The Third Person (Trinity)
 - a. He is God (Acts 5:4)
 - b. He is personal (biblical pronouns/actions)
 - c. He has divine attributes
- II. The Spirit is: The Life-Giver
 - a. From spiritual death to spiritual life (Eph.2)
 - b. Following a “course” & a “prince” (Eph.2)
 - c. The work of RE-creation
- III. The Spirit is: The Advocate
- IV. The Spirit is: The Sanctifier
- V. The Spirit is: The Anointer
- VI. The Spirit is: The Illuminator

1. The Third Person

- Trinity (divine – cf. Acts 5:4)
- Personal Nature (biblical pronouns)
 - He teaches
 - He inspires
 - He guides
 - He leads
 - He grieves
 - He convicts people

- Divine Attributes & Works of God
 - He is creating (Genesis 1:2)
 - He is eternal (Hebrews 9:14)
 - He is omniscient (1 Cor. 2:10-11)
 - He applies salvation
 - John 15:26
 - Galatians 4:6
 - The Holy Spirit is the Messiah's miraculous Muscle. - JDP

2. The Life Giver

- John 3:3
- John 3:5

“It distresses me somewhat to hear a person say, “I am a born-again Christian.” What’s wrong with such a statement?

Well, what other kind of Christian is there? If rebirth is absolutely essential in order to get into the kingdom of God, as Jesus said it is, there cannot be such a thing as a non-born-again Christian. To say “born-again Christian” is like saying “Christian Christian.” It’s a redundancy, a kind of theological stuttering.”

- R.C. Sproul

A. From Spiritual Death to Spiritual Life:

a. Ephesians 2:1-6

B. Following a Course & a Prince (Eph. 2:1)

“Paul says that those who are spiritually dead follow a course and a prince.... In Romans 3, Paul writes: *“None is righteous, no, not one; no one understands; no one seeks for God.”*

“The word or the phrase that Christians used to describe themselves initially was people of “the Way” (Acts 19:9, 23), because they had heard Christ speak about two ways, a narrow way and a broad way (Matt. 7:13–14). The vast majority of people are moving down the wrong road.”
- R.C. Sproul

“Not only do the spiritually dead follow the course of this world, they follow “the prince of the power of the air” (v. 2).”

C. A Work of Re-creation

“It is the ministry and work of the Holy Spirit to come to people who are spiritually dead, who are walking according to the course of this world and according to the prince of the power of the air, fulfilling the lusts of their flesh and of their minds, and to re-create them as He regenerates them. “To regenerate” means “to generate anew.” By means of regeneration, the Spirit gives life to people who have no spiritual life.”

“Regeneration is a work that the Holy Spirit does immediately upon the souls of people. When I say “immediately,” I do not mean “quickly” but “without any

intervening medium.” He does not give a person a dose of medicine; instead, the Spirit directly brings spiritual life out of spiritual death.”

“Jesus stood at the tomb of Lazarus, who had been dead for four days, and shouted in a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out” (John 11:43). When Jesus spoke those words, Lazarus’ heart instantly began to beat and pump blood. Brain activity resumed. Life returned to the body, and he came forth from the tomb. That is exactly what happens to us in our rebirth. The same Spirit who brought life out of the abyss and who brought Lazarus back from the grave raises us from spiritual death by causing us to be born a second time.”

- R.C. Sproul

3. The Advocate

“The Greek word that is translated as “Helper” or “Comforter” is parakletos; it is the source of the English word paraclete. This word includes a prefix, para-, that means “alongside,” and a root that is a form of the verb kletos, which means “to call.” So, a parakletos was someone who was called to stand alongside another. It usually was applied to an attorney, but not just any attorney. Technically, the parakletos was the family attorney who was on a permanent retainer. Any time a problem arose in the family, the parakletos was on call, and he would come immediately

to assist in the struggle. That is the way it is in our relationship with the Holy Spirit.”

“we must remember the context in which Jesus promised to send the Spirit—He was telling His disciples that He was about to leave them. They were going to be without Him in the midst of a hostile world, where they would be hated as He had been hated. Every moment of their lives would be filled with pressure, hostility, and persecution from the world. No one wants to enter that kind of scenario without help.”

“Today, we understand the word comfort to mean ease and solace in the midst of trouble. But its original meaning was different. It is derived from the Latin word *comfortis*, which consisted of a prefix (*com-*, meaning “with”) and a root (*fortis*, meaning “strong”). So, originally the word carried the meaning “with strength.” Therefore, the King James Version translators were telling us that the Holy Spirit comes to the people of Christ not to heal their wounds after a battle but to strengthen them before and during a struggle. The idea is that the church operates not so much as a hospital but as an army... So the Holy Spirit comes to empower and strengthen Christians, to ensure victory or conquest.”

“Take heart” (John 16:33), or, as some translations put it, “Be of good cheer.” However, He did not simply tell them to take heart for the sake of taking heart. He gave them a reason why they ought to have a sense of confidence and assurance

for the Christian life. He said, "Take heart; I have overcome the world."

Nietzsche wanted a superman, a conqueror. He should have looked to Christ. He overcame the world, and He did it in the power of the same Spirit that He sends to His people. The Holy Spirit comes to give strength and power to the people of God. As a result, the Scriptures say, "We are more than conquerors through him who loved us" (Rom. 8:37)."

"So, the work of the Holy Spirit supplements the work of Christ. Christ was the first Paraclete, who came to strengthen us by His atoning death. Now, the empowerment to live the life that Christ has called us to live comes to us by the Holy Spirit."

- R.C. Sproul

4. The Sanctifier

"There are a couple of reasons why the third person is known as the Holy Spirit. First, the term holy is attached to His title because of the particular task the Spirit performs in our redemption. Among the persons of the Trinity, the Spirit is the principal actor who works for our sanctification, enabling the process by which we are conformed to the image of Christ and made holy."

- R.C. Sproul

“the primary leading of the Spirit, as set forth in Scripture, is to holiness. It is His power working in us that helps us grow in holiness. ”

“So, a primary reason why the Holy Spirit is called the Holy Spirit is because it is His specific task to enable followers of Christ in their quest for sanctification.”

“Second, the third person is called the Holy Spirit because there is more than one kind of spirit.”

“Do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God” (1 John 4:1a).”

“Jesus repeatedly called Him “the Spirit of truth” (John 14:17; 15:26; 16:13). The Holy Spirit never entices us to do something that is unholy. Neither does the Holy Spirit ever incline us to embrace a lie.”

“when the Bible says we are to test the spirits to see if they are from God, how are we to do it? What kind of a test should we employ? Obviously the test must be a biblical test, because we know that in the Scriptures we have the teaching of the Spirit of truth. ”

“I do not doubt that the Holy Spirit can put a burden on a believer and can lead a believer supernaturally, but He always does this within and through the Scriptures. He never goes against His own revelation in the Bible. So, the way to test the spirits is to judge them by the Spirit’s own truth.”

“it is equally superstitious to equate our feelings and inclinations with the leading of the Holy Spirit. It seems so much more exciting to live with a freewheeling openness to the leading of the Holy Spirit rather than practicing the laborious discipline of mastering His Word. This is exceedingly dangerous ground. If we want to do the will of the Father, we need to study the Word of the Father”

- R.C. Sproul

5. The Anointer

“the Old Testament gave hints that the nature of the Spirit’s anointing would be much broader and lasting someday.”

“Then the LORD came down in the cloud and spoke to him, and took some of the Spirit that was on him and put it on the seventy elders. And as soon as the Spirit rested on them, they prophesied. But they did not continue doing it”
(Numbers 11: 24–25).”

“When they gathered, God took some of the Spirit that was on Moses and placed it on the seventy elders. As a result, there was no longer just one anointed leader in the camp, there were seventy-one of them.

Moses had been anointed by the Holy Spirit to act as the mediator of the old covenant. Now, God anointed seventy more people to participate in this work. ”

“Moses’ response is vital for our understanding of the work of the Holy Spirit. We read: “...Would that all the LORD’s people were prophets, that the LORD would put his Spirit on them!” (v. 29).”

“The prophet Joel wrote: “And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh... Under the Spirit’s inspiration, Joel said that in the last days, God would pour out His Spirit on “all flesh,” that is, on all the people of God. The empowering of the Holy Spirit for ministry would not be limited”

“every person in the fellowship of God would be so endowed.

What was a prayer for Moses and a prophecy for Joel became a historical reality on the day of Pentecost, when God took of the Spirit that was upon Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, and distributed Him not to seventy but to all the believers.

Jesus had told the disciples that this would happen. In the book of Acts, Luke writes: “And while staying with them [Jesus] ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, ‘you heard from me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now’” (1:4–5).”

“Luke continues: “So when they had come together, they asked him, ‘Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?’ He said to them, ‘It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth’” (vv. 6–8). Here Jesus associated the baptism of the Spirit with power to be His witnesses.

In all the passages we have discussed—Numbers 11, Joel 2, and especially here in Acts 1—the anointing of the Holy Spirit is associated with some sort of endowment, some gracious divine gifting. The Greek word for this kind of gift is charisma. Thus, the gifts the Spirit brings are known as the “charismatic” gifts or the charismata. The Spirit gives these gifts to Christ’s church to empower the people of God to carry out the mission that Christ gave to His people—to bear witness to Him to the uttermost parts of the earth. So, that was the promise. “On the day of Pentecost, the Spirit indeed came upon the disciples with power”

“After that anointing by the Spirit, the disciples were changed men. They began to preach that Jesus was the Christ, the Savior, and they would not be silenced even by threats of execution. Soon, they began to take the message of the gospel everywhere, just as Jesus had commanded them, and soon it was said of them that they had “turned the world upside down” (Acts 17:6). Such is the power of the anointing the Spirit gives to each and every person who trusts in Jesus Christ under the new covenant.” - R.C. Sproul

6. The Illuminator

“We must distinguish the Spirit’s work of illumination from His vitally important work of revelation. The Holy Spirit inspired the biblical revelation, the truth of God that is unfolded and unveiled for us in the Bible. This is information that comes to us ultimately from the mind of God Himself. Illumination, by contrast, brings no new information. It rests upon the information the Spirit has already given in the Scriptures.”

“What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him” these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God.
(1 Corinthians 2:6–10)”

“Paul is telling us here that the Holy Spirit searches the depths of God for us. The Spirit acts as a searchlight and shines on the text of Scripture when we read it, giving us the capacity to understand the meaning of it. When this happens, we see the truth of God intensely and sharply. Every one of us who is a Christian has had this experience sometime in his or her life. We are reading from the Scriptures, and suddenly a particular truth seems to jump off the page and pierce our souls. That is the work of the Holy Spirit in illumination.”

“The Spirit awakens in us a sensibility to the excellence of the things of God. But He does not operate against the Word of God. The Spirit works in the Word, with the Word, and through the Word. In other words, He takes us to the revelation of God and shows it to us in such a way that He overcomes our natural hostility or bias against the truth of God and shows us the loveliness of it. Just as Ezekiel swallowed the scroll with its bitter words and found them suddenly sweet as honey in his mouth (3:3), so the words of God become sweet to all who view them under the searchlight of the Spirit.”

- R.C. Sproul

Grudem's Outline:

- I. The Spirit EMPOWERS 2a
 - a. He gives life
 - b. He gives power for service
- II. The Spirit PURIFIES 3a
- III. The Spirit REVEALS 4a
 - a. Prophets & Apostles get revelation
 - b. Evidence of God's presence
 - c. Guides & directs God's people
 - d. Creates God-like atmospheres
 - e. Gives assurance
 - f. Teaches & Illuminates
- IV. The Spirit UNIFIES 7
- V. The Spirit WITNESSES 8

Sproul's Outline:

- I. The Spirit is: The Third Person (Trinity). 1
 - a. He is God (Acts 5:4)
 - b. He is personal (biblical pronouns/actions)
 - c. He has divine attributes
- II. The Spirit is: The Life-Giver 2b
 - a. From spiritual death to spiritual life (Eph.2)
 - b. Following a “course” & a “prince” (Eph.2)
 - c. The work of RE-creation
- III. The Spirit is: The Advocate 5
- IV. The Spirit is: The Sanctifier 3b
- V. The Spirit is: The Anointer 6
- VI. The Spirit is: The Illuminator 4b