

The Holy Spirit - Part 4

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[0:00] Great. Okay. Well, welcome back, friends, to our class on the Holy Spirit. So, where have we been? For the past three weeks, if you've been with us, we've been considering! The person of the Holy Spirit, who He is. We looked at the Old Testament, then we looked at the New Testament, and what we saw in Scripture is that the Holy Spirit is a distinct, divine person alongside God the Father and God the Son. And then last week, we considered the development of this biblical teaching, this doctrine in church history. And we saw how the church summed up what the Bible teaches about the Holy Spirit, the person of the Holy Spirit, in the words of the Nicene Constantinopolitan Creed of 381, which says this, we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified. Then, the Creed adds this, that the Holy Spirit has spoken through the prophets.

And with that phrase, we turn to the second big theme of our course, which is the work of the Holy Spirit. We've seen who the Holy Spirit is. Now, we're going to be considering what the Holy Spirit does. What is his particular work among the persons of the Trinity? Now, a few weeks ago, when we considered the person of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament, we also touched on his work in the Old Testament. So, we won't spend a lot of time in the remainder of our class specifically looking at the work of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament. Rather, we're going to be considering especially the work of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament, under the New Covenant. Now that Christ has come in fulfillment of the Old Testament promises, what now is the Holy Spirit's work among us? So, that's what we're going to be considering over the next number of weeks, for as long as this class goes, till probably a little bit before Thanksgiving.

Now, the first thing, then, we have to consider when looking at the Holy Spirit's work in the New Testament is the Holy Spirit's work in the life of Jesus himself. You know, we often kind of skip over this. You know, we often skip over a lot about the Holy Spirit. We just want to get, like, tell me about them spiritual gifts, right? And we're going to get to that. But we have to start here.

It is unmistakable that the life of Jesus during his earthly ministry was a life completely saturated with the Spirit at every moment. From conception to resurrection, Jesus was the man of the Holy Spirit.

And remember, this is what the Old Testament promised. Consider Isaiah 11, 1 through 2. In Isaiah 11, verse 1, it says, There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit.

[2:55] Now, the stump of Jesse was, of course, the house of David. So, Isaiah here is talking about the Messiah who's going to come from David's lineage. And what will the Messiah be like? Verse 2 says, What's that, Elizabeth?

The seven spirits. Yes, yes! Yes, that's exactly right. Christ will be the one who has the Spirit in full measure. In Isaiah, as Elizabeth said, in Isaiah 11, 2, speaks of the Spirit in a sevenfold manner, right?

It's the Spirit of the Lord, of wisdom, of understanding, of counsel, of might, of knowledge, of the fear of the Lord. Seven is the Hebrew number of what? Completion, perfection, totality.

The Christ who will come will possess the Spirit in fullness and perfection, and that's exactly what the New Testament tells us about Jesus. His conception, life, death, and resurrection are all done in the fullness of God the Holy Spirit.

So, let's look at a couple passages where we see that. Now, we'll just go through these pretty quickly. First, consider Jesus' conception, right? This is Matthew 1, 18 through 21. Now, the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way.

[4:05] When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found to be with a child from the Holy Spirit. And her husband Joseph, being a just man and

unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly.

But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.

She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins. Then, of course, Luke 1, 34 and 35 affirms the same thing, jumping right into the middle of the narrative of the Annunciation.

And Mary said to the angel, How will this be, since I am a virgin? And the angel answered her, The Holy Spirit will come upon you. And the power of the Most High will overshadow you.

Therefore, the child to be born will be called Holy, the Son of God. So, Jesus' conception. What about Jesus' life? Well, what about most of the Gospels, all the Gospels contain a narrative about Jesus' baptism when his public ministry begins, right?

[5:12] We'll take some passages from Luke. Luke 3, 21 through 22. Now, when all the people were baptized by John the Baptist, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heavens were opened, and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove, and a voice came from heaven, You are my beloved Son.

With you I am well pleased. So, Jesus' public ministry starts, is kind of inaugurated with the Holy Spirit coming on him in power. Listen to Luke 4, 14 through 15.

And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee after the Spirit had led him into the wilderness for the period of testing, right? Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and a report about him went through all the surrounding country, and he taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all.

And he came to Nazareth, where he'd been brought up. And as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read. And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. And he unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor.

He sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor. So our Lord's life was a life full of the Holy Spirit.

[6:25] What about his death? Well, listen to what the author of Hebrews has to say. In Hebrews 9, 13 through 14, it says, If the blood of goats and bulls and the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of a heifer sanctify for the purification of the flesh, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

You see, even Christ's journey to his passion, to the cross, was something done in the fullness of the Spirit. It is through the eternal Spirit that he offers himself up without blemish to God.

And, of course, his resurrection. Here's how Paul starts his letter to the Romans. He says, Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which God promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures, concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh, and was declared to be the Son of God in power, according to the Spirit of holiness, that is the Holy Spirit, by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord.

So Christ not only laid down his life through the power and working of the Holy Spirit, but was raised through the power and working of the Holy Spirit. Okay. So the entire earthly ministry of Jesus was done in and through the power of the Spirit.

When God the Son took on flesh for us and for our salvation, the Holy Spirit was with him every step of the way. The work of the incarnate Lord, that the work that he accomplished for us in his human nature, was accomplished in and through the Holy Spirit.

[8:07] Now that tells us something very central about the work of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit's new covenant ministry is what we might say is Christocentric.

It is centered around Jesus. Jesus is always the focus of the Holy Spirit's work. So we can never separate the work of the Spirit from the work of the Son.

In other words, we might put it this way. What the Son accomplished by the power of the Spirit, the Spirit now applies to the glory of the Son.

What the Son accomplished by the power of the Spirit, the Spirit now applies to the glory of the Son. And this is what Jesus himself said about the Spirit in John 16, 14.

He says quite bluntly, He will glorify who? Me. The Spirit will glorify me for he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

[9:10] Okay. Now, when we think about how the Holy Spirit then applies the work of the Son to us, the first question we might ask is, well, how do we come to know about Jesus at all?

How do we come to know and understand who Jesus is and what he's done? How do we know? After all, how can we believe in Christ and be saved if Christ has not been made known to us? How can we grow in our relationship with Christ if we simply don't know anything about him?

Right? And that is the question. That is the question of revelation. Not the book at the end of the Bible, but revelation in the sense of God making himself known.

Right? Now, the next question we might ask is, once I hear and understand who Jesus is and what he's done, how do I come to truly repent and believe? How does someone move from merely hearing about Jesus to putting their trust in him, to being united by faith in him?

Right? And this is the question of what we might call regeneration. And that leads to another question, doesn't it? Once someone comes to understand and trust in Christ, how do they grow in Christ's likeness?

[10:22] How do they become more and more like him? And that is the question of sanctification. And the answer that the New Testament gives to each of these essential, critical questions, the answer that the New Testament gives is by the working of the Holy Spirit.

It is the work of God, the Holy Spirit, to make Christ known, to bring us to saving faith in him, and to make us grow more and more in Christ's likeness.

And this is what we're going to cover over the next three weeks of our class. I want to spend the rest of the time today considering the Holy Spirit's work of revealing Christ to us.

And next week, we'll talk about regeneration and saving faith. And then the following week, John Hinkson, one of our elders here at Trinity, will teach about the Holy Spirit's work of sanctification because he's much more sanctified than I am and he'll do a better job of it.

Then after that, we won't be done after that. After that, we'll take a few weeks and we'll discuss the work of the Holy Spirit in the church. Because what we see in and through all of this is that the Holy Spirit works not just personally but corporately.

[11:40] The Holy Spirit applies the work of Christ not just to individuals but to a people. So this is where we're going in the course. Okay, so let's spend the rest of our time this morning considering the Holy Spirit's work in making Christ known, in revealing the things of Christ to us.

And I have five headings for us this morning that we see, I think, pretty distinctly and clearly in the New Testament. when we think of the Holy Spirit's work in making Christ known.

The first thing I think we want to consider is Jesus' promise. Jesus' promise. That's an O.

Jesus promised, Jesus himself promised that the Holy Spirit would be the one to make him known.

Now, in John 14 through 16, Jesus is preparing, you'll remember, his disciples for his departure.

He will soon be crucified and raised. They will see him again after his resurrection, but Jesus will soon ascend to the Father after his resurrection to complete the work of redemption, to sit at the Father's right hand.

[12:46] And how then, at that point, how would the world come to know him after he completes redemption and returns to the Father? Well, in John 15, 26, Jesus says, when the helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me.

The Spirit will be the one who bears witness to Jesus. Now, friends, consider how beautiful this is. What we're seeing here is that the triune God will not leave unfinished the great work of making himself known to his fallen creation.

What the Father planned from eternity and the Son accomplished in history, that is not going to fall short of completion. No, God himself, God the Holy Spirit, will ensure that the Son, who alone makes the Father known, will himself be known.

Just as the Father can only be known through the Son, remember John 1, 18, no one has ever seen God, but the one and only God who is at the Father's side has made him known, or Matthew 11, 27, where Jesus says, no one knows the Father except the Son, no one knows the Son except the Father, right?

No one knows the Father except he to whom Jesus, the Son, will reveal him, right? Just as the Father can only be known through the Son, so the Son can only be known through the Spirit.
[14 : 20] So Jesus promises that the Holy Spirit will make him known. But that leads to a question, doesn't it? How?

How? By what means will God the Holy Spirit make Christ known? What means will he use? Right? Will it be clouds in the sky, right?

No. This brings us to our second point. Two. The apostles witness listen to what Jesus says to the apostles in that same section of John's gospel.

This is John 14, 25 through 26. Jesus says, these things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. But the helper of the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all I have said to you.

So, first, the Holy Spirit will ensure that the apostles learn and remember all that Jesus taught them. through the work of the Holy Spirit, the apostles become faithful in their remembrance of Jesus.

[15 : 42] Okay, but now listen to what Jesus says just a little later in John 15, 26 through 27. He says again, oh, we read the first verse but now listen to the second verse. First verse goes like this, remember? When the helper comes who I'll send you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me.

Next verse. And you also will bear witness. because you have been with me from the beginning.

So, who's Jesus talking to here? He's talking to the apostles, those who have been with Jesus from the beginning of his ministry.

They will bear witness. Through the work of the Holy Spirit, they will not just remember but they will proclaim the things of Jesus faithfully for all to hear.

And Jesus himself promised this earlier in his ministry and he promised that this would happen even in moments of great pressure. Luke 12, 11 through 12 says, Jesus is speaking to his apostles, he says, when they bring you before the synagogues and the rulers and the authorities, in other words, bring you to trial, don't be anxious about how you should defend yourself or what you should say for the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say.

Remember what Jesus says when he's sending out the apostles and the disciples on their sort of preliminary missions? Whoever listens to you listens to me. Right? On the basis of what Jesus himself taught them then, when we come to the writings of the apostles, we see that they understood themselves that their witness was the work of the Holy Spirit.

[17 : 13] So this isn't what Jesus taught but the apostles themselves understood their ministry to be happening, their proclamation to be happening under the power of the Spirit. In 1 Peter 1, verse 12, Peter says, those who preached, he's speaking to the church, he's saying, those who preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven have announced to you things into which even angels long to look.

Right? So those apostolic witnesses! to the good news about Jesus, they were doing it how? By the Holy Spirit. Or listen to how Paul puts it in 1 Thessalonians 1, 4-5.

He says, we know, writing to the Thessalonian church, we know, brothers loved by God, that He has chosen you because our gospel, our proclamation of good news came to you not only in word but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction.

So Paul understood that his preaching as an apostle was done through the work of the Holy Spirit.

So, the Holy Spirit makes Christ known through the witness and proclamation of the apostles.

According to Jesus, the Holy Spirit ensured that they would remember all that Jesus had taught them about Himself, about His ministry, about the meaning of His death and resurrection, about the life that He now calls us to live under His Lordship as His church.

[18 : 39] And according to Jesus, the Holy Spirit would empower them to testify and proclaim these things faithfully so that He might be known. But, doesn't that raise another question?

In Matthew 28, Jesus told the disciples to make disciples of all nations. But, all the nations wouldn't be evangelized in the lifetime of the apostles.

So, how would the Holy Spirit ensure that His testimony to Jesus through the apostles would reach all people? How would the Holy Spirit bring it about that His word through the apostles would not be bound by their limitations in either place or in time?

And that brings us to the third point. Scripture's inspiration. I'm going to do something funny here.

I'm going to put in in parentheses. In-spir- Oh, hold on. It's writing a different word. Scripture's inspiration.

[19 : 56] The witness of the apostles didn't remain a spoken word only. It soon became a written word as well. And through the written word, the Holy Spirit's work of making Christ known through the apostolic testimony would be extended and advanced to the ends of the earth and to the end of the age.

Okay. Now, when it came to the written word of Scripture, Jesus Himself believed that every word of the Hebrew Bible, the Old Testament, He believed every word to be the very words of God. We won't go into detail about that this morning, but read the Gospels and consider for yourself how Jesus treats the Old Testament. He quotes it. He lives it. He says it can't be broken. He makes arguments against His critics on the basis of single words. For Jesus, the Bible is the authoritative word of God. And the apostles believed the same thing, that the words of Scripture were the words of God.

Listen to how the apostle Peter puts it in 2 Peter 1, verses 16-21. I'm going to read this whole paragraph because I think the whole thing is important. Peter writes this. He says, He says, We did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty.

[21 : 19] For, when Jesus received honor and glory from God the Father, the voice was born to Him by the majestic glory, This is my beloved Son with whom I am well pleased.

We ourselves heard this very voice born from heaven and we were with Him on the holy mountain. And, we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. Knowing this, first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation? For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

Okay, what is Peter saying here? First, he's saying that he, as an apostle, was an eyewitness of Jesus' majesty, right? He recalls the transfiguration and says, we were there, we saw everything, we heard everything, and we made it known to you.

Then, Peter says in verse 19, that not just was Jesus' work a fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecy, but that we ought to pay close attention to the Old Testament Scriptures as if it were a light in the darkness.

[22 : 41] Why? Because the words of Scripture aren't merely human words. What are the words of Scripture? Well, Peter says in verse 21, men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

Now, notice two things here. Notice that the words of Scripture are human words, right? Men spoke from God. What you read, when you read the Bible, right, you are reading human words. Each writer has their own personality, their own historical and cultural context, their own themes, their own vocabulary and style, but they are not merely human words. Peter says they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit guided and worked in and through their words to speak the words He wanted to say. Without overriding their reason, without overriding their personality, the Holy Spirit spoke and made it such that what they wrote was what God wanted to say.

Now, Paul also affirms this view of Scripture in 2 Timothy 3, 16-17. He writes, All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

[24 : 05] All Scripture, Paul says, is breathed out by God. Now, given the passage we just read from Peter, right, I think it seems reasonable to conclude that the breathing out of Scripture is the particular work of God the Holy Spirit, right?

Men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Spirit. Now, we often say on the basis of this text that Scripture is inspired, right?

Inspired. We talk about the inspiration of Scripture. But the word Paul uses here is actually kind of a unique word, maybe even a word that Paul himself coined, that in Greek is theopneustos.

Theo, God, pneustos. It's a great onomatopoeia there. Breathed out, right? That it's literally God breathed. The ESV does a good job of translating that.

All Scripture is breathed out by God. So, the Holy Spirit isn't, as it were, breathing into Scripture, right? It's not technically correct, maybe, to say that Scripture is inspired.

[25 : 11] Maybe it's a little more accurate to say that Scripture is expired. But then it sounds like it's out of date. So, we don't, we don't, outspired. There we go, that's better. The expiration of Scripture.

But, you know, in English, like we said, that doesn't sound quite right. So, we still talk about the inspiration. But, the Holy, the words of Scripture are the words of the Spirit of God breathed out in human words.

Right? This is why the writer of Hebrews will say that the word of God, referring to Scripture, is living. It's active. Now, one might say, wait a minute.

2 Peter, chapter 1, 2 Timothy, chapter 3, they're talking about the Old Testament, right? Yeah.

Right? Right? Did the apostles think that their own writings were Scripture in, outspired Scripture in the same way as the Old Testament?

Well, it actually seems that they did. Now, where do we see that? We're going again to Peter. Consider what Peter says a little later in that same book, in 2 Peter, chapter 3, verse 15 through 18.

[26 : 29] He says, and I love this passage, actually. You're going to appreciate this one. Our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given to him, as he does in all his letters when he speaks of them in these matters.

There are some things in them that are hard to understand. Kind of a nice, feel a little affirmed in that, don't we? Oh, okay. Okay. Some things in them are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction as they do the other scriptures.

You, therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, take care that you're not carried away by the error of lawless people and lose your own stability, but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen. Amen. Question. How does Peter categorize Paul's letters?

What does he say? Scripture. Now, okay, Scripture. The word literally just means writings, right?

[27 : 39] But, of course, in the context of Peter's letter, as we saw earlier, when Peter's talking about scripture, he clearly seems to mean divine scripture. So, here is one apostle looking at another apostles of writings and saying, it's scripture.

Heed it. Don't get carried away. Heed it and grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Consider also Paul's kind of own self- understanding.

And I think this is exemplary of the apostles. Consider his self- understanding in 1 Corinthians 14, 36-38. In the midst of correcting the Corinthian church, he writes, was it from you that the word of God came?

Or are you the only ones it has reached? If anyone thinks he is a prophet or spiritual, he should acknowledge that the things I am writing to you are a command of the Lord.

If anyone does not recognize this, he is not recognized. Ooh, spicy words from Paul, right? Come on, Paul. Ah, but clear words, are they not?

[28 : 51] Paul understood that he was writing a command, not of himself, but of the Lord. He understood that as an apostle, he wrote with the Lord's own authority, just as Jesus promised the apostles that they would understand all that Jesus said and they would bear witness faithfully so he sees that in his writing, he's exercising that same work, right?

But what about those books in the New Testament that were not written by the apostles themselves, but were written by the apostles sort of close associates?

What books are those? Well, think about Mark, right? Traditionally, Mark was a close associate of Peter, but not himself an apostle. Or Luke, right? Luke was a close associate of Paul, but not himself an apostle.

Or the unknown author of Hebrews, right? Who? I mean, if he wasn't an apostle himself, which it'll be fun to get to heaven one day and figure out who wrote the book of Hebrews. But clearly, if the author of Hebrews wasn't an apostle himself, he was clearly one of the close associates of the apostles.

He mentions some of the other kind of associates of the apostles at the end of his letter. How should we view those writings? Well, it's very interesting that in 1 Timothy 5, 17 through 18, the apostle Paul writes this.

[30:10] He says, let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching. For the scripture says, you shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain, and the laborer deserves his wages.

Sidebar, isn't it great when Paul talks about leadership in the church? He says, hey, respect them, because an ox deserves his wages, right? Exalts and jumbles at the same time.

Here we are, just faithful oxen treading out the grain, right? Ah, Paul in this passage says, the scripture says, the scripture says.

Now, the first quote, you shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain, that's from Deuteronomy 25, verse 4. You can look that up. What about the second quote? The laborer deserves his wages.

Where does scripture say that? Well, in Luke chapter 10, verse 1 through 7, Luke records Jesus' instructions to the 72, whom he sends out during his earthly ministry.

[31:18] And when we pick up that passage in verse 4, Jesus says, carry no money bag, no knapsack, no sandals, greet no one on the road. Whatever house you enter, first say, peace be to this house. And if a son of peace is there, your peace will rest upon him.

But if not, it will return to you and remain in the same house, eating and drinking what they provide. For the laborer deserves his wages. It seems, it seems that Paul in 1 Timothy 5:17 is quoting the Gospel of Luke.

And into what category does Paul put that writing? Scripture. Right alongside Deuteronomy, no less, the Torah. It's as if I were to say, as the great writers once wrote, to be or not to be, and with great power comes great responsibility.

Now what am I doing when I say something like that? Who am I putting into the same category? Shakespeare, right? Who wrote with a great power comes great responsibility?

Stan Lee. Yes, Ivor, Stan Lee, the great poet of our time, right? Right? Right? So Paul, in an almost mind-boggling way, seems to put Luke's Gospel and Deuteronomy in the same category, calling them both scriptures.

[32:41] Okay, so what are we to make of all this? It stands to reason, friends, that the writings, not just of the Old Testament, but of the New Testament as well, are the work of the Holy Spirit.

In the New Testament, we have the Holy Spirit's inscripturating work. here too, not just in the Old Testament, but in the New Testament, the Holy Spirit is breathing out through the written testimony of the apostles, his own word, his own witness to the risen Christ, just as Jesus promised he would. So consider then the great gift that scripture is to us. Because the Holy Spirit has inscripturated his word, we can now read it and declare it and publish it and meditate on it and proclaim it to the ends of the earth, to the end of the age.

There will never be a time when the church does not have the Holy Spirit's apostolic witness to Jesus. His word will never leave us.

We will always have this light shining, as Peter says. We will always have this light shining, no matter how dark it gets. right?

[33:56] And we can read these words. And again, as Peter says, we can read these words until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. Through the Holy Spirit's work, the light shines into our hearts through his work of scripture, through the breathing out of scripture, the light of God shines into our hearts and we behold Christ, the morning star.

God. Now, that brings us straight away to our fourth point, which is the believer's illumination.

The believer's illumination. The Spirit has breathed out scripture. It is truly God's word in human words. But how do we come to understand it?

The truth is, friends, scripture would remain a puzzle and a labyrinth to us without the work of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit not only does the speaking, but he does the work in us so that we might understand what we read.

And this is what traditionally has been called the Holy Spirit's work of illumination. And a classic statement of this is found in 1 Corinthians 2, 11 through 16. Now, we had recourse to this passage when we were talking about the person of the Spirit.

[35:22] Now, look at it again when we consider the work of the Spirit. Let me read this for us. Paul writes, For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person which is in him? Makes sense, right?

So also, no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. Only the Spirit of God totally knows God, right? Now, we have received not the Spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God.

And then Paul says, we impart this in words, not taught by human wisdom, but taught by the Spirit. Again, affirming his own self- understanding as an apostle of speaking Spirit inspired words, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual, right?

Words of the Spirit to those indwelt by the Spirit. The natural person, Paul says, does not accept the things of the Spirit, for they're folly to him. And he's not able to understand them because they're spiritually discerned, that is, discerned through the work of the Spirit.

The spiritual person judges all things, that is, discerns all things, understands, because the Spirit's work in them, but is himself judged by no one, right? For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him, but we have the mind of Christ.

[36 : 40] So what does this mean? It means that when we, friends, when we take the Scriptures into our hands, it's not something that we control. It is God's Word.

And that means God must be the one who brings us to understand it. Too often, those of us who believe in Scripture's authority and inspiration think that we now can sit over Scripture, but we always sit under it, right?

our understanding of it is completely dependent on the Spirit. The God, the Spirit, who breathed out the Scriptures is God, the Spirit, who causes us to understand them.

So we have to approach the Scriptures with humility and a right dependence on Him for any understanding that we receive. But consider what good news this is. It's good news that the Spirit not only speaks through the Apostle's witness, He not only breathes out that witness into the pages of Scripture, but His wind keeps moving into the minds and hearts of those who read the written Word with prayerful dependence on Him and humility before Him.

The Spirit does bring understanding and clarity and assurance. He does indeed cause the morning star to rise in our hearts so that we might see Christ in His Word.

[37 : 57] Isn't that good news? Right? Okay, that brings us to our last point. We're moving a little quickly here because of time. Five, the church's proclamation. As the church prayerfully reads, studies, meditates upon, and obeys the Holy Spirit's and scripturated words, as the Holy Spirit does His work of illumination so that we might understand these words and understand the things of Christ and come to know Him, then we too are swept up in this work of making Christ known.

On the basis of the Holy Spirit's witness in the written word, the church proclaims Christ. We don't do so in pride because we've somehow solved the riddle of God and of Christ for ourselves, but we do it in joyful humility and without any pretension because God in His mercy and kindness has made these things known to us.

We who were in darkness have seen a great light. God who said, let light shine out of darkness, has shown in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. And so the church too proclaims Christ. And through the church's biblical proclamation, the Spirit makes Christ known. Consider Romans, right?

10, 9 through 17. Paul writes, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

[39 : 34] For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. For the scripture says everyone who believes in Him will not be put to shame. But there's no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing His riches on all who call on Him.

For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. Then Paul says this, how then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed?

How are they to believe in Him of whom they've never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent?

As it is written, how beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news. That's a quote of Isaiah. But they have not all obeyed the gospel, for Isaiah says, Lord who has believed what he had heard from us.

And Paul sums up and says, so faith comes from hearing and hearing through the word of Christ. You see what Paul is saying here? He's saying that the church is part of this preaching of the word, right?

[40:42] This isn't something, I don't think Paul is just describing here simply the apostolic work, but the ongoing work of the church. The reformers used to say that the word of God preached is the word of God.

Luther used to call church, like when we gather for church, God's mouth house. Isn't that great? What if we started talking about that on Sunday?

We could post it on Instagram. Come to God's mouth house this Sunday morning. What do they mean by all that? They meant that when we preach the biblical gospel, when we preach the Christ of scripture, when we prayerfully bind ourselves to the written word of God that is living and active, when we do that, the same spirit who bore witness through the apostles and who breathed out the written word continues to make Christ known through our scripture-saturated words.

Now, of course, there's a big distinction between this and this, right? Our words, our proclamation carries no authority in itself.

The preaching of the church is only authoritative insofar as it says, scripture says. But when we declare what scripture says, the spirit advances his work of making Christ known.

[42:08] As a sidebar, this is why, by the way, we preach expositionally at Trinity, because we believe that the Holy Spirit is the Lord, the giver of life, not us.

And we want his words to be the fountain of all of our words. The sword of the spirit, Paul writes, is the word of God. That's why if you go to a small group, you're going to be studying the Bible.

That's why if you come to Tyler's theology group every other Friday, they're not just going to be reading Grudem. Forget about Grudem. They're going to be looking at the word, right? Grudem's a good help.

He's a good teacher, right? When we speak and declare and proclaim what scripture says, the spirit is honored and glorified, and he advances his work of glorifying Christ and making him known.

Okay, friends, so this is how, according to the New Testament anyway, this is how the Holy Spirit makes Christ known. By illuminating the apostolic scriptures in the hearts of believers and in the proclamation of the church.

[43:10] There you go. There's the summary sentence. He gives us an objective word and witness to Christ, right? First in the eyewitness testimony of the apostles, then preserved and breathed out in the written scriptures.

He gives us that objective word and witness, but along with that, he comes and brings internal subjective illumination so that we might receive it and understand it, which means that the work is the spirits from first to last, from the giving of the word to the receiving of the word.

It's his work, not ours. But friends, isn't this a comfort? Isn't this a comfort to us? Do you want to draw near to Christ?

Do you want to know the mighty wind of the Spirit blowing through your life? Do you want to hear God's word about himself, to himself, to us?

Do you want to know the Spirit? Do you want to be in step with the Spirit? Do you want to be awash in the Spirit? Where do you go? What do you do? Well, friends, you go to where he speaks.

[44:25] You go to where he's breathing out his life-giving power. In other words, you go to the Scriptures. And you go to where the Scriptures are being faithfully lived and taught.

That's where you'll find the power of the Spirit at work. In the living word of the Bible. The Spirit's book. Okay. We have 30 seconds for questions.

Because I'm service leaving this morning. No, we have a couple minutes. Yeah, I need it. I have a question about the category of revelation. Yeah. Yeah. Oh, yeah. Mm-hmm.

Yes. Yeah. So I understand that you drop in with Jesus, but for that, there's some wonder in awe. Absolutely. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah, that's right.

Yeah, it would be wonderful to do a whole class on this because there's so much rich stuff there.

Yeah. So Anita's referencing general revelation, which is the revelation that God makes to all people at all times and all places, right? Through creation, through our conscience, through things like that.

[45:26] And what Scripture teaches us about that is that there are certain things that can be known about God through generation, but because we live under the condition of the fall, Scripture is insufficient for us to really be reconciled to God.

Yeah, Beth, you want to jump in on this? Oh, gosh, yes. Thank you, Beth. Creation is insufficient. General revelation is insufficient to bring us to a saving knowledge of God because, because of the

fall, our hearts turn away from those things to idols.

That's what Paul says in Romans 1. Yeah. But, but what that means with the doctrine of general revelation is also a comfort to us because it means that, that people do have a sense of God, right? They may be pushing it down, they may be pushing it out to other ways, right? But God is, in a general way, speaking about his divine nature and his power at all times and all ways.

We're obviously avoiding that and deflecting that as sinners, right? And we need, we need what's called particular revelation or special revelation to break through that.

[46:33] But in our evangelism, things like that, it's a great comfort to know that, that we're not totally coming out of the blue, as it were, right? Paul will say that, you know, God has ordained things so that people will feel after God, right?

They feel insufficiently. They feel in all the wrong ways, but still, we are still created in his image, right? Longing for him, reaching for him, though we know not, though we know it not, right? Yeah, good.

Yeah, Jeff? I think there's a good summary of a lot of this is the opening three or four verses in John, where he says, you know, the word is with God and the word was God.

Yeah, that's great. Those are to say that in him was light, and the light was the light of men, and the light shines in the darkness, but the darkness did not overpower it.

Right. So it's really the imagination of Jesus that the Spirit of God is bringing to us. It's union with Jesus. It's not just union with the Spirit.

[47:29] It's the Spirit emanates Jesus. That's right. Thank you for that clarification, Jeff. Did you hear what Jeff said? Like, who is the Spirit witnessing to in all of this? To Christ, right? We could do a whole other class about how Scripture and the Apostles' proclamation, it's all Christ-centered, right?

That's a bit of why I spent so much time at the beginning of the class talking about the Spirit's ministry in the life of Jesus, to then say, Jesus is saying, now the Spirit will come and testify about me, right? Yeah? One of the things that marks out the apostolic witness, right, is the way they now understand the Old Testament Scriptures and their own writings in such a Christocentric way.

Yeah. That's really good. Yep. Yes, Julia, and then we'll come up to George. We always see everything behind the Jesus formation, God.

Everything behind all the time, God working. Yeah. With everything. That's right. Everything was a work as it was behind everything with God. Yeah. Yep. God is at work.

Yep. Yeah. Then they say, I give this love time in a reader. God doesn't do anything today. It's finished.

[48:44] You know? Ah, yeah. Yeah. God is everywhere. You know that, the book spoken, the God, you know, I have a book called God. Yeah. It's very important. Yeah. Yeah.

Yeah. Thank you, Julia. Yeah. George. Yeah, the Spirit is still at work today. Yes. So why can't there be additional scriptures added to the Bible? Yeah.

Because the Spirit inspired them. Yeah. Yeah. What would they be testifying to? Same thing the other scriptures testified to? Right.

Glory and Christ? Sure. Did they, were they eyewitnesses of Jesus the way the apostles were?

Was Paul? Yes. Well. Jesus met him on the road to Emmaus. Through a vision.

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. I have visions too. Ah. Paul, what Paul experienced was unique and he himself understands it as unique. Right?

[49:39] He calls himself like one untimely born. Right? And actually, he distinguishes what he experienced from what other people experienced, right? We can talk more about that at another time. But Paul's experience of the risen Christ was unique amongst the other apostles, but was also unique from everyone else.

This is what distinguishes, say, Paul's experience from, like, Joseph Smith's purported experience of whatever he reported, right, in the, what, 1800s, right?

Yeah. The other thing I'll say, George, is that Jesus didn't promise that there would be, you know, hundreds of years people would keep being inspired to give more and more revelation about me, right?

He spoke those words to the apostles, right? And then they did that, yeah. So I don't think we should expect more apostolic witness because there's no more apostles, right? So can people understand the apostolic word?

Can God bring a fresh understanding of that and, you know, really weigh it on us powerfully and help us unfold what the apostles taught and what is in Scripture reports? Sure. Yeah. You know, our work of understanding Scripture is never done, right?

[50:49] But adding new revelation to it, actually, we shouldn't even expect that because Christ has accomplished the work. He has given himself the authoritative witness.

So there's, in fact, there's no more need for it because Scripture is sufficient, if that makes sense, right? So part of this, part of the answer to your question is the sufficiency of Scripture, that it's enough for us.

It's complete for us. Yeah. Yeah, Jeff. I think you brought up early in the verse where Jesus says the Spirit will bring to your members all that I have been. He was speaking to that specific people. Right. He wasn't speaking in the future. Right. That's right. He was speaking to specific people. To the apostles, yeah. And, of course, the apostles and people are written towards the latter part of their lives. That's correct.

He wouldn't be forgotten what he had been. That's right. That's right. You read. So I think that's another distinction. That's right. He didn't bring to your remembrance what I had taught you, what I said to you.

[51:51] Yeah. And he's not himself here in that way. Right. Right. Yeah, that's good. Yeah, that's good. Yeah. Is it true that the Holy Spirit brings to our mind the things in Scripture?

Absolutely. But that verse from John's Gospel is not talking about us. That's talking about his authorized witnesses, his apostles whom he sent. Yeah, that's right. Okay, friends, we have to close.

I'm so sorry because we have to go next door for church for God's mouth house. So, amen. Amen. Go in peace and we'll see you next week.

Not mouth house. Mouth house. Mouth.