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**The Holy Spirit’s Role**

**in the Church Age**  **Session 2**

This session is longer than the others. You may want to consider dividing it up into two sessions if you desire.

*The Holy Spirit is central in the sanctification process of a believer in the church age.*

***Sanctification:*** to be set apart for special use or purpose in purity/holiness. Through the power of the Holy Spirit we have been set apart from sin and set apart for holy living. This cannot be done by our own strength but by the empowering Holy Spirit who takes up residency in our lives when we put our trust in Him.

Sanctification says, “I have been transformed or changed internally by the Holy Spirit which results in an external demonstration of holy and upright living.”

**Group Discussion:** Look up the following verses and point out the various roles the Holy Spirit plays in the church age?

John 14:15-20

John 16:4b-15

Here are five primary areas of involvement which the Holy Spirit accomplishes in the life of the believer.

# 1 – **CONVICTION:** Revealing the need to change.

The Holy Spirit convinces a person of his or her need to change. The word conviction means to “bring to light.” There is an inward conviction of one’s thoughts and attitudes and an outward change in one’s actions. This is often accompanied by an acute sense of guilt over one’s wrongdoing before the Lord.

What does the Holy Spirit convict people about? (See John 16:8-9)

Why is the Holy Spirit’s convicting ministry so important?

Share a time as a believer when the Holy Spirit convicted you (or brought to light) an action or attitude which was hindering you from living and walking in truth?

# 2 – **REGENERATION**: When we come to Christ there is an imparting of a new spirit or rebirth with God. (See 2 Corinthians 5:17; Titus 3:5).

Our rebirth is distinguished from our physical birth where we inherited our sin nature. The new birth is a spiritual, holy, and heavenly birth that results in our being made alive spiritually. Man, in his natural state, is “dead in trespasses and sins” (Ephesians 2:1) until he is “made alive” (regenerated) by Christ. This happens when he places his faith in Christ.

Regeneration is a radical change. When we are born again, we begin to see and hear and seek after the things of God. We begin to live a life of faith and holiness. Now Christ is formed in the hearts; having been made new creatures in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17) God, not man, is the source of this transformation (Ephesians 2:8).

*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.* Ezekiel 36:26

**Group Discussion:**

I was born physically on July 16, 1963. But I also have a spiritual birthday (a new birth) which occurred when I put my trust in Christ. This occurred in July of 1973 when I received Jesus Christ into my life for the forgiveness of sin. In your group have people share when they were born physically and if they remember when they were regenerated or born again spiritually.

Why is regeneration so important?

# 3 – **INDWELLING**: The Holy Spirit lives within the believer. In other words, He takes up residency in the life of the believer where He leads, strengthens, comforts, and guides into all truth to live a transformed life.

The Spirit indwells all believers in this age (Romans 5:5 & 8:9 and 1 Corinthians 3:16 & 6:19-20), unlike the Old Testament where the Spirit only indwelt some. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit happens immediately at the moment of salvation and He takes up residency forever. It is impossible to be saved and not be indwelt by the Holy Spirit.

How does the verse below encourage you and assure you of the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit?

*Do you not know your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you,*

*whom you have from God? You are not your own,*

*for you were bought with a price. So, glorify God in your body?*

1 Corinthians 6:19-20

# 4 – **BAPTISM**: The baptism of the Spirit is grossly misunderstood today. The Holy Spirit places the believer spiritually, into union with Christ and into union with other believers in the body of Christ the moment of salvation. As believers we are one in Christ to the glory of His Son. (See 1 Corinthians 12:13) It is through the spiritual baptism of the Holy Spirit that identifies us with Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection (Romans 6:3-5).

1 Corinthians 12:12-13  is the central passage in the Bible regarding the baptism of the Holy Spirit: “For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.” Notice that we “all” have been baptized by the Spirit—all believers have received the baptism, synonymous with salvation, and **this is not a special experience for only a few.**

**Nowhere in Scripture are believers told to be baptized with, in, or by the Spirit, or in any sense to seek the baptism of the Holy Spirit. This indicates that all believers have had this experience.**

The baptism of the Holy Spirit does two things, 1) it joins us to the body of Christ and, 2) it symbolizes our co-crucifixion with Christ. Being in His body means we are risen with Him to newness of life (Romans 6:4). We should then exercise our spiritual gifts to keep that body functioning properly as stated in 1 Corinthians 12. Spiritual gifts will be addressed in our next session.

**Just to be clear**: What is the difference between water baptism and the baptism of the Holy Spirit? Water baptism is an ordinance of the church that gives a public testimony of our faith and identifies us with a local body of believers. Baptism of the Holy Spirit identifies us with Jesus Christ whereby He places the believer into union with Christ and into the body of Christ – the church. Tragically, many are teaching that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is a second blessing or a second work of grace that we must strive for. Paul corrected this teaching in 1 Corinthians 12:13. Every believer in the Church Age has been baptized by the Holy Spirit. **Nowhere does Scripture indicate some form of second blessing.**

# 5 – **SEALING**: The Holy Spirit becomes the guarantee of our spiritual inheritance. Our salvation is assured and secured in Christ, sealed by the Holy Spirit’s promise until the day of redemption. (See Ephesians 1:13-14)

 The Holy Spirit signifies security – Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:20

 The Holy Spirit signifies ownership – 1 Corinthians 1:22; 2 Timothy 2:19

 The Holy Spirit’s sealing occurs the moment of salvation – Ephesians 1:13

Why is the sealing of the Holy Spirit so important?

# 6 – **FILLING:** The filling of the Holy Spirit means to be under His control. This is essential for the maturity and service of a believer that he/she would yield themselves daily to the control of the Holy Spirit. (See 1 Corinthians 3:1-3; Acts 4:31; Ephesians 5:18)

**Reminder:** People who are filled with the Holy Spirit do not receive more of Him; He has more of us.

**Conditions necessary for being filled with the Spirit**

1. Do not grieve the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 4:30). What does this mean?
2. Do not quench the Holy Spirit (1 Thessalonians 5:19) What does this mean?
3. Walk by the Spirit (Galatians 5:16)
4. Fill yourself with God’s Word (Colossians 1:16)

**What about blasphemy of the Holy Spirit?**

Jesus spoke of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. This was committed by the religious leaders of His day. The situation was that the Pharisees were eyewitnesses to Jesus’ miracles, but they attributed the work of the Holy Spirit to the presence of a demon (Mark 3:22-30). Their portrayal of the holy as demonic was a deliberate, insulting rejection of God and was unforgivable.

Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit has to do with accusing Jesus Christ of being demon-possessed instead of Spirit-filled. This particular type of blasphemy cannot be duplicated today. The Pharisees were in a unique moment in history: they had the Law and the Prophets, they had the Holy Spirit stirring their hearts, they had the Son of God Himself standing right in front of them, and they saw with their own eyes the miracles He did. Never before in the history of the world (and never since) had so much divine light been granted to men; if anyone should have recognized Jesus for who He was, it was the Pharisees. Yet they chose defiance. They purposely attributed the work of the Spirit to the devil, even though they knew the truth and had the proof. Jesus declared their willful blindness to be unpardonable. Their blasphemy against the Holy Spirit was their final rejection of God’s grace. They had set their course, and God was going to let them sail into perdition unhindered.

Jesus told the crowd that the Pharisees’ blasphemy against the Holy Spirit “will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come” (Matthew 12:32). This is another way of saying that their sin would never be forgiven, ever. Not now, not in eternity. As Mark 3:29 puts it, “They are guilty of an eternal sin.”

**The Holy Spirit is at work in the local church as He. . .**

Inspires worship and order within the local body (1 Corinthians 14:40)

Directs and empowers its mission work (Acts 1:8; 13:2-4; 16:6-10)

Appoints and raises up leadership (Acts 20:28; 1 Corinthians 2:4)

Cautions its members (1 Timothy 4:1)

Guides leaders’ decisions (Acts 15:28)

Helps assist us in prayer according to God’s will (Romans 8:26-27)



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