The Holy Spirit - Part 7

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[0:00] Okay, so, welcome back to this class on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, where we've been considering! the person and the work of the Holy Spirit.

Now, if you've been coming to the class for the past three weeks, we've been looking at the work of the Holy Spirit. And we've looked at his work of revelation a few weeks ago, then his work of regeneration, and then last week, we looked at the Spirit's work of sanctification. So, in other words, we've considered how the Spirit causes us to know Christ, how the Spirit causes us to be united to Christ, and then how the Spirit causes us to grow in Christ-likeness.
So, what that means then is that, so far, in our discussion of the Spirit's work, we've been focused on his work in us individually, right? But today, we want to start looking at the Spirit's work in us corporately.
That is, we want to start looking at the Spirit's work in the church. After all, what is, what is God's saving plan for humanity?
What we see in Scripture is it's not merely to save individuals in an atomistic way. Rather, God's saving plan for humanity is to save a people, right?
[1:19] A people who, in their life together, will glorify his great name. And how could that be otherwise? How could that be otherwise, given who God is, right?

The God revealed in Jesus Christ and in Scripture is the Triune God, Father, Son, and Spirit. God is a tri-personal God, a God who, in the fullness of his eternal life, is a God of relationality, love, and we might even say community, right?
And so, if humanity is going to glorify the Triune God, as we were created to do, we have to do so together, in relationship, in love, in community. We see that in the creation narratives, right? In Genesis chapter 1.
The creation week finds its climax in the creation of humanity. Remember those verses, those verses from Genesis 1, 26 and 27. Then God said, Let us make man in our image after our likeness.
Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over the livestock, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth. Then it says, So God created man in his own image, and the image of God he created him.
[2:21] Male and female he created them, right? Male and female. Through the diversity of humans as male and female, united in a common mission of ruling and stewarding the earth, God's image is fully shining forth in humanity.

So it's a corporate reality. And we see that corporate reality, not just in creation, but also in redemption, right? When God calls Abraham in Genesis 12, do you remember what happened right before that?
What's the story right before the call of Abraham? Babel. Babel, that's right. Yeah, the Tower of Babel. Humanity and pride tries to build a tower to heaven to make a name for themselves. God confuses their language and scatters them.
So humanity is alienated from God and from one another through sin and through sin's judgment. But in Genesis 12, right? God calls Abraham. And the call of Abraham is not just to bless Abraham individually, but also through Abraham to bless all nations, right?
Genesis 12, 3. And you shall all the families of the earth be blessed. The families, the nations scattered and alienated by the curse of sin will somehow, someway be blessed in Abraham. But not just through Abraham individually, right?
[3:35] Because God's plan would involve making through Abraham a people. God tells Abraham in Genesis 12, 2, I'll make of you a great nation. So here is how God will undo the curse of Babel,

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the alienation of humanity from God and from each other, right?

Here's how the curse of sin will give way to blessing. Through Abraham, a family, a people, a nation will be formed. And in them, God's blessing will cascade to all the families of the earth. But what happens in the Old Testament story, right?
The Old Testament story demonstrates that Abraham's physical family, the people of Israel, though set apart to be a blessing for the nations, the Old Testament shows us that they too need to be rescued from sin's curse, right? And that rescue would come through Abraham's one true offspring, the true Israelite, God's true and only son, the Messiah, our Lord Jesus.
And it's through faith in Jesus that our sins are forgiven and God's blessing is restored to us. Listen to how Paul describes this in Galatians 3, Galatians 3, 6 through 14.
Paul says, Just as Abraham believed God and it was counted to him as righteousness, know then that it is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham. And the scripture foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, And you shall all the nations be blessed.
[4:54] So then, those who are of faith are blessed, along with Abraham, the man of faith. For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse. For it's written, Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the book of the law and do them.

Now it's evident that no one is justified before God by the law, for the righteous shall live by faith. But the law is not of faith, rather the one who does them shall live by them. Christ, however, redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us.
For it is written, Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree. So that in Christ Jesus, the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised spirit through faith.
Okay, how does the blessing of Abraham come to us, sinners, even to us Gentiles? Comes to us through Jesus Christ, through faith in him.
And through faith in him, the spirit dwells in us, making us the people God intended to make us. Right? The people of blessing, in whom the curse of sin is turned back, in whom the glory of God begins to shine again.
[6:11] Right? So the spirit's work, as we see here in this kind of, my quick overview of the biblical theology of a people, right? The spirit's work in uniting us to Christ isn't just a personal individual work, it's also a corporate work.

In uniting us to Christ, the spirit unites us to the people of Christ. And again, that was always God's plan, was to unite a people in himself. Do you remember those magnificent verses at the beginning of Ephesians?
We've looked at Ephesians a couple times in this class, haven't we? Ephesians 1, 7 through 10.
Paul says, In Christ we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us in all wisdom and insight, making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time.
And what is that plan? What is the plan that is being enacted as Christ redeems us through his blood, forgives our trespasses, lavishes his grace on us, and reveals to us a plan, which is what? Paul says, To unite all things in Christ, things in heaven and things on earth. The uniting of all things, the healing of what's broken, the reconciling of enemies, the overcoming of our alienation.
[7:28] This is the work of God in Christ, made effective by his spirit. Because do you remember what the next paragraph is in Ephesians 1? We've heard this good news, and the spirits come and made us gods, made us God's inheritance, right?

Okay, so it would be through this people, this corporate reality, the church, that God's glory shines forth. I love this passage a little later in Ephesians, in Ephesians 3, 8 through 10.
Paul says, Think of all the things that you would put in that blank.
so that through the blank, the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places, right? How would you fill in that blank, right? As like all the heavenly hosts peer over the edge of heaven down at earth, what is the thing that God's going to point to and says, That's where my glory is most fully displayed.
That's where my unfolding wisdom reaches its climax. Yeah, go ahead, Richard. Yeah, what would you say? If I were writing the Bible, I would say the cross.

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[8:55] Mmm. The cross. Yeah. Yeah, that's a good contender, isn't it? I didn't write the Bible. That's right. Yeah. I think initially we would say, Look at this. Look at the heavens, the starry host, right?

Look at how beautiful and complex the creation is. Look at how magnificent the human body is or the human mind, right? Look at how wonderful these things are. Or look at other aspects of redemptive history.
Look at the cross. Isn't that where God's manifold wisdom is displayed, right? But Paul says, Through the church. What a wonderful, mind-boggling reality it is to be a part of the people of God and to know that God's entire redemptive plan has come about so that he might be glorified in this redeemed people, right?
So the church is the locus of God's glory to all the heavens. And so, if the Spirit's work is to bring God's saving plan to completion, then his work won't just be the work of saving individuals, but of creating and sustaining a people, right?
Creating and sustaining a people. Now, we want to be careful. It's not either or, right? It's not as if the personal, the individual doesn't matter. We've just spent three weeks talking about that, right? There's no corporate body without persons believing, trusting in Christ.
[10:13] At the end of the day, we will all be accountable before God, individually, personally. But we are also a people together. That is part of God's plan. So the work of the Spirit is not just a work of saving individuals, but of creating and sustaining a people.

So, now when we think about the church, right, what are some of the metaphors of the church that we see in Scripture that come to mind? for us. We belong to Christ.
Yes, we're in Christ. Yep. What are some others? We're the body of Christ. Yeah, that's one I think that comes to mind right away. Yep. Someone else said something? The temple.
Yeah, the temple of what, Giovanni? The temple of God. Be more specific. The temple of the Holy Spirit. That's it. Great. Yeah, that's right. The temple of the Holy Spirit. Right. You know, I think rightfully so.
When we think about the church and our identity and who we are, it's as the body of Christ. Paul uses that language all the time. The body of Christ. Ephesians 1, 22 through 23.
[11:17] Paul says, And he, that is God the Father, put all things under Christ's feet and gave Christ his head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

So we are Christ's body on earth. Again, in 1 Corinthians 12, 12 and 27, we read, For just as the body is one and has many members and all the members of the body, though many are one body, so it is with Christ.
Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. Right? So we are, the church is, the body of Christ, but not just the body of Christ. Yeah, Jeff, did you want to?
The bride. Oh, the bride. Yeah, that's a good one too, isn't it? Yep. We won't even talk about that one this morning. We'll have to do a whole other class on the doctrine of the church. Yes, Richard? So Hebrews tells us that we are the house that Christ builds. That's right. Yes, yes, yes. Yeah. This is good. We're more ecclesiologically savvy than most Sunday schools, I bet.
[12:15] We're pointing them all out. No, that's right. That's right. Yeah. But obviously what we want to focus on this morning is the church is the temple of the Holy Spirit. Ephesians 2, 19 through 22.

Paul says this. He says, So then, you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure being joined together grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.
So there we see Paul saying that we are like stones being built together into this beautiful new temple where God dwells by his Spirit.
Right? 1 Corinthians 3, 16 through 17. Paul, somewhat rebuking the Corinthians, says, Do you not know that you are God's temple and God's Spirit dwells in you?
If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple.
[13:35] Now, interesting, the temple of the Holy Spirit, Paul will use that both for us individually as Christians. We sometimes think of that, right? But here he's speaking corporately of the church. The

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church is not just the body of Christ, but also the temple of the Holy Spirit.

Think of it a minute about what that means. We don't often think about temples, right, in our day and age. When's the last time you were at a temple? Has anyone here even been to something that's called a temple?
Some of you have. Yeah, good. Right? In the ancient world, temples were those places where the infinite God or the infinite, the transcendent, intersected with the finite world.
Right? I think today we don't think about religious spaces as being that, but maybe, like, have you ever been to a particularly beautiful or transcendent place? Maybe a beautiful place in nature. Maybe it was kind of a beautiful cathedral. I remember visiting the ruins of Glastonbury Cathedral in England many, many years ago. Has anyone here ever been to Glastonbury Cathedral in England? So Glastonbury Cathedral is very interesting because it was a giant, huge cathedral in this town of Glastonbury, and then I think during the Reformation they got, like, all torn down in the Reformation movement.
[14:48] So now it's this magnificent place because it's a beautiful place, nature-wise, but then there are also these giant ruins of an old cathedral shooting out of the ground.

So it's a place that just feels somehow transcendent, like set apart from ordinary experience, as if the kind of veil between heaven and earth were very thin there. Even in its ruin.
Even in its ruin, it has this sort of aura. And you know, other people have caught up on that because there are a bunch of Celtic shops and Druid shops all around town. Lots of spirituality there. But here's the point I want to make.
Here's the point I want to make. We've all had experiences like that, right? Where it just seems like, wow, something holy is kind of here, right? Like this feels like transcendent, special. We're like pushing through to something different.
But that reality, friends, whatever we're sensing there, you know, if there's any truth in that, the truth is, that is most true of the church because the church is the temple of the Holy Spirit.
[15:49] In our life together, God dwells in our midst. Truly here, the infinite is pressing into the finite and the eternal is intersecting with time.

Here in the people of Christ, in the local church, the future of God is coming down into the present and becoming real here. So the church is both the body of Christ and the temple of the Holy Spirit. Just as the Spirit filled Christ for his earthly ministry, so much so that Christ could refer to himself as God's temple. Do you remember that in John 3? Jesus says, hey, if you tear down this temple in three days, I'll raise it up again.
And he was talking about his body. So Jesus was saying, the Jerusalem temple, that was just a sign for who I am, the dwelling of God in your midst. But now the Spirit fills the church just like the Spirit, just like he filled Christ so that we might go in and fulfill the ascended Christ's ongoing ministry of filling all things.
Right? Good. All right. With the rest of the class, I want to look at a couple ways in which the Spirit is at work in the church. And this will just be a beginning entree into the rest of our weeks together.
[17:04] So let's consider some of the ways in which the Holy Spirit is at work in the church, not just as the body of Christ, but as the temple of the Holy Spirit. And I'm following the work of a theologian and teacher named Greg Allison here, who's written a couple books on the Holy Spirit that are quite good.

So this is an original to me. This is something I've learned from other teachers in my life, but it's very helpful. It's very good. So the first thing we see in the New Testament as the Holy Spirit works in the church is that the Holy Spirit grants unity.
The Holy Spirit grants unity. Do you remember that excerpt? It might be helpful, actually, to turn to Ephesians chapter four. Ephesians four. Let me read just the first couple verses of Ephesians four. Paul says, I, therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you've been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace.
Eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace. It's interesting that Paul doesn't tell us there to create the unity of the Church, right?
[18:28] Or manufacture the unity of the Church as if somehow it doesn't already exist. No. What does he say? What's the word he uses? Maintain, right? We are called to maintain the unity of the Spirit, the unity of the Church that the Spirit creates.

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So, in other words, the unity of the Church is a reality already established by the Spirit, right? And isn't that what we see in the book of Acts, right? At Pentecost, when the Spirit comes upon the Church in new covenant fullness, the sign of his presence on that first day is what?
It's the speaking in tongues, right? That is, the apostles, and we talked about this on Sunday a few weeks ago, right, in our service, speaking in tongues in Acts, right, is when the apostles and the disciples were miraculously enabled to speak the native languages of everyone present, right?
Acts 2.1, the crowd say, we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God. In other words, it's a sign of unity. All languages are now being incorporated into the one people, the one body of the risen Lord Jesus.
And then in Acts 10, well, that's, okay, that's great for Pentecost, right? Because those were all diaspora Jews who came to Jerusalem. They were already sort of like in the redemptive path of God's work, right?
[19:47] They were all Jews or they were at least converts to Judaism. They were proselytes, Luke says. But what about those other people, right? What about them? Well, in Acts 10, do you remember, when Cornelius and his household become the first Gentiles to hear the gospel?

They hear the gospel from Peter and they hear the gospel and they believed and they're saved and the Spirit demonstrates his unifying presence in the same way.
This is what Luke writes in Acts 10, 44 through 48. While Peter was still saying these things, that he's sharing the message about Christ crucified and risen with them, while Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word.
And the believers from among the circumcised who had come with Peter were amazed because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out even on the Gentiles. For they were, how did they know?
For they were hearing them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter declared, can anyone withhold water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?
[20:56] And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to remain for some days. So, what's happening in Acts 10 is a redemptive historical moment, right?

When the first non-Jews hear the message about Jesus and believe, the Spirit comes in the same way as he did at Pentecost to say, you are one people.
That same sign is given to them to demonstrate that there wasn't going to be two churches, a Gentile church and a Jewish church, but one church of the Lord Jesus Christ. And the Spirit is the one who did that, right?
The Spirit, he created that unity. He grants that unity to the church. So, it isn't something that we strive to create, back to Ephesians 4. It's a gift of the Spirit that we have to maintain, right?
That the Spirit gives to us. And that means that the kind of, we might say that the default mode of the church, right, is harmony. Now, you might be thinking, Nick, I've been in church for a long time.
[21:59] The default mode of the churches I'm experiencing, I haven't been in, have not been harmony. Right? Of course, right? Of course. Sadly, through our ongoing sin, church members can work against this established harmony and unity, can't we?

Political maneuvering, infighting, individual agendas, pride, gossip, these are all ways and more that we can wreck the already established harmony that the Spirit grants us.
And that's why Paul says in Ephesians 4, make every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Right? Now, in Ephesians 4, Paul talks about seven commonalities, we might say, that foster this unity.
Look at, look at back at Ephesians 4, look at verses 4 through 6. Look what Paul begins to list. He says, be eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There's one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call.
One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who's over all and through all and in all. Paul here is emphasizing the unity that already exists, reminding us that there aren't many churches, right?
[23:17] There's one church, there's one body. There aren't many spirits, but one Holy Spirit, right? There aren't many hopes that we have disparately. There's one hope of the calling of eternal life.

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There's one Jesus Christ who is Lord of all. There's one faith, the faith once delivered to all the saints that Christians believe. There's one sacrament or ordinance of water baptism which we've all undergone. And there's one sovereign God, the Father, who's Father of all people, who's created every person in His image, right?
And in the church, is Father of every son or daughter of a king, right? Paul's just hammering home. We are one. Look at all these commonalities that we have.
Look at what the Spirit has brought us into. But then, Paul also in this passage lists four virtues that help us maintain that unity.
And this is where the passage starts, right? We can read those verses again. He says, I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you've been called with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love.
[24:25] Here are the virtues that as the Holy Spirit grows them in us will help us to maintain unity in this temple of the Holy Spirit, right? Humility. In a church characterized by oneness, its members think more highly of others than they do of themselves.

Humility, right? Gentleness. We're meek rather than contentious. Patience. We steadfastly work through difficulties. Bearing with one another in love.
We put up with each other's idiosyncrasies. That last one might be the hardest sometimes, isn't it? Right? You know, that person's not really sinning, but man, they just kind of get on my nerves. Paul says, we bear with one another in love, right? And even in their sins and flaws, we bear with one another in love, right? Now, if you're wondering how to become more that sort of person, humble, gentle, patient, bearing with one another in love.
You have to go back and listen to this Sunday school lesson from last week when John talked about sanctification, right? As the Spirit does His work in us, reminding us of all that we have in Christ, reminding us of how deeply loved we are and have been, as the Spirit calls out with our spirit that we are children of God, as we cry out, Abba, Father, as He pours that love into our hearts, we become more and more freed from our old vices, our old sins, and as we keep in step with the Spirit, we become more and more like whom?
[25:54] Like Jesus, right? Who was and is humble, gentle, patient, and certainly bears with us in love. So the Holy Spirit grants unity to the church, and we must make every effort to maintain that unity.

We remember these commonalities, these seven commonalities, and we exercise these virtues. Let's keep going. So the Holy Spirit is working in the church. He grants us unity. Second, we see in Scripture that the Holy Spirit establishes leaders.
As Paul preached to the elders at Ephesus, he says, I did not avoid declaring to you the whole plan of God. He's talking to the elders here, the pastors, the leaders. He says, be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has appointed you as overseers to shepherd the church of God, which he purchased with his own blood.
So sidebar there, notice how in Paul's teaching to the elders at Ephesus, he says that the Holy Spirit has appointed you as overseers and that they are to shepherd, right? So we see there, that's one of those New Testament passages where we see that this office of elder or pastor, that's the word for shepherd, or overseer, that's literally the word bishop, episkopos, right?
That's all kind of one office in the New Testament church. So these elders, these pastors, these overseers are responsible for teaching and preaching, for leading the church, for praying for its members, especially for the sick, for shepherding God's people.
[27:21] And to be qualified for these pastor responsibilities and empowered to carry them out, leaders must be established by the Holy Spirit, right? Paul says that you were appointed by the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit equips them, gives them necessary gifts, matures them, molds them in proven ministry. And he so works by the Spirit. The Spirit also works also to prompt the church to publicly acknowledge these leaders as its pastors.
So you think, well, wait, how does that work here at Trinity, right? How do people become elders at Trinity? Does anybody know? It doesn't involve money. We'll get to that in Acts.
Jesus ruled that out pretty early on. Okay, they have to be a believer, right? They have to know the gospel and believe it. How else do we do it? Come on, some of you are members of Trinity.
You know how we do it. You have to be elected. Thanks, Chuck. That's right. That's right. Yeah. So, as a congregational church, right? Recognized. Recognized. By the people of the church.

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[28:22] Yeah, that's right. You recognize that someone is a leader. That's right. Yeah, now we're getting into it, right? As a church community granted unity by the Spirit under the gospel, right?

We start to recognize in our midst those people who are shepherding, who are pastoring without the title, without the name, without the glamour, right?
There's no glamour in being a pastor, by the way. At least not anymore. Right? We start to see in our midst, hey, this person is loving, teaching, and it's bearing fruit.
Right? We begin to acknowledge what the Spirit's already doing in our midst through a person, right? Then, we start to talk about that, right?
Because we know that the Holy Spirit raises up leaders. In fact, in Ephesians, Paul will say that the ascended Lord Jesus gives these offices to the church, right?
[29:20] And we see here in Acts that this is the work of the Holy Spirit doing that too, right? So then, formally here at Trinity, how's that work? We would nominate that person to the existing elders to consider that person for elder.

Then we would vet them and interview them, right? To make sure that what we see of them in public is true of them in private, that there really is a life of obedience to Christ, that they are walking with the Spirit, that they do understand the things of the Spirit, right?
That they do understand biblical doctrine, that they can do those things well, right? And then we would bring them before the congregation at a congregational meeting and do what Chuck said. We vote on them, right? We let people pepper them with questions, right?
And we try them and we test them, right? And then we send them out of the room and we cast ballots, right? But what this means is that the work of discernment, as the Holy Spirit does this work in our midst, as we discern together who He is raising up as leaders, right?
But we mustn't forget, it's very easy to look at that process and see it as a very human process, right? Right? Elizabeth sees so-and-so teaching, so-and-so's teaching. We bring them to a congregation meeting, we vote on them.
[30:30] It all seems like a very human thing, right? Ah, but friends, don't forget that these are the means whereby the Holy Spirit is doing His work in our midst, so we must do it how? Prayerfully, dependently, right?

With humility and gentleness and patience, bearing with one another and not being afraid to ask hard questions, right? But always dependent on the work of the Spirit. Okay, so, the Holy Spirit establishes leaders and thank goodness that the Holy Spirit gives, gives us leaders, right?
They're a good gift to us, right? We need people who teach us, we need people who are further down the road than us helping us to understand the things of Christ, right? How often does Paul say, imitate me as I imitate Christ?
I think each of us in this room can be grateful that we've had other people in our life at times in whom we can see the life of Christ lived out that we can imitate, right? So these are, leaders in the church are a great gift.
Okay, let's keep going. Third, the Holy Spirit empowers the church to engage unbelievers with the gospel, right? He grants us unity, establishes leaders, and empowers us for evangelism and mission.
[31:40] remember, remember, prior to his ascension and the descent of the Spirit of Pentecost, Jesus promised his disciples, you'll receive power when the Holy Spirit has come on you and you'll be my witnesses in Jerusalem and all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth.

That's Acts 1-8, right? So Jesus himself promised that one of the things the Holy Spirit would do when he comes in fullness is empower us to be witnesses. Now, the church is missional as it shares the good news with non-Christians, plants churches, supports and sends missionaries globally, yes, aids the poor and disenfranchise in its community and more, right?
And these, again, it's so easy to look at those things as merely human endeavors, right? But they are things that are directed and empowered by the Holy Spirit and as we keep in step with the Spirit in those things, he brings the resulting fruit, right?
And isn't that good news? Isn't it good news that this mission that we're called to, right? Jesus doesn't just say, okay, I did everything, now it's up to you, right? I died on the cross, now you gotta go do something with that, right?
Go convince your neighbors that they need a Savior. Has anyone ever, I mean, some of our neighbors maybe start to realize that they're in trouble, right? Or that their life is hard, but how many

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of us come to realize that we need divine reconciliation without the ministry of the Holy Spirit, right? [33:08] And how wonderful it is to know that as we go forth in mission, as we are all missional and missionaries in our context, right? There is an even greater missionary going forth before us, right?

The word mission, what does it mean at its heart? Do you know? It's a Latin word, missio. Not service, close, close, Julie, yep, what does it mean?
To send, that's right, Barry, it's ascending, right? Now, before Jesus sent us, who did he send? The Spirit, the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit is already being sent from the Father and the Son to go.
We are simply following in his wake, right? Empowered by him. So it's really good news that the Holy Spirit goes before us, in us, with us, and empowers us for evangelism and mission.
Lastly, and then we'll just pause for questions and we'll break. The Holy Spirit gives spiritual gifts to members. So it's not just an outward mission that the Holy Spirit empowers in our corporate unified life together, but it's also an inward building up, right?
[34:14] Paul explains that a manifestation of the Spirit, a spiritual gift, is given to each person for the common good, he says. And then, in a number of places, he'll list different gifts of the Spirit, right?

And he says, it's one in the same Spirit that's active in all of these, distributing to each person as he wills. And what that means is that each and every church member, everyone who's been united to Christ and made a part of his family has a gift or gifts that are given and empowered by the Spirit. And that's what we're going to talk about next week. Because that's a big topic. So we're going to pause there and spend a couple minutes in questions. But, we can do a couple minutes in questions, but at this point in the class, as we have a few weeks left, I'd also like to hear if there are topics that feel in your mind related to the doctrine of the Holy Spirit that we haven't covered yet that you'd like to hear more about.
If there are other questions or things you're wondering about with respect to the Holy Spirit, I'd love to hear from them and then maybe we can incorporate them in coming weeks. So, any questions about what we talked about today or maybe anything you hope we cover in coming weeks?
Yeah, Julia? Julia? Julia? Yeah. I think the whole policy is when you really want to do you lose your ego like you said. It's no more. So, you can see the ego back even like past some problems.
[35:35] You know when it's me. Uh-huh. Totally. Yep. Yep. Yep. So, when you me, oh, okay. But, you can see when it's a me, oh.

Yeah. Isn't it great how Paul, Paul says that exact thing in Galatians. It's no longer I who live. And the Greek word there is literally, the Greek word for I is ego. It's no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me.
But then he says, but the life I live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God. So, it's like a new us that lives united to Christ. Yeah. It's not easy.
Nope. Thankfully, the Spirit's at work in us to do that. Yeah. Thanks, Julia. Any other, any other questions? Yeah, Giovanni, I have a question if you need to ask. Yeah. It's a little bit unrelated, but what's the difference between the scene at the end of John when the apostles received the Holy Spirit from Moses that he breathed on them and the Pentecost when the apostles received the Holy Spirit from God and Yeah.
Great question. Oh, that's a really good question, yeah. I never understood what's the purpose of this narrative and what's the purpose Yep, yep. That's a wonderful question and so I'll give you a short answer what I think is happening there.
[36:52] So if you're not familiar with what Giovanni's referencing, we've talked a lot in this class about Pentecost in Acts 2 when after the ascended, Jesus ascends to the right hand of the Father and then a few days later he sends out the Spirit upon the church and then the kind of mission and life of the New Testament church begins.

In John's gospel before Jesus' ascension there's a moment when he's with his disciples with the apostles and he says well, let's look there actually.
Basically he says receive the Holy Spirit and then he breathes on them. He breathes on them Luke says. 20, thanks Kunle, yes.
Yep. So, let's see, it's 20 verse, we can pick up a 21. Jesus said to them again, peace be with you as the Father has sent me even so I am sending you.

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And when he had said this he breathed on them and said receive the Holy Spirit if you forgive the sins of any they are forgiven them if you withhold forgiveness from any it is withheld. We'll put in 20, we'll put that last verse in brackets that's a longer conversation when we talk about the doctrine of the church but I think what's happening here short answer Giovanni is I think this is prolepto.
[38:03] In other words, I think Jesus is here sort of demonstrating what's going to happen in fullness on Pentecost, right? Sometimes people will set up these two narratives that's kind of contradicting one another like, oh, well John has a certain Pentecost at the end of his gospel but then Luke kind of makes up a different one or vice versa, right?

I think what's neat about this passage though as Jesus is sort of instructing them like you're going to receive the Spirit, receive the Spirit, right? Is that what he demonstrates so powerfully in person here is that he is going to be the one who is imparting the Spirit to them, right?
So what happens here kind of is like a preview of what happens in fullness in Acts. So that's the best, I think, way to harmonize them that I've come across.
There might be others. Yeah. David, yeah. could you tie into that the references that David had in the book of Psalms to the Spirit?
Yeah, say more. In what way? In a way that he's talking about that while the indwelling itself was not present yet, you see that there's a huge difference between what happened in John and what happened in Acts.
[39:11] Yeah, right. The presence of the Holy Spirit was always present. Oh, yes, that's right. That's right. Yes. Yeah. Yeah.

Yeah, that's really good. Yeah. Right. Yeah, David will say things like, God, don't take your Holy Spirit from me. It's, right. That's right. Yeah. Yeah, that's right.
Yeah, there's oftentimes, the way I've seen people refer to this and I like this is that the Holy Spirit is at work throughout the entire history of redemption. Old and New Testament. But we do see something after Jesus has come and completed the work of redemption, there really is a new covenant ministry of the Spirit, right, in this age of post the Messiah coming where it is, his indwelling presence is fuller, more present, more permanent and it's for everyone, right.
So I do think, I do think you're right, David, this is, what's happening here in John is preparatory. It's getting them ready for that and in that wonderful, like that wonderful symbol of him breathing on them, it's showing that this pouring out of the Spirit is going to be something that happens and is intimately connected to him as the risen king.
Yeah, right. Yes, yes, yes, yes. Yeah, that's great. Oh, interesting.
[40:41] Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, oh, that's really nice. Yeah, that's really nice seeing that, seeing that, that kind of echo of the creation narratives is really good.

Yeah, thanks, yeah, Jeff. Yeah, yeah, yeah, right. That's, that's, that's good, yeah.
Yes, just like Jesus was previewing the cleansing that would happen at the cross, here he's previewing the fullness and pouring out of the Spirit that will happen at Pentecost. Yeah, that's very good. Yeah, he hasn't, yes, that's right, he hasn't completed that work yet, yeah.
Anyone else? Elizabeth, yeah. So my devotions this morning talked about All Saints Day yesterday. Yes, yes. So then, you know, the saints in the church, how we differ with others.
Yeah, with other, with like the Catholic Church, for example, yeah. In the church. That's right. Yeah, that's right. Of these holy saints. Yeah, that's right. I wanted to just say that part of your point.
[41:55] Yes, what a timely observation, Elizabeth, on All Saints Day. You guys familiar with All Saints Day? Right? Sort of? This is the time, this is historically, this is the Sunday of the year, or this is the day of the year, when the church would remember all the faithful departed, all the saints who've gone before us, right?

So, what is the church? The church is both the church militant here below, right, as we sort of work out our salvation with fear and trembling, but there's also the church triumphant, the saints in heaven who've gone before us, who finished their race, right?
And All Saints Day is the day when we rejoice that we are one people, both the saints below and saints above, right? Now, right, in the New Testament, who is a saint?
The ones who are really holy, right? Who wore the hair shirts, right? No, everybody, right? You're all saints. That's right.
We're all saints. It's undeniable from the New Testament that every Christian is a saint. That is, they've been indwelt by the Holy Spirit, brought into his people, and now, we are set apart for a

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noble purpose, all of us.
[43:04] So, on this All Saints Day, right, we remember that through the gospel, through the working of the Holy Spirit, we are all made holy, we're all brought into this family, and we are all prized and precious, to our God.

Yeah. Did you want to add more on that, Elizabeth? No? Go ahead. Yeah, tell me your name. Yeah, I'm John. John. Welcome. Yeah, welcome. Share. Yeah. The contrast between the passage and John and Acts, it reminded me of the sort of, in Samuel, I think it is, where like, the king is anointed and then the spirit rushes on the king at a time.
Yeah. Then when they're anointed, they carry out the work of God. Yeah. So maybe it's something like that too, although the Pentecost in Acts 2 does seem to be kind of like very much a beginning point.
Right, right, yeah. Yeah, and I think all that that was, you know, some of those anointing passages in the Old Testament were fulfilled in Christ, right? Those are kind of four figures of who he is, but because we're united to Christ, right, that we partake in that.
So there is a fulfillment of those Old Testament anointings of kings and prophets and priests and all these things and that outward sign of anointing them with oil was symbolic of the spirit who would come upon them and empower them for those tasks, right?
[44:18] And what's so beautiful about living this side of the death and resurrection and ascension of Jesus is that that's true of all of us in a measure that the Old Testament saints could have never fathomed. Well, they did fathom that they looked ahead to it with anticipation, especially as history kind of rolled on.

Are there any, we're going to wrap up in a minute, are there any topics you hope we cover over the next few weeks that we haven't yet? Elizabeth, yeah. So, yeah, I read in the World Maga Green a really good article about is the control of AI our battle.
Yeah, yes. As we leave, we can be thinking about that. Yes, so we are going to do a whole class in the new year that we're coining digital sanctification where we're going to talk about not just AI but lots of things with like being faithful followers of Jesus in our very technological age and AI will be one of the, one of the number of topics we deal with there but it will be a big one.
Yeah, so we won't talk about that in this class because we got a whole one queued up in the new year to talk about that. Yeah, yeah, George. something I'm being curious is that the last chapter of Revelation Yes.
Father and the Son seated on the throne Yes. Noticeably absent the Spirit on the throne. Uh-huh. Yeah, yeah, great. Where's the Spirit on the throne?
[45:42] Yeah, that's a great, that's a great observation, George. Let's, if you look at Revelation chapter 22.

Well, if you look a little earlier in Revelation, in Revelation 4, remember, Revelation is a very symbolic book. So, listen to, listen to John's description of the throne in Revelation 4.
He says, around the throne were 24 thrones and seated on the thrones were 24 elders clothed in white garments with golden crowns on their heads. From the throne came flashes of lightning and rumblings and peals of thunder and before the throne were burning seven torches of fire which are the seven spirits of God and before the throne there was, as it were, a sea of glass like crystal.
So, right there, right in front of the throne, there's this thing that John describes symbolically as the seven spirits of God, right? I think a better way of translating that is the sevenfold spirit.
Now, why seven? Why seven, right? Because in Isaiah 11, when it's talking about the work of the Messiah, the Messiah will be filled with the spirit in a sevenfold way.
[46:53] We talked about that a couple weeks ago. We can look at that, right? So, I think what John is describing here, he's talking about the Holy Spirit right there in the midst of the throne. So, it's there in Revelation 4. He may not be explicitly referenced in Revelation 22, but he's certainly there.

And then, of course, you see in the rest of Revelation 22 where it's the spirit and the bride say come. So, the spirit's there, active and present. Yeah. Does that help? Yeah, it says before the throne.
Right? Yep. Are you suggesting maybe, George, that the, that, why isn't the spirit like right there on the throne if he's fully God? Right? Yeah. Yeah. I don't know. I don't know why John wrote it that way.

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But I do think, what is the one thing we see about the spirit though in his ministry and is certainly in the spirit's earthly ministry, right? He's the one who's gathering God's people.
He is in our midst. So, maybe that's what John's saying there. And the spirit and the bride say come. Right. He's been the second one. Right. Yeah, that's good. Yeah, that's good.
[48:03] Yeah, good. Yeah, David. I'm interested too on clarity on that. Sure. I'm not dabbling too much in front of the way. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

There is a reference in the book of John that strikes into it and that's when Jesus explains to the disciples who the father is and outside of the flesh he says God is what God is spirit.
Yeah. So, picturing that, I would be interested to on more clarity on how to picture the throne as these three separate persons in one.
Right. Right. So when Jesus says God is spirit there, right. Yeah, keep in mind that spirit language in the Old and New Testament doesn't always refer to the person of the Holy Spirit, God, the Holy Spirit. So, right. So we can say that God is spirit, right? What does that mean? Well, it means that God isn't like material like we are, right? That doesn't mean that God is less real or less powerful. In fact, in biblical thinking, like, especially when talking about God, God as spirit means that he's more real and more powerful, right? And in John's, in Jesus's point there, right, that's John, oh, interesting. Yeah, I'm thinking of his interaction with the woman at the well in John 4. Yep. God is, you know, God is spirit and those who worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth, right? So Jesus is making the point there that...
I think it's just in John 4, but he does say to Pilate that my kingdom, my kingdom's not of this world, right? Yeah, my kingdom's not of this world, which is a similar point, right? Yeah. So I think, so maybe that's helpful as you think about putting some of these verses together is that the word spirit in the New Testament doesn't always refer to God, the Holy Spirit. We have to look at the context and figure that out, yeah. Okay, we need to close. Julia, did you want to...
[50:10] Parting shot, go, quick, because we've got to close. Spirit means God knows everything, and he says a woman who... We know God knows Jesus, knows what he means, what he does, you know, that's our spirit. Yeah. Yes. Right.

This is with the God, when you pray, whatever God knows everything. Yeah, thankfully he does, right? Yeah, sure. There's no question, I know. Yeah. That's our search of connection. Yeah, that's good.
Nobody knows, and I don't know what he thinks. I don't know, but he knows what he knows. That's right, yeah. He knows what he does, no one. Yeah, that's right. Searches even the deep things of God, Paul says. And the Bible, in Jesus' word, all added to the Jew, all in the... all, all that come and only Jesus, you know that Jesus... Right, fulfilled in heaven.
I mean, in a vast coverage, told to everything Jesus, but they don't see. Right. But because they put aside, and you know the revelations say, the blind are going to be open.
Right. You know that third, and they organize, say that. They are going to own Jesus' side, they all fall down. Yeah. Now they say, what your scum?
[51:21] Yep. Yeah. One day, every knee will bow, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, through the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Well, let me end in prayer, friends. Father, thank you so much for the sending of your Spirit in us and among us. Lord, help us to live and keep in step with him.
Help us to maintain this unity. Lord, help us to go forth in mission and his power. Father, help us, as we'll learn in the coming weeks, to use the gifts that he gives to build one another up. We pray this in your mighty name, Jesus. Amen.
Amen.

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