



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

6420 Churchill Way | Dallas, Texas | 75230 | t 972.239.5371 | believerschapeldallas.org

Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Systematic Theology

“The Importance of the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit”

TRANSCRIPT

[Prayer] We thank Thee for the opportunity of studying the Scriptures again, and we ask that the Holy Spirit whom we are studying, may be our teacher, and guide us into the truth.

And this we ask in his, our Lord’s name and for his sake. Amen.

[Message] Now, the subject for tonight in our second in the series on the Holy Spirit is “The Importance of the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit.” And for Scripture reading tonight, I want you to turn with me to John chapter 16, and let’s read together verse 7 through 15. I’ll read along. You follow in your texts. John chapter 16, verse 7 through verse 15. You will recognize these words as the promise by our Lord to the disciples of the coming of the Holy Spirit and his ministry to them and also his ministry to the world. The world first, and then the ministry to the disciples. John chapter 16 in verse 7,

“Nevertheless, I tell you the truth. It is expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you. But if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of

judgment. Of sin, because they believe not on me. Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more. Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.

I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth. For he shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak, and he will show you things to come.”

And by the way, that expression, “for he shall not speak of himself” does not mean that he will not say anything about himself. It means that his teaching shall not originate with himself. He shall not speak from himself. Well, he will tell us a great many things about himself, but they will come ultimately, from our Lord himself. Now, notice the next words.

“For he shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine. Therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you.”

The Importance of the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit. An aged saint once said to D. L. Moody, “Young man, honor the Holy Ghost.” It was good advice, for to honor the Holy Spirit, is to honor Jesus Christ. For it is the Spirit who speaks of Jesus Christ. But one of the most appalling and I think harmful facts in evangelicalism is its failure to honor the Holy Spirit by understanding him. It’s a startling thing to realize how little we understand of the Holy Spirit.

In Dr. Chafer’s Systematic Theology in the introduction to the section on the Holy Spirit he comments on something you may have noticed in your looking at hymn books that evangelicals use. About eighty percent of the hymns on the Holy Spirit begin with the words “Come, Holy Spirit.” And in that, there is an implicit recognition -- it seems to

me, failure to recognize, the most fundamental fact of the Holy Spirit and that is that he has come.

Now, I know it is possible for a hymn writer, who speaks often under kind of poetic inspiration, to speak of the coming of the Holy Spirit in the sense of a coming to realization of his ministry, but that is really not the force of most of the hymns. Most of them speak as if -- as if the Holy Spirit is really absent, and by pleading and by prayer we, as Christians, may force him, cajole him, coax him into coming into our lives. And if we do not understand as Christians that the Holy Spirit has come and that we possess the Holy Spirit, then we have not realized the most fundamental thing in the doctrine of the Holy Spirit.

We all know, of course, the Pentacostalists tend to go to extremes on the Holy Spirit. Some of them are humorous, some, not so humorous. I remember many years ago, hearing a man who had been associated with some of the more radical groups in Pentacostalism, explaining the difference between the two terms “Holy Ghost” and “Holy Spirit.” And he was seeking to show that the term “Holy Ghost” was a term that referred to the person of the Holy Spirit, whereas the term “Holy Spirit” was the feeling you get. And he did not even know the fact that in the New Testament, the term “Holy Ghost” and the term “Holy Spirit” is a recognition -- is a translation -- of the same Greek expression. “Holy Ghost” and “Holy Spirit” are terms for the same person. One is not the person and the other is not the feeling you get. And I know that I do not have to tell my audience here that the Holy Ghost is not a spook, but that is an old English term for “Holy Spirit.” Now, ghost has unusual connotations for us, but that is not the sense of the New Testament, particularly the King James Version where we find it.

I think there are two movements that have contributed most to our ignorance of the Holy Spirit, and one of them is rationalism. Rationalism in religion means one thing, and in philosophy means another, but when I speak of the term “rationalism,” I’m

speaking of a view that that content of faith is true, which appeals to reason. In other words, it must appeal to our reason if it is true. That is rationalism.

And in the Christian faith, we have a great deal of rationalism. We should have some rationalism, because God has given us reason. He has given us the ability to think, and we should real -- we should use that which we have under the direction of the Holy Spirit, but reason is never a final -- a final guide for us. But rationalism is responsible for a great deal of the ignorance of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, and in its most extreme forms, it leads to the view that the Holy Spirit is really not a person at all, but simply a divine influence. And quite often in Christian circles, you will find Christians really somewhat doubting the existence of a person known as the Holy Spirit. And this is particularly true of some groups that are not really true to the word of God. There is one well-known Christian organization which is very, very prominent in the southern part of the United States -- but really has spread all over the United States -- which claims to be Christian, but when which -- but with which -- when you talk about the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, they almost invariably fall into the habit of referring to him as an “it.”

Now, the other error -- the other movement which has contributed to our ignorance -- and I think this is particularly true of us who are evangelicals -- is a movement which we might call emotion -- might call emotionalism. It tends to make standard of doctrine, experience, and of course, it leads to tremendous excesses. If you speak to someone who is afflicted by emotionalism, it is not so much what the Bible says that appeals to them as it is the experiences that we may have. And consequently -- we don't have anybody that drives a Cadillac Highland. All of us drive Fords and Cavaliers and Volkswagens. I'm not sure really, but you can -- oh, I see someone's getting up. Cadillac KXN393. Lights on. Two people are leaving. [Laughter]

Emotionalism tends to make experience the standard and the guide for us. Quite frequently I have people come to speak to me about spiritual things, and sometimes the things that they like to talk about are the things of the Holy Spirit. And almost invariably,

they will lapse into the language of experience, “Well, such-and-such a thing happened to me, and I got this feeling.” Now, you want to be sure in spiritual things to doubt your experiences if they are not clearly in harmony with the word of God. Remember, I have made this statement a number of times. It’s not original with me, but it is surely true, and that is that, “There is no Christian experience which is not -- no true Christian experience which is not netted to the Word of the Bible.” In other words, if we some experience that we cannot associate with a text or passage from the word of God, then doubt that that experience is a biblical experience.

So emotionalism tends to mislead us. Satan’s two methods in combating truth are, first, he loves to see the truth hidden, and then if he cannot see it hidden, he likes to see it over-emphasized. This I think was illustrated in the Great Reformation, which was produced through the Reformers under the Spirit’s direction, Luther, Calvin, Svingley and others. But in the Reformation, the great truth of the doctrine of justification by faith was recovered, and men went out proclaiming that it was not necessary to keep the law. It was not necessary to do good. It was not necessary to join the church. It was not necessary to be baptized, to sit at the Lord’s table. In order to become a Christian, men were justified by faith. But then of course, there were some, in seeking to set this forth, taught it in such a way that others thought that what they meant was, that all you must do is to believe in Jesus Christ, and then you could live as you please. And so anti-Nomianism, or a teaching of opposition to the law of God, the truth of God, came into existence. It was an excess. It was an over-emphasis on the doctrine of justification by faith. We are justified by faith, but when we are justified by faith, some tremendous transformations take place in us, which make it impossible for us to live as we please. And, in fact, if we live as we please, or continue in sin, that is the best kind of evidence that we have never really been justified by faith. We have never been born again.

The aim of our study in the Holy Spirit of course, will be to investigate the teaching of the word of God on the Holy Spirit. And we shall try to be subject to what

the Bible says, not what it experience says, but what the Bible says. And then of course, we will go home, I hope, and get down by the side of our bed and pray that the biblical teaching may become a personal experience in our lives.

Now, we should have experience. We should not just be so full of Scripture with no Christian experience, that we become dead. We’re walking corpses. There are too many of them in evangelicalism today, too. So we want to try to bring these two together -- the word and experience -- but we want to keep the word first and experience second. Never base a doctrine on experience. Base a doctrine on the teaching of the word of God, then seek by the grace of God, to have the experience that is taught in the Bible.

When you turn to the New Testament, it’s surprising to discover how much it has to say about the Holy Spirit. Did you know that the Holy Spirit is mentioned in every book of the New Testament with the exception of three? And the three in which the Spirit is not mentioned are three one-chapter books; the Book of Philemon, and the Books of 2 and 3 John.

Professor Denia said, “It may be said that, to understand what is meant by the Spirit, is to understand two things. Number One; the New Testament. And Number Two; the Christian Church.” So if we understand the Holy Spirit, we understand the New Testament, and we understand the Christian Church. We understand what the Bible teaches, and how it is worked out in experience. In other words, if we understand the Holy Spirit, we understand everything there is to understand in the New Testament. It is that significant to the teaching -- in the teaching of the New Testament.

Now, tonight, in this particular study, we want to take a broad look at the area of the Holy Spirit. And I hope, by just taking this broad area, to bring home to you particularly, the importance of this doctrine. So we’re going to look at the Holy Spirit and the Scriptures, and we shall do this in a broad way. Later, we will do it exegetically, looking at the Bible texts, and analyzing them, but this time broadly; second, the Holy Spirit and the Creation; third, the Holy Spirit and the Work of Redemption; fourth, the

Holy Spirit and the Work of Regeneration; and fifth, the Holy Spirit and Christian Education; and sixth, the Holy Spirit and Christian Sanctification; and finally, the Holy Spirit and Christian Service.

And first, we’re going to look at the Holy Spirit and the Scriptures. Now, we could begin by saying that the Holy Spirit is important because he’s a member of the eternal Trinity. That would be sufficient reason for us to study the word of God in connection with the Holy Spirit, but we want to look at it in detail. So let’s begin with the place where I think we should begin, the Holy Spirit and the Bible. What is the relationship of the Holy Spirit to the Bible? In the Old Testament we read in 2 Samuel 7:28,

“And now, O Lord God, thou art God and thy words are true.”

Now, the reason that we may affirm this is because the Bible is the product of the Holy Spirit. And the principle passages that deal with this are: 2 Timothy chapter 3, verse 15, 16, and 17, and 2 Peter chapter 2, verses 19, 20, and 21. So I want you tonight, if you will, to turn to these passages, and we’re going to just read them, and I want to say just a brief word about them. 2 Timothy chapter 3, verse -- verse -- first, verses 15 through 17. 2 Timothy chapter 3, verse 15, 16, and 17.

Now, Paul is writing young Timothy, who was not a pastor of a church, as he is often called by Bible teachers, and particularly by Bible teachers who are pastors of churches. But Timothy was an apostolic legate. He was a representative of the Apostle Paul. He never carried on a one-man ministry, or he was never the administrative head of any legal body in the New Testament. He was just simply a man who knew Paul, was converted through Paul, and served Paul as a helper in his apostolic ministry. And he wrote Timothy two letters we know, and in the second one, he has given us a very important statement on the Bible. Now notice, verse 15. He is writing young Timothy and he says,

“And that from a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.”

Now, I want to stop, and just ask you a question. Which books of the New Testament does Paul refer to when he says, “Thou hast known from a child, the holy Scriptures? Which books of the New Testament does Paul refer to? Does anyone want to offer an answer? None of them. Right. None of them. He is referring to the Old Testament, “that from a child, thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.” Then he says, giving us a principle, “All Scripture” -- or even, every Scripture. We will talk about that when we come to the Scriptures in the Holy Spirit.

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”

Now notice, what Timothy is told here, is that the Scriptures themselves will make him perfect. They will bring him to a completeness so that he will be thoroughly or thoroughly furnished for every good work. Now, that is the sufficiency of the word of God. But the thing I want you to notice particularly, is that Paul says that, “All Scripture is inspired of God.”

Now, that is the facts of divine inspiration, and if you were thinking about this, you might say, “Well, how does this happen? How did Scripture, as we have it, come to be inspired by God?” Well, now, Peter tells us how this took place in his second letter in the first chapter, verses 19 through 21. I think I said a minute ago, chapter 2, verses 19 through 21, and that was wrong. And the reason I said it is because I have it in my notes

wrong, but it’s chapter 1, verse 19, 20, and 21 of the second letter. So 2 Peter chapter 2 -- chapter 1 -- verse 19 through verse 21. I’ve got to correct this because every time I look down at it I will see “2,” and we now know that I am not infallible in my teaching. Verse 19, Peter says,

“We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts. Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.”

Now, if in 2 Timothy chapter 3, Paul tells us that scripture is inspired, God breathed -- breathed out by God, here he tells us who is responsible for this inspiration. He points us to the process by which Scripture has come to be inspired of God. Men were moved by the Holy Ghost. Now, you can see then, that the Bible -- this entire book that we study -- is a book that has come to us through the promptings of the Holy Spirit. Now, if that were all that the Spirit did, it would be sufficient reason to study him.

But second, the Holy Spirit and the Creation. The Creation is generally ascribed in the Bible to God without distinction of person. Usually you will find reference made to “the Lord created” or “God created.” Occasionally, there are exceptions to this. In John chapter 1 in verse 3 we read concerning Jesus Christ,

“All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made.”

And so we know that Jesus Christ also was prominent in the creating work. So when we look about us, we do not say simply, The Father is responsible for this glorious

creation in which we live, but Jesus Christ was the agent in this creation also. Now in the Old Testament, there are several passages that suggest that the Holy Spirit was also involved in the Creation. Let’s turn to the second verse of the Bible. Genesis chapter 1 in verse 2. Genesis chapter 1 in verse 2. Now, I hope you don’t mind reading all of these passages from the Bible tonight, because if you’re going to teach -- I mean, if you’re going to study theology, you obviously have got to get acquainted with the Bible itself. So we’re going to be looking at the Bible quite a bit in the weeks ahead. Now, in Genesis chapter 1, verse 1 Moses writes,

“In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God move upon the face of the waters.”

Now here, Moses says that the Spirit hovered over the unformed matter under the primeval waters. If this is a reference to direct creation by God, or if it is a reference to a restoration -- restoration, we still have the Spirit active in the work of Creation or in the work of restoration. And so here the Spirit is identified with the creating work of God, but let’s look on to some other passages. This one -- in chapter 1 of Genesis -- is under a little bit of question because people interpret it in different ways.

But let’s look at Isaiah chapter 40 and read verses 10 through 12. Isaiah chapter 40, verses 10 through 12. Now, again, I’ve given you the wrong verses, but you won’t mind, will you? It’s verses 12 through 14. [laughter] But unfortunately -- I mean, I -- I want to confess this -- I had it right in my notes. So I need glasses. Isaiah chapter 40, verses 12 through 14. Now, Isaiah writes,

“Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the

mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counselor hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and showed to him the way of understanding?” [And here you can see that it is the Holy Spirit who is associated with the creating work.] “Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and who hath meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure.”

He is so great -- the Holy Spirit -- that if you were to describe his creating work, it would be to -- as if we were to say, he took all of the dirt of the earth and put it a little balance -- divine balances. He is so great, and it is he who is responsible for the creation.

Now, let’s turn back a few pages to Job chapter 26 in verse 13. Job chapter 26 in verse 13. Here we read,

“By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent.”

“By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens.” And so here, Job says the creating work has been done by God through his spirit. And then, since some of you have finally found Job, let’s look on at chapter 33 in verse 4, and those of you who have not find it -- found it, chapter 26, now try chapter 33, verse 4. This is -- this is a text that refers to the creation of man, and we read,

“The spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.”

So we see from these passages that the Holy Spirit is identified in the creation of the material universe, and he is also identified in the creation of man. So the work of the Holy Spirit, if it were only to do this great creating work of the inanimate creation, and the animate creation, it would be sufficient reason to study him.

Third, the Holy Spirit and the work of redemption. When God designed the great and glorious work of recovering fallen man, saving sinners to the praise of his grace, he appointed two great means. Number one, the giving of his Son for men, and, number two; the giving of his Spirit to the men. For God’s saving work does not end with our salvation from hell. That really is the beginning.

And so God has, in his great covenant within the godhead, determined himself -- and the Son has agreed, and the Spirit has agreed -- has determined to send his Son to agree to perform the work of redemption, and to send the Holy Spirit in order that that work might be applied to all whom he wished to save. Now, the Spirit is not absent from the redemptive life and ministry of Christ. Not only was Jesus Christ sent to perform the work, but the Holy Spirit came with the Son, and he was the Son’s power while he was here upon the earth.

Now, when we studied the doctrine of the person of Jesus Christ briefly last year, we pointed out that the works that our Lord did were largely done in the power of the Holy Spirit. The reason for that is simple. God wished to demonstrate that a man could come -- a perfect man -- and could live upon this earth, a perfect life, in order that he might be a perfect redemption for sinful men. And so our Lord came as the dependent Son of God, and he relied upon the Holy Spirit.

Occasionally, there were evidences of the manifestation of his divine nature in his life. And there are experiences described in the word of God that our Lord had, and words that he uses, which can only be understood as implying that, at a point of two in his experience there was a manifestation of his divine nature, which of course was his from eternity. But the striking thing about the ministry of our Lord, I think, is that he was

ordinarily in the power of the Spirit carrying out his ministry. And just to give you an indication of what we shall be studying when we come to this subject, I want to just again, read a few passages from the life of our Lord, and point out to you how great was the influence of the Spirit upon his life. And we should turn first of all, to the first chapter of the Book of Matthew, in which we have a reference to his birth. Matthew chapter 1, verse 18 through verse 20.

Now, this is one of my favorite passages in the Bible, and it’s a great temptation to stop and expound it, but then we should never finish. You know, the Bible is so rich, but I believe I could just expound it for the rest of my days. It is so rich in significance, and it becomes richer the more you study it. Listen to this birth account beginning with Matthew 1:18,

“Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child [not of Joseph] of the Holy Ghost.”

From the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the origin of that child that is to be born. Now in verse 20,

“But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream saying; Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.”

Again, from the Holy Spirit. The fetus in her womb was from God, the Holy Spirit. Now, that’s an amazing statement. Amazing. It is of course, a reference to the virgin birth of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, let’s turn over to Luke, and read the same thing in Luke. Matthew -- I mean, Luke chapter 1 in verse 31 through verse 35. This is the enunciation of the Angel Gabriel to the virgin, and in verse 31 of Luke we read,

“And behold Mary, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus.”

You know, the Apostle’s Creed reads, “Conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of the virgin Mary.” So as I mentioned to you last year, the appropriate doction -- doctrine is really not, strictly speaking, the virgin birth of Jesus Christ, for our Lord was born like any other man or woman, but the virgin conception of our Lord Jesus Christ. But that’s beside the point here.

“He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest, and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David. And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel; How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered, and said unto her; The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee. Therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God.”

You’ll notice how Scripture just veils the passages whereby God implanted that fetus in Mary’s womb. “The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee.” Wouldn’t you like the chance to ask a lot of questions about this? Wouldn’t you like to know how this was accomplished? Well, do you know why you don’t know? And do you know why probably you will never really understand? It’s because this is one of those holy mysteries that only God can understand. It is the holy mystery of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ

which makes his life sublime. So in the birth of our Lord, the Holy Spirit had a part. He must be a great person if he has a part in the birth of our Lord. “The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee Mary. The power of the Highest shall overshadow thee.” You know, I think I would like to know the person real well who is responsible for our Lord’s birth, wouldn’t you?

Let’s read on a little more. Matthew chapter 3, verse 13 through verse 17. This is the account of the baptism. You might have thought that the Holy Spirit, having been responsible for the birth of our Lord, should be free to go back to heaven and rest awhile. But listen. He is constantly active. And so we read,

“Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbad him saying; I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him; Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water, and lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him. And lo, a voice from heaven saying; This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

And here we have one of those amazing conjunctions of the whole godhead. For the Father speaks from heaven to the Son who has come out of the waters of baptism, and the Holy Spirit, the third member of the Trinity, is seen coming upon him as a dove, anointing him for his Messianic ministry. And so the Holy Spirit is not only active in the birth of our Lord, but he is active in his Messianic ministry.

Now, let’s turn over to Luke chapter 4, and read Luke’s account of the temptation. Now, we could read the Matthian account, but you need some Bible drill, and, furthermore, there are a couple of references in this account that are not in the Matthian

account. And so let’s look at Luke chapter 4, and let’s read the first verse. This is shortly after the baptism, and Luke 4:1 reads,

“And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness.”

And so it is the Spirit who is responsible for the guidance that came to our Lord that said to him in effect, “Now is the time for you to go into the wilderness in order to have the experience of the temptation.” And you can see that our Lord is a man who is relying upon the Holy Spirit.

Now, I don’t want to talk too much about this, because we’re going to spend an entire time on the ministry of the Spirit in the life of our Lord, so let’s just look at verse 14.

“Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee, and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about.” You can see now, our Lord in his Messianic ministry as being led by the Spirit.”

Let’s turn to Matthew chapter 12, verse 28. Are you getting tired of finding passages in the Bible? Matthew chapter 12, verse 28. Here, our Lord gives us a statement that pertains to his mighty works. Notice what he says,

“But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you.”

And we notice from this that the works that Jesus did are said to -- to be done by the Holy Spirit, and in connection with this, his teaching is also by the Spirit. And I’m going to read this passage to you. It’s from Luke chapter 4 in verse 18 when our Lord

stood in the synagogue at Nazareth, read the passage from the Bible, sat down to teach, and this is what he said,

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor.”

So our Lord said that his preaching was Spirit-directed. So in the case of our Lord, his works were done in the power of the Spirit, his teaching was also done in the power of the Spirit. He was born through the Spirit. He was baptized, and the Spirit came upon him. He was led by the Spirit into the wilderness. He was led out of the wilderness by the Spirit. He did his mighty works in the power of the Spirit. He also taught in the power of the Spirit.

Now, you would expect -- you would expect in the light of this, that there would be some reference to the Spirit’s work when our Lord died upon the cross. Surprisingly there is, so far as I know, no text in the Bible that says that he died on the cross in the power of the Spirit. Isn’t that startling? There is a text in Hebrews that says, “Who through eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God.” We shall talk about that when we deal with this question. It probably is not a reference to the Holy Spirit. Why is it that in the Bible there is no reference to the Spirit’s work in our Lord’s cross-work? Well, we shall consider that question later.

Now, another thing. There is no reference in the Bible, so far as I can tell -- we shall talk about some texts that are supposed to be claims to that end -- there are no texts in the Bible that said that he was raised by the power of the Spirit. Isn’t that interesting? Why? Well, we shall talk about that later, too. There is a text in Acts chapter 1 which says that, when Jesus was resurrected, and in -- and then engaged in the teaching of his disciples, he taught them by the Spirit after his resurrection. That’s Acts chapter 1 in verse 2. Well, you can see from this, that the Holy Spirit was active in the work of redemption,

for the Spirit guided and directed our Lord. The Spirit worked in his works and was involved in his teaching.

Now, fourth, the Holy Spirit and the work of regeneration. There are three great periods in the divine revelation to man. I’m not talking about three dispensations, although in a sense, they were dispensations. These three great periods in the divine revelation of man involve a progressive development in grace. And I put this outline over here, and these words of course, are not the inspired interpretation of the outline. I want you to notice these three periods. This we’ll just call broadly “The Old Testament Period.” This we will call “The Ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ,” his lifetime, his first advent, and his cross. And this we will call “The Present Time.”

Now, if you look at the Bible, you immediately discover that in this period, which person of the Trinity is prominent? Which person of the Trinity is prominent in all of the Old Testament period? The Father. The Father. He is seen as the great transcendent God. He is the one who is planning all that is taken -- taking place, not only on the earth, but also in his soteriological program, in his *Heilsgeschichte* -- that’s even more complicated than soteriological, isn’t it? In the history of salvation. After all, if you’re going to take Systematic Theology, you have to learn a few German words. You wouldn’t be considered to be taking theology if you didn’t do that. So *Heilsgeschichte*. It means, the history of salvation. It means in effect, God’s divine program through the years. I saw somebody look at her husband, and then you know what I think? I believe they must be able to speak German, and they were just saying, “He has an accent from Bavaria; southern Germany.” [Laughter]

Now of course, in this second period, we’re dealing with the life of the Son, and obviously, in the New Testament, in the Synoptic Gospels, and in the Gospel of John, who is prominent? The Father, the Son, or the Spirit? The Son, of course. The Son.

Now, in the third period it is the Spirit. The Father planned it. The Son executed the program of redemption, and it is the Spirit who is now administrating that program. It

is the Father who has planned our redemption. It is the Son who has accomplished it. It is the Spirit who applies it to the sheep who are being gathered. And so there are these three -- there are these three periods, and there is a development. Now, I think -- I didn’t have time to put the whole diagram of the future there, but someone might want to ask me, “Well, what about the kingdom that is to come? Who is prominent then?” And later on, we shall talk about that, too.

Now, regeneration is the divine act of the cleansing of the elect and the communicating of spiritual life through the word and through the Spirit. Regeneration is what takes place when you believe in Jesus Christ. You are regenerated. You are born again. You are given new life. You were born once, and all of you were a little infant, but then when you believed in Jesus Christ, you were born again. You were sought out by the Holy Spirit. You were brought to Jesus Christ. You were led to put your faith and trust in him. You believed in him, and you were given new life so that you are a new creature. That is regeneration. Isn’t it wonderful to be born again? Isn’t it wonderful to have new life? Well, you could almost let a “hallelujah” slip out some time if nobody was around.

Now, this regeneration is the work of the Holy Spirit. It is of course, the work of the Father. He planned it all. It is the work of the Son. He died; laid the basis for it. It is the work of the Spirit, who has taken the Word and has applied it to your hearts. Look at John chapter 3, verse 8. That’s the only passage we’ll read here. John 3, verse 8,

“Jesus said; the wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof Nicodemus, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth. So is every one that is born of the Spirit.”

So in a sense, my dear Christian friend, the Holy Spirit is your father and your mother, for it is he who has brought us into spiritual life, born of the Spirit.

Now then, let’s take a look at Roman V, the Holy Spirit and Christian Education. John Olion said, “All the actings of grace, all good duties; all good duties are actually ascribed to the Spirit of God.” Now, he was talking about Christians when he said that, and what he meant was this; that everything that we do that is good is the product of the Spirit of God. Now, I believe that. I think the Bible teaches it. I think that when we get to heaven, we shall not be able to say that we are responsible for any good. We’re responsible for a lot of bad, a lot of evil, a lot of wickedness, but when we get to heaven, all that is good that has been done by us is done through us in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Now, what about Christian education? How can I understand the Bible? Well, the answer -- if we ask the question about any other type of -- of -- of knowledge is, “How can I understand biology? How can I understand history? How can I understand chemistry?” Well, the answer is: go to school.

Well, the same kind of answer is given in the Bible. In God’s school, the text is the Bible, and the teacher is the Holy Spirit. So the Holy Spirit is our professor of Christian Education. Now, if we had just the Bible, it would be something like a dead letter. On the other hand, if we had the Holy Spirit and we did not have the word, we would be inclined to fall into fanaticism. That is what has happened to so many in Christian circles who have rested their -- their Christian experience on experience, and not on the word of God. It results in speculation. It results in fanaticism. It results in misunderstanding, and ultimately of course, it results in sorrow and disappointment in the Christian life.

Now, there are two passages that tell us that the Holy Spirit is our teacher. Now, I read one, and I’m not going to read it again for the sake of time. It is found in John chapter 16, and there Jesus said, that it was better for the disciples that he went away. Seems a strange thing to say, doesn’t it? But it was, because if he should go away then the Holy Spirit was free to come to everybody, so that every one of us now is in the

position of having Jesus Christ as our ultimate teacher through the Spirit who has come to indwell us.

And so in that prophetic passage of John chapter 16, our Lord says he was going to give the Spirit, and he was going to -- that Spirit was going to guide the disciples into all truth. By the way that suggest to us that, since we are still living in the age of the Spirit, that he is still teaching. Now, that suggests to us that there are still things in the word of God that we might discover, now which would -- it would seem to me -- give us tremendous incentive to continue to study the Bible. Now, what I’m telling you is not the final word on the Bible. I think it is mind you, but I know it really isn’t, because as long as we are here, the Spirit apparently feels it necessary to so some more teaching. And Jesus said he would guide us in the sphere of the truth, all the truth. And so it is the Spirit who teaches.

Now, there is another passage in 1 Corinthians chapter 2. It’s verse 6 through chapter 3, verse 4, in which we are told how the Spirit teaches and the requirements for being a good pupil. Now, the requirements for being a good pupil in 1 Corinthians are, that we be subject to the Holy Spirit. He says remember, “The natural man,” verse 14 of 1 Corinthians 2,

“The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God. They are foolishness unto him. Neither can he know them, for they are spiritually -- or, by the Spirit -- discerned.” [And then he adds,] “The spiritual man discerns all things.”

He that is spiritual. So in the school of Christian education, the Bible is our text, the Spirit of God is our teacher, and we are being led by him progressively into all truth. Now of course, if we are carnal Christians, as he says in chapter 3, we shall hinder his teaching, but if we are spiritual, if we grow under his instruction and become mature Christians, then we are able to understand all of the deep things of the word of God, and

thus, be able to meet the problems of life. For it isn’t that we are to understand the Bible just to be knowledgeable in the Scriptures, but it is that we might meet the problems and the trials and the difficulties and the challenges of life. That’s why we learn the Scriptures.

Now, you can see the Holy Spirit is involved in the writing of the Scriptures. He is involved in the creation. He is involved in the work of redemption, and in our Lord’s life specifically, he’s involved in the work of regeneration. He is our teacher. It is tremendously important that we understand the doctrine of the Holy Spirit.

Now, Roman VI, the Holy Spirit and Christian Sanctification. Those of you who listen closely -- closely to me realize that I started out to say something about this when I said that everything that the Spirit does -- well, everything that we do that is good, is a product of the Holy Spirit.

Now, I’m going to read a text in Galatians chapter 5 here, so will you turn with me there, to Galatians 5. And here we’re going to note that, when Paul speaks about Christian sanctification, he relates it to the Holy Spirit. Galatians 5:16. Paul says,

“This I say then; walk in the Spirit.”

Or, walk by the Spirit. Notice the expression, “Walk by the Spirit.” In other words, in the Christian life, our walk is by the Spirit. We walk in -- in accordance with his prompting. Just as our Lord was led by the Spirit, so are we to be led by the Spirit. Notice verse 25,

“If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.”

So we not only walk by the Spirit, but even our whole life can be said to be “by the Spirit.” And will you notice verse 22 and verse 23,

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, temperance. Against such, there is no law.”

So that the whole gamut of Christian experience is the product of the Holy Spirit. The fruit of the Spirit, and all of these virtues, which so beautifully express the Christian life, are really the fruit that the Spirit produces in a Christian life. So you can see that even our sanctification is the product of the Spirit.

No, finally, Roman VII, the Holy Spirit and Christian Service. Now, here we must distinguish two or three things, and when we talk about these terms later on, I hope you will understand what I mean by them. First, the Gift of the Spirit. What is the gift of the Spirit? Well now, there is one sense in which we could speak of the gift of the Spirit, as the coming of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost for this whole a -- for this whole age. For it was then, that he came to do his great work that he is continuing to do on the Day of Pentecost. But we’ll not use it too much in that sense. That really was the promise of the Spirit and the sending, by the Father and by the Son.

When we talk about the gift of the Spirit, we will be talking about the fact that, the moment that we believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, we are given the Holy Spirit. Remember Peter said in Acts chapter 2, verse 38,

“Repent and be baptized. Let each of you be baptized for the remission of sin, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

So the gift of the Spirit, is the Spirit coming into our lives to permanently indwell us when we believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Every one of us if we believe in Christ, we have the Holy Spirit dwelling within us. This great third person of the Trinity, who has done all of these works, indwells us. Now, that’s the gift of the Spirit.

There is another term that we’ll be using, and that is the ‘Gifts -- plural -- of the Spirit’. Now, the gifts -- plural -- of the Spirit, are the spiritual gifts for service which he sovereignly bestows upon those who have already received the gift of the Spirit, his indwelling. So the gift of the Spirit is his permanent indwelling. The gifts of the Spirit are those sovereign abilities for Christian service that he gives us. Everybody, we shall see, has one -- at least -- spiritual gift. Some of them are utterance gifts. Some are non-utterance gifts. All are important, and the whole body cannot function if we do not -- each one of us -- come to know our gifts -- we’ll talk about how you can do that -- and then exercise that gift to the glory of God. So the gift of the Spirit is the permanent indwelling of the Spirit. The gifts of the Spirit are those various, sovereign abilities given to men.

In the New Testament, there are between twenty and thirty spiritual gifts that are listed. I don’t guess we can really say these are the only gifts, but we can say these are the only ones the Bible mentions specifically. There may be some other gifts. I rather tend to think that they are a complete listing, but that’s beside the point. The important thing is to know that they exist, that we each have one, we’re responsible before God to exercise it in the power of the Spirit.

Now, there is one other term that we want to be sure of before we leave tonight, and that is the “Graces of the Spirit.” Now, the graces of the Spirit are to be distinguished from the gifts of the Spirit in this way; the gift, remember, is the coming of the Spirit to permanently indwell us. The gifts of the Spirit are those sovereign abilities that are bestowed upon us for Christian service. The graces of the Holy Spirit are those virtues that are produced in our individual lives by the Holy Spirit. Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness, faithfulness, self-control. These are the graces of the Spirit. So if we see a person who manifests a wonderful spirit of love, we should not say to him, “Well now, he has a wonderful spiritual gift of love.” You shouldn’t say that. That’s not biblical. We should say, “We see the evidence of the grace

of love in his life.” If we see another man who is preaching in the power of the Holy Spirit, and teaching with great effectiveness, we might say of him, “He has a wonderful spiritual gift of teaching.” Or if we see another brother who, in the Christian church, is an effective elder who cares for the saints of God, and exercises oversight over the affairs of the Lord in the local church, we’d say, “Well, I believe that brother has the spiritual gift of administration.”

So gift -- singular -- the indwelling of the Spirit. Gifts; those sovereign abilities which are given by God for service. Graces; the virtues, really of our Lord’s life, that are produced in us by the Holy Spirit. Now, Paul had no doubt about the relative value of the gifts and graces. He said, “The graces are more important than the gifts.” And he said that at least, in a couple of places, so we should remember that.

Now, as we look at all of this, that is a tremendous field of study. Now, we’re going to look at it in detail, and some other things that are not there, and we’ll try to deal with the passages exegetically, so you will understand why, but tonight I just tried to give you an overview of what we’re doing and why the doctrine of the Holy Spirit is so important.

Our time is up. In fact, I went two minutes over one hour. Let’s close with a word of prayer, remembering that there will be some refreshments in the other room. And if there are questions, feel free to ask them at that time.

[Prayer] Father, we thank Thee for the opportunity that we have had to consider the ministry of the Holy Spirit. And, Lord, we pray that it -- may it not be just a doctrine with us, but that the teaching that we come to understand, may it find evidence of its reality in our lives.

We pray in Jesus’ name. Amen.