

Essential Truths I: Living With God

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Holy Spirit

In **Acts 2:38**, Peter describes God’s salvation in terms of three things:

- **Repentance** – turning from sin to God
- **Baptism in water** – the enacting of that repentance
- **The gift of the Holy Spirit** – the sealing of that repentance

In **verse 39**, Peter proclaims that this “gift of the Holy Spirit” is a promise “for you and your children and for all who are far off – for all whom the Lord our God will call.”

The gift of the Holy Spirit is what marks out the believer in Jesus as different from those around. In **Ephesians 1:13**, Paul declares:

“...Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit.”

In **Ephesians 4:30**, Paul warns:

“And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.”

The Seal of Ownership

Read 2 Corinthians 1:21-22
Read 2 Corinthians 5:5

The Bible speaks of our salvation in terms of redemption – a buying back of our lives to God. But in ancient times, redemption was a three-step process:

- **Purchase** – the redeemer would pay the required price for the item he was redeeming.
- **Sealing** – the redeemer would mark the item with his personal seal, identify the item as now

- The Word
- God
- Origins
- Jesus
- The Cross
- The Blood
- Resurrection
- Repentance
- Faith
- Grace
- Water Baptism
- Holy Spirit**
- Temptation
- Fellowship
- Generosity
- Kingdom of God
- Worship
- Prayer
- Eternity
- Second Coming
- The Call

belonging to him.

- ➔ **Collection** – the redeemer would later return to collect his sealed item.

This is a picture of the three-step process in the redemption of your life by God. The price for your life has already been paid (**1 Corinthians 6:19-20**; **1 Peter 1:18-19**). And because you now belong to God, he has branded you with his personal seal, the Holy Spirit. This seal is a mark of ownership and sets you apart as different from those who do not yet belong to God.

Read 2 Timothy 2:19

The Holy Spirit is God's gift to every believer. When a person personally receives Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, the Holy Spirit comes to live on the inside, imparting spiritual life.

Read 1 John 4:13

The Spirit of Life

Read Romans 8:1-2

The Holy Spirit is described as “the law of the Spirit of life.” In **John 6:63**, Jesus said: “The Spirit gives life...” (see also **2 Corinthians 3:6**) and this is one of his main functions when he enters your life.

Read Genesis 2:7

When God created man, he “breathed into his nostrils the breath of life” and from that moment, “man became a living being.” The Bible does not record God doing this for any of the other creatures he made. This “breathing” of the breath of life into man was special, but in what way?

God the Holy Spirit

Read Matthew 28:18-19

The Holy Spirit is one of the three Persons of the Godhead. Just as Jesus is God, yet distinct from the Father (note **John 1:1-2**), so also the Holy Spirit is God, yet distinct from the Father and the Son.

Read Acts 5:3-4

You will note how in **verse 3** Peter first says: “...you have *lied to the Holy Spirit*.” And then in **verse 4**, he says: “You have not lied to men *but to God*.”

The *Nicene Creed* describes the Holy Spirit in this way:

“We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father [and the Son]. With the Father and the Son he is worshipped and glorified.”

The *Westminster Confession of Faith* also describes the Holy Spirit's relationship with the rest of the Godhead:

“In the unity of the Godhead there [are] three persons, of one substance, power and eternity; God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. The Father is of none, neither begotten, nor proceeding: the Son is eternally begotten of the Father: the Holy Spirit eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son.”

All three Persons of the Godhead are actively involved in the process of salvation, as shown in **Ephesians 2:18**:

“For through [the Son] we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.”

The Hebrew and Greek words for “breath” are the same as the word for “spirit.” When God breathed into man, this was the equivalent of placing his Spirit within man. In Scripture, the “breath of life” and the “spirit of life” are synonymous. The tragedy of the fall of man, however, was that man lost this Spirit of life.

Read Jude 18-19

In the fall, mankind lost the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. Sure, he continued to walk and breathe, but the quality of life that can only come by the the Spirit of God was lost. This was one of the effects of the fall that Jesus came to reverse.

Read John 20:22

In his appearance to the disciples after his resurrection, Jesus echoed **Genesis 2:7** by breathing into his disciples the breath of life. As he did so, he explained what he was doing with these words: “Receive the Holy Spirit.”

Notice that this was before the Day of Pentecost. The disciples had not yet been “baptized in the Holy Spirit” (**Acts 1:5**). So what was Jesus talking about when he breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit”?

The impartation of the Spirit of God to the disciples in the upper room is what we would today call the “born again” experience. We are born again by the Spirit of God (**John 3:3-6; Titus 3:5**). At that time, the Holy Spirit takes up residence in our lives.

Read 1 Corinthians 6:19

Read Ephesians 2:22

The Counselor

Read John 14:16-18

When Jesus went back to His Father, he did not abandon us as spiritual orphans in the world. He sent his Holy Spirit into our lives. The Holy Spirit is the personal presence of God.

Read John 16:5-7

When Jesus said, “[The Father] will give you *another* Counselor to be with you forever,” he was saying that the One that the Father would send would be a Counselor to the disciples in the same way that Jesus was a Counselor (**Isaiah 9:6**).

The Greek word for *counselor* literally means “one who comes alongside.” As their Lord and Teacher, Jesus came alongside the disciples – living with them, encouraging them, rebuking them and strengthening them. Now, Jesus said, because he was returning to the Father, he would ask the Father to send another Counselor just like him – the Holy Spirit – who would also live with them, encourage them, rebuke them and strengthen them. In **John 14:26**, Jesus says:

“All this I have spoken while still with you. But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit,

whom the Father will send in my name, *will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.*"

Read 1 John 2:27

The Ministry of the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit has a two-fold ministry toward the believer:

In the believer

The Holy Spirit comes to dwell within the believer to help him to grow in the Lord. The Holy Spirit...

- Opens access to the Father (**Ephesians 2:18**)
- Gives us new birth (**John 3:3,6; Titus 3:5**)
- Testifies that we are God's children (**Romans 8:16**)
- Baptizes us into the Body of Christ (**1 Corinthians 12:13**)
- Makes us one with the Lord in spirit (**1 Corinthians 6:17**)
- Teaches and guides us (**John 14:26; Romans 8:14**)
- Gives us wisdom and revelation (**1 Corinthians 2:9-10; Ephesians 1:17**)
- Enables us to live a holy life (**Galatians 5:16-25; Romans 8:1-2**)
- Helps us in prayer (**Romans 8:26; Ephesians 6:18; Jude 20**)
- Strengthens and imparts resurrection life (**Romans 8:11**)
- Transforms us into the likeness of Christ (**2 Corinthians 3:17-18**)

The Holy Spirit is the One who takes the salvation of God that came through Jesus and makes it real in your life (**2 Thessalonians 2:13**).

Through the believer

The Holy Spirit also empowers the believer to serve God and minister to others. The Holy Spirit...

- Gives power to witness (**Acts 1:8**)
- Testifies that Jesus is alive (**Acts 5:30-32; 4:31-33**)
- Anoints with spiritual gifts (**1 Corinthians 12:4-10**)
- Releases true worship (**Ephesians 5:18-19; John 4:24**)
- Glorifies Jesus (**John 16:13-15; 15:26**)

The Holy Spirit is the One who works in power through your life to communicate the Gospel to those around you (**1 Corinthians 2:4-5; 1 Thessalonians 1:5**).

The New Way of the Spirit

Romans 7:6 makes a remarkable statement:

"But now, by dying to what once bound us, we have been released from the law so that we serve *in the new way of the Spirit*, and not in the old way of the written code."

The old way of religion is to try to be accepted by God through self-effort. But God's standard is so high that no one can reach it in their own strength. So the Gospel has introduced another way – “the new way of the Spirit.” It is the Holy Spirit who enables us to live a life pleasing to God. He is the inner power which changes us from the inside out (**2 Corinthians 3:17-18**). He reveals the finished work of the Cross and makes it a daily reality in our life. He sets us free so that we can walk with God (**Romans 8:2**).

Read Galatians 3:2-3

The Galatian Christians had made the mistake of not continuing in the way they had begun. They had started by being born again by the Spirit, but had fallen into the trap of thinking that they could grow through self-effort.

But the way we begin in Christ is the way we are to continue in Christ. We start the Christian life in the Spirit; we are now called to continue to walk in the Spirit (**Galatians 5:16-18,25**).

Read Galatians 6:7-8

God has hinged your whole walk with him on the basis of the operation of his Holy Spirit in your life. By keeping your focus on Jesus through the Holy Spirit, you will experience the fullness of life and peace that God has planned for your life (**Romans 8:5-9**).

Read John 7:37-39

The Fellowship of the Spirit

Read 2 Corinthians 13:14

The Holy Spirit is not a remote-control extension of God. He is a Person in his own right, and as such he can be grieved (**Ephesians 4:30**), quenched (**1 Thessalonians 5:19**, KJV) and insulted (**Hebrews 10:29**). And as a Person, you can maintain a daily fellowship with him.

Read Philippians 2:1-2

Names of the Holy Spirit

The Bible gives many different names to the Holy Spirit. Each name describes one facet of the Holy Spirit's character and ministry:

- The eternal Spirit (**Hebrews 9:14**)
- The Spirit of God (**Romans 8:14; 1 Corinthians 6:11; Philippians 3:3**)
- The Spirit of the Lord (**Acts 5:9**)
- The Spirit of God's Son (**Galatians 4:6**)
- The Spirit of Jesus (**Acts 16:7; Philippians 1:19**)
- The Spirit of Christ (**1 Peter 1:11**)
- The Spirit of truth (**1 John 5:6**)
- The Spirit of holiness (**Romans 1:4**)
- The Spirit of grace (**Hebrews 10:29**)
- The Spirit of wisdom and revelation (**Ephesians 1:17**)
- The Spirit of glory (**1 Peter 4:14**)

This rich, deep fellowship is an intimate sharing of two hearts – your heart and the heart of God. It works in this way:

- The Holy Spirit searches your heart – (**Psalm 139:1,23; Proverbs 20:27; Jeremiah 17:10; Romans 8:27**)
- The Holy Spirit searches the heart of God (**1 Corinthians 2:10-11**)

In this way, the Holy Spirit becomes your living link with the Father. Because the Holy Spirit “searches all things, even the deep things of God,” you are now able through the Holy Spirit to search the heart of God. He reveals to you the very depths of God’s heart.

Read Psalm 42:7

The Psalmist described his relationship with God in terms of “deep calls to deep in the roar of your waterfalls.” Through the Holy Spirit, the depths of God’s heart resound with the depths of your heart. This is the depth of fellowship we discover in the Holy Spirit – a fellowship with the Holy Spirit and, through the Holy Spirit, with the Father and the Son.

Read 1 John 1:3

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit

Read Luke 24:49

Read Acts 1:8

Not only does the Holy Spirit indwell the believer, but he also desires to fill him with power to be an effective witness. The Bible calls this infilling being “baptized in the Holy Spirit” (**Matthew 3:11; Acts 1:5**).

Read Acts 19:1-7

Just as water baptism means to be immersed in water, so baptism in the Holy Spirit means to be immersed in the power of God’s Spirit. This is God’s promise for every believer.

Read Luke 11:9-13

Being filled with the Holy Spirit manifests itself in a number of ways:

- A supernatural language (**Acts 2:4; 10:44-46; 19:1-6**)
- Prophecy (**1 Corinthians 14:5**)
- Signs and wonders (**Hebrews 2:4; 1 Thessalonians 1:5-6**)
- Other gifts of the Spirit (**1 Corinthians 12:8-10**)
- Empowered prayer (**Ephesians 6:18; Jude 20**)
- Supernatural joy (**Acts 13:52; 1 Thessalonians 1:6**)
- Anointed worship (**John 4:23-24; Philippians 3:3**)

Although the Scripture seems to indicate that there is just a one-time baptism in the Holy Spirit, being “filled with the Spirit” is not only a continuing experience

(note **Acts 4:31; 6:3-5; 11:24; 13:9**), but also a continuing command from God.

Read Ephesians 5:18

To be “filled with the Spirit” means to be anointed with the same anointing that Jesus had (note **Acts 10:38; John 14:12**). Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we become the hand of Jesus touching people’s lives today.

Read Luke 4:18-19

God desires every believer to experience the power of the Holy Spirit both *in* him (for personal growth) and *through* him (in empowered ministry to others). As Paul expressed it in **Ephesians 3:16,20**:

“I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power *through his Spirit in your inner being*...who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us.”