

The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit

2: The Spirit of Christ

“The Church has never sufficiently confessed the influence the Holy Spirit exerted upon the work of Christ” Abraham Kuyper

“The task assigned to the Spirit and carried out by Him in all respects was to anoint and equip Jesus (the Mediator) for all the duties of the Servant of God, then to be sent as the Spirit of the Father and the Son on the errand of revealing the redemption Jesus had won, and actually applying it to the souls of men” Smeaton

Last time we looked at the ‘Big Picture’:

“The work of the Holy Spirit is to bring God’s desired order into the world – bringing his Kingdom.”

To have a clear understanding of the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer, we first need to understand how he was at work in the life and ministry of Jesus.

1) The Birth of Jesus

In the Bible, there were numerous occasions when a ‘significant person’ was born to a barren woman:

- Sarah – Isaac Gen 17
- Rachel – Joseph Gen 30
- Zorah’s wife – Samson Judges 13
- 1 Samuel 1 – Hannah - Samuel
- Elizabeth +Zechariah – John the Baptist Luke 1

All these point forward to this event which was unique = the birth of Jesus.

On these other occasions, it is through divine intervention that a ‘barren woman’ is made fruitful, with the incarnation – even more stunning – a ‘virgin will be with child’ Isaiah 7:14 and this will be by the power of the Holy Spirit:

“The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will **overshadow** you” Luke 1:35.

When the Old Testament (written in Hebrew) was translated into greek (The Septuagint), the word Luke uses here for ‘overshadow’ was used to translate the word used to describe the hovering of the cloud of God’s glory over the Tabernacle – Exodus 40:35 NB typo in original

“Moses could not enter the Tent of Meeting because the cloud **had settled upon** it and the glory of the Lord filled the Tabernacle”

And again in Psalm 91 to describe the protective hovering of God over his people – “He will **cover you** with his feathers...”

As we saw last time – the one who led God’s people through the wilderness as a pillar of cloud and fire, hovering over them to lead, protect and fashion them into the people God intended them

to be – was the Holy Spirit – mirroring his work of ‘hovering’ over the formless and empty creation (Gen 1). Now he ‘overshadows’ Mary about to begin a new work – note, not a new creation out of nothing, but rather “he works on already existent materials (the humanity of Mary) in order to produce the ‘second man’ and through him to restore true order, just as he brought order and fullness into the formlessness and emptiness of the original creation” S Ferguson.

*(Interestingly, the only other time Luke uses this word is in Luke 9:34 at the transfiguration of Jesus – “a cloud appeared and **enveloped** them” (overshadowed).*

In the Old Testament the cloud hovered over the Tabernacle and was present with them as they wandered through the wilderness, now the cloud hovered over Jesus on the mountain of Transfiguration when he spoke with Moses and Elijah (Luke :31) about his ‘Exodus’(departure).

In alluding to the Exodus, Luke is pointing us to the New Exodus).

In Luke’s account of the birth of Jesus, he lays great emphasis on the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit: **we can expect something of great significance**

- John the Baptist would be filled with the Holy Spirit from birth 1:15
- Elizabeth filled with the Holy Spirit 1:41
- Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied 1:67
- Simeon - waiting for the consolation of Israel and the Holy Spirit was upon him 2:25
- The Holy Spirit revealed to him he would see the Christ 2:26
- The Spirit ‘moved’ him to meet the baby Jesus in the temple 2:27

2) The Life and Ministry of Jesus:

Note the way in which John the Baptist announces the coming of Jesus: **Might think contrast – I am witness/he is the saviour - no – I baptise water -he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit ___3:16**

At his baptism, the Holy Spirit descends upon Jesus, in bodily form like a dove and this is accompanied by the proclamation, “You are my Son, whom I love, with you I am well pleased”.

This alludes to:

- i) Psalm 2:7 “You are my Son, today I have become your Father” – this figure in psalm 2 is the one to whom God the Father will give the nations – God’s coming King – whose Kingdom will spread throughout the world
- ii) Isaiah 42:1 “here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in **whom I delight; I will put my Spirit** on him and he will justice to the nations....will not falter or be discouraged until he establishes justice on earth”

Jesus is both the expected Messiah- King and the Servant of the Lord.

As Jesus is about to begin his public ministry, a vital aspect of the Spirit’s ministry in his life is the assurance of his ‘sonship’, the Holy Spirit testifies to him that he is the beloved child of God.

(Luke then interrupts the narrative of Jesus life with the record of his genealogy – immediately after Jesus has been proclaimed the beloved ‘Son of God’ – we read of Adam – ‘the son of God’. Thus setting the scene for the ‘New/Last Adam – will he succeed where the first failed?)

Jesus 'full of the Holy Spirit' (4:1) is then immediately led by the Spirit – into the wilderness.

- i) This alludes to the 40 years of Israel's wanderings in the wilderness – where the nation was tested and failed. (Israel also called in OT the 'son of God')
- ii) He is led here **by the Spirit**
- iii) He is led here by the Spirit – to do battle. This is “ the energy and power of the Spirit as the Lord who advances the Kingdom of God into enemy-occupied territory.” S Ferguson
- iv) Previously the people of God 'grieved' the Spirit and rebelled against him in the wilderness, here Jesus resists the assaults of the enemy, anointed by the Spirit he responds in obedience and faithfulness

Following his conflict in the wilderness, Jesus returns to Galilee and begins his ministry once again Luke is careful to point out, that he returned “In the power of the Spirit”(4:14).

All of Jesus' ministry following his baptism was done in the 'power of the Spirit'.

In Luke 4 he reads from Isaiah 61 “The Spirit of the Lord is on me because he has anointed me...”and proclaims “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing”.

This is the dawning of the Day of the Lord, the coming of the Kingdom of God because the Spirit-anointed Servant-King has come who by the power of the Holy Spirit will establish the Kingdom of God.

The miracles of Jesus point us to what the Kingdom of God established on earth will look like – sin, suffering, disease, evil, death and even the 'disorder' of creation will be no more.

3) JESUS and THE TEMPLE - THE DWELLING PLACE OF GOD

In the Old Testament, the Tabernacle, then the Temple were understood to be the special 'dwelling place of God' and so inseparably connected to this, they were also the place where provision for sin was made (sacrificial system) in order that a Holy God and a sinful people could have fellowship together.

When Israel went into Exile, apart from the awful destruction of Jerusalem the other great tragedy was the destruction of the Temple.

Ezekiel understood the theological significance of this appalling event

“Then the glory of the Lord departed from over the threshold of the temple and stopped above the cherubim. While I watched, the cherubim spread their wings and rose from the ground and as they went, the wheels went with them. They stopped at the entrance to the east gate of the Lord's house and the glory of the God of Israel was above them...the glory of the Lord went up from within the city and stopped above the mountain east of it (Mount of Olives)” Ez 10:18-19,11:23

However, later on Ezekiel also has a vision in which the glory of God returns to the Temple,

“I saw the glory of the God of Israel coming from the east...the Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court and the glory of the Lord filled the Temple” Ez 43:2,5.

From the restored Temple, filled with glory – will flow a river bringing life to all,

“I saw water coming out from under the threshold of the temple towards the east...where the river flows everything will live” Ez 47:1,9

After the Exile, the people did return to the Land, rebuilt Jerusalem and the Temple, but it was never as glorious as it was prior to the Exile, the promise made through Ezekiel is still awaiting fulfilment.

“Many of the older priests and Levites and family heads, who had seen the former temple, wept aloud when they saw the foundation of this temple being laid, while many others shouted for joy” Ezra 3:12

READ John 1:1-2,14

- What does John tell us about who Jesus is? **God**
- Why is that especially significant under this section? (The word translated ‘dwelling’ in v14 literally means ‘tabernacled’)**became flesh – Gd now presnt as a man, implied replac of T/T**

READ John 2:12-22

- When did this incident take place? **Passove**
- Who according to John the Baptist – is Jesus? **Lamb of god**
- What according to John, the gospel writer – is Jesus? **V21 the temple**
- What is the deeper significance of his actions in v15? **He removes need of animals**
- Remembering Ezekiel’s vision what is the signifce of John 4:13-15, 7:37-39?**water+jn19:31**

4) JESUS DEATH, RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION

Jesus gave himself to suffering and death on the cross, through the power of the Holy Spirit,

“Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God” Hebrews 9:14

He was raised by the power of the Spirit,

“For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body and made alive by the Spirit” 1 Peter 3:18

Jesus’ resurrection body is the first fruits of a new humanity

“So will it be with the resurrection of the dead...it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body....The first Adam became a living being, the last Adam a life-giving Spirit...and just as we have borne the likeness of the earthly man, so shall we bear the likeness of the man from heaven” 1 Cor 15:42-49

“Christ as life-giving Spirit is the source of our resurrection existence. He gives life suited to the Spirit” S Ferguson

READ 2 Corinthians 3:14-18

- Who is ‘the Lord’ in v16 **Christ**
- Who is ‘the Lord’ in v17 **Lord is the Spirit**
- Who is the Lord in v18? **From the Lord of the Spirit most natural rendering Complete intimacy between Jes and Spi almost interchangeable**

Roman 8:9 the spirit – the spirit of God – the spirit of Christ – if Christ is in you

“In effect Paul is teaching that through his life and ministry Jesus came into such complete possession of the Spirit, receiving and experiencing him without limit, that he is now ‘Lord of the Spirit’ S Ferguson

“This taking possession of the Holy Spirit by Christ is so absolute an appropriation... the Holy Spirit has become entirely the property of Christ” Bavinck

The Holy Spirit is to be so closely identified with Jesus that he can say,

“You know him (the Holy Spirit) for he lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans, I will come to you.” John 14:17-18

Jesus is the Giver of the Spirit to the people of God

“Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear”. Acts 2:33

When we come to look at the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer we have to understand that in the light of his ministry in Jesus