

Holy Spirit

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[0:00] The Spirit of Truth. What is that? You know, usually we spend extensive time on the Holy Spirit on Pentecost Sunday, which is coming up in a few weeks.

But this Pentecost will be concentrating on baptisms. And so today is the day we will spend extensive time on the Holy Spirit.

This will be a thematic sermon rather than an expository sermon, which I usually give verse by verse of a passage. This will be the theme of who the Holy Spirit is. There will be three parts to it. One is, who is the Holy Spirit? Number two, what do Anglicans think about the Holy Spirit? And number three, what in the world does the Holy Spirit have to do with you and me?

So that's our roadmap. That's where we're going. And our basis is from the gospel that Deacon John read from John 14. Jesus speaking, John recording these words.

[1:15] If you love me, Jesus says, you will keep my commandments and I will ask the Father and he will give you another helper.

That's sometimes translated counselor. Helper doesn't mean to hand you a wrench when you need it. Helper means here.

Give me the wrench. The Holy Spirit says. A little different emphasis. To be with you forever. Even the Spirit of truth. Whom the world cannot receive.

Because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him. Jesus says. For he dwells in you and will be in you.

That is colossal. Jesus didn't say that. I said that. That is colossal. And may God bless this reading of his holy word today.

[2:13] So as we plunge in who is the Holy Spirit, we need to do a little word study. A Bible word study. Words for spirit in the Bible.

In the Old Testament, I'm refreshing you and getting cobwebs out right now. In the Old Testament, spirit is known by the Hebrew word ruach. The wind.

The breath of God. Right from the beginning. What does the word Genesis mean? Beginning.

Right. Right from the beginning. Genesis 1.1 says, In the beginning.

Did you know that God invented baseball? Well, in the big inning. Okay. So. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

And the earth was without void. It was without form and void. And darkness was over the face of the deep. And the spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

[3:17] From before the beginning, the Holy Spirit, the Holy Breath of God, has been in operation. God breathed into Adam and brought life.

And so, the ruach mysteriously breathes over us. Bringing meaning to the earth for us.

And bringing eternal life to us. The ruach. Then when we move to the Greek, the New Testament was written mostly in Greek.

When we look to the Greek, we see another word. And it is pneuma. P-N-E-U-M-A. Like pneumatic breaks.

Get that one? Air. Air power. Jesus said, John baptized you with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.

[4:22] With power. Not many days hence. And not many days hence. The Holy Spirit did come upon those disciples in the upper room.

As tongues of fire. And empowered them to go out and share the gospel of Jesus. And so he does today. He mysteriously empowers us.

Empowers our inner beings. Empowers our inner beings. Makes us desire to seek God more. And to share his love. But wait a minute.

Are you waiting a minute? Okay. The Holy Ghost. Where do we get that word ghost from? Sometimes we still hear the Holy Spirit referred to as Holy Ghost.

Ghost. That's kind of weird. Are we talking about the woo-woo-woo? I don't think so. We have to look at English. English has evolved since the 16th century.

[5 : 28] Back then, the word for spirit was gast. G-A-S-T. Gast meant a disembodied being.

That's where we get that word ghost today. A disembodied being. But there was more to it. It was the Holy Ghost.

A sanctified. A sanctified disembodied deity. Now when we think of Jesus, we think of a man. We're not sure what he looked like. We try to figure out what he looked like. When we think of God the Father, we think of an old man with a beard sitting in a rocking chair. Kind of watching the world go by, which is a heresy.

And then when it comes to Holy Spirit, we don't have any body. Sometimes we think of a dove. Sometimes we think of a tongue as a fire.

[6 : 28] But we don't have a body which causes trouble when we call him Holy Ghost. Ghost. Now the writers, the translators in the 20th century went back to the original.

They left ghost out of the New Testament. And they put the original spirit. Holy Spirit. But Holy Ghost works.

As long as you don't get the wrong impression of ghost when it comes to thinking about him. So, in summary, the Holy Spirit, for us, is the third person of the Trinity, one God.

It's a mystery. And some groups have just stopped believing in it. They're called Unitarians. They don't want to go there with three persons in one God. It's too confusing.

We go there. And we're happy to go there. So, any of you ever heard of Billy Graham? Yeah, most of us.

[7 : 32] Okay, yeah. He died a few years back. His son is carrying on the tradition. But Billy Graham wrote something wonderful about the Holy Spirit. This is what he said. The Holy Spirit is the one who illumines our minds.

Makes us yearn for God. Takes spiritual truth and makes it understandable. Yay! That's the biblical Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is action. Lights. Father. Camera. Jesus. Action. Holy Spirit.

He is action. But we want to be careful that we don't see him as some kind of spiritual computer or life force.

He's not really the force, Luke. Use the force. He's a person. Which moves us to our point, too. Anglicanism.

[8 : 35] How does Anglicanism view the Holy Spirit? Well, first of all, as a real person. Anglicanism abides by the ancient Nicene Creed.

Some of you studied the Nicene Creed. The Nicene Creed, which we'll say in a few minutes, is a summary of Scripture which systematically tells us who God is and how he relates to us.

That's why we say it every Sunday. To remind us who God is in our lives. And that third person is identified in the Nicene Creed.

It says, We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life. He was there before the beginning. He is Lord. We acclaim the Holy Spirit as God. He actually hovered over the waters when the earth was being made, creating.

[9 : 43] He is the giver of life. And then it says, He proceeds from the Father and the Son. Three persons, one God. Not three gods.

But He proceeds from the Father to show us what the Father does. He proceeds from the Son to show us our salvation in the cross.

And then it says, Who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified. Once again, we give Godhead to the Holy Spirit.

Even though we don't have a body to identify. We give Godhead to Him. And finally, Who has spoken through the prophets.

All scriptures inspired by God, Including the prophets, And the Holy Spirit is the initiator.

[10 : 38] Every so often, almost every Sunday, We hear a word of prophecy at the end of communion. You know where that's coming from? The Holy Spirit. Enlivening our lives.

Being present to us. To get further into what Anglicans feel about the Holy Spirit, I'd like you, If you've got a red prayer book, I'd like you to turn in that prayer book to page 773, All the way back to

the back.

772 says, The 39 Articles of Religion of 1571. These documents are as close as you can get to Anglican doctrine, To Anglican teaching.

They were mostly written by an archbishop named Thomas Cranmer, Who was a great British guy. He took all the teachings from Europe, Regarding the Protestant Reformation, And he, what we call, Anglicized them.

Gave them a gentle touch. And so the 39 Articles, Tell us who we are as Anglicans. If you were to look at, Article number 5, For those who haven't, Gone through the Roman alphabet, It's the period, On page 773.

[12:07] It says, The Holy Ghost, Proceeding from the Father and the Son, Is of one substance, Majesty and glory, With the Father and the Son, Very and eternal God.

So, where did Thomas Cranmer get that? He got that from the Nicene Creed, Which got it from the Bible. We believe this about the Holy Spirit.

Now, it doesn't end there. Thomas Cranmer also wrote a series of homilies, Or short teachings, Which were to be read in church on Sunday.

And one of those homilies is about the Holy Spirit. I'm going to read a little bit of this. You may be lulled into sleep, But maybe if you do, You probably needed a nap.

But I'm going to read this. This is what Thomas Cranmer taught Exactly about the Holy Spirit. And I'm translating from the Old English here.

[13:09] He says, The Holy Ghost is the third person of the deity, Distinct from the Father and the Son, S-O-N-N-E, And yet proceeding from them both.

The New Testament doth so plainly And evidently confirmed the distinction Of the Holy Ghost From other persons in the Trinity That no man can possibly doubt thereof Unless he will blaspheme The everlasting truth of God's word.

Okay, now, I'm going into part two, But I think I lost some of you. Do you remember this man, Prince Philip?

Did he just die? Yeah, okay. Prince Philip was quite a personality, And he was often given the gift of crazy speech.

So the retired bishop of London Asked him whether he was high church or low church. And Philip answered, Well, I like low church.

[14:25] I can abide high church. I even understand broad church. But what I really love is short church. Lesson learned.

Okay, ready for part two. Continuing with Thomas Kremler, But that this may appear more sensibly To the eyes of all men, It shall be requisite to come to the other part.

Namely, The wonderful and heavenly works of the Holy Ghost, Which plainly declare unto the world His mighty divine power. And then concluding, The Holy Ghost doth always declare himself By his fruitful and gracious gifts, Namely, By the word of wisdom, By the word of knowledge, Which is the understanding of the scriptures, By faith, In doing of miracles, By healing them that are diseased, By prophecy, Which is the declaration of God's mysteries, By discerning of spirits, Diversities of tongues, Tongues, Interpretation of tongues, And so forth.

Did you know we believed in that stuff? Yeah. We do. Yeah. That's what we are called as Anglicans To believe about the Holy Spirit.

We believe in the fruit of the Holy Spirit, right? Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, Gentleness, faithfulness, self-control. That's a wonderful spirit-filled life.

[16:04] We also believe in the gifts of the Spirit. Things like prophecy, Words of wisdom and knowledge, Miracles, Healing, Speaking in tongues, Interpreting those tongues.

Those, We don't believe in the Anglican Church, We don't believe they ended When the last disciple died. We believe the Holy Spirit is still gifting his people In wonderful, Miraculous ways. So that's where we are When it comes to the Holy Spirit. And that could be the end of the sermon. But wait, There's more.

Point three. How in the world does this Holy Spirit impact you and me? Now we're getting down to a practical bottom line stuff.

We've been talking theology. Now let's talk about how theology impacts us. I would have to say for me personally, I grew in my knowledge of God.

[17:04] When I was a boy, I understood God as Father. My mother had taught me to say the Lord's Prayer. And I said it every night, Growing up. I knew about God as Father.

Now I'll have to admit that my reckoning with God the Father Was a little on the selfish side. I prayed for birthday cakes. As I got older I prayed for girlfriends.

For success on the football field. It was kind of about me getting stuff out of the Father. Some of us did that with our earthly fathers, didn't we?

But I did have an understanding of God as Father, Which grew as I grew. When it came to Jesus, I didn't realize, I mean I knew there was a Jesus, I knew he lived a long time ago, I didn't know how he impacted my life, Until as a young Marine, Another Marine led me to an acquaintance, And then a commitment to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

I never heard that. Maybe my ears were stopped up. But Jesus is the way, The truth, And the life became a part of my life as a young Marine.

[18:25] And Jesus has never left me. It's wonderful. Now we get to the Holy Spirit. I can tell you, To quote somebody from the radio, I had zilt, Zero, Nada, Acquaintance with the Holy Spirit.

I didn't know what that was, I knew I said it on Sundays, But I had no clue What that meant. So I, In, In, In ministry, So now I'm in ministry, I'm reading some books on the Holy Spirit, And one day, Coming back from the hospital, The Holy Spirit spoke to me.

I said to him, I can't do this anymore, This is too hard. Everybody expects me to be the Messiah. I'm not the Messiah. I'm just a guy.

And the Holy Spirit just washed me. You might call it, Baptized me. Immersed me into his power. So that I could take everything I was doing, That was about me, And just lay it into the hands of God.

And let him do it through me. The Holy Spirit came alive, In my life. What joy, What peace, What certainty, This has made in my life.

[19:52] As I've grown in my commitment to God, As Father, Son, And Holy Spirit. You see, As we get to conclusion, The Holy Spirit shows us Jesus.

The Holy Spirit empowers us, Or fashions our lives after him. That impacts our very everyday life. Father, Son, Holy Spirit, One God for you.

And what I'd like to do to conclude is, Is pray for you, Pray for me, That we might be so immersed in the Holy Spirit, That we lay aside that which cripples us, Throw away the crutches, And let the Holy Spirit carry us.

So, Let us pray. Oh God, You are mysterious. You are more than we can ever imagine.

We thank you for showing us in your Holy Word, Who you are, And what you're like. Lord God, We're each one of us carrying too much. We're worried.

[20:58] We're in pain. We don't know what's going to happen to our country. We're weighed down, Lord. We would ask that your Holy Spirit, Might so show us Jesus, That we can be empowered for you.

That we might be the Ruach, That you use in this world. That we might be the Pneuma, Empowered to show the world who you are.

Come, Lord. Immerse us in your Holy Spirit. We pray this in the name of Jesus Christ, Our Lord. Amen. Amen.