

# Concord Community Church

May 5, 2024

## The Holy Spirit & the Mission of the Church

Sub-Topic: **Learning about the Holy Spirit as a Person**

With the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost (Acts 2), there was a universalizing of the ministry and mission of Jesus. Jesus was God's final word to humanity, and the Spirit's role was not to give some new revelation of His own but to bear witness to Jesus and to interpret and bring out all the final implications of God's final Word. When the Spirit came in full at Pentecost, there was the inauguration of the church.

The Spirit's coming brought not an emotional frenzy but a new, sovereign gift of power to the young church. Yet with the Spirit's coming was the accompanying sign of tongues of fire. Tongues were not necessary to advance the mission but to authenticate the mission's message and messengers. The tongues were given to the apostles; they were not taught. The ultimate purpose of the giving of the Spirit was for enablement of the church's mission, which was the spreading of the good news and to exalt the name of Christ.

After Pentecost the Spirit was active in many aspects of the Christian community. The Spirit was active primarily in (1) preaching, (2) teaching, (3) prophecy, (4) witnessing, (5) bringing love and guidance to the new community, and (6) the continuation of the church's mission. The Spirit was involved in the early church in Jerusalem (Acts 2–5), in the prophetic proclamation of Stephen (Acts 6–7), in the spreading of the gospel to the Gentiles (Acts 10), in the sending out of Paul and Barnabas (Acts 13), and in the establishment of the transition to the church's mature state (Acts 19).

The Spirit used various means to advance the new mission. Some of these means included trances (Acts 10), prophetic word (Acts 11), worship services (Acts 13), church councils (Acts 15), and inner constraint (Acts 16). What is obvious is that the Spirit always remained the unpredictable, mysterious, sovereign third member of the Trinity.

Today's message is the first of eight messages in which our focus will be on the Holy Spirit's "Identity", "personhood" and "Symbols" as described in the Scriptures.

### **I. The Holy Spirit's presentation indicates that he is a person.**

- A. *"But if I depart, I will send him to you" (John 16:7b).*
- B. *"And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment" (John 16:8).*
- C. *However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth: for He will not speak on His own authority; but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will tell you things to come" (John 16:13).*
- D. *"He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you (John 16:14).*
- E. Ten times in this brief Scripture passage the Holy Spirit is represented by a personal pronoun. The Holy Spirit is not an "it," but a person.

It is not hard to identify persons we have seen as persons. Yet we readily accept those we have never seen as persons. A person we have never met calls us on the telephone and identifies himself, and we do not think that an "it" has called: a person has called. A clear identification makes easy our classification.

## II. The Holy Spirit's association indicates that he is a person.

- A. *"All things that the Father has are Mine: Therefore, I said, that He will take of Mine and declare it to you" (John 16:15).*
- B. Here the Holy Spirit — that is, "He" — is named with the persons of the Father and the Son. Where the Trinity is named, each is mentioned in His kind. It would be exceedingly awkward to have grouped two "persons" and a "thing."
- B. *"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28:19 NKJV).* Our very commission illustrates this inseparable association.
- C. *"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. Amen" (2 Cor. 13:14).* This is but another of these beautiful divine associations.

## III. The Holy Spirit's vocation indicates that he is a person (John 16:8 – 11, 13, 14).

- A. **Principle.** What the Holy Spirit does is that which can be done by a person only. His performance is a key to His personality. There are some tasks that things can do, but the work ascribed to the Holy Spirit (Him) can be done by a person only.
- B. **Performance.**
  - 1. He creates (Gen. 1:2).
  - 2. He comforts (John 14:16).
  - 3. He dwells (John 14:17).
  - 4. He teaches (John 15:26).
  - 5. He testifies (John 15:26).
  - 6. He convicts (John 16:7 – 15).
  - 7. He guides (John 16:13).
  - 8. He hears (John 16:13).
  - 9. He speaks (Acts 13:2).
  - 10. He witnesses (Rom. 8:16).

11. He helps (Rom. 8:26).

#### **IV. The Holy Spirit's characterization indicates that he is a person (John 16:7 – 16).**

This is but another way of saying that his characteristics are those of a person, not of an impersonal force.

A. *He is aggressive (Rom. 8:27).* He is said to take the initiative in interceding for us.

B. *He has the capacity of being grieved (Eph. 4:30).* "Grieve not the holy Spirit" could refer to a person only.

C. *He is a friendly person (John 16:14 – 15).* He moves about speaking to people.

D. *He bridges the most important communication gap — between humanity and deity (John 16:13).*

E. *He engages constantly in unselfish activity (John 16:14).*

F. *He is truly rich in his possession and access (John 16:15).*

### **Conclusion**

This evening, we can ask ourselves; wouldn't we like to meet and associate with such a wonderful person? If we already know the Holy Spirit, wouldn't we like to get better acquainted with Him? **Remember!** recognizing the personhood of the Holy Spirit should lead us to a deeper reverence and relationship with Him. We should seek to be filled with Spirit (Ephesians 5:18) and to cultivate the fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23) in our lives. We should also be sensitive to the leading of the Spirit, allowing Him to guide & direct our steps in our daily lives.