

The Holy Spirit's Work

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Overview: By examining the purposes of the Holy Spirit's works in the believer's life, we can better understand and discern how to integrate and use our gifts and experiences.

Introduction

- How strange that there is such divisiveness over the Holy Spirit!
- Jesus sees love, healing, and joy issuing from His Spirit's presence.
 ³⁸ He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.'" ³⁹ But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified" (John 7:38-39).
- The Book of Acts similarly speaks of the Holy Spirit, bringing love, unity, praise, and boldness in the early church.
- The same God works in us all: "The Lord who sanctifies you" (Ex 31:13).
- God wonderfully works in our lives, providing believers across the world varying personal experiences.

Let's look at the four larger works of the Holy Spirit which affect every believer.

(1) **Onetime:** God saves us with the Holy Spirit — Our Salvation

God brings us individually into His presence through the Holy Spirit's work in us, producing faith in Christ. The Holy Spirit jointly works with the Father and Son, saving us from our sins and reconciling us with God. Our communion with God provides evidence of our reconciliation (Rom 5:1-5).

"Jesus answered, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God' "(John 3:5).

"He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit)" (Titus 3:5)

- Once spiritually dead with no spiritual life, but now, the promise of life brings joy, hope, love, and renewal.
- The Spirit dwells in His people, forming God's people into the holy temple of God (1 Cor 6:19-20).
- God at salvation, once for all, seals each genuine believer with the Holy Spirit for a forever relationship.

"Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption" (Ephesians 4:30).

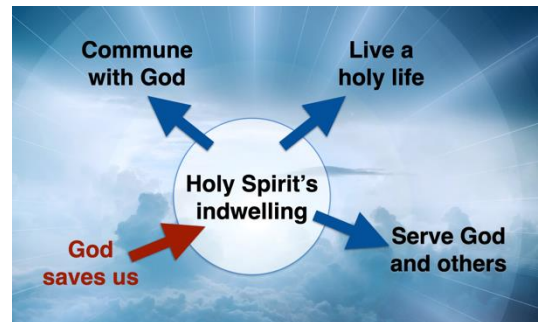
Application: Are you at peace, confident that you know the Lord, His saving grace, and have His Spirit indwelling in you?

(2) **Commune with God (1 Cor 2:12) — Our Fellowship**

The Holy Spirit enables us to commune with God, including our conversations with Him in our prayers, praise, requests, and understanding of His Word. Ongoing evidence of salvation is our communion with God, seen in our quiet times and worship.

"Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God.(Cor 2:12 1) "

- **God equips us with hope, blessing, and joy in the Spirit.**
 "You also became imitators of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much tribulation with the joy of the Holy Spirit" (1 Thes 1:6).
- **The Spirit enables us to pray and commune with God.**
 "In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself



intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words” (Romans 8:26).

“Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!”” (Galatians 4:6)

- **The Spirit’s work strengthens our relationship with God through the Word of God (2 Tim 3:16-17).**

“But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one’s own interpretation, ²¹ for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God” (2 Peter 1:20-21).

- **Comforted by the Spirit**

“So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria enjoyed peace, being built up; and going on in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it continued to increase” (Acts 9:31).

Application: Do you daily cultivate your relationship with the Lord, making most of your communion with Him?

(3) Live a Holy Life (Rom 5:5; 14:17) — Our Being

From our new birth onwards, the Holy Spirit continually works in His people to sanctify them. He is holy and by His very presence awakens us to God’s holiness, transforming our character into the likeness of Christ.

“The love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us ”(Rom 5:5).

- **Each Christian must learn to keep in step with the Holy Spirit to influence their walk and talk.**

“But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh” (Galatians 5:16).

“If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit” (Galatians 5:25).

- **God’s hope and purpose are to grow us in our relationship with Him daily.**

“According to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood” (1 Peter 1:2).

- **God desires us to be like Jesus, fully affected by His Spirit (Acts 10:38).**

“Be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹ speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; ²⁰ always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; ²¹ and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ” (Eph 5:18-21).

- **We grow with others who, like us, have the same Spirit causing love for others, God, and for the lost.**

“There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling” (Eph 4:4).

Application: Do you regularly seek the Spirit to help you develop your holy character to be like Christ (i.e., sanctify)?

(4) Serve God and Others (Rom 12:1) — Our Doing

Part of the Holy Spirit’s purpose of sanctifying us is so that we can work along with the Father, just as Jesus did, to accomplish His designated good works through our lives (Eph 2:10).

“Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.(Rom 12:1) ”

- **God pours out His love and joy in us so that we can properly relate to and care for others.**

“And hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us” (Romans 5:5).

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control” (Galatians 5:22-23).

- **Maturity depends not on experience but on being shaped into Christ’s likeness.**

“However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him” (Romans 8:9).

manifested that you are a letter of Christ, cared for by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts” (2 Corinthians 3:3).

“Being

- **The Holy Spirit provides needed guidance.**

“They passed through the Phrygian and Galatian region, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia” (Acts 16:6).

- **The Lord gives and uses our spiritual gifts through the Spirit to help others.**

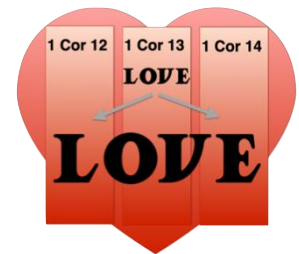
“Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit” (1 Corinthians 12:4).

“To another faith by the same Spirit, and to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit” (1 Corinthians 12:9).

- **The Spirit gives wisdom and boldness to the church to speak for the Gospel even to the ends of the world.**

“So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia and from there they sailed to Cyprus” (Acts 13:4; Rom 15:18-19).

Application: How does God regularly use you to display Christ’s love and care to others?



Summary

- Observe how the Spirit of God works with God's overarching purposes, first in salvation and then in ongoing ways. Be amazed at God's commitment to work in our lives.
- Biblical and systematic theologies remind us of the importance of interpreting our experiences by the Scriptures.
- Even the Holy Spirit's works are interwoven in the grand redemptive plan of the Godhead.

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all(Corinthians 13:14 2) "

- Avoid all pride by focusing on your duty and the opportunity to serve each other.
- By remembering the Holy Spirit's purposes, we can better utilize our unique gifts, knowing they are not for our benefit but His greater purposes and glory as He works in His people.

Discussion Questions on the Works of the Holy Spirit

1. Why does Jesus speak so favorably of the Holy Spirit (river of life), but believers seem so divided over the Spirit's work?
2. What are the three ongoing ways the Spirit of God generally works in the lives of His people?
3. From the list given, share one way the Spirit of God is working in your life right now—or that you want Him to work.
4. Explain how our unique set of spiritual gifts or experiences do not make us better than others. (Perhaps, use Paul's life as an example.)