



“And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased” (Luke 3:22).

The Son and the Spirit

Central Truth: God anointed Jesus with the Holy Spirit.

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The Holy Trinity of deity is revealed to us as three persons: Father, Son, and Spirit. And yet, the three are one (I John 5:7). There is perfect unity of nature, motive, intent, and action between them.

There came a time when *“the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world”* (I John 4:14). The Son came willingly and in full agreement with the Father, saying, *“Lo, I come to do thy will O God”* (Hebrews 10:9). The Holy Spirit worked in perfect agreement with the Father and the Son by foretelling His coming and ministry, effecting His conception in the incarnation, and continuing to minister in the life of the incarnate Christ the whole of His time on earth.

The relationship of God the Son and God the Spirit is a neglected but rewarding study. It is the theme of this week's lesson. Section V of last week's study gave a list of nine ministries of the Spirit in relation to the Son. Four of those ministries are considered in this lesson.

I. THE SPIRIT AND CHRIST'S BIRTH

“And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God” (Luke 1:35).

Conception! That is the work of the Holy Spirit in the birth of Jesus

Christ in human flesh, according to Luke 1:26-38.

The angel of the Lord appeared to the chaste virgin named Mary and announced that she would bear the Christ child. Mary was amazed. She was a chaste virgin. She had no husband. Conception seemed impossible. She asked, *“How shall this be?”* (verse 34). The angel explained, *“The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God”* (verse 35).

How would the conception of an infant come to pass in the womb of Mary? God would perform a creative miracle by the personal presence of the Spirit just as He effected the creative miracles recorded in Genesis 1. No coitus of any kind, natural or supernatural, would occur. God would speak the creative word and it would be so.

What a chaste and beautiful way for God to come in human flesh! No one but He would have thought of such a way.

Men stand today in awe before Jesus Christ, for He is the *“only begotten Son”* of the Father (John 3:16).

II. THE SPIRIT AND CHRIST'S BAPTISM

“Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased” (Luke 3:21, 22).

Identification! That is the word to indicate the coming of the Spirit upon Jesus at His baptism in water by the hands of John the Baptist (Luke 3:21, 22; Matthew 3: 13-17).

Jesus considered baptism in water an important rite. He walked a distance of some sixty miles to receive baptism at the hands of John. He even insisted when John hesitated, saying, *“Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness”* (Matthew 3:15). So He was baptized. Jesus was praying as He arose from the baptismal waters and *“the heaven was opened, and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased”* (Luke 3:21, 22).

The coming of the Spirit upon Him, with the voice of the Father from heaven, was testimony that God identified and approved Jesus as the Messiah of Israel and the Savior of those who believe. John the Baptist understood that and said, *“I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize*

with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God” (John 1:33, 34). Therefore John could say with confidence, *“Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world”* (John 1:29).

III. THE SPIRIT AND CHRIST'S MINISTRY

“And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about. And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all. And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears” (Luke 4:14-21).

Power! The Holy Spirit was the power by which God the Father did His work in the world through God the Son. This is a mystery, but it is evident Bible truth.

Jesus' power during His incarnate ministry was not His power as second person of the godhead. It was the power of the Father expressed through Him by God the Holy Spirit.

When Jesus came in human flesh, “He emptied himself” (which is the literal translation of *“made himself of no reputation”* in Philippians 2:7). He did not empty himself of the divine nature, for the fullness of deity resided in Him even in His physical body (Colossians 2:9). But He emptied himself of all appearance as deity (no glory, for instance, and He experienced limited knowledge — Luke 2:52 — and suffered temptation, though God cannot be tempted with evil — Luke 4:1-13; James 1:13). He could thus empty himself and still be God because it was a self-emptying, a self-limitation.

Jesus said concerning His self-emptied state, *“The Son can do nothing of himself”* and *“I can of mine own self do nothing”* (John 5:19, 30).

Jesus was empowered and enabled for His ministry by the anointing with the Holy Spirit at His baptism in water. The Bible reports, “*The Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him*” (Luke 3:22). Peter explained the significance of that, saying, “*God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him*” (Acts 10:38). Luke reports, “*And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee*” (Luke 4:14). He explained His power by saying, “*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me*” (Luke 4:18). The result of His anointing was “*his word was with power*” (Luke 4:32).

The power manifest in the personal ministry of Jesus on earth was the power of the Father communicated through Him by the Holy Spirit who anointed Him. And that is the way Christians are empowered today!

IV. THE SPIRIT AND CHRIST'S ANOINTING

“The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all:) That word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judaea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him” (Acts 10:36-38).

What happened at Jesus' baptism when the Spirit descended and abode on Him? “*God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power*” (Acts 10:38). Anointing! That is the key word. Anointing of the skin was commonly practiced in ancient times as relief from sun and lime dust in the Middle East. It was done for secular uses (Luke 10:34; 7:46; II Samuel 14:2; John 12:3). It was also used for sacred purposes (Exodus 29:7; I Samuel 9:16; I Kings 19:16; Isaiah 61:1). Two different words were used to distinguish secular anointings (Hebrew *sukh*, Greek *aleipho*) from sacred anointings (Hebrew *mashah*, Greek *chrío*).

God promised that the Savior who would come would be “The Anointed One.” Thus He is called “*Messiah*” (from the Hebrew *mashah*) and “*Christ*” (from the Greek *chrío*).

In ancient times, a prophet, priest, or king was anointed to indicate his separation unto God and the beginning of his ministry for God. Jesus was anointed with the Holy Spirit at His baptism in water by the hands of John the Baptist to indicate His separation to God and the beginning of His ministry for God. All the messianic expectations are fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

He is the great Prophet, the eternal King, and the only Priest who could make one offering for sin forever.

But the anointing with the Holy Spirit did not cease when the Father anointed the Son with the Spirit. The Bible declares, *“Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts”* (II Corinthians 1:21, 22).

Who anoints Christians? God the Father anoints Christians. Each Christian is anointed when he is saved, and should live in the sufficiency of that anointing with the Holy Spirit.

If the ministry of the Holy Spirit was so essential in the ministry of Jesus, how essential He must be in our service for God today. Be filled with the Spirit!

Questions

1. What is meant by “three persons” in Holy Trinity?
2. How was the Holy Spirit active in the birth of Jesus?
3. How did the Holy Spirit identify Jesus as the Messiah?
4. How was the Holy Spirit related to power in Jesus' ministry?
5. How is John 5:19 related to Acts 10:38 and Luke 4:14?
6. When, why, and how was Jesus anointed with the Holy Spirit?
7. How are Christians related to anointing with the Spirit today?
8. What does anointing with the Spirit mean in your life?