

North Dallas Community Bible Fellowship

Wednesday Bible Study

Fall, 2008

Pneumatology: The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit

Section 3

The Advent and Age of the Spirit

Understanding the uniqueness of this age as the Age of the Spirit is crucial for our ability to correctly interpret the teaching of the New Testament on the Spirit and His ministry for today. The Church Age is often referred to as the Age of the Spirit because of His distinctive ministry during this time.

This truth needs to be stressed because the Holy Spirit is God's special gift and means of power to experience Christ's life in ours. In fact, there is no aspect of the Christian life, Bible study, prayer, witnessing, growth, etc., that is not vitally dependent on the enabling ministry of the Holy Spirit of God. Though God gives us spiritual gifts and a new capacity for life through the Spirit's work of regeneration, it is the Holy Spirit, as our divine Enabler, who empowers our lives for both worship and service.

The Promise of the Spirit as God's Special Provision

That God would one day do a unique work through the Holy Spirit in His people is not new revelation. Rather, the Holy Spirit is the object of many marvelous promises in both the Old and New Testaments in anticipation of what God would do through the Spirit for His people.

[Ezekiel 36:24-27](#) “I will take you from the nations and gather you from all the countries; then I will bring you to your land. 25 I will sprinkle you with pure water and you will be clean from all your impurities. I will purify you from all your idols. 26 I will give you a new heart, and I will put a new spirit within you. I will remove the heart of stone from your body and give you a heart of flesh. 27 I will put my Spirit within you; I will take the initiative and you will obey my statutes and carefully observe my laws.

[Ezekiel 37:14](#) I will place my Spirit in you and you will live; I will give you rest in your own land. Then you will know that I am the Lord—I have spoken and I will act, declares the Lord.”

[Isaiah 44:3](#) For I will pour water on the parched ground and cause streams to flow on the dry land. I will pour my spirit on your offspring and my blessing on your children.

[Joel 2:28-29](#) After all of this I will pour out my Spirit on all kinds of people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy. Your elderly will have revelatory dreams; your young men will see prophetic visions. 29 Even on male and female servants I will pour out my Spirit in those days.

[John 7:37-39](#) On the last day of the feast, the greatest day, Jesus stood up and shouted out, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me, and 38 let the one who believes in me drink. Just as the scripture says, ‘From within him will flow rivers of living water.’” 39 (Now he said this about the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were going to receive, for the Spirit had not yet been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.)

[John 14:16](#) Then I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate to be with you forever—

[Acts 1:4-8](#) While he was with them, he declared, “Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait there for what my Father promised, which you heard about from me. 5 For John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.” 6 So when they had gathered together, they began to ask him, “Lord, is this the time when you are restoring the kingdom to Israel?” 7 He told them, “You are not permitted to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. 8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the farthest parts of the earth.”

The Fact of the Spirit’s Coming

When we come to [Acts 2](#) and the events that follow in the book of Acts and in the rest of the New Testament, we have the declaration that the Holy Spirit has come to indwell believers with an explanation of His new and distinctive role. No longer is His coming an anticipation; it is a blessed fact.

[Acts 2:1-4](#) Now when the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. 2 Suddenly a sound like a violent wind blowing came from heaven and filled the entire house where they were sitting. 3 And tongues spreading out like a fire appeared to them and came to rest on each one of them. 4 All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit, and they began to speak in other languages as the Spirit enabled them.

[Acts 2:14-17](#) But Peter stood up with the eleven, raised his voice, and addressed them: “You men of Judea and all you who live in Jerusalem, know this and listen carefully to

what I say. 15 In spite of what you think, these men are not drunk, for it is only nine o'clock in the morning. 16 But this is what was spoken about through the prophet Joel: 17 'And in the last days it will be,' God says, 'that I will pour out my Spirit on all people, and your sons and your daughters will prophesy, and your young men will see visions, and your old men will dream dreams.

[Acts 10:44-45](#) While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell on all those who heard the message. 45 The circumcised believers who had accompanied Peter were greatly astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles,

[Acts 11:15-17](#) Then as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them just as he did on us at the beginning. 16 And I remembered the word of the Lord, as he used to say, 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' 17 Therefore if God gave them the same gift as he also gave us after believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I to hinder God?"

[1 Corinthians 6:19](#) Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?

[Ephesians 1:13-14](#) And when you heard the word of truth (the gospel of your salvation)—when you believed in Christ—you were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit, 14 who is the down payment of our inheritance, until the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of his glory.

[Ephesians 4:30](#) And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

[Galatians 5:5](#) For through the Spirit, by faith, we wait expectantly for the hope of righteousness.

An Explanation of the Age of the Spirit

The following chart illustrates the change in the ministry of the Spirit from the Old Testament to that of the New Testament. From [Acts 2](#) onward, the Spirit's ministry took on a new and distinctive change beginning with the events of Pentecost as promised both in the Old Testament and by the Lord. From this point on we have the formation of the body of Christ, the church, and the universal indwelling ministry of the Holy Spirit. This is when the church began and when the Spirit began to indwell all who believed in the Savior. This is proven by the following:

(1) In [Acts 1:5](#), the Lord gave the promise of the baptizing ministry of the Spirit. “For John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”

(2) Baptism is a form of identification. “With the Spirit” may also be translated “by the Spirit” and should be in view of [1 Corinthians 12:13](#). [First Corinthians 12:13a](#) describes what the baptizing work of the Spirit consists of. It is the work by which the Holy Spirit joins every believer into union with the body of Christ so that the believer becomes identified with the body of Christ and with Christ Himself. This occurs simultaneously with the indwelling of the Spirit ([1 Cor. 12:13b](#)). When we trust in the Savior, the Spirit joins us into union with the body of Christ, the church ([Rom. 6](#)). As a result, we become identified with Christ in His person and His work.

(3) In [Acts 11:15-16](#), Peter equated the coming of the Spirit on the Gentiles in the house of Cornelius with that which had occurred to them as Jews in [Acts 2](#) on the Day of Pentecost. But he also equated [Acts 2](#) with the fulfillment of the promise of Christ regarding the baptism of the Spirit in [Acts 1:5](#). In other words, [Acts 2](#) began the indwelling and baptizing work of the Spirit for the body of Christ. This began the unique age of the indwelling ministry of the Holy Spirit.

The following chart illustrates the difference.

