

The promise of the Holy Spirit received

In many Christian circles the Holy Spirit is either neglected, forgotten, or misunderstood. The One given to unite the body of Christ is the centre of controversy. This is a nettle which ought to be firmly grasped. So often Christian work is so rigidly programmed that it seems we need no longer depend on Him—yet Jesus said, “Without Me you can do nothing.” ...

The late Dr. A. W. Tozer, author and pastor, said, “If the Holy Spirit was withdrawn from the church today, 95 percent of what we do would go on and no one would know the difference. If the Holy Spirit had been withdrawn from the New Testament church, 95 percent of what they did would stop, and everybody would know the difference.”

Alan Redpath

Acts 2: 1 – 13

1) Who is the Holy Spirit?

- He is a Person and not some impersonal cosmic force
 - John 16: 13 When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.
 - This is one example where the personal pronoun “he” is used to describe the Holy Spirit.
 - The Holy Spirit is never referred to as “it”.
- Some of the personal attributes of the Holy Spirit
 - He knows and searches the things of God
 - 1 Cor. 2: 11 For what person knows a man’s thoughts except the spirit of the man which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.
 - He can be grieved
 - Ephesians 4: 30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God
 - He has a will
 - 1 Corinth 12: 11 All these are inspired by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills
- He is God
 - He was involved in the creation of the universe
 - Genesis 1: 2 The earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters.
 - Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is the unforgivable sin
 - Matthew 12: 31 – 32 Therefore I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. And whoever says a word against the Son of man will be forgiven; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.
 - Acts 5: 3 – 4 But Peter said, “Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back part of the proceeds of the land? While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not at your disposal? How is it that you have contrived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God.”

2) When was He promised?

- Ezekiel prophesied the Holy Spirit being within us
 - Ezekiel 36: 26 – 27 I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.
- Joel prophesied the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in all people
 - Joel 2: 28 – 29 "And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days.
- Jesus promised the Coming of the Holy Spirit as a the Comforter who will be with us forever
 - John 14: 16 – 17 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever-- the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.

3) Why do we need the Holy Spirit – what is His work?

- Gives new birth
 - John 3: 3 – 8 In reply Jesus declared, "I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again." "How can a man be born when he is old?" Nicodemus asked. "Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb to be born!" Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit."
- He empowers us to be witnesses
 - Acts 1: 8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."
 - The empowering will include the gifts that He gives to do His will.
- He convicts the world of sin, righteousness and judgment
 - John 16: 7 – 8 Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment
- He will guide us into all truth
 - John 16: 13 But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth

Before we can be filled with the Spirit, the desire to be filled must be all-consuming. It must be for the time the biggest thing in the life, so acute, so intrusive as to crowd out everything else. The degree of fullness in any life accords perfectly with the intensity of true desire. We have as much of God as we actually want. A. W. TOZER