



## Part 4 – The Gift of the Spirit

### John 14:15-27

*Not as the world gives do I give to you.  
Let not your hearts be troubled...*

The Hebrew (Old Testament) word for “spirit” is *ruach*. In Greek (New Testament) the word is *pneuma*. The Old Testament uses *ruach* about ninety times. In the New Testament, *pneuma* is used more than 250 times. Both words refer variously to wind or breath. The general idea however is the same: *ruach* and *pneuma* express movement, life, and power. Like the Son, the Holy Spirit is not a mode, emanation, or mere revelation of God. The Holy Spirit is God. He is God, present with his people. In the Person of the Holy Spirit, God convicts the world of sin. He gives new life to his people and fills them with power to overcome sin and walk in faithfulness.

While the Holy Spirit is more “visible” in the New Testament, he makes his first appearance in the opening section of the Bible. The Holy Spirit was present at creation, hovering over the face of the waters, working both to order and complete all that the Father had purposed and planned (**Genesis 1:2**). The Old Testament repeatedly offers glimpses of both the Son and the Holy Spirit. But it is in the New Testament where the veil is fully lifted and the implications of God’s glorious triune nature are revealed. The Holy Spirit is the promised Helper come to fill, guide, gift, empower, sanctify, and comfort the church of Jesus Christ.

In giving us the Holy Spirit, his own lovely presence, God gives us the assurance of His love. “And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out His love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom He has given us” (**Romans 5:5**). The love that God has for us was demonstrated in that while we were his enemies Christ died for us. Who, then, shall separate us from the love of Christ? The seal of love is on His heart of grace and His arm of power, love that is stronger than death (**Song of Songs 8:6**).

#### 1. God as Self-Giving Gift

- God is the great Giver. None in all creation has ever given the way God gives. God gave himself to us in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ. And because of the deep mystery of the triune Godhead, we can say that there was a two-fold giving in the incarnation of Jesus. Not only did God give himself – which is extraordinary enough – but in an act of incomprehensible generosity, the Father gave the Son for the sake of sinners. And God continues to give. Not only did the Father send the Son to die for sinners but the Father and the Son sent the Holy Spirit to dwell within his people.

#### 2. The Holy Spirit’s Ministry

John 14-16

##### a) Sanctification

John 14:15; 1 Peter 1:2

- Jesus’ promise to send the “Helper” comes immediately after he makes the connection that loving him means obeying his commandments. The Holy Spirit works both to give the desire and the power to obey the Lord. This is one way to describe sanctification which more literally mean to be made holy.

##### b) Illumination

- In terms of our experience of the Spirit’s ministry, one of his most important works is the way in which he illuminates our minds enabling us to know, see, grasp, and apply the will and purposes of God. The Spirit taught the apostles “all things” (**John 14:26**) and led them into “all truth” (**John 16:13**). Now, however, **He continues this work in us through the Scriptures**. The Holy Spirit overruled the writers of Scripture in such a way that their words were the very words of God (**2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21**).

**c) Conviction of sin**

John 16:8

- Apart from the work of the Holy Spirit we would never understand the gravity of our sin. For unbelievers, that means the Holy Spirit is that voice of conscience telling you that something is deeply wrong; something is missing; things are not the way they should be. Like a spotlight, the Holy Spirit searches deep inside and brings to light that which we would prefer to be hidden.

**d) New Life**

John 3:1-15; Titus 3:5

- The new birth or regeneration is the work of the Holy Spirit to bring to life those who are dead in their sins so that they will, without fail, repent of their sins and believe the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is a supernatural work accomplished according to the sovereign will of God – “The wind blows where it wishes...”

**e) Gift Giver**

Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12, 14

- The Holy Spirit portions gifts to the church as he sees fit. That means that every Christian is given some measure of grace which will be expressed as mercy, helps, giving, serving, teaching, etc for the building up of the church. These spiritual gifts are not the personal possession of the believer but belong to the church so that possessing a spiritual gift makes one obligated to serve his or her brothers and sisters.

**f) Assurance**

2 Corinthians 1:21-22; Ephesians 1:13-14

- The Apostle Paul borrowed from the common practice of sealing documents, contracts, etc with wax or clay seals to describe the sealing of the Lord: “Having believed, you were marked in Him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God’s possession—to the praise of His glory” (**Ephesians 1:13b–14**). This sealing by the Holy Spirit is the ground of our assurance. We know that God will never leave us nor forsake us; we know that he will never cease in his love for us because he has sealed us with himself, the blessed Holy Spirit.
- “God’s seal is not, like the great seal of the United States, an emblem to be impressed on paper. God’s seal is His Holy Spirit, who is God Himself present with His people. To be sure, God has given us also outward signs and seals of His ownership. In baptism God seals us by giving us His name; in the Lord’s Supper we have the spiritual seal of His presence in the sacrament. Even these seals have a power beyond the outward sign: the reality of God’s presence provides the blessing. But God gives a seal that is even more than these gifts of blessing. His final seal is the gift of Himself.” – Edmund Clowney

**3. The Spirit Who is Holy and Given**

- The Holy Spirit is referred to in the Bible variously as the Spirit of Life, The Spirit of God, The Spirit, and The Spirit of Christ. But his most common title is Holy Spirit. The word holy literally means to be set apart. Something or someone who is holy means it is set apart for God’s own possession and purposes. Holiness also indicates absolute moral purity. Because the Holy Spirit is God – a member of the indivisible Godhead – he cannot sin or be in anyway less than perfect. And yet, the Holy Spirit is also given to us. He indwells as “possesses” us, as it were. This simultaneous holiness and givenness of the Holy Spirit calls us to a dual dedication both to God and our neighbor. We are set apart for God (holy) and, in this life, given to our neighbor.

Romans 8:14-17; Galatians 4:4-6

- Because God gives us the seal of His presence in the Spirit of His Son, we cry, “Abba, Father!” (**Galatians 4:6**). We use the very word our Savior used, for we have received the claim of Christ’s Sonship. In death we are given the Spirit of life; in error, the Spirit of truth; in corruption, the Spirit of glory.