

Whatever Happened to the Holy Spirit?

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THE *PROMISED* HELPER

(John 14:15-18, 25-27; Acts 1:4-9; 2:1-4)

INTRO— In his book *Forgotten God* Francis Chan writes, “From my perspective, the Holy Spirit is tragically neglected and, for all practical purposes, forgotten. While no evangelical would deny His existence, I am willing to bet there are millions of churchgoers across America who cannot confidently say they have experienced His presence or action in their lives over the past year. And many of them do not believe they can.”

Question: “How real and active is the Holy Spirit in your life? What can you attribute to Him doing in and through your life in last three months?”

Carl Bates said, “If God called His Holy Spirit out of the world, about 95% of what we are doing would go on.”

I. THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IS PROMISED

- A. By the Father (Ezek. 36:26-27; 39:29; Joel 2:28-29, 32; Isa. 32:15; 44:2-3).
- B. By the Son (John 14:15-26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:4-8).

II. THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IS FULFILLED (Acts 2:1-4, 33)

J.O. Sanders writes, “Pentecost is second only to Calvary in importance to the Christian, for Pentecost is the complement of Calvary. Without Pentecost, Calvary would have been ineffective to redeem lost mankind. It required the dynamic of the Spirit as well as the sacrifice of the Saviour to bring the benefits of salvation to a waiting world, for all Christian experience revolves around the twin centers of Calvary and Pentecost. Calvary opened the fountain from which all the blessings of Pentecost flowed. Pentecost made available to men all that Calvary made possible.”

III. THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT HELPS US

The Holy Spirit is still working today (John 5:17; 14:10, 16-17; 16:7, 12-14).

- A. His continuing work in the world.
 - 1. (John 16:8-11)—Conviction of sin
 - 2. (John 3:3-8; Titus 3:5-6; Eph. 2:1-6)—Regeneration
 - 3. (2 Thess. 2:7-8)—Restrains evil
- B. His continuing work in His church.

1. (1 Cor. 12:12-13)—Baptizing believers into His body, the church
2. (Rom. 12:4-5)—Unifying His people out of diversity
3. (Phil. 2:13; 1 Cor. 12:1-11, 18, 28-30; Rom. 12:1-8; Eph. 4:7-16; 1 Pet. 4:10-11)—Resourcing His people

C. His continuing work in believers.

1. (Eph. 1:13-14; 4:30; Rom. 8:16; 1 Jn. 5:11-13)—Secures
2. (Rom. 8:26; Heb. 7:25)—Intercedes
3. (John 14:26; 16:13-14; 1 Cor. 2:10-13)—Illumines and teaches
4. (Acts 1:8; 4:31)—Empowers witness
5. (1 Cor. 12:7, 11)—Equips to serve
6. (Rom. 7:15-25; Gal. 5:16-26)—Controls the flesh
7. (Eph. 5:22-6:9)—Strengthens relationships
8. (Rom. 8:29; 15:16; 2 Thess. 2:13)—Transforms into Christlikeness
9. (John 16:13; Rom. 8:14)—Guides
10. (John 14:16; 16:6; Eph. 3:14-16, 20)—Comforts and strengthens
11. (Rom. 14:17)—Joy
12. (Rom. 15:13)—Hope
13. (John 10:10; Rom. 8:2, 6; 2 Cor. 3:17-18)—Abundance and freedom
14. (John 15:26; 16:14; 1 Cor. 6:19-20; Matt. 5:16)—Glorifies the Son

Charles Stanley writes, “The Holy Spirit has been sent by the Father to assist you in all the practical matters of Christian living. He is your number one Helper.”

CONC—

THE TRANSFORMED LIFE

INTRO— In Christ we enjoy a new:

- owner (1 Cor. 6:19)—
- purpose (1 Cor. 6:20)—
- power (Acts 1:8; 2 Pet. 1:3)—

God sent His Holy Spirit to be our _____. The Holy Spirit is _____ and He _____ lives in _____ believer (John 14:12-17; 16:17; Rom. 8:9; 1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19).

ROLE OF HOLY SPIRIT

- *Before* incarnation the Holy Spirit came _____
- *During* Christ’s earthly time He was _____
- *Since Pentecost* He lives _____

Swindoll writes, “At the moment of spiritual rebirth, our bodies become a sacred sanctuary for the Spirit of the living God. Think about that! Beneath the façade of our flesh and blood dwells the purity, power, and perfection of the One who created and controls the universe! He has transformed the frail dust of our humanity into holy ground for Himself. Even the most venerated cathedrals, with all their statues and stained glass, are nothing but empty shells in comparison to the grand glory of one Spirit-filled Christian.”

“But, why?” 2 Cor. 3:18; Rom. 8:29; 1 Pet. 1:15-16. The Holy Spirit _____ us to become more like Christ (Matt. 10:24-25; Gal. 4:19; 1 Jn. 3:2).

Max Lucado writes, “God loves you just the way you are, but He refuses to leave you that way. He wants you to be just like Jesus.”

“SO, WHAT’S THE PROBLEM?”

-
-
-
-
-
-

EXAMPLES OF TRANSFORMATION? Look at the disciples before and after Pentecost.

BEFORE

-
-
-

AFTER

-
-
-

What was the difference? (Acts 1:8; 2:1-4)

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE FILLED?

OBSERVATIONS FROM TEXT

1. Mood is *imperative*—a command to _____
2. Form is *plural*—for _____ believers
3. Voice is *passive*—received from _____
4. Tense is *present*—action is _____

EVIDENCES OF TRANSFORMATION (Eph. 5:19-21)

1. (v. 19)
2. (v. 20)
3. (v. 21)

HOW CAN I BE FILLED?

1. F _____
2. D _____
3. C _____
4. S _____
5. A _____
6. B _____
7. R _____

CONC— God gives us His Holy Spirit to transform us. With our cooperation He helps us be more like Christ in our attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors.

THE *EMPOWERED* LIFE
(Eph. 1:15-23)

INTRO— The Holy Spirit’s power is manifested in every believer through two outlets or channels. The two channels are _____ with our gifts and _____ with our lives.

COMPARISON OF GIFTS AND FRUIT

GIFTS				
FRUIT				

EMPOWERED TO SERVE THROUGH OUR GIFTS

- Gift vs. Gifts — Gift is for _____; gifts are for _____
- 1 Cor. 12:12-27—Foundation:
 1. _____ believer is a part and has a role in ministry (v. 14).
 2. Each person’s role in ministry is _____ (vv. 15-17).
 3. It is _____ who chooses what role we have (vv. 18-20).
 4. Each ministry is _____ upon other ministries (vv. 21-27).
- Truths about Gifts:
 1. _____ Christian is gifted (1 Pet. 4:10; Rom. 12:6; 1 Cor. 12:7; Eph. 4:7).
 2. Our gifts are not _____ but are the product of God’s grace (Rom. 12:6; Eph. 4:7; 1 Pet. 4:10).
 3. _____ decides the gifts we get (1 Cor. 12:18; Eph. 4:7; 1 Cor. 12:11).
 4. My gifts are for _____ others (1 Pet. 4:10; 1 Cor. 12:7; Eph. 4:12).
 5. My gifts are to be _____ (Rom. 12:6; 1 Pet. 4:10).
- Discovery: Assessments (JandLMinistry.com, exercise “What Are My Talents?”), feedback, experiment

EMPOWERED TO BEAR FRUIT (John 15:1-11, 16; Matt. 5:16)

Fruit is mentioned in 24 of the 27 New Testament books. Some 70 times in the New Testament.

- Explaining the Symbols (John 15:1-11)

- Vine is _____
- Vinedresser is our _____
- Branches are _____
- “Sap” is the indwelling _____

Charles Stanley writes, “The vine is Christ, I am the branch. The Holy Spirit is the sap that runs from the vine into the branch. The branch lives, grows, and bears fruit not by struggles and effort but by simply abiding.”

- Clarifying the Principles

1. The only objective evidence a believer is walking in the Spirit is the presence of _____.
2. Believers are expected to _____ fruit not _____ it.
3. We are expected to bear _____ fruit not just _____ fruit.
4. Our faith and its impact are channeled through our _____.
5. The key to bearing fruit is _____.
6. We can do _____ if we fail to abide.

- Effects of bearing fruit

- On the _____ (John 15:8; Acts 2:5-11)—
- On _____—
- On _____—

CONC— Swindoll writes, “Have we mistakenly bought into the misconception that unless we’re experiencing one miracle after another, we’re not filled with the Spirit? Think about it. Is that what Jesus really promised—a miracle a moment—when He said we would receive power when the Spirit came?”

THE *GUIDED* LIFE
(Rom. 8:14; Gal. 5:18)

INTRO— If you could ask God one question, what would it be? One of the ways the Holy Spirit helps us as believers is by guiding us into God’s will. Some passages—Psa. 25:9; 37:23;

73:24; Pro. 3:5-6; Isa. 30:21; 48:17; 58:11. George W. Truett said, “To know the will of God is the greatest knowledge; to do the will of God is the greatest achievement.”

JESUS—Mk. 3:31-35; Jn. 10:27-30; 14:26; 16:13-14

EARLY CHURCH—Acts 8:27-29; 10:19-20; 13:2-4; 15:28; 16:6-7; 20:22-23

PAUL—Acts 22:14; Rom. 8:14; 12:1-2; Gal. 5:18; Eph. 5:15-17; Phil. 2:13

I. MYTHS OF HIS GUIDANCE

- A. M
- B. M
- C. M
- D. M
- E. M
- F. M

II. FACTS ABOUT HIS GUIDANCE

- A. He is a _____ Guide (Jn. 14:26; 16:13-14; Rom. 12:1-2)
- B. He _____ to us and _____ us His will (Acts 11:12; 13:2; 16:6; 20:23).
- C. He has a _____ for each of us (Jer. 29:11; Eph. 2:10; Psa. 32:8).
- D. _____ and _____ are required to receive His guidance (Heb. 5:8). If I follow His guidance as I know it, I will know His guidance as I need it.
- E. His guidance is _____ (Pro. 3:5-6).

T _____ L _____ A _____

III. REASONS FOR HIS GUIDANCE

- A. (John 16:7-11; Heb. 12:10-11; Job 5:17)—
- B. (Ezek. 22:30)—
- C. (Psa. 25:9; 49:11; Isa. 58:11)—
- D. (2 Cor. 1:3-4; Heb. 4:15)—

E. Just because He _____ us!

IV. FILTERS FOR HIS GUIDANCE

- A. (2 Tim. 3:16; Psa. 119:105; Pro. 6:21-22)—
- B. (Pro. 11:14; 12:15; 13:10; 15:22; 18:15; 19:20)—
- C. (Rom. 8:28; Eph. 1:11; Phil. 1:12-13)—
- D. (Rom. 2:14-15; 9:1-2)—
- E. (Col. 3:15; Phil. 4:7)—
- F. (Eph. 5:15-18)—
- G. (Jer. 33:3; Rom. 8:26-27; 1 Jn. 5:14-15; Jam. 1:5; Psa. 40:8; 143:10)—

Tozer writes, “We should never seek guidance on what God has already forbidden, nor for those things about which He has already given us a specific command, but that in most other things God has no preference. The shepherd leads the sheep but he does not decide which tuft of grass the sheep shall nibble. Touching our life on earth God is pleased when we are pleased. He wills that we be as free as birds to soar and sing our Maker’s praise without anxiety. God’s choice for us may be any one of a score of possible choices. The Christian who is wholly and joyously surrendered to Christ cannot make a wrong choice. He doesn’t care if you eat steak or chicken, as long as we are pleased, then He is pleased. He gives us the freedom to use our God-given intellect and sanctified common sense.” Remember: His guidance is more about the relationship than the specifics (Psa. 37:4). If we allow our relationship to grow, we will hear and know His voice. It is much easier to follow His guidance if we enjoy a close relationship.

CONC— Charles Stanley writes, “We are never outside of God’s overarching plan. It may seem that we have taken a wrong turn, gotten off track, or that the sorrows of this life have caught up with us; but God is never surprised by our circumstances, and He is never out of control. There are no storms too great and no problems too deep for Him to solve. No matter what you may face, when you surrender your life and your situation to Him, God will place a sense of peace deep within your heart, and you will come to know Him in a more intimate way.”

Henry Drummond writes, “The maximum achievement of any man’s life after it is all over is to have done the will of God. No man or woman can have done any more with a life.”

SINS AGAINST THE HOLY SPIRIT

INTRO—

WE ARE IN A BATTLE: My Flesh vs. His Spirit

- Rom. 7:15-23; 8:1-5
- Rom. 8:12-15, 24
- Eph. 4:22-24
- Gal. 5:16-26

WE ARE IN A RELATIONSHIP

Henry Blackaby writes, “The doctrine of the Holy Spirit is distinctive to the Christian faith. No other religion has anything like it. What believers in Jesus Christ have come to know and experience through His gift of the Spirit brings them into a relationship with God that’s inaccessible in all other religions of the world. For just as God did not create the world and then step back and watch it spin, but chose to enter time and space and interact with His people, so also God did not just deliver a set of laws for us to follow in the hope of earning our way to heaven. Instead He chose to enter a relationship with His people on earth through His indwelling Spirit.”

OUR SINS CAN DAMAGE THE RELATIONSHIP

1. Eph. 4:30 “do not *grieve* the Holy Spirit of God”

- (v. 25)—
- (v. 26)—
- (v. 28)—
- (v. 29)—
- (v. 31)—

Commonality? All are sins of _____.

2. 1 Thess. 5:19 “Do not *quench* the Spirit”

- (vv. 12-13)—
- (vv. 14-15)—
- (v. 16)—
- (v. 17)—

- (v. 18)—
- (v. 20)—
- (v. 21)—
- (v. 22)—

Commonality? All are sins of _____.

CONC— Have you grieved the Holy Spirit? Have you quenched His work in you?

WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?

INTRO— The Ephesians' ignorance could be descriptive of many Christians in our day. It seems in some Christian circles the person and work of the Holy Spirit is rarely mentioned. It is a largely *overlooked* and neglected area of study. J.O. Sanders has a chapter entitled "The Displaced Member of the Godhead." Conversely, other Christian circles *overemphasize* the Holy Spirit making Him the center of attention. Either view will cause the power and work of the Holy Spirit to be confused, misunderstood, and even perverted. The person and work of the Holy Spirit is one of the most scriptural and practical doctrines in all the Bible.

I. THE HOLY SPIRIT IS A *PROMISE*

A. *Prominence in Scripture* -

1. Transitional focus upon different persons of the Godhead - Basically, in the Old Testament from creation to Bethlehem, God the Father; in the Gospels, from Bethlehem to Pentecost, God the Son, and from Acts 2 until the Rapture, God the Holy Spirit is focused.
2. The Holy Spirit is mentioned over 90 times in Old Testament and 261 in the New Testament. Only Philemon and 2nd & 3rd John omit reference to Him.

B. *Place in Scripture* -

What role in history and the present does the Holy Spirit have?

1. *Old Testament* (Before Christ on earth), the Holy Spirit *came on or in or upon* selected people for a certain purpose for a limited time (Joseph-Gen. 41:38; Joshua (Num. 27:18); Daniel (4:8; 5:11-14; 6:3); Judges 3:10; 6:34; 11:29; 13:25; Prophets: 1 Sam. 10:10; 16:13; 2 Chron. 15:1). In Old Testament times He did not indwell on a permanent basis.
2. During the *time of Christ's* physical presence on earth, the Holy Spirit's work centered around the person of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit was in Christ dwelling *with* the disciples (John 14:17). He played an active role in Christ's life (conception, baptism, temptations, anointing, empowering, death and resurrection).
3. *Since Pentecost*, during the church Age, He uniquely *indwells permanently* all believers (John 14:17; Rom. 8:9; 1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19; 12:13)

C. *Promised to come:*

1. Father promised in Old Testament (Joel 2:28; Acts 2:17ff) - also Jer. 31:31ff
2. John the Baptized promised (Lk. 3:15-16)
3. Jesus promised 7 times (Lk. 24:49; John 14:16; Acts 1:4-5)

II. THE HOLY SPIRIT IS A *PERSON*

The Bible teaches that the Holy Spirit is a real person, having a distinct personality, possessing all the marks of a true personality.

- A. Holy Spirit is *NOT*: enthusiasm, genius, it, thing, life principle, impersonal force, energy, an influence, or experience - all are erroneous concepts.
- B. He is a *PERSON* with the distinctive elements of personality. Some *proofs* of personhood:
 1. *Grammatical considerations* - Masculine personal pronouns are used when referred to. Look at Jn. 14:17; 16:13-14 (8 times He, His)
 2. He possesses *intelligence* - has ability to think, reason, understand, plan, etc.
1 Cor 2:10-11 "searches all things...knows thoughts of God"
Rom. 8:27 adds "the mind of the Spirit"
 3. He shows *emotions*: can be grieved (Eph 4:30); loves (Rom. 5:5; 15:30); longs jealously (Jam. 4:5); can be insulted (Heb. 10:29); resisted (Acts 7:51); lied to (Acts 5:3); encourages (Acts 9:31); calls out (Gal. 4:6); etc.

4. He has a *will*, so He decides, acts, expresses, etc.
 1 Cor. 12:11 "as He wills"
 Rom 8:14 "leads" (Acts 8:29; 16:6-11)
5. He *speaks* - He calls and commands. He prays (Rom. 8:26). He teaches (1 Cor. 2:13; John 14:26; 16:12-14). He speaks to the churches (7 times in Rev. 2 & 3).

III. WHAT BIBLICAL SUPPORT IS THERE THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT IS GOD?

A. He is ACCLAIMED as God. Divine ascriptions are given to Holy Spirit:

1. Acts 5:3 "lied to the *Holy Spirit*"
 Acts 5:4 "lied to...*God*"
2. Cor. 3:16 "you are *God's temple*"
 1 Cor. 6:19 "a *temple* of the *Holy Spirit*"
 2 Cor. 6:16 "*temple* of the living *God*"

B. He has divine ATTRIBUTES that belong to God alone:

1. *Eternality* (Heb. 9:14) - never a time when he was not
2. *Omnipresent* (Psa. 139:7)
3. *Omniscience* (John 14:26; 16:13; 1 Cor. 2:10-12)
4. *Omnipotent* – Ability seen in:
 - (1) Creation of earth (Gen. 1:2; Psa. 104:30); human life (Gen. 2:7; Job 33:4)
 - (2) Incarnation-caused virgin birth (Luke 1:35)
 - (3) Inspiration of Scripture (2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:21) -
 - (4) Regeneration (gives spiritual life) - John 3:5; Titus 3:5
 - (5) Sanctification of believer (1 Pet. 1:2) - The Holy Spirit sustains spiritual life
 - (6) Resurrection (Rom. 8:11)

CONC— There is nothing that God is that the Holy Spirit is not. All essential aspects of deity belong to the Holy Spirit. He is not simply a part of God, or just an emanation from God, or even a substitute for God - He is God. The Holy Spirit is actually and fully God.

"Why is this important?" It means that possessing the Holy Spirit is not just a religious experience; but is having the very presence of God in us - filled with God Himself! This means our attitudes and actions can & should reflect the character of God. What a mystery and a blessing!

Swindoll says, "The third member of the Godhead, the invisible, yet all-powerful representation of deity, is actually living inside your being. His limitless capabilities are resident within you, since He indwells you. You think you can't handle what life throws at you? You think you can't stand firm, or, when necessary, stand alone in your life? You think you can't handle the lure of life's temptations? Well, you certainly could not if you were all alone. You - alone - can't do that anymore than I can fly alone. But with the right kind of power put into operation, the very power and presence of God, you can handle it. You can do it. As a matter of fact, all the pressure will be shifted and the weight transferred from you to Him. It's a radically different way to live. And because He is God He can handle it."

THE *CONVICTING* OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

(John 16:5-11)

INTRO— We live in the age of the Spirit. Since Pentecost, the Holy Spirit permanently indwells all who come to Christ. He is actively working in our world today. To *Christians*, He is the Comforter and Counselor (Jn. 16:7). To the *unsaved*, the Holy Spirit is a Prosecutor and Convictor. This passage and message explains the convicting work of the Holy Spirit. Look at three things: the Essence, Extent, & Effect of conviction.

I. THE ESSENCE OF "CONVICTION" (v.8)

A. The *MEANING* - What is it?

1. *NOT* the same as conversion, but it is necessary to it - can be convicted and not converted, but can't be converted and not have been convicted.

2. *Greek verb "ELEGCHO"* can be translated convince, reprove, rebuke, expose, convict. It is a legal term meaning to bring to light, to expose, to refute, to convince, and to convict. Always carries idea of cross-examining until error is seen and guilt is established.
3. *NT Definition* of convict is to *convince* someone of sin and to *call* to repentance or else be *condemned*. The aim of the Holy Spirit is not to produce a guilty verdict - already stands (Jn. 3:18, 36) - but to convince the guilty defendant of his perilous condition. Conviction offers proof, but doesn't guarantee the truth will be accepted, which is needed for conversion.

B. The *MANIFESTATIONS* of conviction - denial, anger, fear, escape, tears, laughter, guilt, repentance, etc.

II. THE EXTENT OF CONVICTION (vv.9-11)

The Holy Spirit convicts people with respect to three specific areas (sin, righteousness, judgment) - all of which are basic to determining one's spiritual state.

A. (v9) The *GRAVITY OF MAN'S SIN*

It is the Holy Spirit's function to convict all people of their guilt of the sin of unbelief. Note, sin is singular. The basic issue is not sins (symptoms), but sin (disease). Unbelief is the sin of sins - the only unpardonable sin. Unbelief condemns (Jn. 3:18-21). The greatest demonstration of sin against God is refusing to believe in Christ (Jn. 3:18, 36; 15:22, 24). The Holy Spirit's role is to convince all of the gravity and seriousness of their sin and call them to repentance. He establishes the guilt of the whole world before God (Rom. 3:10-18, 23). We'll never know our need for a Savior without being convinced of our sin.

B. (v10) The *POSSIBILITY OF TRUE RIGHTEOUSNESS*

What comfort is it to be convicted of sin if there's no possibility of righteousness to meet my need. But the Holy Spirit now shows us the solution - need for true righteousness. How so? He not only shows us how bad we are, but also how good Christ is.

1. First, He shows the *liability of self-righteousness* - The answer is not human righteousness or to do good (Rom. 10:3; Ph. 3:8-9; Tit. 3:5). Man cannot solve his sin problem, no matter how good he is (Isa. 64:6). The Holy Spirit must convict the world of its false inadequate righteousness as insufficient.
2. Second, He shows the *availability of true righteousness in Jesus Christ*. - In killing Jesus the Jews believed they were showing His unrighteousness (Jn. 9:24). But God, through resurrection and ascension, vindicated Christ as the perfectly Righteous One. It is now the work of the Holy Spirit to convince sinners that Christ has the righteousness I need. Christ's righteousness is the standard, not man's. The Holy Spirit takes Christ's place to convict the world of its false righteousness. True righteousness is possible only in a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

C. (v11) The *CERTAINTY OF FINAL JUDGMENT*

1. The *Order* is important and logical: must be convinced of need over sin, must be convinced Christ is the only answer, or else judgment.
2. *World Views* the cross as a place where Jesus was condemned; but God sees it as the place where an unbelieving world is condemned and Satan was defeated. Christ's death and Resurrection judged Satan (Jn. 12:31; Col. 2:15). Though still active, Satan is a defeated foe - a condemned criminal awaiting final execution (Rev. 20:1-3, 7-10). Satan and all who refuse to believe "now stand condemned." Judgment is a certainty.

SUMMARY - It is the Holy Spirit's work to convince and convict a person: there is such a thing as sin and its essence is to refuse to believe on Christ; there is such a thing as true righteousness and it is embodied in Christ (attested by His return to the Father); and there is such a thing as final judgment for all who remain in sin and reject Christ.

III. THE *EFFECT* OF CONVICTION

How one responds to conviction is critical. Conviction has two possible effects:

1. *Repentance and Belief* lead to conversion (Acts 2:22-41; 7:51-57; 9:1-6; 1 Cor. 14:24).
2. *Rejection and Unbelief* bring condemnation (Rev. 20:11-15).

Warning – the right response is essential when the Holy Spirit convicts because He will not always do so! (Gen. 6:3) Don't pass the point of no return and become hardened where you no longer are convicted.

CONC— The Holy Spirit is the prosecuting attorney and all the unsaved are guilty prisoners of Satan. The purpose of His indictment is not condemnation but salvation. Apart from the convicting work of the Holy Spirit, fallen humanity would never come to grips with the seriousness of its sin, the sufficiency of Christ to save, and the certainty of final judgment.

John Phillips writes, "The greatest sin a person can commit is not to believe in God's beloved Son. That is the sin of sins, the ultimate sin, the damning sin. It is like a man who has a deadly but curable disease. He goes to the doctor who prescribes a remedy but the man refuses to take it. He dies of his disease, not because he had the disease but because he spurned the remedy. All of us have this fatal sin virus in our souls. But God has provided an infallible remedy in his Son, a remedy that he offers us on the simple basis of belief (John 3:16). Those who will not believe in the Son go to a lost eternity - not because they are sinners but because they have refused God's remedy."

Exactly, how will the Holy Spirit convict? Jn. 16:7 "to *you*" (twice) - through the godly lives of his people!

THE BAPTISM WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

(1 Cor. 12:12-13)

INTRO— Merrill Unger writes, "The BAPTISM of the Holy Spirit is one of the most vital and important scriptural doctrines. The baptism is that divine operation of God's Spirit which places the believer in Christ, in His mystical body, the church, and which makes him one with all other believers in Christ. The baptism makes them one in the life of the Son of God Himself, sharing His common salvation, hope, and destiny. Thus, this major Bible theme concerns intimately and vitally the believer's position and experience, his standing and state." The baptism with the Holy Spirit is not only one of the most important issues of Scripture, it is also one of the most misunderstood and abused. There is much confusion over this subject.

I. TWO VARIANT AND CONFLICTING VIEWPOINTS

1. The ***Subsequent to Salvation*** view says the baptism with the Holy Spirit is a work of the Holy Spirit subsequent to and in addition to salvation, which should be eagerly sought and experienced by every believer. Those holding this position (typically Charismatics) adhere to a "Second Blessing or Work of Grace." These believe every Christian should enjoy two baptisms: One is a baptism into Christ (salvation) and it is for all believers. A second baptism, subsequent to salvation, is into the Spirit and is for all Christians who meet the conditions (earnestly seek and believe), and who evidence they have received this second blessing by having new spiritual motivations, power, and abilities, primarily the ability to speak in tongues. Generally, charismatics believe that while the Spirit has baptized every believer into Christ (conversion), Christ has not yet baptized every believer into the Spirit (Pentecost baptism). Pentecostals usually believe that every believer has the Spirit, but not every believer has received the baptism of the Holy Spirit.
2. The second view says that the baptism with the Holy Spirit is ***Synonymous with Salvation***. This position holds that the baptism with the Holy Spirit is an event synchronous with receiving Christ at conversion, which is never to be repeated, much less sought after.

RESULT: Christians and the body of Christ, the church, become divided into two levels: the haves (zapped) and the have-nots (unzapped). The zapped tend to believe they are a bit more spiritual; while the unzapped wonder why they do not have the same kind of experience. The result is a schism in the body.

II. WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

The phrase "the baptism with Holy Spirit" occurs only seven specific times in all of Scripture, all in New Testament. Five are *prophetic* in that each refers to a future event. Four of these five are from John the Baptist (Matt. 3:11; Mk. 1:7-8; Lk. 3:16; Jn. 1:33). The fifth is by Jesus after Resurrection before Ascension (Acts 1:4-5). All look ahead to Pentecost. One is *historical*, as Acts 11:15-17 looks back to Pentecost. The seventh and final reference is *doctrinal* in that it explains the reality of this for all believers (1 Cor. 12:13). There are five other references where this concept is mentioned (Rom. 6:3-4; Gal. 3:27; Eph. 4:5; Col. 2:12; 1 Pet. 3:21). Many would want you to believe this idea is on every page in the Bible.

III. WHAT DOES 1 COR. 12:12-13 TEACH US ABOUT THE BAPTISM WITH THE Holy Spirit?

1. *Who experiences this reality?* "we...all." It was a common reality among Paul and the Corinthian believers. The baptism with the Holy Spirit is a unique reality for all Christians during the Church Age. How many of these Corinthian Christians had this? "All." What do we know about them? They were carnal & immature; yet, all had it - no exceptions. *It is not a second and subsequent experience for some, but an initial and universal fact for all.* It is not a mark of spirituality for a few. All were baptized, but did all speak in tongues? (12:30)
2. *When is it experienced?* "were" implies the past. When would you think was "were"? At salvation. How many times does a person get saved? Only once. So, how many baptisms are there? One (Eph. 4:5). The tense of this verb is aorist, which is the Greek way of expressing a once-for-all event. *The baptism with the Holy Spirit, then, is a once-for-all reality for all believers when they are saved.* This is why none of the references containing

this expression is a command because it is automatic at conversion. This is also why you find no mention of conditions to enjoy it (like waiting & seeking), it is automatic! No subsequence!

3. *Who does the baptizing?* not as clear here (implied) as in the other passages (Matt. 3:11). *Christ Himself is the one baptizing - never the Holy Spirit.* The expression "the baptism of the Holy Spirit" is not even biblical, because would mean the Holy Spirit does the baptizing. Note v.12 - If not baptized with Holy Spirit, what? Be baptized with fire (of hell). Only two kinds of people: those baptized with Holy Spirit (Christians) and people who go to hell.
4. *Into what or who are Christians baptized by Christ?* Look at next three words, "by or with the Holy Spirit." The Greek preposition *en* has many translations. You must look at the context. Since the Holy Spirit is not baptizing, then, *of* could never be used. It could be with, in, or by, with is probably best. *The Holy Spirit is the element into which Christians are baptized. Christians are baptized by Jesus Christ with the Holy Spirit.*
5. *What is the purpose of this reality?* New spiritual motivation and power? The ability to speak in tongues? NO! Look at the next few words in v.13, "into one body" (cp. v.12 "form one body"). Jesus Christ baptizes (spiritually immerses) every believer with the Holy Spirit for the purpose of placing him/her into the universal church, the body of Christ. Every Christian, when saved, is immersed into the body of Christ, the church. If this baptism is not common to all Christians, then some Christians aren't in the body! *The baptism of the Holy Spirit joins every Christian to the body and is the basis of our oneness and unity in Jesus Christ.* Though the baptism here is a dry spiritual immersion; it is symbolized by water baptism into the local church, which is the visible expression of Christ's body.

CONC— The baptism with the Holy Spirit is a fact, not a feeling, that occurs only once by Christ at conversion and is common to all believers. It is neither a repeatable nor subsequent experience. It is not just for a select group of believers. Listen, Christian, you aren't missing anything. If you got saved, you received the Holy Spirit. There is nothing more to wait for. The question is not have you been dipped, rather are you filled and committed!

THE SEALING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

(Eph. 1:13-14)

INTRO— The Holy Spirit is at work in believers and unbelievers. At conversion the Holy Spirit performs three once-for-all ministries: indwelling, baptism with, and the sealing of. Scripture uses various *emblems* to describe the person and work of the Holy Spirit. Each symbolizes something: Fire-power and purification, Dove-purity and peace; Wind-sovereign invisible work, Oil-approval, choice, and healing power. Another emblem is the SEAL. Three New Testament passages speak of this specific work (2 Cor. 1:22; Eph. 1:13; 4:30). This specific work of the Spirit is found nowhere in the Old Testament, and is something done in and for believers since Pentecost. Look at five things related to the Sealing:

I. THE PEOPLE WHO ARE SEALED

The *terms* used in 2 Cor. 1:21-22; Eph. 1:13 could only be used of believers. As with indwelling and baptism, the sealing belongs to believers only and to all believers.

II. THE *POINT* OF SEALING

Like indwelling and baptism, sealing occurs only once at the time of our conversion, when we believe and are saved. Eph. 1:13 indicates believing and sealing occur at same time, or it would be possible to have unsealed believers.

III. THE *PERSON* WHO SEALS US (2 Cor. 1:21-22)

Clearly, from these passages the sealing is something God does with the Holy Spirit. God is the Agent and Holy Spirit is the element.

IV. THE *PURPOSES* OF THE SEAL - Sign of:

- A. *PROPRIETY* (OWNERSHIP-Identification) - *Normally*, then and today, when a man owned something he put his seal on it meaning, "This is mine!" The seal provided rightful ownership. Biblical *examples* (Song 8:6; Hag. 2:23; Rev. 7:2ff). *Application* - Paul says we were *bought* with a price (1 Cor. 6:19-20). As His rightful purchased possessions, he seals us with His Spirit to prove His ownership (2 Tim. 2:19). Christians are not just bought by the Son, but also *branded* by the Spirit.
- B. *AUTHENTICITY* - *Normally*, every letter or official document, then and now, was signed and sealed. Sealing attested to the genuineness of the document. It showed authenticity, certifying genuineness of documents, royal commands, etc. No document was seen as authentic without the seal. Biblical *examples* (1 Kings 21:8; Esther 3:10-12; 8:7-10) - Seal showed authentic documents from the king. *Application* - The presence of the Holy Spirit in the believer is the mark of genuinely belonging to God (Rom. 8:9). He seals the genuineness of our salvation. The Holy Spirit is God's seal of divine confirmation and certification that we are truly believers.
- C. *SECURITY* - *Normally*, the seal was used as a means of protecting books, letters, and other documents from tampering and harm. The sealing secured protection, which no man could reverse. Biblical *examples* (Esther 8:8 again; Daniel 6:17; Matt. 27:66; Rev. 20:3). *Application* - God has sealed us with His Spirit. We are secure and protected. Every Christian is safe and secure, which no man can reverse. God says, "Keep out!" Salvation is secure. Until when? Eph. 4:30... Paul says in Phil. 1:6... Job 14:17 reads...

Eph 1:14 adds more security as Paul says the Holy Spirit "is a *deposit guaranteeing* our inheritance..." *Arrabon* is fascinating word. *Legally*, it was "the down payment to guarantee the final purchase of some commodity or piece of property." Today, real estate people talk about earnest money as a pledge to fully purchase. *Personally*, it is an "engagement ring," which is an assurance that promises made will be kept. *Application* - God gives us and seals us with His Holy Spirit when we believe. He is God's first installment that guarantees every believer that God will complete His work of salvation and take us all to glory, secured and protected!

- D. *FINALITY* - *Normally*, now as well as then, when important documents are processed, they are stamped with an official seal indicating the transaction is complete. The seal marked formal ratification of a covenant or transaction. Biblical *examples* (Jer. 32:9-12) marked a done deal. *Application* - Turn to John 19:30 - The Father and the Son had a deal. The sealing of the Holy Spirit marks that completed transaction between God and Christ for our salvation.
- E. *AUTHORITY* - *Normally*, the seal was the sign of authority and power. The king and all who possessed this seal were given authority to act in his stead. Biblical *examples* (Gen. 41:42; 1 Kings 21:8; Est. 3:12; 8:8-10). *Application* - Christians are sealed with the Holy Spirit. He gives every believer all the authority and power he needs. As God's official representatives, He has given us jurisdiction. By His Spirit, He has invested authority and power.
- F. *RESPONSIBILITY* - *Normally*, seals were evidence of some covenant or agreement between two parties, each having certain obligations of responsibility. Each must fulfill all contractual duties or mar the seal. Biblical *examples* (Neh. 9:38; 10:1). *Application* - God and every believer enter a covenant at salvation. God's part is to save and secure us. What is my responsibility? Every seal is visible and leaves an impression or image. A seal imparts its own image to that which it seals. In sealing us with His Spirit, God imparts His image and character. Every Christian is responsible to reflect the image and character of God. The Holy Spirit wants to make us like God. The Holy Spirit wants to reveal Himself through all He seals. No one has the right to say he is sealed by the Spirit of Truth if he lies consistently.

SUMMARY - The sealing of the Holy Spirit signifies that the great transaction of redemption, in which God the Son paid for humanity's sin, is finished. As believers we now belong to God and are His heritage. Therefore, we are eternally secure, and as those owned by God we are responsible to reflect His character and glorify His name in all we are and do.

V. THE PERIOD OF SEALING (Eph. 1:14; 4:30) - I am secure until the final day of redemption. When is this? Redemption will be complete when I receive a new and glorified body (Rom. 8:23).

CONC— Oh the blessedness of being a sealed saint! Have you been sealed? Only if you have heard and believed. If sealed, then you are eternally secure. The seal cannot be broken!

THE GIFTING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

INTRO— Many Christians live in spiritual poverty, unaware of the vast resources God has given in the form of spiritual gifts. We must tap into this rich reserve, and attempt to understand and unwrap this God-given treasure of spiritual gifts. Few things are more important for a Christian than knowing his/her gifts. This subject is one of the most interesting, important, and yet, controversial. Few areas have been more neglected or abused. Consider six facts to aid in understanding and unwrapping our treasury of spiritual gifts: Distinctions, Definition, Divisions, Distribution, Design, and Discovery.

I. THE DISTINCTIONS - Gifts are distinct and unique. They are different from:

- A. The *Gift of the Person* of the Holy Spirit. At salvation the person of the Holy Spirit comes to indwell us. Gifts that we receive at salvation are special abilities to aid us in serving God.

- B. The *Fruit* of the Holy Spirit. Character - service; Attitudes – activity. This is described in Gal. 5:22-23 and is related to character.
- C. *Natural Talents*. These are abilities given at birth and therefore possessed by believers and nonbelievers alike.
- D. A *Ministry* is not a gift, but the place or area where the gift is used to serve.

II. THE DEFINITION - "What are spiritual gifts?"

- A. Two words that help:
 1. (1 Cor. 12:1, 7) - *pneumatikos* - from or of the Spirit. Actually, gifts are from the Father (Rom. 12:3), by the Son (Eph. 4:7), and through the Spirit (vv.7-11). Source is God-given. Gifts are sovereignly given by God (v.11, 18). The Holy Spirit decides and you have no choice in the matter. He knows the needs and what is best. There is no need to seek; however, shouldn't ignore or exalt. We don't earn them, they are a gift.
 2. (1 Cor. 12:4, etc.) - *charismata* - product of grace. Gifts can't be earned. We don't work for them nor receive them because we deserve them.
 3. (Rom. 11:29) Spiritual gifts are irrevocably given. They can be "shelved" due to lack of use, but won't be removed.
- B. *Definition* - Spiritual gifts are God-given abilities, sovereignly bestowed upon every Christian at salvation, to enable him to serve with ease and effectiveness the church, the body of Christ. Gifts are channels for *service*. They are supernatural endowments which enable us to do God's work.

III. THE DIVISIONS – Four lists in the Bible - none exhaustive.

- A. Generally:
 1. (1 Cor. 12:4-6) *Variety* of gifts, ministries, and results
 2. (1 Cor. 12:12-27) *Diversity* of parts ("many members" with differing functions) - each is unique! This means we are dependent on each other.
 3. (1 Pet. 4:10) *Mixture* of colors on a palate - All different, important, and valuable. God has something for you to do and it will not get done unless you do it!
- B. Specifically, Two Main Categories of Gifts (1 Pet. 4:10-11)
 1. Speaking (more verbal) - dispense truth to the Body
 2. Serving (more supporting) - behind-the-scenes

IV. THEIR DISTRIBUTION - As said, God is the source as they are sovereignly given as He wills. There is a variety of them. But, who gets them?

- A. Passages -
 - 1 Cor. 12:7, 11 "...to *each one*...is given..."
 - Eph. 4:7 "...to *each one* of us...has been given"
 - 1 Pet. 4:10 "...*Each one* should use whatever gift he has received"

C. Recipient - Only for Christians because only Christians possess Holy Spirit. Each and every believer is gifted - no exceptions; yet, no Christian has all the gifts. Every believer, is a body part, an animal, an instrument, a tool. Every Christian has a job to do. No Christian has every gift, but every Christian has some gift. Everybody is somebody in His body! In the truest sense every Christian is a charismatic since each has "charismata."

V. **The DESIGNS (Purposes)** - What are they for? (1 Cor. 12:1) Why is it important not to be ignorant about gifts?

A. *EDIFICATION OF OTHERS* - Basic purpose:

1. 1 Cor. 12:7 "for the common good." The word means to bring together or to lift up others. Gifts should bring us together like pieces in a puzzle - all are different yet fit together.

2. Eph. 4:12 and 1 Pet. 4:10 also.

My gifts are to help others, never self-edification or personal glory. They are not status symbols but service tools. They are not for our enjoyment but His employment. They are to serve the church, to build up the Body and to edify the saints. Any gift that fails to edify others is no longer being used but abused!

B. *ENABLEMENT OF SELF* - Gifts do hold some personal benefit. They identify my part telling me where I am to function and serve. This eliminates unemployment and unfulfillment.

C. *ENLARGEMENT OF CHURCH* - (Eph. 4:13, 14, 16) First in maturity and quality and oneness. Then, in numbers. Balance and health.

D. *EXALTATION OF GOD* (1 Pet. 4:10-11) –

VI. **THEIR DISCOVERY - How do I discover my treasure?**

A. It is initiated by *prayer*. Petition God and ask Him to reveal your giftedness (Matt. 7:7-11). Note, you are seeking to discover what He has already given.

B. It is helped by *information*. Remember every Christian is gifted. Read, study, talk to others. Don't be ignorant.

C. It is often indicated by your personal *desires*, interests, and enjoyments. Gifts give you a sense of accomplishment and fulfillment.

D. It is usually discovered by *exploration*. Be open and available to try and to risk. Expose yourself to opportunities.

E. It will be accompanied by *blessings*. When you do it, there will be results. God will bless it. It will have effect.

F. It should be *confirmed* by others (1 Tim. 4:15; 1 Cor. 14:29). What do others say you do well and it blesses them?

CONC— Imagine you have a friend who lives in a city many miles away; and because of this great distance, you haven't been able to see each other for years. Every Christmas, though, you

try to make up for that distance by taking great care and effort in choosing just the right gift. Even the details of the wrapping reflect your love and respect for your friend.

Then one day, out of the blue, someone sends you enough money to make a long-dreamed-of visit to your friend. Bubbling with anticipation, you travel the many miles, finally reveling in your friend's warm welcome. Talking and laughing like two giddy kids, you share a wonderful ride from the airport, until at last you've arrived at your friend's home. After a few moments, you pause to survey the living room, but see none of your gifts on display. While still chatting, you glance into the den, the kitchen, the hallway - no gifts. Your heart begins to sink, but you don't have the courage to ask about the gifts.

While your friend is away on an errand, however, you peek into the front closet, and your heart drops. There, after all these years, are all the once-glittering gifts you sent, still wrapped and unused. How would you feel?

As you think through your own emotions, perhaps you can imagine a little of how God feels. For He has sent us beautifully wrapped and carefully selected gifts as tender expressions of His love for us (Jam. 1:17), yet many of us have stored these gifts in a closet - unopened, unused. As a result, we may be missing the special way in which God wants to use us through our gifts.

Don't be a masterpiece hidden in the attic. The rest of the body needs you. To fail to use your gift is to abuse the grace of God.

Every child of God is gifted. Two closing thoughts:

1. Though grace gifts, each is *Accountable to God* as a faithful steward (1 Pet. 4:10; Matt. 25:14ff) - Rom. 12:6 says, "using them." Invest, don't waste your gifts.
2. So get with it -- Paul said, "Don't *neglect* it!" (1 Tim. 4:14). Paul said, "*Stir it up!*" (2 Tim. 1:6).

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

(Gal. 5:22-23)

INTRO—

1. *CONTEXT* of vv. 22-23:
 - a command (v.16) - walk by Spirit (won't be easy)
 - a conflict (17-18) - flesh vs. Spirit (inner warfare) - different appetites
 - a contrast (19-23) - living in flesh (19-21) vs. led by Spirit
2. *PRODUCT* of living by and being led by the Spirit is the *fruit of the Spirit*.
3. *FREQUENCY* - "Fruit" is mentioned in 24 of 27 New Testament books. It appears 70 times in the New Testament. God has much to say about fruit in a Christian's life.
4. *VARIOUS KINDS* of fruit (soul winning, holy living, generous giving, etc.). Beyond the fruit of the Spirit, Scripture speaks of other types of fruit; however, the focus here is the fruit of the Spirit. Three truths concerning the fruit of the Spirit:

I. THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT *DEFINED*

A. *NOT* same as

1. the Gift of the Spirit - salvation
2. the Gifts of the Spirit - service

B. Fruit has to do with *character*, or the *graces* of the Spirit. Fruit is the outward expression of the working of God's Spirit in a believer. Fruit is the manifestation of God's character. Fruit is the harvest of a Christ-dominated life. You can't buy this fruit and attach it to your life - it comes from within. Fruit is the external evidence of the indwelling Christ. The Holy Spirit is the origin and producer. Fruit is not the by-product of works. It comes natural when the supernatural life of God by his Spirit flows in and through us. Fruit is not produced by human effort but by the power of the Spirit.

QUOTE: "The measure of the control of the Holy Spirit in the life of a believer is not in how many gifts a person manifests, nor how much emotion he can express, nor one's intelligence about spiritual things, but his control is measured by the degree that a person exhibits Christ-likeness through the fruit of the Spirit."

II. THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT *IDENTIFIED* (Gal. 5:22-23)

1. *LOVE* is most God-like quality of all. It is an act of one's will not emotion. It is displayed through selflessness and sacrifice. It is unconditional and self-giving.
2. *JOY* is one of God's big little words. It has nothing to do with the world's wealth or pleasures, nor with circumstances. It is His joy in us.
3. *PEACE* is wholeness and togetherness. It is inner calmness no matter what happens externally.
4. *PATIENCE* is long-suffering and tolerance with difficult people; learning to endure their faults without complaints.
5. *KINDNESS* is a tender, benevolent attitude. It is a non-critical or judgmental attitude and leads to a forgiving spirit.
6. *GOODNESS* is moral excellence and is more active than kindness. It is helping others.
7. *FAITHFULNESS* is trustworthiness, reliability, dependability, and follow-through. It is a life of constant dependency on God.
8. *GENTLENESS* (meekness) is a humble submissiveness even in difficult circumstances reflecting a belief in the sovereignty and the goodness of God. It is power in control; not weakness in character.
9. *SELF-CONTROL* is inner discipline and strength to control appetites and desires. It is the ability to keep self in check.

III. THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT CULTIVATED

How is this fruit cultivated? What conditions best produce it?

- A. (Gal. 5:24) Crucify the flesh (Jn. 12:24) - hate sin - flesh is dying, but not dead
- B. (John 15:2) Be cleansed by the Father -
- C. (John 15:4-5) Remain in close communion with Christ -
- D. (John 15:7) Stay in Word -
- E. (Gal. 5:25) Walk in the Spirit - let Him guide; yield

CONC— Close with 3 thoughts:

1. A *Reminder* (Jn. 15:4,15,16) - Fruit is a command
2. A *Warning* (Matt. 7:15-20; 13:32) - Fruit is an indicator of salvation. There is no such person as a "no fruit" Christian. Fruit is the visible sign of life.
3. A *Promise* (Jn. 15:8) - God is glorified when we bear fruit.

Fruit of the Spirit is commanded of every believer, exemplified in Christ, and produced only by the Holy Spirit.

A man asked Rembrandt at what point a picture was complete. He replied, "...when it expresses the intent of the artist." So it is with us. We are incomplete until we express the full intent of our Master. This is what the fruit of the Spirit is all about.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS PASSAGES

1 Cor. 12:1-11, 18, 28-30

¹Now about spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be ignorant. ²You know that when you were pagans, somehow or other you were influenced and led astray to mute idols.

³Therefore I tell you that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says "Jesus be cursed," and no one can say "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit.

⁴There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit; ⁵There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. ⁶There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men. ⁷Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. ⁸To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, ⁹to another faith by the same Spirit, to another

Romans 12:1-8

¹Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. ²Do not be conformed any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. ³For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you. ⁴Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, ⁵so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. ⁶We have different gifts, according to

Ephesians 4:7-16

⁷*But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it.*

⁸*This is why it says:*

“When he ascended on high, he led captives in his train and gave gifts to men.”

⁹*(What does “he ascended mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions?*

¹⁰*He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.)*

¹¹*It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers,*

¹²*to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up ¹³until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.*

¹⁴*Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here*

1 Peter 4:10-11

¹⁰*Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms.*

¹¹*If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.*

EXAMINE THE FOLLOWING “SHORT LIST” OF TALENTS AND

Circle those you feel confident that you have. You may also choose to insert new words below that describe your personal talents. Look at those you circled and make an “X” next to your top five. Then, put those in numerical order according to your greatest ability.

Achieving	Communicating	Drawing	Improving	Organizing	Comforting
Discipling	Connecting	Editing	Influencing	Coaching	Challenging
Implementing	Maximizing	Igniting	Instructing	Persuading	Speaking
Motivating	Coordinating	Encouraging	Leading	Planning	Stimulating
Researching	Counseling	Resolving	Analyzing	Budgeting	Strategizing
Writing	Advertising	Facilitating	Caring	Assisting	Supporting
Developing	Hosting	Advising	Loving	Promoting	Teaching

Repairing	Welcoming	Giving	Managing	Recruiting	Activating
Designing	Administrating	Helping	Mentoring	Relating	

My Top Five Talents or Abilities are: _____, _____,
 _____, _____, and _____.

Rank in order what you feel to be your three greatest abilities:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

My GREATEST ABILITY is _____!

IDENTICAL DIVINE ATTRIBUTES

ATTRIBUTE	FATHER	SON	HOLY SPIRIT
Eternal existence	Deut. 33:27; Psa. 90:2; 93:2; Ex. 3:13-14	Jn. 1:1-2; 8:58; 17:5; Isa. 9:6; Micah 5:2	Heb. 9:14
Omniscient	Acts 15:8; Psa. 147:5	Matt. 16:21; Lk. 6:8; 9:47; 11:17; Jn. 2:23-25	Jn. 14:26; 16:13; 1 Cor. 2:10-11
Omnipresent	Jer. 23:24	Matt. 18:20; 28:20	Psalm 139:7

Omnipotent	Rev. 19:6	Matt. 28:18; Rev. 1:8	Jn. 16:7-14
Creator	Gen. 1:1; Psa. 100:3	Jn. 1:3; Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:2	Psa. 104:30; Job 33:4
Saves (Regenerates)	Psa. 106:21; Isa. 43:3, 11; 45:21-23	Lk. 19:10; Jn. 3:16	Jn. 3:5; Titus 3:5
Inspired Scripture	2 Tim. 3:16	Jn. 14:26; 16:14	2 Pet. 1:21
Indwells believers	1 Jn. 4:12	Col. 1:27; Jn. 14:17	Rom. 8:9; Jn. 14:17
Called “God”	Gen. 1:1	Jn. 10:30; 14:9; 20:28	Acts 5:3-4; 1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19

THE TRINITY – *HOW* DOES GOD EXIST?

INTRO— The term used for how God exists is “trinity,” a concept unique to Christianity. Though “trinity” does not appear in the Bible (neither does incarnation, omni... —but Bible depicts God as all... — grandfather, etc.), the concept is plainly expressed in Scripture. Greater brains than mine have struggled to explain this mystery (so I can’t). My aim is to explain how this unique concept is revealed in God’s Word and how experiencing the Trinity has great implication for our everyday life. What does Scripture say about the Trinity? Two Truths:

I. THERE IS ONLY ONE TRUE GOD

Scripture presents God as one (unity) in His essential being or nature. Trinity does not mean three God’s, but only one. The Latin word, coined in 3rd Century is “tri-unus” which means three-in-one. “TRIUNITY” perhaps a better term. OT – Deut. 6:4 (Shema); Isa. 45:5-6. NT – 1 Cor. 8:4; 1 Tim. 1:17.

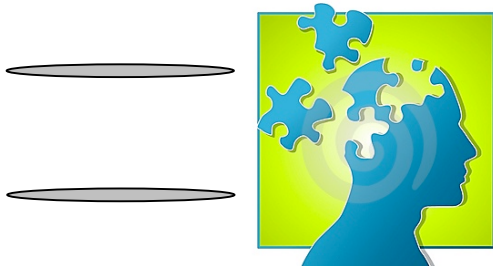
II. THE TRINITY CONSISTS OF THREE DISTINCT PERSONS EACH BEING GOD

- A. There is one God who has revealed Himself in three distinct Persons, and these three persons are the one God.
1. Name for God “Elohim” (Gen. 1:1, 26; 11:7) refers to a plurality of persons not gods—not three-headed God!
 2. New Testament teachings on the Trinity is implied in 75 passages and in 21 of 27 NT books. Passages—Matt. 3:16-17; Matt. 28:19; Jn. 15:26; 2 Cor. 13:14; 2 Thess. 2:13; Heb. 9:14.
 3. “Distinct” – Each Person in the Trinity has a unique role. We experience the one God in a three-fold manner. Each is distinct. The Father is the source or cause, Son is agent through Whom He works, Spirit is the power.
 4. “Persons” – All Persons in Trinity are knowable. Personal pronouns describe each of them. Each thinks, acts, speaks, feels, ...
- B. Each person in the Trinity is equally and fully God.
1. Each is *called* God (Gal. 1:1; Heb. 1:8; Acts 5:3-4).
 2. Each has *attributes* of deity:
 - Eternality (Ps. 90:2; Jn. 1:1-2; Heb. 9:14)
 - Omnipresent (Jer. 23:24; Matt. 28:20; Ps. 139:7)
 - Omnipotent (Rom. 11:33; Rev 1:8; Jn. 16:7-14)
 - Omniscient (Ps. 147:5; Jn. 2:23-25; Jn. 14:26)
 3. Each involved in exclusive divine *activities*:
 - Creation (Gen. 1:1; Jn. 1:3; Gen. 1:2)
 - Salvation (Isa. 45:21-23; Jn. 3:16; Titus 3:5)
 - Inspiration (2 Tim. 3:16; Jn. 16:14; 2 Pet. 1:21)
 - Resurrection (Gal. 1:1; Jn. 10:18; Rom. 8:11)

III. IMPACT OF BETTER UNDERSTANDING THE TRINITY

- A. SPIRITUAL GROWTH— Reveal study indicated 4 triggers for growth: SB&A, PSP, CA, and SAO. Top 2 SB&A are Salvation by grace and Trinity.
- B. DISPENSING ABILITIES (1 Cor. 12:4-6, 11, 18; Eph. 4:7)
- C. PRAYER— Son is interceding (Heb. 7:25) and Spirit is interpreting our heart to the Father (Rom. 8:26-27).
- D. WORSHIP— What an awesome God! If I have a God who I can understand, then not worthy of my worship! Rom. 11:33-34.
- E. DAILY LIFE— Trinity lives in me (Jn. 14:16-18, 20, 23)! Imagine struggling with some temptation, need guidance or comfort...indwelled by God.

CONC— The Trinity is one of the most unique teachings of Christianity. Difficult to understand? Yes! But, we accept and enjoy stuff every day we don't grasp—because personal experience or scientific evidence says it's so—and yet reject Biblical teaching on Trinity!



QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. Will you read and reflect on John 14-16 and Christ's teachings on the Holy Spirit?
2. What thoughts come to mind when you meditate on this truth: The Holy Spirit is God and He permanently lives in me?
3. Why do some Christians see so little of God's Spirit working in their lives?
4. Is there a specific area in your life where you need the help of the Holy Spirit?
5. How do you see the Holy Spirit working in people's lives today?
6. What is the evidence the Spirit of God has taken up residence in your life?
7. When was the last time you saw the Holy Spirit work in and through your life?
8. If God were to respond in proportion to you asking, would He be convinced you want to live an empowered life for His glory?
9. If the church is the body of Christ on earth, then why is her impact so inconsequential in many places?
10. How will deepening your dependency on the Holy Spirit change the way you live?
11. How has God demonstrated His power to you recently?

12. Have you been more interested in what the Holy Spirit can give you than in what He wants to do in and through you?
13. When those outside Christ see your life, do they see the power of God at work?
14. If the Holy Spirit indwells us as believers, then shouldn't there be a huge difference in how we live in contrast to the person who does have Him?
15. How does walking in the Spirit affect your life in a practical and meaningful way?
16. According to Gal. 5:16-25, as you allow the Holy Spirit to empower you, what can you expect Him to do in, for and through you?
17. How do you recognize the guiding of the Holy Spirit in your life?
18. Honestly, how serious are you about the Holy Spirit guiding your life?
19. Have you made the intentional and deliberate decision to allow God's Spirit to have complete control of your life?
20. As you seek to allow the Holy Spirit to control your life, what areas of need or weakness do you struggle with the most?
21. Has the Holy Spirit revealed unholy living in you?
22. In what ways might you have recently grieved and/or quenched the Holy Spirit?
23. What do you anticipate life in the Holy Spirit to look like in your future?
24. If God truly lives in you, in what ways should you be different than everyone else?
25. Do you believe you exist not for your own pleasure but to help people know the love of Jesus and to come fully alive in Him?
26. Going forward how will you answer: Who is the Holy Spirit to me? What have I done with Him? What has He done or doing with me?

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ANSWER SHEET

THE *PROMISED* HELPER (pp. 1-2)

Promised (Father, Son)

Fulfilled

Helps us

World (conviction of sin, regeneration, restrains evil)

Church (baptizing believers into the Body, unifying a diverse people, resourcing His people to serve)

Christians (secures, intercedes, illumines and teaches, empowers witness, equips to serve, controls the flesh, strengthens relationships, transforms into Christlikeness, guides, comforts and strengthens, joy, hope, abundance and freedom, glorifies the Son)

THE *TRANSFORMED* LIFE (pp. 3-4)

Christ

Glorify God

Holy Spirit

Helper, God, permanently, every

Transforms

THE *EMPOWERED* LIFE (pp. 5-6)

Serving others

Bearing fruit

What we do	service	few	easily counterfeited
Who we are	character	all	hard to counterfeit

Salvation, service

Every, important, God, dependent

Every, earned, God, helping, used

Christ, Heavenly Father, believers, Holy Spirit

Fruit

Bear...produce

Much...some

Fruitfulness

Abiding

Nothing

Lost, believers, self

THE *GUIDED* LIFE (pp. 7-8)

Map, misery, missionary, miracle, messed up, mystery

Reliable, speaks... shows, plan, faith..., obedience, conditional, trust, lean, acknowledge

Correction, intercession, direction, comfort, lover

Consistent, counsel, circumstances, conscience, peace, wisdom, prayer

SINS AGAINST THE HOLY SPIRIT (pp. 9-10)

Lying tongue, sinful anger, socially dishonest, corrupt speech, bad temper, commission
Lack of submission, lack of engagement, not rejoicing, not praying, not thankful, not
serving, not discerning, not avoiding evil, omission