



St. Andrew Academy

What Christians Believe and Why It Matters

Week 6

“The Holy Spirit”

“The holy catholic church”

1



“... the Holy Spirit ...” **The Holy Who?!**

- ❖ The Spirit is the **personal presence** of God
 - In the Bible, the Spirit *searches, knows, teaches, dwells, accomplishes, gives life, cries out, bears witness, has desires, is grieved, helps, intercedes, works all things together, strengthens, and is lied to.*
- ❖ Paul calls the Spirit, the *Spirit of Jesus Christ*
- ❖ The Spirit is always referred to using personal pronouns!!
 - Always WHO, never “it” – we have to retrain ourselves!

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The Presence of God in the OT

- ❖ The “deliciousness” of presence
- ❖ The Israelites understood themselves to be the people of the presence – the ones with whom God would dwell
 - Moses at Mt. Sinai, the place of God’s dwelling
 - Exodus 19
 - The tabernacle – the moveable dwelling place of God
 - Exodus 25-27
 - Exodus 33:14-16
 - The temple – the “permanent” dwelling place of God
 - Ezekiel 10: the departure of God’s presence, God’s glory
 - Malachi 3:1 – the promised return of God to the temple
- ❖ God’s presence and God’s Spirit
 - Isaiah 63:9-14

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The Spirit as the Renewed Presence of God

- ❖ This is key to understanding Paul and the NT
 - For Paul, God has returned to the temple. The Spirit is how God presently dwells in his holy temple.
 - Jeremiah 31:31-34 – The new covenant written on hearts, not the tablets of Moses
 - Compare to 2 Corinthians 3:1-6
 - Ezekiel 36-37; esp. 36:22-32 (see v. 27) – God will give his people a new heart and a new spirit
 - Compare to 1 Thessalonians 4:7-8
- ❖ The Spirit dwells in and among the people of God
 - Romans 8:9-11; Galatians 4:6; see 1 Cor 16-17 & 2 Cor 6:16
- ❖ Acts is the story of the Spirit guiding and directing the creation and expansion of the church. The book could be called *The Acts of the Spirit*.

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The Spirit in John's Gospel (Barclay)

- ❖ The Spirit is the *paraclete*, the Comforter
 - In the Greek, a *paraclete* is “someone who is called in to enable a person to cope with life in any situation when life is too much.”
- ❖ The Spirit is Jesus’ alter ego, the one who is take the place of Jesus in the lives of his disciples. Jesus may have returned to the Father, but the disciples would be separated from the “Spirit of Christ.”
- ❖ The Spirit is the “Spirit of Truth.”
 - The Spirit teaches us the truth, reminds us of it, interprets the truth for us, and brings new truth. The Spirit guides all persons into the truth.
- ❖ The Spirit both convicts of sin (enables us to understand that we are sinful people) and convinces us that Jesus is righteous and will judge good and evil.

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The Holy Spirit and the Godhead

- ❖ Though “Holy Spirit” is used only twice in the OT, the early Christians came to use it as the formal name for God’s Spirit. Paul uses “Holy Spirit” about as often as he uses “Lord Jesus Christ.”
- ❖ Christians came to understand that in the one God, Yahweh, there exists a community of three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Indivisible yet distinct. A unity of three. Equal and eternal.
 - The Holy Spirit is truly and completely God, every bit as much as Jesus and every bit as much as the Father.
 - Jesus is fully God, but not all of God. The Holy Spirit is fully God, but not all of God. The Father is fully God, but not all of God.
- ❖ Gordon Fee writes, “We must not merely cite the creed, but believe and experience the presence of God in the person of the Spirit.”
 - *The Spirit is God’s empowering presence in our lives.*

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“... the holy catholic (universal) church ...”

- ❖ The people of God
 - “I will walk among you, and be your God, and you shall be my people” (Lev 26:12).
 - The biblical story is the story of God’s relentless pursuit of his people.
- ❖ The body of Christ
 - “He [Jesus] is the head of the body, the church” (Col 1:18)
 - “... for building up the body of Christ” (Ephesians 4:12)
- ❖ A community of the Spirit
 - “For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body – Jews or Greeks, slaves or free – and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.” (1 Corinthians 12:13)

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What is the church in the NT?

- ❖ In the NT, the Greek word for church is *ekklesia*
- ❖ This refers to a newly created community of believers gathering to worship and praise God in response to the ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.
 - Paul went around the Mediterranean founding colonies of the new human race!
 - “So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation! Everything old has passed away, everything has become new.” (2 Cor 5:17, NRSV)
- ❖ The image of a community of believers is one of the most dominant in the NT.
 - The NT world was enormously communal and this worldview permeates the New Testament.
 - This commitment to the family of Christ, before one’s birth family, caused a lot of problems for Christians. In the Roman/Greek culture, Christians were seen as destroyers of “family values.” See Matthew 12:46-50.

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The Church as God's Temple

- ❖ The Christian church in Corinth – a mess!
 - “Church” refers not to a building but to the people of God
 - There are probably no more than 150 Christians in Corinth meeting in house churches
- ❖ 1 Corinthians 3:16-17 (“you” is plural here)
 - “Do you not know that you are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in you? If anyone destroys God’s temple, God will destroy that person. For God’s temple is holy, and you are that temple.” (NRSV) [look also at v. 9, where Paul compares the church/people in Corinth to a building]
 - The church/people in Corinth is God’s temple in Corinth – and God dwells in his temple – God’s presence is his Spirit!
- ❖ See also 2 Corinthians 6:16-18

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What is our place in the church?

- ❖ We are still individuals!
 - “Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.” (1 Corinthians 12:27)
- ❖ We all have been given gifts to contribute to the building up of the church and its work!
 - “The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ,” (Ephesians 4:11-12)
- ❖ There are certain ways we are to live with one another in community!
 - “As God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.” (Colossians 3:12-14)

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Growing in the Spirit

Dallas Willard's "Curriculum for Christlikeness"

- ❖ What are **not** our objectives?
 - Following sets of externally-visible rules
 - Profession of perfectly correct doctrine
 - Being active at church
 - Assorted super-spiritual states or experiences
- ❖ What **are** our objectives?
 - "... to bring apprentices to the point where [1] they dearly love and constantly delight in that 'heavenly father' made real to earth in Jesus and [2] are certain that there is no 'catch' to it all."
 - A **trusting** mind and heart filled with "the great and beautiful God."
 - Remove our automatic responses against the Kingdom of God
 - "Yeah . . . I hear all that Sermon-on-the-Mount stuff, but I have to live in the real world!"

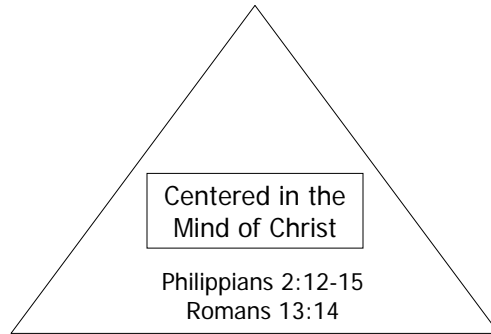
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The Golden Triangle of Spiritual Growth

The Action of the Holy Spirit

John 3:5 – Romans 8:10-13 – Galatians 5:22-26



Ordinary Events of Life
"Temptations"
James 1:2-4 Romans 5:1-5

Planned Discipline to
Put on a New Heart
Col 3:12-17 2 Peter 1:5-10

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From *The Divine Conspiracy*, Dallas Willard, HarperCollins, 1998



Spiritual Disciplines

- ❖ We are practiced in sin! Are we practiced in the Spirit?
- ❖ What is a spiritual discipline?
 - A practice designed to help us shed our dependence on what is natural (“of the flesh” in Paul) and depend on the reality of God’s kingdom.
- ❖ Two disciplines of abstinence (Willard)
 - Solitude
 - Silence
- ❖ Two disciplines of positive engagement (Willard)
 - Study
 - Worship
- ❖ Others: Fasting, prayer, meditation, service, celebration
- ❖ Resources:
 - Richard Foster’s, *Celebration of Discipline*
 - Dallas Willard’s, *The Divine Conspiracy*
 - John Ortberg’s, *Getting the Life You’ve Always Wanted*

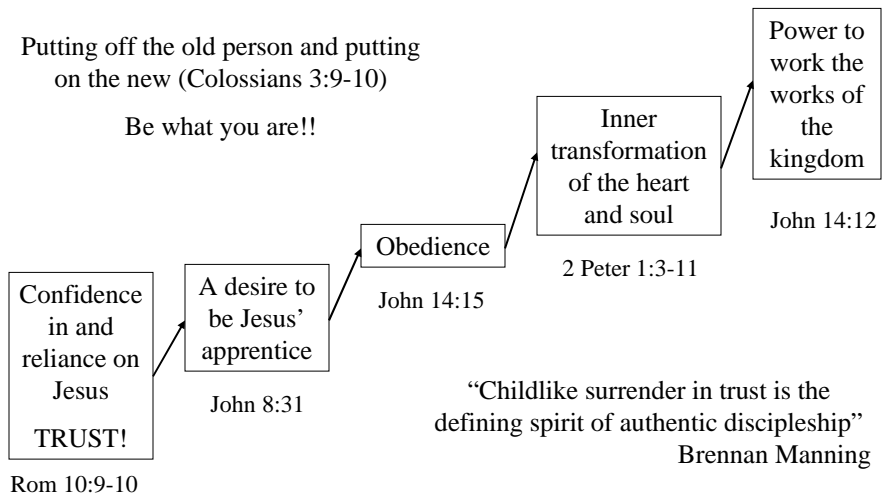
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Five stages in growth to eternal life (Willard!)

Putting off the old person and putting on the new (Colossians 3:9-10)

Be what you are!!



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