

## Series: The Gift of the Holy Spirit

# Apostolic Testimony to the Holy Spirit

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Just as God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten, unique Son that those who believe in Him should not perish but have everlasting life, so also the Father and the Son gave the Holy Spirit to be the Paraclete, the Comforter, the one who would guide into all truth.

Here in the USA, we give thanks to God on Thanksgiving Day for His bountiful blessings. God's greatest gift is Himself. God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself. Jesus gave Himself as the sacrifice for sin to satisfy all requirements of divine justice and to assure all things necessary and sufficient for salvation.

Today we move to the testimony of the Holy Spirit in the apostolic epistles. This testimony was given to Paul, Peter, James, Jude, and John. The apostles take for granted, with full agreement and consent, the general corruption of man's nature. They refer to the Holy Spirit as the originator and source of all the saving, sanctifying, and comforting influences which the truly elect experience (Ephesians 3:16; Romans 15:13). We don't see them stopping to inquire into any debate about the renewing work of the Holy Spirit harmonizing with freedom of will. They simply set forth man's responsibility and the proclamation of converting grace with the renewing action by the Holy Spirit as truths flowing side by side.

Paul. Paul provides us with an abundance of insight into the Holy Spirit's work in the full extent of His saving and sanctifying operations. Paul, if we remember, had not known Christ after the flesh (2 Cor. 5:16). He received his revelation after Jesus' time on earth. In 2 Corinthians 3:17 Paul says, "**Now the Lord is that Spirit.**" He proclaims the close connection of Christ and the Holy Spirit. They have a joint mission. Christ is never to be conceived apart from the Holy Spirit nor is the Holy Spirit conceived of apart from Christ. Jesus is God. The Holy Spirit is God. Jesus is the Child of the Holy Spirit.

Paul testifies to the divine dignity of the Holy Spirit. Acts 28:25. The Holy Spirit testifies from city to city and bonds and imprisonment awaited Paul (Acts 20:23). Paul declares that the Holy Spirit sustained him in his ministry (Romans 15:19). In Romans 9:2, Paul appeals to the Holy Spirit and calls Him to witness. Paul uses the same expression, sent forth, to describe the mission of the Holy Spirit that he used to describe the mission of the Son (Galatians 4:4-6).

Paul gives many names and titles of the Holy Spirit. For example, Spirit of God (Romans 8:9), the Spirit of His Son (Gal. 4:6), the Spirit of Christ (Romans 8:9), the Spirit of Him that raised up Christ from the dead (Romans 8:11). In Titus Paul says that the Holy Spirit is to be shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior (Titus 3:6).

As to benefits and blessings conferred by the Holy Spirit and of which He is the immediate author, the Holy Spirit is called the Spirit that dwells in us (Romans 8:11), the

Spirit of grace (Hebrews 10:29), the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus (Ephesians 1:17), the Spirit of adoption (Romans 8:15), the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:2), the Spirit of meekness (Gal. 6:1), the Spirit of power, and of love, and of a sound mind (2 Timothy 1:7).

Paul contrasts the commencement of the Christian life with the previous sinful life and ascribes this change to the Holy Spirit. (1 Corinthians 12:3; Titus 3:4-7) Whether or not someone refers the expression *the washing [or laver] of regeneration* to baptism or not, it still must be construed as referring to the active operation of the Holy Spirit at the commencement of the Christian life. The Holy Spirit is the personal cause; we are not talking about some mere teaching or doctrine.

If we ask, in what sense can men be said to be saved by the renewing of the Holy Spirit, when salvation is in Christ, the answer is: We are saved by the divine purpose, for God has chosen His own to salvation. We are saved by the atonement as the meritorious ground of all. We are saved by faith as the bond of union to Christ. We are saved by grace as contrasted with works done, even works of righteousness we have done. We are saved by truth as conveying God's testimony. We are saved by the renewing of the Holy Spirit as producing faith in the heart. The particular and indispensable work of the Holy Spirit in salvation is the necessary link in the chain. The saved receive saving blessings revealed by the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 2:10). **The saved do not receive the spirit of the world, but the Holy Spirit which is of God for a purpose, to know the things that are freely given to us of God (1 Cor. 2:12).** The Holy Spirit is called "the Spirit of faith." He is the author or producing cause of faith (2 Cor. 4:13). You wouldn't believe in Christ in a saving way unless the Holy Spirit first regenerated your heart and turned it to hear, see, and believe in Jesus.

Three Pauline Epistles shed the most light on understanding the Person and Work of the Holy Spirit: 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, and Romans.

Today we will focus on 1 and 2 Corinthians.

The Corinthians were attaching undue importance to human wisdom, and "pluming themselves" on the possession of various supernatural gifts which they owed only to the Holy Spirit, but which were given for a different purpose. They dishonored the Holy Spirit by self-complacency, emulation, and contentions; and by their readiness to think lightly of licentious tendencies and feelings. 2 Corinthians 13:14 and 1 Corinthians 3:16, 17 reveal aspects of the Holy Spirit's nature, mission, and fellowship along with a warning.

1 Corinthians. 2:10; 12:1-6. Here, Paul introduces the personhood and omniscience of the Holy Spirit. Is the Holy Spirit personally distinct from God? We have one God in three distinct Persons. The Holy Spirit is divine in His Being. Consider the gifts dispensed as listed in 1 Corinthians 12: 4-6. The Holy Spirit is the author of the operations and Jesus is the author of the ministries (Ephesians 4). The Holy Spirit has a personal will of His own.

By the way, the gifts of the Father can be found in Romans 12. They are motivational gifts. The gifts of the Son are listed in Ephesians 4. They are ministry gifts—offices. The gifts of the Holy Spirit are listed in 1 Corinthians 12. They are manifestation gifts.

1 Corinthians 6:9-11 speaks of three operations of the Holy Spirit. The power of the Holy Spirit to transform a life is more than just moral persuasion. . Name three operations of the Holy Spirit from this verse. What were these folks beforehand? He enlightens the mind and leads one to embrace the great salvation, assured that he/she is washed, sanctified, and justified. The natural man lacks the Holy Spirit and so does not receive the things of the Spirit [the word of truth, atonement, saving provision] (1 Cor. 2:14; 2 Cor. 11:4; 1 Thess. 1:5,6).

The Holy Spirit is the author of faith and is the producing cause of faith.. Read 2 Cor. 4:13; 2 Thess. 3:1,2. The faith of which He is the author is not effected by the bearer's own strength or by the hearer's own effectual will (John 6:44, 45; Ephesians 2:8, 9; Phil. 1:29; also Ephesians 1:3). He takes out of the heart every hindrance and obstruction, convicts of sin and righteousness, removes the enmity, and works both to will and to do God's good pleasure. (John 6:45) Also, we can look up Hebrews 12:2 in order to see how closely aligned are the Holy Spirit and Christ (the Anointed One) as author of faith. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Faith.

From 2 Corinthians 3:6-18. We see the difference between OT and NT as to the supply of the Holy Spirit. The Law cannot give the Spirit of life, but we have shown that the Holy Spirit operated in the OT.

The life of the soul is in the blood. The life that was "in the blood" was reserved for sacrificial purposes, the atonement. Lev. 17. Jesus poured out His soul unto death. Isaiah 53:10-12. But the Source of Jesus' life was not in His blood, which He poured out to make atonement for the sins of His people; it was the Holy Spirit. (Matthew 1:20; Luke 1:35; John 6:60-64) Believers are called to live by the Holy Spirit. (Galatians 5:16, 18, 25).

Knowing who the Holy Spirit is and what He does, just as knowing who Jesus is and what He does, is vital to our lives. The Holy Spirit is the Life-Giver, the Life-Maker. Relationship with the Living God starts and builds as we yield to the Father, to Jesus Christ, and to the Holy Spirit. Don't play games with the Holy Spirit. Treat Him with utmost respect, without presumption that He will tolerate us because "that's just the way I am." 1 Peter 3:8-10.

The Holy Spirit can be tempted/tried/tested, grieved, insulted, quieted, vexed, limited, resisted, quenched, lied to, defrauded, despised, disobeyed, blasphemed against, refused; or received, obeyed, followed, and yielded to. May we know Him as He glorifies Christ in us, and may we cooperate in the process of sanctification. Amen.

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