

The Promise of the Spirit

Series: The Empowered Life

Brad Bailey – June 12, 2022

Intro

Today... I am excited to be launching a new series.

And to help us get started ...I want to consider how we think about our relationship with God. When we think of about our relationship with God ... many of us naturally identify first and foremost with Christ. I believe that Jesus of Nazareth ...was indeed the Christ... Christ means the anointed one... whom God had spoken of coming to reconcile us with God and restore all things.

I believe that he was the embodiment of God...exact representation of His being...,his nature.

Apart from Christ...I can know about **God's power through creation...** his **goodness through beauty...**I can know **pieces of justice** through my limited sense of fairness...**BUT only through Christ can I know God's mercy...** the forgiveness that is only God's to give.

I believe that being united with Christ.... We are united with God and are able to become united with one another.

So quite rightfully...I identify with aspiring to be a follower of Christ...to follow him in the way of life with God.

BUT it was Christ who was so clear...that he was **inviting us into a wider relationship...** into a dynamic relationship with the eternal God ...united in three persons.... Father, Son, and Spirit.

And we do well to grasp...that this is why Christ spoke so much about the Father... defined all he did as only what the Father was doing... and that he only did what the Father was doing....and that if you have seen him, you have seen the Father (because they are one in nature)... and that his mission... was all about **bringing us home to the Father.**

But that is not all...at the climatic juncture came... he said **something else** was at hand.

I want to encourage us to **listen to Jesus.**

It helps to really **consider the position of these first disciples.**

They were just common lives... who had encountered someone different... and that difference was clearly taking on cosmic proportions. He is not like anyone from earth...in his authority... power. And he had hosen them personally to be his team.

He **called them** to be **partners....gave them purpose... power. And as they came to Jerusalem... he spoke of dying... of leaving them. It's all over.**

If he leaves us...and simply ascends back to His Father in the heavens... we are simply left powerless to wait.

Jesus understands... but he has news. It's not over.

Let's listen to some of what Jesus told his followers was at hand...

John 14:15-18, 23, 25-26

¹⁵ "If you love me, keep my commands. ¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— ¹⁷ 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^{ab} in you. ¹⁸ I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.

²³ ...**"Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. ...²⁵ "All this I have spoken while still with you. ²⁶ But the Advocate, 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 15:26-27

²⁶ **"When the Advocate 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. ²⁷ And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning.**

John 16:5-7

⁵ ... I am going to him who sent me.....⁶ ... you are filled with grief because I have said these things. ⁷ But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.

John 16:12-15

¹² "I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. ¹³ But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the 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. ¹⁴ He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you. ¹⁵ All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you."

And then after he had risen... in the days he spent with his disciples he said...

Luke 24:49 (NLT)

"And now I will send the Holy Spirit, just as my Father promised. But stay here in the city until the Holy Spirit comes and fills you with power from heaven."

May we receive the blessing of these words from the Lord.

Here **Jesus is declaring the promise of the Holy Spirit.**
He is introducing his disciples to the coming of the Holy Spirit.

The Scriptures had long made reference to the Spirit of God... but only in reference to various manifestation of God working. In the very opening chapter of the Bible... in Genesis... it says that the **Spirit of God moved over the initial creation** to bring order.

The Spirit **breathed spiritual life into human life.** The Scriptures speak of the Spirit coming about the ancient prophets to speak what God was speaking.

Here Jesus is telling of **something entirely new at hand.**
He is telling that the time is now at hand in which **the Spirit will come to all who receive him.**

> **It is the fulfillment of God's coming redemptive power at work through human life. [1]**

First thing to hear...is that this is good.

John 16: 7

it is for your good that I am going away... if I go, I will send him to you.

Why was it for their good? ... our good?

"I will not be leaving you as orphans"... how many of us can feel like orphans... abandoned ... left on our own.

The Holy Spirit bears the Personal Presence of God

John 14:16

...he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever

John 14:17-18

...he lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.

The Spirit is inseparable in nature... so that Christ can speak of he himself being with us.
Then he says that the Father and he will come make their home in us.

John 14:23

...we will come to them and make our home with them

The Spirit manifests God's presence... and that includes his presence in us.

Jesus understands the significance of the disciples wanting him to be present with them.

He knows how important it is not to be alone.

When he knew that his fate of suffering was at hand...he went to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray...and he asked them to come with him.

He understands that **we were never meant to be ultimately alone.**

That is WHY he is saying this is good. (Literally better.)

Because he bears **one physical body**... with the same limitations as any...but he is going to **send another presence.**

There is a way in which someone we have known...continues to influence us... as we internalize their presence. In a similar way... there is an aspect of becoming familiar with Jesus... becoming so familiar with his life through the Gospels... that we gain something of the mind of Christ...the heart of Christ. But Jesus is telling them...and us...that something even more dynamic is at hand. We are spiritual beings...and his Spirit...will be indwell us...and engage our spirit.

He uses a Greek word Paraclete ...here translated **Advocate**... at its root it means 'alongside"... in a **helping manner**...and as such is translated by various words... including **Comforter, or Encourager, or Counselor.**

The powerful presence of God which first created the world... breathed spiritual life into human life...and worked mighty acts of God... is now going to bear that presence in us.We are to recognize that...

The Holy Spirit is a distinct member of one personal God manifest in three persons.

When Jesus sends them into the world... he is quite clear... when he says...

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

The word baptize means to immerse... he is saying that we are to be immersed into a life with God that is with the eternal community of the Father, Son, and Spirit. And by this we recognize that the Spirit is personal. While clearly associated with the power and work of God... the Scriptures speak of the Holy Spirit as speaking...as leading...and as the Spirit grieving. [2]

Our relationship to the Holy Spirit...is not to an **impersonal spiritual power.**

The Spirit is Personal. That is difficult for us to grasp...because our sense of personhood is so associated with a body. But it is very clear that the Spirit bears a distinct nature... a will entirely aligned with the Father and Son...but serving that will in a distinct personal way.

I can't presume to fully understand the mystery of God as one God in three persons – Father, Son, and Spirit. Yet I realize that as I consider the longings of my soul... my inner being... that only in such a triune God do I find the fullness of the relationship I long for. We can think of it this way.

Father – establishes who I am

Son – reaches me in my separation, and reunites me with who I am

Spirit – empowers and enables who I am to be... provides a pervading presence

This leads to identifying that...

The Holy Spirit is an Empowering Presence

It was the Holy Spirit who was **there in creation**...bring form to everything we know as the created world.

It was the Holy Spirit who **called Abraham... spoke to prophets... moved in miracles.**

It was the Holy Spirit who **brought the Christ into the womb of Mary.**

It was the Holy Spirit who **guided and empowered the works of Jesus.**

The very word Christ means the anointed one from God... and Jesus began his ministry with that anointing of the Spirit...and declared the very words which God had spoken through the prophet...that the Spirit of the Lord is upon me to set captives free... give sight to the blind bring good news to the poor.

It was the Holy Spirit who **Christ was so prepared to have sent to fulfill what he had begun.**

The Spirit empowers the fulfilment of God's purposes.

How? A few core ways that are described to us...

- **Convicting us** of our need; prompting repentance (John 16:8-11)

When he comes, he will convict the world of its sin, and of God's righteousness, and of the coming judgment. - John 16:8

- **Connecting us;** confirming our position as children of God (Rom. 8:15)

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."** - **Romans 8:15**

There are times we may feel defeated in our aspirations... but as we turn our hearts to God...we realize that the very nature of such a desire... is that of one who knows He is our Father. [3] It is the Spirit that conforms that nothing can separate us from the love of God.

- **Changing us;** reorienting our character to the nature of Christ ("fruits of Spirit" Gal. 5:22-23)

The Spirit helps us to become rooted and grounded in love... and being rooted in God's love and led by His nature... is transforming. [4] The Scriptures are very specific that the fruit of the Spirit...in other words... what comes from the Spirit...is love, joy, peace patience, self control. [5]

John Stott said [6]...

It is no good giving me a play like Hamlet or King Lear, and telling me to write a play like that. Shakespeare could do it; I can't. And it is no good showing me a life like the life of Jesus and telling me to live a life like that. Jesus could do it; I can't. But if the genius of Shakespeare could come and live in me, then I could write plays like his. And if the Spirit of Jesus could come and live in me, then I could live a life like his.

- **Counseling us** with truth, guidance, and revelation (John 14:17; 16:12-14)

When he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. – John 16:13

- **Comforting us** with peace (John 14:27; Acts 9:31), as a deposit from heaven (2 Cor. 5:5-7)

Then the church ... enjoyed a time of peace and was strengthened. encouraged by the Holy Spirit.... – Acts 9:31

Paul explains..."God, who has given us the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come. Therefore we are always confident and know that as long as we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord." - 2 Corinthians 5:5-6

That is what a deposit will do...it allows you to be confident of what will come.

- **Empowering us...** for the works of God through various gifting (Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 12:7-11)

Jesus worked through the empowering of the Spirit... sent the Spirit to work with us. [7]

And Paul say how that will reveal how everyone will be gifted in different way. A unique favor and flow. [8]

So let's close quickly considering...

What is our relationship to the Holy Spirit?

That is what we will be engaging over the next several weeks.
But let me help us begin that process.

On Screen: NOW CHANGE TO A SINGLE SLIDE WITH ALL IN THIS SHORTER LIST

An empowering personal presence

- **Convicting us** of our need; prompting repentance
- **Connecting us**; confirming our position as children of God
- **Changing us**; reorienting our character to the nature of Christ
- **Counseling us** with truth, guidance, and revelation
- **Comforting us** with peace, as a deposit from heaven
- **Giftng and empowering us**

I believe that most of us can identify with most of these dynamics.

If we look at the works of the Spirit....we will realize that the Spirit has indeed been at work in us.

Accompanying power.

We have all experienced something of God's Spirit at work... something that was beyond us.
Yet... there is an element of our participation.

Spirit... convicts and leads me to repentance....but it is I who must repent.
The Spirit is at work to change my nature...but only as I allow that love... grace to change me.

On screen: REMOVE LIST

Jesus captured this in what he told his disciples...

“When the Advocate 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. And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning. - John 15:26-27

Each have a part on testifying...in advancing the work of God... and it captures the nature of partnering with the Spirit.

Our relationship with the work of the Holy Spirit is a partnership.

We need to trust and depend on the work pf the Spirit which we can see. The work of the Holy Spirit is compared to the wind.

Jesus said

Just as you can hear the wind but can't tell where it comes from or where it is going, so you can't explain how people are born of the Spirit (John 3:8 NLT).

In fact... the word translated as Spirit is also used to speak of wind and breath.

Wind is invisible.

One cannot see the wind. In the same way, God's Spirit is invisible. God, by nature is Spirit. Jesus made this clear.

Wind is the most uncontrollable sources of power.

Jesus said that the Spirit blows where it will...we don't control when it comes...nor how strong...nor what direction.

There are those who have become adept at partnering with it.

Those who are **hot air balloonist...**

Can have the nest vessel and crew... no wind...no movement.

Those who sail... know they are partners... that they are dependent.

Can have the nest vessel and crew... no wind...no movement.

But they do partner....and they play a role.

They learn how to wait... and then to work with the wind.

They know that they can't be presumptuous... and claim to control the wind. They develop a humility.

They qualify where they plan to go... knowing they are dependent on the wind.

At the same time... they are not passive. They learn about the nature of the wind and how to work with it.

Jesus is calling us to become partners with Spirit of God.

Like a little boy whose dad invites to mow the lawn. The little boy is straddled in front of his dad's legs... and has his hands up on the lawn mowers big handles... and feels as if he is pushing it along. His head and hands are engaged...but couldn't do it without the force of the father.

Dr. Bill Bright of Campus Crusade for Christ tells this story of a **famous oil field called Yates Pool:**

During the depression this field was a sheep ranch owned by a man named Yates. Mr. Yates wasn't able to make enough on his ranching operation to pay the principal and interest on the mortgage, so he was in danger of losing his ranch. With little money for clothes or food, his family (like many others) had to live on government subsidy.

Day after day, as he grazed his sheep over those rolling West Texas hills, he was no doubt greatly troubled about how he would pay his bills. Then a seismographic crew from an oil company came into the area and told him there might be oil on his land. They asked permission to drill a wildcat well, and he signed a lease contract.

At 1,115 feet they struck a huge oil reserve. The first well came in at 80,000 barrels a day. Many subsequent wells were more than twice as large. In fact, 30 years after the discovery, a government test of one of the wells showed it still had the potential flow of 125,000 barrels of oil a day.

And Mr. Yates owned it all. The day he purchased the land he had received the oil and mineral rights. Yet, he'd been living on relief. A multimillionaire living in poverty. The problem? He didn't know the oil was there even though he owned it.

Many of us can live feeling we don't have enough to make it... that we don't have enough to meet all the needs and challenges of life.... when there is another whole source of provision and power at hand. > The Holy Spirit.

Notes:

1. When the Holy Spirit descended on the disciples of Christ on the Feast of Pentecost, Peter referred to the event as a fulfilment of Joel's prophecy (Acts 2:14-21).

Joel 2:28–29

I will pour out my Spirit on all people.
Your sons and daughters will prophesy,
your old men will dream dreams,
your young men will see visions.
Even on my servants, both men and women,
I will pour out my Spirit in those days.

2. Reflecting the personal nature of the Spirit:

Acts 15:28 (NIV)

It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us not to burden you with anything beyond the following requirements:

John 16:13 (NIV)

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.

Acts 1:16 (NLT)

"Brothers, it was necessary for the Scriptures to be fulfilled concerning Judas, who guided the Temple police to arrest Jesus. This was predicted long ago by the Holy Spirit, speaking through King David.

1 Cor. 2:13 (NIV)

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.

Romans 8:14 (NIV)

... those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.

Ephes. 4:30 (NLT)

And do not bring *sorrow* to God's Holy Spirit by the way you live. Remember, he is the one who has identified you as his own, guaranteeing that you will be saved on the day of redemption.

3. Also: The Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness. For example, we don't know what God wants us to pray for. But the Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words. - Romans 8:26 (NLT)

4. Ephesians 3:14-19, "For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, 15 from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, 16 that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, 17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, 19 and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

5. Gal. 5:22-23 - But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

6. Taken from [The Radical Disciple: Some Neglected Aspects of Our Calling](#) by John R. W. Stott
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7. 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

8. Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. ⁸ To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, ⁹ to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, ¹⁰ to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues,^[a] and to still another the interpretation of tongues.^[b] ¹¹ All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines. - 1 Corinthians 12:7-11