

PNEUMATOLOGY 101: A STUDY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Lesson #1: Misconceptions, Assumptions and Fears

INTRODUCTION:

- I. **DISCUSSION QUESTION:** *What do you know about the Holy Spirit?* (Give some time for feedback and do not comment on what people say) Most of us will answer from the standpoint of what little we know and understand in Scripture. Let me ask you another question, *What do you know “personally” about the Holy Spirit?* (You are simply getting a feel for the class so do not address, rebuke or correct an answer...there will be time for that) In other words, have they experienced the Holy Spirit in some capacity in their own lives and if so, how?
- II. What is the Holy Spirit? Or, if I am faithful to the Scriptures, who is the Holy Spirit? This is a topic that I have never taught a series of lessons for a lot of different factors but three come to mind: misconceptions, assumptions and fears.
- III. The title of this study is called “Pneumatology” which is the combination of two Greek words.
 - a. *Pneuma* - is the Greek word for “breath, spirit or wind” and is used in the New Testament to refer to wind (e.g. John 3:8), man’s spirit (e.g. Luke 23:46) and also refers to the Holy Spirit (often used [but not necessarily] with the Greek word *hagios* meaning “holy”; e.g. 1 Cor. 6:19).
 - b. *Logos* - is the Greek word for “word” and is commonly used now to refer to the “study of” something. For example, zoology, as you might suspect, is the study of animals. Biology is the study of life and criminology is the study of all things related to criminals.
 - c. *Pneumatology* thus literally means “a word about the Spirit.”
- IV. The design of these lessons is to look at what different portions of Scriptures witnesses about the Spirit and then inductively discuss (as best a finite mind can) how the Spirit works on/with Christians today.
- V. Will you pray with me? “Father in Heaven we rejoice at the fact that you have given us the opportunity to study someone Who means so much to me. The Spirit is something we struggle to understand but the irony of it all, Father, is the embedded question, ‘How can the finite fathom in the infinite?’ So I ask a special prayer that you empower us to think as we should about the Spirit and to treat Your Scriptures with respect and fairness. Thank you for giving us what we need. In Jesus’ name, Amen!”

BODY:

DISCUSSION QUESTION: *What are some questions you have about the Holy Spirit that have lingered for so long? How do your friends at work, school or wherever answer that question?*

I. MISCONCEPTIONS

- a. Stephen Rogers, in his excellent evangelism material, shares some answers he has received in his personal bible studies to the question, "Who is the Holy Spirit?"¹
 - i. "I have NO idea."
 - ii. "I cannot understand."
 - iii. "There is no such being."
 - iv. "God, the Father, Himself."
 - v. "A Ghost." No doubt from the KJV translation of *pneuma* as "ghost" instead of Spirit. It comes from the Old English word *gast* meaning "soul, life, and spirit."²
 - vi. "An impersonal force."
 - vii. "Man's own spirit."
 - viii. "Man's conscience."
 - ix. "The written Word itself."
 - x. "A glorified IT."
- b. Think about the sermons and discussions that you have experienced in your churches. How often do they discuss the Holy Spirit? No doubt we spend much time celebrating Jesus on the first day of the week and praying to the Father in our studies but how often do you hear the name of the Spirit mentioned in prayer?
- c. I think this is because, on one level, we just have a lack of knowledge about the Spirit but on a different level we have this misconception that the Holy Spirit is this weird sort of "thing" that is out there that we have no clue about (which is partially correct).
- d. Before we move on to "assumptions" I want to ensure you that the Holy Spirit is not an "it" and is a person of the Trinity. Consider the following

1. Stephen W. Rogers, *Evangelism Made Simple*, (Pulaski, TN: Sain Publications, 1998): 146-48. If you are looking for excellent material to conduct Bible studies this is excellent material that will address most topics needed for a person to understand Christianity. It is a great catalyst for further study of God's Word!

2. "Ghost," *Online Etymology Dictionary*, Accessed June 4, 2010. <http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=ghost>. "The surviving O.E. [Old English-RM] senses, however, are in Christian writing, where it is used to render L. *spiritus*, a sense preserved in *Holy Ghost*. Modern sense of 'disembodied spirit of a dead person' is attested from late 14c. and returns the word toward its ancient sense."

examples:³

- i. HE TEACHES! **“But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you”** (John 14:26).⁴ Does an “it” do this or a person?
- ii. HE SPEAKS! **“But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come”** (John 16:13). Does an “it” speak?
- iii. HE IS GRIEVED! **“And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption”** (Eph. 4:30).
 1. William Shakespeare wrote in *King Richard II*, “My grief lies all within, and these external manners of lament are merely shadows to the unseen grief that swells with silence in the tortured soul.”
 2. Perhaps there is no greater emotion of sadness and loss than the emotion of grief.
 3. Yet, the Holy Spirit, experiences all of this.

II. ASSUMPTIONS

- a. Another issue that impedes our understanding of the Holy Spirit is the concept that we assume certain things about the Spirit that may or may not be accurate.
- b. One assumption comes from the field of religious experience where people “experience” the Spirit in some capacity. Sometimes they call this experience “confirmation,” and sometimes this experience is called the baptism of the Holy Spirit.
 - i. Without delving too much into this one needs to consider very carefully whether something is from the Spirit or from a human spirit.
 - ii. The apostle John wrote, **“Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world”** (1 John 4:1).

3. Thought process inspired from Rogers, 147-49 but one could make these same assertions from personal studies of the Scriptures.

4. All Scripture will come from the New International Version unless otherwise noted.

- c. Another assumption is that we have discussed the Holy Spirit enough and that there is no reason for us to probe any further about Him.
 - i. God has given us everything we need when it comes to the salvation and knowledge (cf. 2 Pet. 1:3) of God.
 - ii. Although Zophar's questioning of Job's suffering was fundamentally flawed he does pose a good question for all readers to consider: **"Can you fathom the mysteries of God? Can you probe the limits of the Almighty? They are higher than the heavens—what can you do? They are deeper than the depths of the grave—what can you know?"** (Job 11:7-8).
 - iii. If one looks to our own restoration history⁵ you will see that we have been divided on the issue of the Holy Spirit.
 - 1. Barton W. Stone, an early pioneer for the Churches of Christ, had difficulties with the Trinity and saw it as inconsistent and "contrary to reason."⁶
 - 2. In 1801 when the Cane Ridge Revivals were taking place, certain religious experiences (they called them "exercises") took place like people falling and experiencing different things like moaning, shrieking, or prayers of mercy.⁷
 - 3. Thomas and Alexander Campbell were appalled by these exercises and that these "special interventions of the Holy Spirit" found no basis in Scripture and jeopardized the unity of the movement to which they were committed.⁸
 - 4. In the 20th century there was much debate as to how the Spirit dwelled in Christians as J. D. Thomas from Abilene Christian College (now University) in 1966 wrote a series of articles promoting that the Spirit dwelled in Christians in a personal, but non-miraculous manner. Foy E. Wallace, Jr. rebutted with a series of articles in *Firm Foundation* in 1967 stating that the Spirit only dwells in Christians through the

5. I understand Churches of Christ trace their roots back to Pentecost (Acts 2) and not Thomas and Alexander Campbell but it is important to note that our theological thought process started somewhere. I refer to this, as many do, as the Stone-Campbell Movement which is where the Churches of Christ trace their roots.

6. Douglas Foster, "Barton W. Stone," *The Encyclopedia of the Stone-Campbell Movement*, Douglas A. Foster, Paul M. Blowers, Anthony L. Dunnivant and D. Newell Williams, eds., (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004): 704.

7. Ervin C. Jackson, "Cane Ridge Revival," *The Encyclopedia of the Stone-Campbell Movement*, Douglas A. Foster, Paul M. Blowers, Anthony L. Dunnivant and D. Newell Williams, eds., (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004): 164.

8. Byron C. Lambert, "Holy Spirit, Doctrine of the," *The Encyclopedia of the Stone-Campbell Movement*, Douglas A. Foster, Paul M. Blowers, Anthony L. Dunnivant and D. Newell Williams, eds., (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004): 403. There is more to the Stone-Campbell Movement's treatise of the Holy Spirit that deserves your attention so it would be well worth your while to read this splendid article. We shall return to this article in lesson #6 when we talk about how the Spirit dwells in Christians.

Scriptures (i.e. “Word Only”).⁹

- iv. All of this to say that we as a movement are not in full agreement as to what the Scriptures say about the Holy Spirit so we continually need to gauge where we are at by further study and further prayer.

III. FEARS

- a. DISCUSSION QUESTION: *How could fear be something that hinders us from a proper study of the Holy Spirit? What are we afraid of?*
- b. It is only natural to be afraid of something but not all fears are legitimate.
- c. Fear #1 - What will people think?
 - i. Inevitably when you start discussing things about the Spirit people start shifting in their chairs a little and crossing their arms and rolling their eyes. Sometimes you can see them wanting to interrupt you to correct your “liberal” thinking (whatever “liberal” means anyways).
 - ii. If the Scriptures tell us that the Spirit can do certain things and if we honestly believe that the Spirit does in fact dwell in us then why should we care what people think?
 - iii. Sure they will think you are going off the deep end and they think you will be a person who is “too emotional, energetic and someone who ignores the Scriptures.”
 - iv. But does that matter?
 - v. **“We are not all we were made to be when everything in our lives and churches can be explained apart from the work and presence of the Spirit of God.”**¹⁰ Let that quote sink in for a little bit and penetrate your heart. If our church numbers, baptisms and progress can be explained by human initiative and business tactics apart from the Spirit of God then something is truly wrong with our churches.
 - vi. I don’t know about you but I am a little tired of wondering what people think about me or what I write, preach, teach or say. God gave us a spirit of power (2 Tim. 1:7) not of fear.
 - vii. We care too much about appearances and what people think about us. I wonder if we care too much about what people think instead of what the Holy Spirit thinks.
 - viii. Fear immobilizes the church and if we are not careful it can destroy the church.

9. Ibid., 405.

10. Francis Chan, *Forgotten God*, (Colorado Springs: David C. Cook, 2009): 18.

- d. Fear #2 - What if God show's up?
- i. What if he actually comes through and the Spirit starts working in your life?
 - ii. I am not sure if this is a bad thing. This should prompt you into a study with God and to dig deeper into the "depths and riches" of Him!
 - iii. I think most of us are worried that if we talk about the Spirit and think that He operates in our lives that He might not show up. We don't "feel" His presence and so all of this talk was nothing more than theological mumbo-jumbo that was a waste of time.
 - iv. I believe that is more of an excuse that a legitimate fear. The Spirit manifests Himself in different capacities and one of those, as we will learn in another lesson, is that He allows us to bear fruit. Paul, in Galatians 5:22-23, advises Christians to put on the fruits of the Spirit which are "love, joy, peace..." If we love others and experience joy and peace is that not, in a sense, the fellowship of the Spirit? Something to think about.
- e. Fear #3 - What if I quench the Spirit?
- i. Paul, in 1 Thessalonians 5:19 says, "**Do not quench the Spirit!**"
 - ii. A little Greek lesson is in order. The Greek word for "quench" is present active imperative second person plural (*sbennute*). This means Paul is emphatically commanding the Thessalonians in as strong of language as possible in Koine Greek. Essentially Paul is telling them: "**YOU DO NOT QUENCH THE SPIRIT!!!**" The New Living Translation (NLT) translates it: "**Do not stifle the Holy Spirit.**"
 - iii. This is a legitimate fear that I think needs to be instilled in every Christian. If Paul was so concerned about the Thessalonian brethren stifling the Spirit what does that say for us? What does that look like when we quench the Holy Spirit?
 - iv. That question alone should prompt us into the importance of this study!

Conclusion:

- I. There are misconceptions, assumptions and fears that keep us from studying the Holy Spirit and having a relationship with Him like we do with Jesus and with the Father.
- II. This should not hinder us but inspire us to look deeper, think harder and pray stronger than ever before.
- III. So let me ask you: Are you ready? Are you willing to look at something as if you looked at it for the first time? Can you shed preconceptions,

assumptions, and old biased views for something else?

- IV. What's the payoff? I don't know! At least for you I don't! But is a relationship with the divine and the assurance of His will enough to entice you? The join me for 7 more weeks as we dig into the Scriptures to know our Comforter, our Dove, Our Wind, Our Holy Spirit!!!

PNEUMATOLOGY 101: A STUDY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Lesson #2: The Holy Spirit and the Old Testament

INTRODUCTION:

- I. **DISCUSSION QUESTION:** *What does the Old Testament have to say about the Holy Spirit? Why do you think we do not know as much about the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament?*
- II. When I began to study the Scriptures in college I began a general knowledge of the Holy Spirit but was limited to the New Testament (which we will study next week). The issue is that I limited myself to the New Testament since the plea of the churches of Christ is to restore New Testament Christianity. I often used the Old Testament only when those Scriptures appeared (or where cited/quoted) in the New Testament. So my knowledge of the Holy Spirit's activity in the Old Testament was limited to a few places but notably Joel 2:28-32 which was a prophecy concerning the future outpouring of the Spirit on the people of Israel. This happened at Pentecost in Acts 2:1-13 but the only reason I know about it was because Peter quoted Joel in Acts 2:17-21.
- III. I am not assuming this is what all members of the churches of Christ do in their study of the Scriptures but, in my experience, it seems we are strong in our knowledge of the New Testament but weak in our knowledge of the Old. Did you know that the Spirit is mentioned as early as Genesis 1:2 and as late as Malachi 2:15? That means from the first of creation until post-exile the Holy Spirit was active in the lives of God's people.
- IV. I believe a study of the Spirit in the Old Testament will only strengthen our trust in Him.¹¹ Paul said, in Romans 15:4, **"For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope."**
 - a. I believe that he was speaking to all of those things that were written in the Old Testament which would have been the only written documents available to him at the time.
 - b. The Old Testament, then, does four things according to Paul...
 - i. It teaches us.
 - ii. It endures.
 - iii. It gives us encouragement.

11. I hope the students and readers of the lessons will understand that this study on the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament is only the "tip-of-the-iceberg" in that there are many more passages, thoughts and lessons that are left out for the sake of time and space. Please use this lesson as a primer for further study and it is my prayer that I give you a healthy appetizer for something that will feed you even more days, months and years down the road.

- iv. It provides us with hope.
- V. That is why I believe the Old Testament is crucial for not only our understanding but for the way we conduct our lives as Christians. If what we study is used only for knowledge and does not change our lives then it is a waste of our time.

BODY:

I. The Holy Spirit and Creation¹²

- a. The author of Genesis writes, **“Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters”** (Gen. 1:2; cf. Job 33:4; Psalms 33:60; 104:30).
- b. Just think about a time when the earth was not in its full form. No cell phones, no day-planners, no roads, no mountains, and no plants—nothing.
- c. We are told that the Holy Spirit¹³ was hovering (NIV) or moving¹⁴ across the waters. What does that mean? Scholars, as you could imagine, are not united about the meaning and opinions differ but we can assume that in some capacity the Holy Spirit was active in creation.¹⁵

II. The Holy Spirit as Divine Presence

- a. In a psalm of praise to God for his omniscience and his powerful hand David asks a powerful question pointing to the omnipresence of God in creation: **“Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?”** (Psalm 139:7).
- b. 18 years after King Cyrus issued a decree that allowed the captive Jews to return to Israel the prophet Haggai prophesied that Zerubbabel would lead God’s people and restore a fallen nation to its new found glory. How would Israel do this? Haggai’s comfort is not found in human initiative,

12. Much of this outline is from Bob Deffinbaugh’s article, “Putting Pentecost in Perspective (Part 1) The Holy Spirit in the Old Testament (Acts 2:1-13),” from Bible.org. <<http://bible.org/seriespage/putting-pentecost-perspective-part-1-holy-spirit-old-testament-acts-21-13>> This was an excellent article and well worth your attention. The thoughts in this lesson are mine but his outline was the best I have seen when it comes to the Holy Spirit and the Old Testament.

13. Referred here in Genesis 1:2 as the *ruach elohim* or the “Spirit of God” which is a common construct used to refer to the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament.

14. From the Hebrew word *rachaph* meaning to “flutter, move or shake.”

15. A side note is that Jesus too was active in creation (cf. Col. 1:15-17; Heb. 1:2).

intellect or slight of bureaucracy but by the presence of God through the Spirit: **“But now be strong, O Zerubbabel,’ declares the LORD. ‘Be strong, O Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest. Be strong, all you people of the land,’ declares the LORD, ‘and work. For I am with you,’ declares the LORD Almighty. This is what I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt. And my Spirit remains among you. Do not fear”** (Hag. 2:4-5).

- i. God was with them and the manifestation of His presence was shown through the Holy Spirit.
- ii. What that entailed is unknown but we could surmise that it was a presence that comforted God’s people in a tumultuous and uncertain time period.

III. The Holy Spirit and Indwelling in God’s People

- a. Joseph stood out to prominent leaders in Egypt because they sensed that the “spirit of God” was with him (Gen. 41:38).
- b. An interesting happens in Numbers 11:4-34 where the Spirit was active when the people desired more food from God (because they were sick of manna; 11:6). They wanted meat and so God became angry. The burden of the constant grumbling was too much so God told Moses to gather all of the elders together to show the power of God. God said, **“I will come down and speak with you there, and I will take of the Spirit that is on you and put the Spirit on them. They will help you carry the burden of the people so that you will not have to carry it alone”** (Num. 11:17).
 - i. Moses did what he was commanded: **“Then the LORD came down in the cloud and spoke with him, and he took of the Spirit that was on him and put the Spirit on the seventy elders. When the Spirit rested on them, they prophesied, but they did not do so again. However, two men, whose names were Eldad and Medad, had remained in the camp. They were listed among the elders, but did not go out to the Tent. Yet the Spirit also rested on them, and they prophesied in the camp. A young man ran and told Moses, ‘Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp.’ Joshua son of Nun, who had been Moses’ aide since youth, spoke up and said, ‘Moses, my lord, stop them!’ But Moses replied, ‘Are you jealous for my sake? I wish that all the LORD’s people were prophets and that the LORD would put his Spirit on them!’”** (11:25-29).
 - ii. The Spirit caused them to do things they were not able to do otherwise.
 - iii. All of this to show that God was still leading His people even though they were obstinate and rebellious.

c. Saul and David

- i. **“The Spirit of the LORD will come upon you in power, and you will prophesy with them; and you will be changed into a different person. Once these signs are fulfilled, do whatever your hand finds to do, for God is with you”** (1 Sam. 10:6-7). The prophecy was fulfilled in 1 Samuel 11:6 which says that the Spirit did come upon Saul.
- ii. However, Saul became disobedient and chose his own ways rather than the ways of the Lord (e.g. not killing all of the Amalekites) so something happened which was recorded in 1 Samuel 16:13-14: **“So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on the Spirit of the LORD came upon David in power. Samuel then went to Ramah. Now the Spirit of the LORD had departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the LORD tormented him.”**
 1. This is important to understand because the success of the Israelite nation hinged on the presence of God among His anointed leaders.
 2. Saul, on his own apart from the presence of the Holy Spirit, could not advance his reign for David kept getting stronger and stronger while Saul just kept getting weaker and weaker.
 3. Why? It was the empowerment of the Holy Spirit.

d. Ezekiel

- i. Ezekiel’s commission to declare the prophecies of God was done with the presence of the Holy Spirit.
- ii. **“He said to me, ‘Son of man, stand up on your feet and I will speak to you.’ As he spoke, the Spirit came into me and raised me to my feet, and I heard him speaking to me. He said: ‘Son of man, I am sending you to the Israelites, to a rebellious nation that has rebelled against me; they and their fathers have been in revolt against me to this very day. The people to whom I am sending you are obstinate and stubborn. Say to them, ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says.’ And whether they listen or fail to listen—for they are a rebellious house—they will know that a prophet has been among them. And you, son of man, do not be afraid of them or their words. Do not be afraid, though briars and thorns are all around you and you live among scorpions. Do not be afraid of what they say or terrified by them, though they are a rebellious house. You must speak my words to them, whether they listen or fail to listen, for they are rebellious. But you, son of man, listen to what I say to you. Do not rebel like that rebellious house; open your mouth and eat what I give you”** (Eze. 2:1-8).¹⁶

16. See also Ezekiel 3:12, 14, 24; 11:1, 5, 24; 13:3; 43:5.

- iii. The prophetic ministry of Ezekiel was done in the Holy Spirit and the indwelling of the Spirit marked Ezekiel's commission into the work of God.
- e. There are dozens of other instances¹⁷ where the Spirit empowered someone in the Old Testament to either mark someone for God's service or to represent God's power or presence among His people. Please research these instances for yourself.

IV. The Holy Spirit and Prophecy

- a. There are many instances in the Old Testament where the Spirit is said to be involved in the future of either the nation of Israel or the work of the Messiah. (Please note that not all prophecy is intended to predict the future as some prophecy is about the current circumstances of the nation of Israel.)
- b. Prophecy Concerning the Future of Israel
 - i. Isaiah
 - 1. **"Beat your breasts for the pleasant fields, for the fruitful vines and for the land of my people, a land overgrown with thorns and briers—yes, mourn for all houses of merriment and for this city of revelry. The fortress will be abandoned, the noisy city deserted; citadel and watchtower will become a wasteland forever, the delight of donkeys, a pasture for flocks, till the Spirit is poured upon us from on high, and the desert becomes a fertile field, and the fertile field seems like a forest. Justice will dwell in the desert and righteousness live in the fertile field. The fruit of righteousness will be peace; the effect of righteousness will be quietness and confidence forever. My people will live in peaceful dwelling places, in secure homes, in undisturbed places of rest. Though hail flattens the forest and the city is leveled completely, how blessed you will be, sowing your seed by every stream, and letting your cattle and donkeys range free"** (32:12-20).
 - 2. Isaiah seems to point to a time when the people of Israel will experience joy and peace and that experience will come from the Holy Spirit. In context, the first 39 chapters of Isaiah point to a rebellious, idolatrous and a wicked people.

17. For example, in the book of Judges alone, the Spirit empowered each judge to rule Israel and govern them for a period of time. Othniel, Gideon, Jephthah and Samson were all said to be empowered by the Holy Spirit.

Judgment is inevitable for these people however, there will be a remnant for the nation of Israel and a chance for redemption through the Messiah.

3. Isaiah further states, **“The Redeemer will come to Zion, to those in Jacob who repent of their sins,’ declares the Lord. ‘As for me, this is my covenant with them,’ says the Lord. ‘My Spirit, who is on you, and my words that I have put in your mouth will not depart from your mouth, or from the mouths of your children, or from the mouths of their descendants from this time on and forever,’ says the Lord”** (59:20-21).
4. Is Isaiah speaking about the Church in eschatological terms or is it simply just the nation of Israel? Perhaps we can argue that ultimately the Church is the Spirit-empowered manifestation of God’s people and the “New” Israel.

ii. Ezekiel

1. Ezekiel can be divided into two sections: Prophecies of Judgment (1-32, 35) and Prophecies of Restoration (33-34, 36-48).
2. Even though God’s people will endure much there is hope for God’s people which comes through the avenue of the holy Spirit.
3. **“The hand of the LORD was upon me, and he brought me out by the Spirit of the Lord and set me in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. He led me back and forth among them, and I saw a great many bones on the floor of the valley, bones that were very dry. He asked me, ‘Son of man, can these bones live?’...Then he said to me: ‘Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, “Our bones are dried up and our hope is gone; we are cut off.” Therefore prophesy and say to them: “This is what the Sovereign Lord says: O my people, I am going to open your graves and bring you up from them; I will bring you back to the land of Israel. Then you, my people, will know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves and bring you up from them. I will put my Spirit in you and you will live, and I will settle you in your own land. Then you will know that I the Lord have spoken, and I have done it, declares the Lord””** (Ezekiel 37:1-3a,11-14).
4. God’s people did not have to endure eternal suffering but there would be a time when the Spirit would descend on the people and they would have new life and new opportunities.

iii. Again, there are many more instances of this that I have not covered but a good student would research this for himself and

discover more about the Holy Spirit.¹⁸

c. Prophecies about the Messiah and the Holy Spirit

- i. It is a safe assumption to wonder how the Spirit will work on God's people.
- ii. One way is through the Messiah¹⁹ or, as we now understand, through Jesus Christ.
- iii. Isaiah records much about the Messiah but is the only prophet who records the Messiah's work with the Holy Spirit.
- iv. **"A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him²⁰—the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord—and he will delight in the fear of the Lord. He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, or decide by what he hears with his ears; but with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked. Righteousness will be his belt and faithfulness the sash around his waist" (Isa. 11:1-5).**
- v. **"Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him and he will bring justice to the nations" (42:1).**
- vi. **"The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, and provide for those who grieve in Zion—to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the Lord for the display of his splendor" (61:1-3).**
- vii. The picture Isaiah paints for the Messiah is that His work will be to restore wrongs and to bring justice to God's people. How will He do this? Through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit.
- viii. It will be the Spirit that will restore Israel to return from exile and to reestablish the Israelite nation but ultimately it will be the Spirit who

18. Specifically see Isaiah 4:4-6; 28:5-8; 44:1-5; Ezekiel 11:18-21; 18:30-32; 36:22-32; 39:29; Joel 2:28-32; Haggai 2:3-9; Zechariah 4:6-9; 6:1-8; 12:10-14; 13:1-9.

19. Messiah comes from the Hebrew word *mashiach* which is translated "Anointed One." The same meaning is applied to the Greek word *Christos* or Christ.

20. Fulfilled in John 1:32-34 where the Spirit descended on Christ after John the Baptist baptized Jesus.

will restore the nation of God under one eternal king as seen through the Anointed One—Jesus Christ of Nazareth.

CONCLUSION:

- I. So how did the Spirit work in the Old Testament or, specifically, among the people of Israel?
- II. We noted that it was active in the beginning stages of creation. The Holy Spirit also represented the presence of God among His people. Thirdly we concluded that the Spirit empowered certain individuals in the Old Testament for a variety of different reasons but mostly for the leadership of God's people. Finally, we noted that the Spirit was involved in prophecies concerning the future of Israel (and subsequently the church) and the work of the Messiah.
- III. If we can grasp one nugget from this entire lesson I think it would be wise to say that the Spirit represented the active work and presence of God among His people. To not have the Spirit was equated to being separated from God. This is why David was so confessional when he sinned with Bathsheba and pleaded with God to receive forgiveness saying, **“Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me”** (Psalm 51:11). David knew what not having the Spirit was like because he witnessed the demise of Saul who had the Spirit taken from him.
- IV. Having surveyed the Old Testament's view of the Holy Spirit we can see that it is not so different than the New Testament. Next week we will look at the Holy Spirit and the Gospels.

PNEUMATOLOGY 101: A STUDY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Lesson #3: The Holy Spirit and the Gospels

INTRODUCTION:

- I. **DISCUSSION QUESTION:** *Why do you think the Holy Spirit, at least from Scripture's perspective, became so active and involved in the New Testament?* This is good discussion and we will never know the answer fully but if we take into account what we learned last lesson about the Spirit being active in the coming of the Messiah (Hebrew *mashiach*) then perhaps the Holy Spirit became more active (again from Scripture's perspective) when Jesus came to this earth.
- II. We have looked at the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament²¹ and now we need to take into account what the New Testament says about the Holy Spirit. I have broken the lessons up (partly) according to genre of literature as the epistles (letter form and occasional) are different than the gospels (narrative) in thought.
- III. The Holy Spirit is very much present in the gospels and seems to bookend the life of Jesus being involved in His birth and His death. Before we begin this lesson it is important to know at least a little New Testament Introduction 101.
 - a. The gospels can be divided into two groups: The Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark and Luke) and John's Gospel.
 - b. The synoptic gospels are concerned more about Jesus' ministry, teachings, miracles and His dealings with the Pharisees. The gospel of John seems to be concerned more about the identity and theology of Jesus as God in flesh and with signs and wonders.
 - c. Matthew, Mark and Luke have a lot of similarities both in word and thought pattern that draw many to the conclusion that they used each other's material in the composition of their gospel.
 - d. All of this to say that the Synoptic Gospels are going to differ in their treatise of the Holy Spirit than John's gospel. That doesn't mean they *contradict* each other rather one is relaying more information about the Spirit to its readers than the other.
- IV. As we move closer to the application (the so what?) portion of this series it is important to note how the Scriptures revealed what the Spirit did. The question we will ask later is "What does this mean for me?" In other words, later we will ask questions like, "Can the Spirit miraculously impregnate my wife like He did with John the Baptist? If not then why not?"

21. By "looked" I mean we have only scratched the surface on the subject. One lesson on the Spirit in the Old Testament does not do sufficient justice for a complete understanding. We did not address the issue of how a Jew would not even think in Trinitarian terms (i.e. God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit) as they only knew of God as being the one and only God.

BODY:

I. The Holy Spirit and the Birth Narratives

- a. The Holy Spirit was involved in the conception and birth of two individuals that changed the course of history.
- b. John the Baptist
 - i. **“For he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He is never to take wine or other fermented drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even from birth. Many of the people of Israel will he bring back to the Lord their God. And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous—to make ready a people prepared for the Lord”** (Luke 1:15-17).
 - ii. This was God speaking to Zechariah telling him that his wife, Elizabeth, would be found with child and that this child would be the forerunner of Jesus Christ (“Lord”).
 - iii. Luke records that John would be “filled with the Spirit” (cf. Luke 1:41-42, 67) even from the moment he was born. The Greek word for “filled” (*plēraō*) also means to be “satisfied or accomplished” but in this context seems to suggest that a filling of some sort is in order. We are not told how the filling takes place, although Luke 1:80 seems to indicate that when John was in the wilderness he became strong in the Spirit instead of spirit but we cannot be dogmatic about this.
 - iv. All we know is that the Holy Spirit, much like it did with other leaders in the old Testament, empowered John to do the will and work of God. Specifically to prepare the paths of Jesus.
- c. Jesus
 - i. Much in the same fashion we see how the Spirit was involved in the birth of Jesus.
 - ii. **“This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit”** (Matthew 1:18).
 - iii. **“But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, ‘Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit’”** (Matthew 1:20).
 - iv. **“The angel answered, ‘The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be**

born will be called the Son of God” (Luke 1:35).

II. The Holy Spirit and the Baptism of Jesus

- a. The Holy Spirit marked the beginning of Jesus’ life in the womb of Mary but also marked the beginning of Jesus’ ministry at the baptism of Jesus.²²
- b. John the Baptist ministered to the people preaching on repentance and the forgiveness of sins. Something interesting came from his preaching.
 - i. **“I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor, gathering the wheat into his barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire”** (Matthew 3:11-12; cf. Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16-17).
 - ii. Some people believe this to be a different baptism than the baptism found in Acts 2:38 and other passages. They claim that there is the baptism where we receive the forgiveness of sins but also there is another baptism (sometimes also called the baptism of fire) where one is “immersed” in the Holy Spirit.
 - iii. What I see from John’s statement could be seen in John 14-16 where Jesus taught them about the Holy Spirit (see below) and how it would come upon them in power (*dynamism*) and is not another baptism but on in the same.
- c. When Jesus came up to John the Baptist to be baptized it was a moment where Jesus was empowered to do the ministry of His father.
 - i. **“As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him”** (Matthew 3:16; cf. Mark 1:10).
 - ii. Luke adds, **“And a voice came from heaven: “You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased”** (Luke 3:22).
 - iii. John the Baptist said, **“I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him. I would not have known him, except that the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, ‘The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is he who will baptize with the Holy Spirit’”** (John 1:32-33).
- d. What does all of this mean? The Spirit here is seen as a dove²³ which was

22. There is an ongoing debate among scholars as to why Jesus needed baptism. If baptism was for the forgiveness of sins and Jesus could not sin then why did He get baptized? If we say then it was for the reception of the Holy Spirit do we then say that Jesus could not perform miracles without the Holy Spirit? All of these questions are superfluous and profitable if you want to sell books in scholarship or if you want to try to confuse your thinking. Ultimately this was the plan of the Father and Jesus said: “I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does” (John 5:19).

23. Or some type of bird. The word can refer to a variety of pigeons and doves Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to Matthew*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992): 66. The dove is seen as representing

the symbol for the nation of Israel and so perhaps this is seen as the fulfillment of prophecy that Messiah had come (?). Whatever the interpretation the Spirit here is now empowering Jesus to begin His ministry. The heavens were opened and Jesus saw the Spirit which, according to Leon Morris, must have been a source of comfort to Jesus.²⁴

III. The Holy Spirit and the Ministry of Jesus

- a. The Spirit was active in the ministry of Jesus and the first thing the Spirit did for Jesus was to send Him into the wilderness to be tempted (Matt. 4:1; Mark 1:12; Luke 4:1).
- b. Shortly after that Luke tells us that, **“Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside”** (Luke 4:14).²⁵
- c. Luke records for us that the Holy Spirit was a source of joy for Christ and perhaps brought Him much comfort in the difficult times of His ministry: **“At that time Jesus, full of joy through the Holy Spirit, said, ‘I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure’”** (Luke 10:21).
- d. **DISCUSSION QUESTION: *What does it mean to be “full of joy through the Holy Spirit?”***

IV. The Holy Spirit and Blasphemy

- a. **“And so I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come”** (Matt. 12:31-32; cf. Mark 3:29-30; Luke 12:10).
- b. A lot of worry has come from this text in the form of Christians concerned whether they have committed the sin of blasphemy which will not be forgiven.
- c. What we need to understand is that when we come across a particular verse there is ALWAYS a particular context. In this section Jesus is speaking to the Pharisees about their comment about Jesus healing a

something that is peaceful and gentle so the Spirit could be seen as someone that is gentle and peaceful. Although John

24. Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to Matthew*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992): 66.

25. We cannot miss the point that Jesus went into the wilderness to be with the Spirit and perhaps to learn of the Spirit and he found the Devil and temptations (i.e. trials). He came out of the wilderness, out of the temptations and away from the Devil powered by the Spirit. Is it safe to say that some of our difficult times as Christians are a part of the Spirit’s plan for our lives and that our endurance will in turn help us to leave our “trials” empowered by the Spirit?

- demon-possessed man in Matthew 12:22.
- d. The Pharisees said Jesus was healing people in the name of Beelzebub (i.e. Satan) instead of the Holy Spirit. What they were doing was saying that Jesus was casting out demons in the name of a demon instead of the Holy Spirit and this was blasphemy. This has no forgiveness for to do this would mean that the kingdom of god was not upon this earth and that the work of god was in vain.
 - e. So if you state that the miracles of Jesus are done in the name of Satan instead of the Holy Spirit then that is Blasphemy of the Holy Spirit and ***as long as you do that*** then there can be no forgiveness for there is any repentance.
 - f. This text does let us know that Jesus' miracles were done either by the power of the Spirit or at least with the direction of the Holy Spirit.

V. Jesus' Teaching on the Holy Spirit²⁶

- a. Men are Saved by Means of the Ministry of the Holy Spirit
 - i. **Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit ... The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit"** (John 3:5-6, 8).
 - ii. **"The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life"** (John 6:63).
 - iii. **"When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment: in regard to sin, because men do not believe in me; in regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; and in regard to judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned"** (John 16:8-11).
- b. The Holy Spirit Would be Given to the Disciples and to all Those Who Believe
 - i. **"If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"** (Luke 11:13).
 - ii. **"On the last and greatest day of the Feast Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "If a man is thirsty, let him come to me and drink.**

26. Again, I am impressed with Bob Deffinbaugh's work on the Holy Spirit and I recommend you look at his article. I am using his outline for this section of the lesson. Bob Deffinbaugh, "The Holy Spirit in the Gospels (Appendix A)" Bible.org <<http://bible.org/seriespage/holy-spirit-gospels-appendix>> Accessed June 19, 2010.

Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.” By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified (John 7:37-39).

- iii. **“If you love me, you will obey what I command. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever—the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you”** (John 14:15-17).
- iv. This is so important for us to understand in that Jesus here was speaking to His disciples but the command seems to be all-encompassing with the qualification that we do what he asks us to do.
- v. The Greek word for “counselor” comes from *paraklētos* which means “a calling to one’s aid.” Literally it means to call (from *kaleō*) alongside (from *para*) and Jesus is letting His disciples know that the Holy Spirit will be with them forever.

c. The Holy Spirit Would Facilitate True Worship:

- i. **“Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth”** (John 4:23-24).
- ii. Often these verses are used to describe the true-worshipper as one who worships in truth (right doctrine) and in spirit (right attitude or mindset). That is certainly plausible from this text but I would suggest an alternative interpretation in the spirit here means the Holy Spirit.
- iii. Jesus just concluded his discussion with Nicodemus on the idea that we do not know where the wind goes so we have no clue where the Spirit goes.
- iv. Why would there be such an abrupt change in meaning from one context to another?
- v. Worshipping in Spirit here means simply that God is among us when we worship much like the Spirit was among those in the Old Testament to represent God’s presence among the Israelites. This does not change our “form” of worship per se but, in my opinion, intensifies it for when we worship God is not away from us but rather among us.
- vi. Again, there is no need to be dogmatic on this for a right spirit is necessary in worship as seen in 1 Corinthians 14:15.

d. The Holy Spirit Would Teach and Guide Believers

- i. **“But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my**

- name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you” (John 14:26).
- ii. **“When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me” (John 15:26).**
 - iii. **“But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come” (John 16:13).**
 - iv. **“All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you” (John 16:15).**
- e. **The Holy Spirit Would Give the Disciples the Words to Say When Put on Trial for Their Faith**
- i. **“For it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you” (Matthew 10:20).**
 - ii. **“Whenever you are arrested and brought to trial, do not worry beforehand about what to say. Just say whatever is given you at the time, for it is not you speaking, but the Holy Spirit” (Mark 13:11).**
 - iii. **“For the Holy Spirit will teach you at that time what you should say” (Luke 12:12).**
- f. **The Holy Spirit Would Represent and Manifest Christ to His Disciples (provide comfort) After His Ascension.**
- i. **“If you love me, you will obey what I command. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever—the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you” (John 14:15-18).**
 - ii. **“In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me” (John 16:16).**
- g. **The Power of the Spirit Was to Play a Vital Part in the Fulfillment of the Great Commission**
- i. **“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matthew 28:19).**
 - ii. **“You are witnesses to these things. I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high” (Luke 24:48-49).**
 - iii. **And with that he breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit” (John 20:22).**
 - iv. **“When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will**

testify about me; but you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning” (John 15:26-27).

CONCLUSION:

- I. The Spirit was active in the gospels and we can understand that He had an integral part in the foundation of the church through the ministry of Jesus.
- II. He empowered Jesus and provided Him encouragement but also Jesus told the disciples that the same comfort He receives from the Spirit they too will also be comforted.
- III. The Spirit also is accessible to all who obey the commands of the Father and is a source of joy and peace to all those who partake of Him.
- IV. It can be a little frustrating trying to understand the Spirit and the Scriptures as it is a lot of information. Francis Chan wrote, **“Know that even as you seek to understand the Spirit more, He is so much more and bigger than you will ever be able to grasp. This is not an excuse to stop seeking to know Him, but don’t limit Him to what you can learn about Him.”**²⁷
- V. In other words, theology without practice, experience and relationship is not true theology. It is simply information. Seek to know the Spirit both through Scripture and a relationship.

27. Chan, *Forgotten God*, 65.

PNEUMATOLOGY 101: A STUDY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Lesson #4: The Holy Spirit and Acts

INTRODUCTION:

- I. **DISCUSSION QUESTION:** *If you were to describe the work of the Holy Spirit in the book of Acts how would do it?*
- II. Statistics on the word *pneuma* in the book of Acts.
 - a. The word for Spirit is *pneuma* which does not always refer to the Holy Spirit is mentioned some 350 times in the New Testament. Of those 350, it is mentioned 68 times (20%) in the book of Acts alone. That is 31 times more than the next highest number which is the book of Luke.
 - b. Since Luke wrote his gospel and Acts that means that he uses the word for Spirit 105 times (30%)!!!²⁸
 - c. All this to say that the Spirit assumes a specific responsibility in the book of Acts that has not been seen up to this point.
- III. “A gospel of the Spirit”
 - a. Prominent New Testament scholar Donald Guthrie writes, **“Since Luke-Acts must be considered as a whole, and sine the first part possess the character of a gospel the second part must be viewed in light of this fact. For the author the important thing is the recognition of a divine activity behind the events, hence his great emphasis on the work of the Holy Spirit...It is not inappropriate that this book has been called the Acts of the Holy Spirit and it is significant that several times the record of events is described as the continued activity of Jesus.”**²⁹
 - b. It is important to understand, though, that it is more than simply words of a textbook but Acts is narrative of the history of how the Church was started.
 - c. Having said that, it was not Luke’s intent to write a theology of the Holy Spirit more so than to record the actions of the apostles, church and Spirit among God’s people known as the Church.

BODY:

I. Pentecost

- a. Jesus was raised from the dead as the Scriptures prophesied and spent a

28. Only Paul uses it more (128 times) but that is spread out among many of his books. Still it is fascinating to know that between two authors in the New Testament that they make up for over 67% of its usage (233 times)!!! These, one could argue, were men of the Spirit. ‘

29. Donald Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction*, 4th ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity P, 1990): 366.

period of time with his disciples and with other people and then it came time for Him to return with the Father. Before Jesus left he gave the disciples the assurance that they will have what has been promised.

- i. Luke records, **“For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit”** (Acts 1:5).
 - ii. What does he mean? Remember in John 14:26 Jesus said that the Father was going to send them a comforter (i.e. Holy Spirit) to them but Jesus had to die, to rise and to ascend. Jesus is letting them know that they are going to receive something that is truly amazing and truly powerful.
 - iii. Jesus goes into more specifics, **“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth”** (Acts 1:8).
- b. Acts 2:1-13 - **“When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard them speaking in his own language. Utterly amazed, they asked: ‘Are not all these men who are speaking Galileans? Then how is it that each of us hears them in his own native language? Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs—we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!’ Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, ‘What does this mean?’ Some, however, made fun of them and said, ‘They have had too much wine.’”**
- i. **“Luke’s account of Pentecost indicates that this event marked the fulfillment of a grand prophetic tradition.”³⁰**
 - ii. What happened here was not something that was a random act but it was something that was prophesied and now has been fulfilled.
 - iii. In Acts 2:14-36 Peter delivers a powerful sermon to explain what just happened and in vv. 17-21 Peter quotes Joel 2:28-32 which discusses the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.
 - iv. Look at how the Spirit came...
 1. A violent wind...
 2. Filled the whole house...

30. Stanley Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994): 370.

3. Tongues of fire...
 - v. These men were able to do something that they had never done before and that was to speak in tongues but this was only done **“as the Spirit enabled them”** (2:4).
 - vi. It is also important to understand that these men were recognized as Galileans yet they were speaking languages that were not trained in speaking but could do so because of the presence of the Holy Spirit.
 - vii. **DISCUSSION: WHAT IS THE POINT OF PENTECOST?**
 1. To show that prophecy had been fulfilled and that the church has now begun.
 - a. **“As the grand fulfillment of prophecy, Pentecost was a nonrepeatable event. Its singularity arises from its importance as a milestone in the history of God’s activity marking the inauguration of a new age. The Spirit entered the world in a unique way at Pentecost. This entrance can occur only once. The significance of the Spirit’s filling of the upper room disciples lies in this context. The coming of the Spirit on the group signified the creation of the Spirit-endowed, Spirit-empowered, Spirit-led community. This event, the birth of the church, can only occur once.”**³¹
 - b. In other words, Pentecost was the moment where the culmination of all things previous is now realized and the Spirit came to show this fact.
 2. To convert the Jews who were listening but ultimately to show that the Spirit is available to all.
 - a. **“Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit”** (Acts 2:38).³²
 - b. All people have the opportunity receive this gift, this empowerment if they simply immerse themselves for the forgiveness of sins.
 - c. In this way, all Christians then receive the Holy Spirit and our bodies become the dwelling place for the Spirit.
 - c. For a similar story in the book of Acts about the outpouring of the Holy Spirit see Acts 10 (specifically 10:44-48). This was a unique event because it marked the beginning of the gospel going to the Gentiles! Another instance is Acts 19:1-7 where the Ephesian men were only

31. Ibid., 370.

32. I am well aware of all of the different issues surrounding Acts 2:38 but this is not the place to discuss different issues but the place to try to understand what Luke recorded. Perhaps it would be valuable to look up “Acts 2:38” on the Restoration Serials Index at www.acu.edu/rsi which is a database for most articles written by members of the Churches of Christ.

baptized with baptism of John. Paul baptized them in the name of Jesus and only then did they receive the Spirit.

II. The Spirit and Filling

- a. **"Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them: "Rulers and elders of the people" (Acts 4:8).**
- b. On a number of occasions in the book of Acts the Spirit is said to "fill" people in a way that helps them speak, make decisions and persevere as the people of God.
 - i. **"After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly" (Acts 4:31). This came as a result of fervent prayer.**
 - ii. **"Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom" (Acts 6:3; cf. 6:5).**
 - iii. **"But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God" (Acts 7:55). This in the presence of people who are about to kill him.**
 - iv. **"He was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith, and a great number of people were brought to the Lord" (Acts 11:24).**
 - v. **"Then Saul, who was also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit..." (Acts 13:9).**
 - vi. **"And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 13:52).**
- c. What does all of these mean? Perhaps a distinction that separated false prophets and genuine men of God was that true prophets were full of the Holy Spirit.
- d. It also represented the quality of evangelists as not possessing authority or power on their own but it was God who was working with/in/through them.

III. The Spirit and Objects of Deception

- a. Acts 5:1-11 - **Now a man named Ananias, together with his wife Sapphira, also sold a piece of property. With his wife's full knowledge he kept back part of the money for himself, but brought the rest and put it at the apostles' feet. Then Peter said, "Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land? Didn't it belong to you before it was sold? And after it was sold, wasn't the money at your disposal? What made you think of doing such a thing? You have not lied to men but to God." When Ananias heard this, he fell down and died. And great fear seized all who heard what had happened. Then the young men came forward, wrapped up his body, and carried him out and buried him. About three hours later his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. Peter asked her, "Tell me, is this the price you and Ananias got for the land?" "Yes," she said, "that is the price." Peter said to her, "How could**

you agree to test the Spirit of the Lord? Look! The feet of the men who buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out also." At that moment she fell down at his feet and died. Then the young men came in and, finding her dead, carried her out and buried her beside her husband. Great fear seized the whole church and all who heard about these events.

- i. First of all, this story is told, I believe, to let the first century readers know that from the beginning deception creeps in the church and must be nipped.
 - ii. Secondly, the story is told to signify how evil it is to deceive.
 - iii. Thirdly, the story lets us know that that the Holy Spirit is, in fact, God. Verse 3 says that Ananias lied to the Holy Spirit and verse 4 says that he has lied to God.
 - iv. Fourthly, the Spirit knows what occurs and this is a stern warning to all who read these pages.
- b. Acts 8:9-24 - Now for some time a man named Simon had practiced sorcery in the city and amazed all the people of Samaria. He boasted that he was someone great, and all the people, both high and low, gave him their attention and exclaimed, "This man is the divine power known as the Great Power." They followed him because he had amazed them for a long time with his magic. But when they believed Philip as he preached the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. Simon himself believed and was baptized. And he followed Philip everywhere, astonished by the great signs and miracles he saw. When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. When they arrived, they prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit, because the Holy Spirit had not yet come upon any of them; they had simply been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit. When Simon saw that the Spirit was given at the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money and said, "Give me also this ability so that everyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit." Peter answered: "May your money perish with you, because you thought you could buy the gift of God with money! You have no part or share in this ministry, because your heart is not right before God. Repent of this wickedness and pray to the Lord. Perhaps he will forgive you for having such a thought in your heart. For I see that you are full of bitterness and captive to sin." Then Simon answered, "Pray to the Lord for me so that nothing you have said may happen to me."
- i. Philip's desire of the Spirit was not out of pure intention and he

wanted to market this perhaps for money.³³

- ii. He was wanted that the Spirit is not an opportunity for financial gain but an opportunity to do the work of God as God sees fit.

IV. The Spirit and Directions

- a. The Spirit was active in sending people to certain places and preventing them from going into certain places.
 - i. **"The Spirit told Philip, "Go to that chariot and stay near it" (Acts 8:29).**
 - ii. **"When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him again, but went on his way rejoicing" (Acts 8:39).**
 - iii. **"The two of them (Paul and Barnabas), sent on their way by the Holy Spirit, went down to Seleucia and sailed from there to Cyprus" (Acts 13:4).**
 - iv. **"Paul and his companions traveled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia" (Acts 16:6).**
 - v. **"When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to" (Acts 16:7).**
 - vi. **"And now, compelled by the Spirit, I am going to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there" (Acts 20:22).**
 - vii. **"Finding the disciples there, we stayed with them seven days. Through the Spirit they urged Paul not to go on to Jerusalem" (Acts 21:4).**
- b. What's the point? The Spirit was involved in the coming and going of His workers so that the will of the Father could and would be accomplished.

V. The Spirit and Personal Communication

- a. **"Then the church throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria enjoyed a time of peace. It was strengthened; and encouraged by the Holy Spirit, it grew in numbers, living in the fear of the Lord" (Acts 9:31).**
 - i. How did the Spirit encourage the believers? Luke does not tell us but perhaps it was through personal communication or through the evangelists who, themselves, were full of the Spirit.

33. I will put this in a footnote but I wonder how many so-called "evangelists" use the Spirit's work for marketing purposes. They say you can be healed of your diseases, cancer, depression all if you put your hands on the TV or if you phone-in and make a donation. I wonder how many "Simons" there are out there?

- ii. At any rate we see that John 14:26 fulfilled (at least in part) again as the Helper has come bringing comfort and consolation.

- b. **“The Spirit told me to have no hesitation about going with them. These six brothers also went with me, and we entered the man's house”** (Acts 11:12). Peter, reporting what happened with the house of Cornelius.

- c. **“While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them’”** (Acts 13:2). Holy Spirit is vocal.

- d. **“It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us not to burden you with anything beyond the following requirements”** (Acts 15:28). Letter to Gentiles from the Jerusalem council.

- e. **“I only know that in every city the Holy Spirit warns me that prison and hardships are facing me”** (Acts 20:23). How did it warn him? Personal communication.

VI. The Holy Spirit and Scripture

- a. The Holy Spirit, as we will learn next week in Paul’s epistles, is active in the writing of Scripture.

- b. **“They disagreed among themselves and began to leave after Paul had made this final statement: ‘The Holy Spirit spoke the truth to your forefathers when he said through Isaiah the prophet’”** (Acts 28:25).
 - i. Then he quotes portions from Isaiah 6:9-10.
 - ii. It seems that the Holy Spirit here is the author and not Isaiah. How would Paul know that? He too had communication with the Spirit.

CONCLUSION:

- I. Again there is a lot of information here but one needs to understand that it was not Luke’s intent to give a systematic theology of the Holy Spirit but rather to record the events (specific) of God’s people in God’s Story.

- II. Another important “nugget” to gain from this lesson is that from the moment Christ ascended through the last chapter of Acts the Holy Spirit was active. We will see this as a pattern for later discussion but suffice it to say that the Holy Spirit was AND IS still active in the church.

- III. **“If you love me, you will obey what I command. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever...But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you”** (John 14:15-17).

PNEUMATOLOGY 101: A STUDY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Lesson #5: The Holy Spirit and Pauline Epistles (Part 1)³⁴

INTRODUCTION:

- I. **DISCUSSION QUESTION:** *If you were to describe the work of the Holy Spirit in the Paul's Epistles how would do it?*
- II. If there was ever an author in the New Testament who was as interested in the Spirit's work as Jesus it would be Paul.
 - a. In Lesson 4 we discussed some statistics about the use of the Greek word *pneuma* (word for "Spirit, spirit, wind or breath). We noted that Luke, in Luke-Acts, uses the term 105 times. Paul utilizes the term 128 times!!! On statistics alone one could argue that no other author is as enamored with the Spirit as Paul was.³⁵
 - b. One author admits, "Antiquity has bequeathed to us no writer more enamored with the spirit than the Apostle Paul, whose letters are awash in the spirit, so much so that isolating a single point of entrée is a monumental task."³⁶
- III. Paul is highly concerned with the Spirit and its role in the believer however his purpose of writing was not to give a systematic theology of what Paul believed rather he was writing to specific churches with specific needs.
 - a. Paul's agenda was situational or occasional as the same problem that the Corinthians struggled with were not the same problems Paul found in Colossae.
 - b. Why is this important? Scripture is a story and is more than words on leafs of parchment but is living, active and dynamic. One author writes, "**...God did not drop from the sky a text containing 'timeless universal principles.'** Instead, this God entered into covenant relationship with a particular people and called them to embody an alternative to the peoples round about them."³⁷
 - c. What Paul speaks about the Spirit is meant to be lived in a context of other believers who are fellow sojourners along the way. So when Paul says, "**Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in**

34. Much of this lesson and the next one come from Terence P. Paige, "Holy Spirit," *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*, eds. Gerald F. Hawthorne, Ralph P. Martin and Daniel G. Reid, (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993): 404-13.

35. Keep in mind that every time Paul (or any author for that matter) is using the term *pneuma* he is not always referring to the Holy Spirit (e.g. 1 Cor. 15:45).

36. John R. Levison, *Filled with the Spirit* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009): 253.

37. Lee C. Camp, *Mere Discipleship*, 2nd edition, (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2003, 2008): 68.

you..." (1 Cor. 6:19) he is not thinking about a theology on the Spirit but rather he is instructing the Corinthians on the importance of sexual abstinence as a practice of serviceable worship as the Spirit being a part of us.

- IV. Another danger is the belief that we can figure everything out that Paul has written about the Spirit.
- a. Peter had trouble with Paul's writings stating, "**His letters contain some things that are hard to understand**" (2 Pet. 3:16).
 - b. I am not one to debate with an inspired author and say that I know things better than Peter and I have figured out everything.
 - c. Some things Paul writes just leave you scratching your head which, in my opinion, is ok to experience.
 - d. This does not take away from the fact that we can know things and come at least to a positive understanding of the Spirit as much as is revealed in Scripture (cf. 2 Pet. 1:3).

BODY:

I. Sources of Paul's Thought

- a. Where does Paul get his thoughts from when it comes to the Holy Spirit?
- b. From his training as a Rabbi he would be immersed in the Old Testament and intertestamental literature.
 - i. In Lesson #2 we delved into the Spirit in the Old Testament so this is not the place to discuss this type of thought but suffice it to say that Paul would know the Scriptures (specifically Ezekiel 36-37).
 - ii. Between the book of Malachi and when the New Testament was written there is a bunch of literature written by the Jews of the time and it was called Intertestamental literature (e.g. 1-2 Maccabees).
 1. Psalms of Solomon 17:37 in speaking about the man who relies and trusts on God the author says, "**And (relying) upon his God, throughout his days he will not stumble; For God will make him mighty by means of (His) holy spirit, And wise by means of the spirit of understanding, with strength and righteousness.**"
 2. Testament of Levi 18:7 when speaking of the new Priest who will be raised up says, "**And in His priesthood shall all sin come to an end, and the lawless shall rest from evil, and the just shall rest in Him. And He shall open the gates of paradise, and shall remove the threatening sword against Adam; and He shall give to His saints to eat from the tree of life, and the spirit of holiness shall be on them.**"

3. **“The Qumran³⁸ sectarians apparently believed themselves heirs in some sense of this promise of the Spirit. The prophetic promise underlies Paul’s view of the Spirit as a normal part of the Christian life.”³⁹**
- c. Another source for Paul’s thought is the early Christian community and his own experience as a witness/participant of the Spirit of God.
 - i. In Acts 2 the church was formulated with the coming of the long awaited presence of the Spirit.
 - ii. Many wonders and signs were done in the early church that gave birth to a theology about what the Spirit was doing.
 - iii. Paul acknowledged that what was happening in the first century was the coming of the Spirit. **“He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit”** (Gal. 3:14).

II.

38. Qumran communities were those communities where several scrolls were found in 1947 that contained numerous portions of Scripture never seen before. Much of these scrolls were used to identify the validity of Old Testament Scripture (most of which was completely accurate) and a lot of the scrolls let us know how a group of people lived as a community in the desert years before Christ was born.

39. Paige, “Holy Spirit,” 404.

PNEUMATOLOGY 101: A STUDY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Lesson #7: The Spirit in the General Epistles and Revelation

INTRODUCTION:

- VI. **DISCUSSION QUESTION:** *Can you think of what the other New Testament authors have to say about the Spirit?* Most of the church's theology of the Spirit come from the Gospels, Acts and Paul's Epistles. **DISCUSSION QUESTION:** *Why is that?*
- The reason is rather simple in that *pneuma* is mentioned in the Gospels, Acts and Paul a total of 277 times!!!
 - Pneuma* is mentioned in the remainder of the New Testament (Hebrews, James, 1-2 Peter, 1-3 John, Jude and Revelation) only 58 times! That means Paul, the gospels and Acts account for 83% of its usage.
 - That is important to remember but may be a moot point in that less usage does not necessarily mean less importance. But our minds concentrate more on something that we see occur more and more. A teacher pays more attention to the kid who disrupts class on a consistent basis than she does the child who acts appropriately in class.
 - For the most part, we are not trained to notice the nuances of Scripture but rather the principles that occur on a consistent basis.
 - It seems to me that the Lord only has to say something once for it to be important to His readers and followers. This is the attitude I approach the General Epistles and Revelation when it comes to the Spirit.
- VII. Keep in mind that when we look at these verses they all have a context so please approach them within that framework. Another issue to remember is that just because *pneuma* is mentioned in the Greek does not necessarily entail it to mean the Holy Spirit. Sometimes we have to use context clues, modifying adjectives and other issues in the text to determine if it does speak of the Holy Spirit.
- VIII. Something else to understand is that we are not merely reading and studying for information but for transformation. If these studies do not bring you closer to Deity in a positive and viable relationship than it is nothing more than information in our brains. Keep in mind Paul's warning/encouragement in 1 Corinthians 2:12-14: **"We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words. The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned."**
- IX. The approach of this lesson is to take each book/epistle (or groups of books)

and to look at the Spirit in those books.

BODY:

I. Hebrews

- a. The first instance mentioned is Hebrews 2:4 where the Spirit is involved in distributing gifts that testified to the work of God. This was mentioned in an effort to hold fast to the salvation (which is a theme in the book of Hebrews) which could be trusted.
- b. The Holy Spirit as author of Scripture
 - i. **“So, as the Holy Spirit says...”** (Heb. 3:7). The Hebrews author then quotes Psalm 95:7-11 which means that he is attributing the Scripture to the Holy Spirit.
 - ii. **“The Holy Spirit also testifies to us about this. First he⁴⁰ says...”** (Heb 10:15). The Hebrew author then quotes Jeremiah 31:33-34. Did Jeremiah author the book or did the Holy Spirit? The answer is, “Yes!” The Holy Spirit inspired (see 2 Tim. 3:16-17) Jeremiah to speak words from God. Perhaps this is the filling of the Spirit that was spoken of in the Old Testament where these prophets were filled with the Spirit.
- c. The Holy Spirit had an active role in the Old Testament customs because the Hebrews author says that the Spirit showed the way into the Most Holy Place (Heb. 9:8).
- d. The point was that it pointed to something better which was Christ who was (and is) the High Priest who offered himself unblemished but this offering was done, according to Hebrews 9:14, through the Spirit.
- e. The Holy Spirit and Apostasy
 - i. **“It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit, who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age, if they fall away, to be brought back to repentance, because to their loss they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace”** (Heb. 6:4-6).

40. Did you catch what the author of Hebrews mentioned? When talking about the Holy Spirit the author said, “He says...” That is significant because people claim (Jehovah Witnesses for example) that the Holy Spirit is a non-personal force but here we see that the Holy Spirit is very personal in speaking words of prophecy. The Holy Spirit is very personal in its relationship with mankind.

- ii. A lot is occurring in this text that needs to be explicated somewhere else but apparently there is a state of apostasy where repentance is impossible for a person because they **continually** are “crucifying the Son of God all over again.”
- iii. The issue is that at one time they “shared in the Holy Spirit.” What does that mean? I take heavenly gift and the Holy Spirit to mean the same thing (see Acts 2:38; 10:45; 11:17; 1 Pet. 1:12) so that the experience here is that Holy Spirit is a participation (from the Greek word *metochos*) joined by all Christians.
- iv. A similar warning passage is mentions the Spirit as well in Hebrews 10:26-31 where the author reiterates that if there is an ongoing pattern of sinful behavior there is no sacrifice for sins. The sacrifice cannot be made because the sinner is rejected the testimony of God and ultimately tramples Jesus and insults the Spirit of grace.

II. 1-2 Peter

a. The Spirit and the Prophets

- i. **“Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Even angels long to look into these things” (1 Pet. 1:10-12).**
- ii. The Spirit is involved in delivering the message of good news which, according to 2 Peter 1:21, states that the prophecy they delivered were not words of their but inspired words from the Holy Spirit.
- iii. The Spirit is active in the revelation of prophecy to prophets but also in the written words of Scripture known as the canon.

b. According to 1 Peter 3:18 Christ was resurrected (“made alive”) through the work of the Holy Spirit.⁴¹

41. Peter Davids in his commentary on 1 Peter says this does not refer to the Holy Spirit but is referring to the soul of Jesus in contrast to his flesh. “Thus Peter contrasts the death of Christ with his resurrection, the one happening with respect to the natural fallen human condition, the flesh, and the other with respect to God and relationship to him, the spirit.” Peter Davids, *The First Epistle of Peter*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990): 136-37. I do not have an issue with this but it seems Davids is making a case on the dative form of *pneuma* (*pneumat*) seeing it as a Dative of Sphere where Christ was raised in the sphere of a new flesh. Possible. I take it as a Dative of Means where Christ was raised by the means of the Holy Spirit. I believe Davids is avoiding attributing anything the Spirit does as personal which is a move in hermeneutics known as eisegesis where people look into the verse things that simply are not

- c. A bit of comfort we receive comes from 1 Peter 4 in the discussion of suffering under fiery trials (4:12) we can take joy that we are participating for something to be revealed in glory (4:13). Peter reiterates that, **“if you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you”** (4:14). Interpretations⁴² differ on this but the verses are comforting in that whatever our trials are we have the Spirit of the glorious Christ that is resting⁴³ on us.

III. 1 John

- a. Knowing we have the Spirit
 - i. John is concerned about knowing things as he often will begin a statement with, “This is how we know...”
 - ii. **“Those who obey his commands live in him, and he in them. And this is how we know that he lives in us: We know it by the Spirit he gave us”** (3:24).
 - iii. **“We know that we live in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit”** (4:13).
 - iv. What does this mean? It means that we can KNOW that we have the Spirit because we are obeying his commands and that we are living/walking in Him. That is how we know!
- b. Testing the spirits
 - i. **“Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world. You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. They are from the world and therefore speak from the viewpoint of the world, and the world listens to them. We are from God, and**

there. We must take into account context (which Davids does superbly) but we cannot take this verse out of the overall story of God which speaks of a personal being that inspires, talks, directs and comforts.

42. For a good introduction on possible interpretations see Simon J. Kistekmaker, *James, Epistles of John, Peter and Jude*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002): 176.

43. The word for rest in the Greek is *anapauō* and simply means to give something a rest or give one intermission from labor. Bauer, Danker, Arndt and Gingrich says it means, in this context, to settle on an object (*A Greek-English Lexicon to the New Testament and Early Christian Literature*, p. 69). Sounds a lot like the role given to the Spirit as our *paraklētos* or as our comforter!

whoever knows God listens to us; but whoever is not from God does not listen to us. This is how we recognize the Spirit of truth and the spirit of falsehood (4:1-6).

- ii. Apparently the audience John is writing to is faced with false prophets and antichrists and so there was a way in which you could tell someone had the Spirit and someone who was a false spirit.⁴⁴
- iii. Confessing that Jesus was real in the body apparently separated those who were of the Spirit and not. Those who were Spirit-filled were those who listened to the instructions of the apostle and their disciples.
- iv. It seems to not be this easy in that testing the spirits today involves a

c. The Spirit Bearing Witness

- i. **“This is the one who came by water and blood—Jesus Christ. He did not come by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. For there are three that testify: the Spirit, the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement”** (5:6-8).
- ii. The Spirit, once again, is closely linked with the work and ministry of Jesus and bears witness to Jesus so that we can have an unwavering faith in Him. The point is that “God’s testimony” (5:9) is of significantly more importance and the Spirit is involved in this work,

IV. Jude and Revelation

a. Jude

- i. **“But, dear friends, remember what the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ foretold. They said to you, ‘In the last times there will be scoffers who will follow their own ungodly desires.’ These are the men who divide you, who follow mere natural instincts and do not have the Spirit. But you, dear friends, build yourselves up in your most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit”** (Jude 17-20).
- ii. Jude deals with an audience who deals with corrupt, peverse and rebellious individuals. He encourages them to contend for their faith (Jude 3) so that nobody can take what is theirs. The ungodly people are those who do not have the Spirit. They are unspiritual and unSpirit-filled.

44. John seems to be dealing with incipient Gnosticism which claimed that anything made in this material world was corrupt so Jesus did not have a physical body. This, of course, contradicts many Scriptures and the whole idea of a priest who was like us but yet was without sin.

- iii. How do we avoid these people? Pray in the Spirit?⁴⁵ This seems to support my view that John 4:24 refers to the Spirit much like (as a possibility) 1 Corinthians 14:15 could mean “I will pray in the Spirit...sing in the Spirit.” (see also Eph. 6:18). Simon Kistemaker says, **“The Spirit takes our feeble prayers and perfects and presents them to God the Father.”**⁴⁶

b. Revelation

- i. John was “in the Spirit” on the Lord’s Day (1:10; cf. 4:10; 17:13; 21:10)
 - 1. **DISCUSSION QUESTION: *What does this mean?***
 - 2. No need to be dogmatic here but if I take this to mean that the Spirit had come upon him to give him the visions (revelations) of the throne room and of what must take place (4:10).
 - 3. It also means the state of presence he was in as one not associated with this world but associated with being in the Spirit and the Spirit took him to different places of vision (17:13; 21:10).
- ii. The Spirit and the Seven Churches
 - 1. The Spirit was involved in declaring what was wrong with the churches, what the churches needed to do to repent or what the churches were doing right.
 - 2. The formula is used verbatim seven times to each church, **“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches”** (2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22).
- iii. The Spirit is not mentioned again until 14:13 where the people are resting from their labors against the Beast and that they have steadfast endurance. For if they persevere this is what they experience according to John **“Then I heard a voice from heaven say, ‘Write: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.’ ‘Yes,’ says the Spirit, ‘they will rest from their labor, for their deeds will follow them’”** (14:13). This is pretty comforting.
- iv. Finally, in probably the most comforting fashion, the Spirit was involved in the final scene of Scripture with an invitation.

45. There is no confusion as to spirit or Spirit as the Greek text reads, “en pneumatī hagiō proseuchomenoi” which translated literally says, “in spirit holy, pray.” Taking praying as a temporal participle you could translate this verse, “build yourselves up in your most holy faith by praying in the Holy Spirit.”

46. Kistemaker, 406. He cites Romans 8:26 as support for this of which I completely agree with.

1. **“Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End. Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city. Outside are the dogs, those who practice magic arts, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idolaters and everyone who loves and practices falsehood. I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you this testimony for the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright Morning Star. The Spirit and the bride say, ‘Come!’ And let him who hears say, ‘Come!’ Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life” (22:12-17).**
2. Powerful, immeasurable and altogether comforting. At this very moment the Spirit is involved in some metaphysical, supernatural yearning for us to come and answer the call of participating in a great reward.
3. He simply says, “Come!”

CONCLUSION:

- I. We learned a lot about the Spirit in this lesson. He testifies, he works with Christ, he was involved in the Old Testament, we can pray in Him, we know that we contain Him and that he is waiting for us to make that jump to be in relationship with Him.
- II. Now, next week we talk about what we learned and how that affects us as Christians. In other words, now that we have a theology of the Spirit what does that mean for us today? What does the Spirit do for/to/through/with us right now?
- III. I leave you with this lengthy but necessary quote: **“The Holy Spirit is the vital power that bestows free mercy on theology and on theologians just as on the community and on every single Christian. Both of these remain utterly in need of him. Only the Holy Spirit himself can help a theology that is or has become unspiritual. Only the Spirit can assist theology to become enduringly conscious and aware of the misery of its arbitrary devices of controlling him. Only where the Spirit is sighed, cried, and prayed for does he become present and active. *Veni creator Spiritus!* “Come, O come, thou Spirit of life.” Even the best theology cannot be anything more or better than this petition made in the form of resolute work. Theology can ultimately only take the position of one of those children who have neither bread nor fish, but doubtless a father who has both and will give them these when they ask him. In its total poverty evangelical theology is rich, sustained, and upheld, since it lays hold on God’s**

promise, clinging without skepticism, yet also without any presumption, to the promise according to which—not theology, but—the Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God.⁴⁷

47. Karl Barth, *Evangelical Theology*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1963): 58-59.

PNEUMATOLOGY 101: A STUDY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Lesson #8: So What?

INTRODUCTION:

- I. We have briefly looked at what the Scriptures have said about the Holy Spirit and so now it seems to be a good time to do a couple of things.
 - a. First, by way of review, come up with some concluding summary statements about the Spirit.
 - b. Secondly, we will address the question, "So what?" What does this mean for us? How will this help me in my spiritual journey?
- II. Certainly this is a daunting task for one lesson but please know that we are not done yet with the Spirit and, paradoxically, the Spirit is not done with us yet.
 - a. Next week we look at what a church looks like that is filled with the Spirit.
 - b. Then we will conclude by looking at some things that are holding us back from having a relationship with the Spirit.

BODY:

I. Concluding Summary Statements.

- a. **DISCUSSION QUESTION:** *Based on the lessons that we have encountered thus far what can you remember about the Scriptures and what they say about the Spirit?* If you are teaching this lesson be prepared for whatever may come when you open the floor. Do not be discouraged if nobody answers the question as it is a lot to handle when put on the spot like that. Below are my answers that I came up with as far as I could remember. I did not cheat by looking at the Scriptures nor did I look at previous lessons but I approached the question as if I were asked in the same capacity.⁴⁸
- b. What Robbie remembered about the Spirit...
 - i. Spirit is deity.
 - ii. Spirit is personal.
 - iii. Spirit is closely connected with Christ.
 - iv. Spirit represented God's presence.
 - v. Spirit is involved in our worship.

48. Truth be told, I was in Panama City, Florida on the beach when I wrote this lesson and so I did not have the luxury of being at my desk. If you want you can check the previous lessons for main points in an effort to help.

- vi. Spirit indwells in believers.
 - vii. Spirit testifies to God that we are His children.
 - viii. Spirit comforts us.
 - ix. Spirit enables us with gifts for the common good.
 - x. Spirit is involved in fellowship.
 - xi. Spirit is concerned with sexual purity.
 - xii. Spirit is involved in keeping us holy (i.e. sanctification).
- c. Come up with some concluding remarks in your own class time or personal study. The above 12 statements would be my concluding remarks but there is so much more that I can't even put on paper so please come up with your own concluding statements.

II. So What?

- a. Perhaps you are looking for me to say something spectacular that nobody has discovered. The Scriptures are closer to 1900 years old and people have been explicating them for years and so I offer no new suggestions only simple observations from my perspective.
- b. The Spirit is omnipotent, omniscience and omni-benevolent and eternal so trying to explain the works of the Spirit is treacherous territory in the first place. **"The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may follow all the words of this law"** (Deut. 29:29).
- c. **DISCUSSION QUESTION:** *Is it ok for us to say that when it comes to knowing everything about the Spirit we just cannot know? Why or why not?* To me it seems that to say that we can know everything about how the Spirit operates and what the Spirit EXACTLY does is a statement of arrogance because we just cannot know. I am ok with that as there is a sense of beauty in the idea that the divine cannot be fit into a neat box and that there is mysteriousness about God.
- d. But a few points are necessary...
 - i. While the Spirit is supernatural and does dwell in us personally (see below) it seems that things the Spirit did in the 1st century are things the Spirit does not do in the 21st century.
 - 1. Speaking in Tongues (e.g. Acts 2; 1 Cor. 12; et al). No doubt you have come across people who sincerely believe that the gift tongue-speaking is very much alive.
 - a. The largest proponent of tongue-speaking comes from the Pentecostal movements (or charismatic)

- which adhere more than 11,000 different groups.
- b. One such movement, the Assemblies of God, state that **“The baptism of believers in the Holy Spirit is witnessed by the initial physical sign of speaking with other tongues as the Spirit of God gives them utterance.”**⁴⁹ Furthermore, **“The speaking in tongues in this instance is the same in essence as the gift of tongues, but is different in purpose and use.”**
 - c. I have also watched videos on YouTube where people are speaking in so-called tongues which appear to be genuine but it looks more like nonsensical twaddle than it does tongue-speaking that we read about in the New Testament.

2. Miracles of Healing

- a. No doubt many of you have turned on the television and have heard a televangelist proclaim that he has the gift of healing and that people need to come down front to be healed of their various infirmities.⁵⁰
 - b. What you do not see on these television shows is people being healed of AIDS, terminal cancer, cystic fibrosis or any other debilitating disease. You don't see people bringing in dead bodies and being healed like Lazarus in John 11.⁵¹
3. The Spirit is at work among his people but we miss the point of miracles in the 1st century when say they still happen today. What was the point of Pentecost and miracles in the first century? Wasn't it to establish the church and bring the Old Testament prophecy of Joel 2:28-32 to fruition? Secondly, miracles are for the edification of the church not the advancement of a ministry or the confirmation of a person in Christianity.⁵²

ii. A second point to make about the Spirit is that the Spirit is involved

49. From “Our 16 Fundamental Truths,” *Assemblies of God, USA* at http://www.ag.org/top/beliefs/statement_of_fundamental_truths/sft_full.cfm#11.

50. No doubt with a request for you to donate to their “ministry” to receive the same gift.

51. Of course, there is always that one story where someone heard that a person was raised from the dead in a remote village in Africa. If you do your research nothing ever comes of this and it is more tale than truth. A question I have is, “Why does it always have to be a remote village in Africa or South America?” Does God not work in Walla Walla, Washington or Amsterdam, Netherlands?

52. For a full response of this issue at whether miracles occur today see Jack Cottrell, *The Faith Once for All*, (Joplin, MO: College Press, 2002): 297-305.

in the conviction of hearts and the sanctification of believers.

1. **“But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment: in regard to sin, because men do not believe in me; in regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; and in regard to judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned” (John 16:7-11).**
 2. Perhaps you can retrace your own process that led you to a relationship with God. What were some feelings/emotions you encountered during that period of time leading up to your conversion? That conviction is done in part by Scripture (Rom. 1:16) but it is also done providentially through the Holy Spirit.
- iii. In my opinion, arguing about word-only or personal non-miraculous indwelling of the Spirit is a waste of time.
1. Those are strong words to say in response to so many who have put pen to paper on this subject. But it seems we are arguing (if we hold to the cessationist view that miracles do not occur by human agents) over points of knowledge more than areas of salvation.⁵³
 2. Churches have split (mainly because of preachers like myself) because they could not fellowship with someone who believed that the Holy Spirit dwelled in them personally.
 3. This is most unfortunate and if there was ever an instance of “grieving the Spirit” I strongly believe this is it.
 4. At the end of the day do our arguments, propositions, and squabbles actually change the nature of who the Spirit is? We cannot change that and arguing about this is a waste of precious time where we could be investing in church planning, organization and evangelism.⁵⁴
- e. Do you want to know why we struggle with knowing and understanding

53. There are four views traditionally held in the churches of Christ: 1) Verbal-restrictive (word-only), 2) verbal-augmentative (word but with special powers; Alexander Campbell held this view), 3) Verbal-coefficient (Spirit accompanies the Word) and 4) verbal-transcendent (Spirit acts apart from the Word. See Byron C. Lambert, “Holy Spirit, Doctrine of the,” 403-06.

54. If you really want to know what position I hold read Romans 8 and it seems clear that the Spirit dwells in us personally and works in the sanctification of the believer. “Dwells in you” does not seem to be a suggestion through the Word but a promise for those who have been baptized and raised to walk in newness of life. Those with the Spirit are said to be compelled/controlled by the Spirit.

and communing with the Spirit?

- i. This is going to seem strange but it is because we are not reading Scriptures like we should. I do believe that the spirit can act outside of the Word but I do not believe that means we neglect the Word altogether.
- ii. The author of Scripture is the Holy Spirit (2 Tim. 3:15-16) and there must be a reason He wrote the Scriptures and inspired men and there also must be a reason we have this document with us. If we do not search the Scriptures then how do we know about God? How do we know about the work of the Church? How do we know about the salvific blood of Jesus Christ that cleanses us from our wrongs? How do we if we are not immersed, enmeshed and engross in the living oracles of God?
- iii. Look at your life right now and see how much time you spend in the Word. Then look at how much time you spend texting, shopping, browsing on Facebook or other internet sites.⁵⁵
- iv. But even when you spend time with other Christians whether it is youth group, college, singles, young adults do you talk about your spirituality, Scripture and how God is moving in your lives or do you spend more time talking about movies, clothes, other people?
- v. Should we be surprised that we struggle knowing the Spirit if we are not reading what the Spirit wrote?
- vi. When the people at Pentecost had the word of God their hearts melted? Do our hearts melt in the same fashion?

CONCLUSION:

“Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace; the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God’s law, nor can it do so. Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God. You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ” (Rom. 8:5-9).

“So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts. Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, with a continual lust for more.

55. There is actually something called F.A.D. which is Facebook Addiction Disorder which is said to affect 300 million people worldwide. For some hints that you are addicted to Facebook see <http://edition.cnn.com/2009/HEALTH/04/23/ep.facebook.addict/index.html> and for some Facebook statistics see <http://www.penn-olson.com/2009/12/02/25-interesting-facebook-statistics-and-facts/>. Both are compelling and convicting.

You, however, did not come to know Christ that way. Surely you heard of him and were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus. You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness. Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body. 'In your anger do not sin': Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold. He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need. Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you" (Eph. 4:17-32).

"You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love. The entire law is summed up in a single command: "Love your neighbor as yourself." If you keep on biting and devouring each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other. So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law. The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other" (Gal. 5:13-26).

Having read those verses above can you say that you are in the Spirit and are walking by the Spirit? We will help you in two ways...1) we will look at what the church needs to do to live Spirit-ually and then 2) we will look at what is holding YOU back.

PNEUMATOLOGY 101: A STUDY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Lesson #9: A Pneumatic Church

INTRODUCTION:

- I. We studied in Acts 2 where the Spirit empowered the Christians at Pentecost to speak in tongues and that instance was the beginning of Church as Christians began to do things together as Christians. Peter preached to the masses about the prophecy in Joel and how it was fulfilled through the Spirit's work and that these Jews were witnessing the dawning of a new era. They could be participants in this new era but it meant doing one thing: admitting that they had crucified Jesus and that, for the most part, their zealous adherence to Pharisaical Judaism was, at best, missing the mark. The solution? Repent and be baptized then receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

- II. After that...this is what the New Testament church went about the business doing: **"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved"** (Acts 2:42-47).

- III. I have a chart below as a litmus test of sorts to see how your church matches up with the Pentecost church.

	Yes	No
Are you devoted to the apostle's teaching?		
Fellowship?		
Breaking of Bread?		
Prayer?		
Are all believers together or united?		
Do all believers have everything in common?		
Do you sell our possession and give to those in need?		
Do you meet together on a consistent basis?		
Do you meet together with glad and sincere hearts?		
Do you praise God continually?		
Do you enjoy the favor (grace) of all of the people?		
Is your church growing numerically?		

- IV. If you checked yes to a bunch of the above things then I say awesome! It is

- my guess that many of our churches are not doing what initially fueled, flamed and fired the New Testament Church.
- V. My question to you is why not? Why are we not accessing our full potential as the paid-for, died-for, Spirit-empowered church of the living God? What can we do to become the church not only that resembles the 1st century but is uniquely cultural embodying the gospel in the 21st century? This is the direction of this lesson.
- VI. I used this quote before from Karl Barth's book *Evangelical Theology* in two lessons ago but thought it would also be appropriate here: **"The Holy Spirit is the vital power that bestows free mercy on theology and on theologians just as on the community and on every single Christian. Both of these remain utterly in need of him. Only the Holy Spirit himself can help a theology that is or has become unspiritual. Only the Spirit can assist theology to become enduringly conscious and aware of the misery of its arbitrary devices of controlling him. Only where the Spirit is sighed, cried, and prayed for does he become present and active. *Veni creator Spiritus!* "Come, O come, thou Spirit of life." Even the best theology cannot be anything more or better than this petition made in the form of resolute work. Theology can ultimately only take the position of one of those children who have neither bread nor fish, but doubtless a father who has both and will give them these when they ask him. In its total poverty evangelical theology is rich, sustained, and upheld, since it lays hold on God's promise, clinging without skepticism, yet also without any presumption, to the promise according to which—not theology, but—the Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God."⁵⁶**

BODY:

I. Signs of our UnSpirit-ual Situations⁵⁷

- a. Disunity
- i. Disunity is not an unknown concept to Scripture (see 1 Cor. 1:10-17) but is probably one of the most intolerable things Paul dealt with.
 - ii. On a number of occasions Paul was quick to point out the absolute necessities of striving for unity. **"Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace"** (Eph. 4:3). **"If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded,**

56. Karl Barth, *Evangelical Theology*, 58-59.

57. These are not exhaustive so feel free to add or take away given your own current church context.

having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others” (Phil. 2:1-4).

- iii. I could point out many other Scriptures and even, in a sense, the whole history section of the Old Testament that deals with the kingdom (Judges-Nehemiah) is a testimony of what unity can do to a nation and subsequently what disunity can do to a people.
- iv. You can tell pretty quickly whether a congregation is dysfunctional by the way they treat each other.
- v. Unity is the key to Spirit-ual growth and we are either going to die or we are going to grow because of the way we treat each other.
- vi. In our churches the one thing that kills us is the fact that we do not know how to be with each other. I am completely floored that a group of people can meet together 2-3 times a week and not know a single thing about each other.
- vii. Cliques are the one thing that destroys churches. Churches cannot operate in a cliquey fashion...if you don't like the word clique, here are some synonyms: mafia, crowd, circle, faction, clan, mob, gang, insiders, outfit, pack, posse, ring, set and society. Some groups in churches make you feel like you have to have a special signet ring to join their special hang-out group. I get tired of it. Then you have the group of people who hates the cliques and in so doing they start talking about all of the people who will not hang out with them and how this group of people did not invite them to this event. In so doing they start their own clique called the anti-clique clique.
- viii. The problem? Disunity, favoritism, selfishness and an unwillingness to meet new people or work with people you disagree with.
- ix. Disunity kills but unity heals.

b. Evangelism

- i. The first century Christians were busy witnessing to the community about the wonderful acts of God and they knew they were empowered by the Holy Spirit. Whether this meant they were to be stoned (like Stephen) or imprisoned (like Peter, Paul and others) that was irrelevant because to them evangelism and the advancement of the kingdom of God was the most important thing in the world.
- ii. I am not sure we care about the souls of other people to talk to them about the most important thing in the world. You know why we probably do not tell more people about an amazing relationship with Jesus? WE PROBABLY DO NOT HAVE MUCH TO TELL THEM!!!
- iii. That statement may upset you...may disgruntle you...may discourage you...but that may be because it's the truth.

- iv. A Spirit-filled church is one that is bursting out of the seams at sharing the redemptive story of God to other people.

- c. Worship

- i. If our worship is supposed to be the moment at which we believe God is present then why does it feel like nobody is present? Why are we so dry in our worship? So mundane? So lifeless? Why are there so many people sleeping during worship? Why are there so many people who refuse to open up their Bibles when the Word is read or preached? Why are we not on our knees in tears or on our feet in joy when we worship?
 - ii. Of course it is easy to blame it on the song leader, the preacher or the elders for creating an atmosphere of boredom. Perhaps, what if we stopped the blame and simply looked in the mirror. What if we said, "I cannot control what songs will be led, what message will be preached but I can give it my all because God is in the midst of our worship and He deserves just that!"
- d. The list is certainly not conclusive as perhaps the main culprit is leadership issues where we are not being led/shepherded like we are supposed to either by eldership, deacons or even ministers.

II. Moving from the Mundane to the Miraculous

- a. There is no formula that will get a church from point A to point B. Especially since most churches do not know what Point B really is. I think there are a few ways to do this...
- b. Confession and Repentance
 - i. Perhaps we are doing well in our churches and this is just simply a reminder.
 - ii. I think what we need to do is to quit the name-calling, finger-pointing stage of denial in our churches and simply confess our sins. I would love to see an eldership or ministry team stand up in front of the church and say, "We believe we have been walking by the flesh and leading you in that way so we confess that to you and now wish to be led by the Spirit."
 - iii. That would be amazing! God has promised his believers that if they turn from their sin he will forgive those who do so (cf. 1 John 1:9).
 - iv. Confession is not enough but we must turn from our ways in order to do spiritual things.
 - v. **"Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died,**

and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory” (Col. 3:1-4).

c. Teaching

- i. We need more teaching. Teaching is what grounds us, instructs us, corrects us and lifts us up. We do not need this touchy, feely classes like “8 Principles to the Better You” or, “Living Lady Like from the Book of James” rather we need serious biblical teaching about how to live our lives as 21st century Christians.
- ii. One Christian author noted, **“In a wide-ranging study of a number of major American denominations, the Search Institute of Minneapolis determined that the most important factor in producing a mature, well-balanced, and well-integrated Christian faith was not excellent preaching, worship, small-group fellowship, or anything else but *adult Christian education*”** (emphasis mine).⁵⁸
- iii. We should never sigh because we “have” to study the book of Leviticus. We should never roll our eyes when someone wants to spend time in Revelation or Ezekiel.
- iv. Our attitudes on how we approach the text say a lot about who we are.
- v. We also need to be taught how to read the text appropriately so that we do not approach the text haphazardly. We also need to be taught how to worship as it is not enough to criticize people if they have never been taught how to worship.

d. Sharing

- i. Luke Timothy Johnson said, **“God’s Word unfolds with every breath we breathe.”**⁵⁹
- ii. This means we must be in spiritual conversation with one another about our lives and in congregations we must continually ask the question, “What is the Spirit calling us to do?” on a consistent basis.
- iii. We need to sit down and have a process of discernment where each has an equal voice (women included) and we, as a group, ask important spiritual questions.
- iv. **“In discernment, we are given the opportunity to know the divine will, to see God who is self-disclosing and who is forever committed to having a covenantal relationship with God’s people.”**⁶⁰

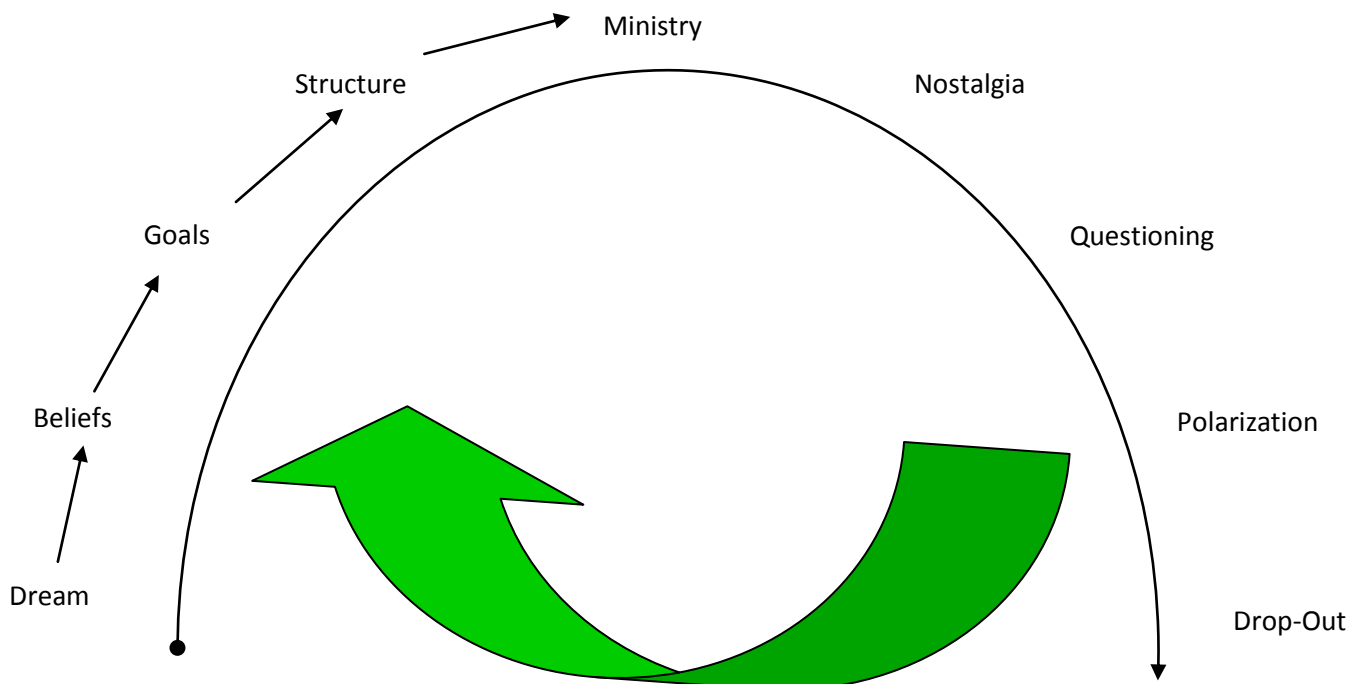
58. John G. Stackhouse, Jr., *Making the Best of It*, (New York: Oxford UP, 2008): 315.

59. Luke Timothy Johnson, *Scripture and Discernment* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1996), 15.

60. Danny E. Morris and Charles M. Olsen, *Discerning God’s Will Together* (Bethesda, MD: Alban Publications, 1997), 37.

e. Vision

- i. We need to cast vision and be visionaries and continue to dream big in our churches.
- ii. Consider the chart below which illustrates my point.⁶¹



CONCLUSION:

- I. I wrote a paper in my Gospel and Culture class at Lipscomb called, "Main Street: An Imagined Future." I will conclude with its conclusion and I hope it is worth your attention.
- II. Veni creator Spiritus!

Where does Main Street end up? This question is one only God can answer but I do believe he gives the members of Main Street the tools necessary to cultivate and create culture in a way in which the gospel can uniquely spread throughout the community of Springfield. We are many millennia removed from the Garden of Eden yet we are still given the same task that Adam and Eve were: tend the garden. We may not be able to change *the* world but we may be able to change our world as many of us see it in Springfield, Tennessee. So we have circled back to the title of this paper: an Imagined Future. This place is a reality and is a place of peace which Stackhouse defines (from

61. Dr. Steve Joiner, "Theology of Ministry," (lecture, Lipscomb University, Nashville, TN, October 12, 2009). I believe much of Dr. Joiner's research in this lecture was based on Robert D. Dale's book *To Dream Again: How to Help Your Church Come Alive*, (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2008).

the Hebrew word *shalōm*) as, “each element (human, animal, plant, and so on) flourishing as itself, enjoying flourishing relationships with everything else, and joining with all creation in [a] flourishing relationship with God.”⁶²

So what are we to do? Zechariah probably summarized it best when he envisioned a day in which all people would seek the Lord and be drawn to Jerusalem not because of a fancy message, a strategic marketing plan or a sophisticated ministry program, but because these people were seeking to be with those who were seeking God: **“Thus says the Lord of hosts:**

Peoples shall yet come, even the inhabitants of many cities. The inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, ‘Let us go at once to entreat the favor of the Lord and to seek the Lord of hosts; I myself am going.’ Many peoples and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem and to entreat the favor of the Lord. Thus says the Lord of hosts: In those days ten men from the nations of every tongue shall take hold of the robe of a Jew, saying, ‘Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you’” (Zech. 8:20-23).⁶³

The “imagined future” of Main Street is more than preaching the good news to a lost and dying world—the imagined future of Main Street is to *be* the good news to that world!

62. Stackhouse, Jr., *Making the Best of It*, 202.

63. To which Lee Camp adds, “The gospel invites us to forsake the way of playing the world’s games, and to follow the good way of Christ. The gospel calls us to the adventure of being mere disciples” (*Mere Discipleship*, 209).

PNEUMATOLOGY 101: A STUDY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Lesson #10: Living Spirit-Filled

INTRODUCTION:

- I. We have looked at many Scriptures about the Spirit and have discussed the role of the Spirit in our lives and in our churches.
- II. The design of these lessons is two-fold: 1) Informative (knowledge is not intrinsically evil) but also, 2) Transformative. If we look to the Scriptures to proof-text, to find out only what we can cognitively know then we miss the point of the Scriptures themselves. Not everything is cut-and-dry when it comes to the Holy Spirit. There is much beauty in the mystery of the Holy Spirit that should provide comfort and consolation in our most difficult times.
- III. The goal is to find a relationship with the Holy Spirit that is fruitful, impactful and void of hypocrisy and pretense.
- IV. But how do you do that? We are going to look at some principles from Francis Chan's book *Forgotten God*, specifically chapters 4-7. I challenge you to consider some of these things, look at the Scriptures to see if they are correct and then consider what they are calling you to do.

BODY:

I. Do you even want a relationship?

- a. That is an important question to ask because imbedded in that question is a series of other questions that are not so easy to answer.
 - i. Nowhere in Scripture do you find kings, disciples, apostles or prophets (or even Jesus for that matter) leading the Spirit. They are always the ones who are *led by the Spirit*. **"For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live, because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father" (Rom. 8:13-15).**
 - ii. This is a difficult point to understand but we are not in control of the Spirit but the Spirit is in control of us. Chan makes an excellent point, "I honestly believe that most of us—while we might *say* we want to be led by the Spirit—are actually scared of this reality. I know I am. What would it mean? What if He asks you to give up something you're not ready to give up? What if He leads you where you don't want to go? What if he tells you to change jobs? To

move? Are you willing to surrender to him, no matter where He wants to take you? Am I?"⁶⁴

- iii. That is easy to say but often we are confronted with two equal choices that are both good. What do we do in that instance? The Spirit is not so easy to discern but could we accept that and simply submit?
- iv. You might say to yourself, "I am exactly where the Spirit wants me!" **"It is true that God may have called you to be exactly where you are. But it's absolutely vital to grasp that He didn't call you there so you could settle in and live out your life in comfort and superficial peace. His purposes are not random or arbitrary. If you are still alive on this planet, it's because He has something for you to do."⁶⁵**

b. Obstacles to a real relationship

i. Comfort (Maybe Your Life is Too Safe)

1. **"From my own experience, I have felt closest to God when nearness to Him was a necessity...Why would we need to experience the Comforter if our lives are already comfortable?"⁶⁶**
2. Look around your own life and see if your life is way too comfortable. When the church relies on God the most is when the church is in the most distress. When Stephen, in Acts 7, delivers the most powerful defense of Christianity he does so knowing his physical life is in peril.
3. Do you think we actually trust in God? I think my life has been designed and molded in such a way in which it makes it easy to worship God. It is easy to be a Christian because I have a savings account, a checking account, two vehicles that are paid for, a house, air conditioning, good health, etc. If I were to get in real financial trouble I could probably call my dad (I wouldn't but I could) and he would bail me out of my "tough times." But it is materialism that so often squelches our relationship with God. What if all those things were taken away?
4. I am not saying it is bad to have these things or to live right where you are at but if we are not taking up our cross daily then we are not doing what we need to do.
5. **"If all you want is a little Jesus to 'spiritualize' you life, a little extra God to keep you out of hell, you are missing out on the fullness of life you were created for. Not only this, you don't**

64. Chan, *Forgotten God*, 90.

65. *Ibid.*, 92.

66. *Ibid.*, 106-07.

need the Holy Spirit. You don't need the Holy Spirit if you are merely seeking to live a semi-moral life and attend church regularly. You can find people of all sorts in many religions doing that quite nicely without Him."⁶⁷

6. I have heard bible classes, sermons and devotionals (even preached them) that challenge the people to take up the cross and follow Jesus yet their lives (mine too) does not fit that mold. **"Taking up the cross' has become a euphemism for getting through life's typical burdens with a semi-good attitude. Yet life's typical burdens—busy schedules, bills, illness, hard decisions, paying for college tuition, losing jobs, houses not selling, and the family dog dying—are felt by everyone, whether or not they follow the Way of Jesus. When Jesus calls us to take up our cross, He is doing much more than calling us to endure the daily, circumstantial troubles of life. The people in Jesus' day were very familiar with the cross. Having witnessed crucifixion, they understood the commitment and sacrifice of taking up the cross. It is a call to radical faith."**⁶⁸
7. There are ramifications of that kind of faith that, if we are honest, most of us want to avoid.
8. Truth be told, we act more like life-insurance underwriters who assess risk instead of visionary entrepreneurs who accept and embrace risk knowing that the rewards outweigh the difficulties.

ii. Busyness

1. We are a people of busyness and our actions reek of noise that clutters the work and ministry of the Spirit.
2. How can we have a relationship with someone if we do not spend time with them?
3. DISCUSSION QUESTION: How many of you have planners that you use? How many of you write on your planners, "Time with God," on them?
4. We are not planning our schedules accordingly and I am just as guilty.
5. **"Our lack of intimacy often is due to our refusal to unplug and shut off communication from all others so we can be alone with Him."**⁶⁹

67. Ibid., 122.

68. Ibid., 124-25.

69. Ibid., 109.

II. What do we do?

- a. Repent! Isn't that what we should always do? **"The Redeemer will come to Zion, to those in Jacob who repent of their sins," declares the Lord. 'As for me, this is my covenant with them,' says the Lord. 'My Spirit, who is on you, and my words that I have put in your mouth will not depart from your mouth, or from the mouths of your children, or from the mouths of their descendants from this time on and forever,' says the Lord"** (Isaiah 59:20-21).
 - i. We should confess our wrongs, our insufficiencies, our stagnate/lukewarm lifestyle and seek forgiveness and welcome a new lifestyle.
 - ii. I know this sounds typical but time and time again we read of stories in the Old and New Testament of a God who loves his people even when they blatantly disregard God's commands.
- b. Be Patient
 - i. Rome was not built in a day and neither is a relationship with the Spirit.
 - ii. **"Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit"** (2 Cor. 3:17-18).
 - iii. Two things should provide comfort: 1) there is a growth process that ages. Like wine, it gets better with time. 2) It comes from the Lord!
- c. Follow where He leads...
 - i. Do not quench the Spirit but embrace the fact that He might be calling you to do something amazing and something different.
 - ii. Consent to this new opportunity and allow God to do things in your life to advance His kingdom!!!
- d. Teach others!
 - i. **"...we've created a whole brand of churches that do not depend on the Spirit, a whole culture of Christians who are not disciples, a new group of 'followers' who do not follow. If all God asked for were faceless numbers to fill the churches, then we would be doing all right."**⁷⁰
 - ii. We must teach others what we learn and tell our story to others so

70. Ibid., 143.

that people can see the work of God in our lives and know that God is not only found in Scripture but He is alive in our bodies and our souls.

CONCLUSION:

- I. Once again...there is no formula, no “3 S’s to a Spiritual You” and no 12 Steps to a Spirit-filled Christian. It takes discipline to develop a relationship, it takes struggle, it takes trust, it takes suffering, it takes hope and it takes a genuine thirst for something else.
- II. **“Jesus is calling us to be willing to suffer anything and forsake everything for the sake of the gospel. His call is to love those who have cheated us in business; those who have spread nasty rumors about us; those who would kill us if they could; those who disagree with us politically, practically and fundamentally. His call is to consider everything a loss for His sake. His call is for total surrender. He calls us to give up all that we have, to give even to the point of offering up our lives as a living sacrifice. His call means realizing that His power us made perfect in our weakness, that when we are weak we are also strong” (2 Cor. 12:9-10).⁷¹**
- III. Let us work and in the words of the early church fathers, “Maranatha!”⁷²

71. Ibid., 125.

72. “Come, O Lord!” See 1 Cor. 16:22.