

The Work of the Holy Spirit

Throughout eternity, the Holy Spirit has been actively involved in all of the works of the Divine Trinity. There are three basic areas of God's work: Divine decrees, Creation (the execution of His decrees), and sovereign rule (preservation and providence).

God's decrees involve God's eternal purpose.

In eternity past, God determined His plan and purpose for all things according to His own wise and holy counsel. Since God is omniscient and holy, His plan has not failed and has not been altered. All of God's decrees originate in His own unconstrained and unlimited purpose. Everything that God has planned and purposed ends in His own glory.

There are two kinds of God's decrees.

Some of God's plans and purposes are efficacious. These are things that God has planned and purposed which He brings about or produces the intended result by His Own sovereign power. The creation is part of God's efficacious decrees.

The second area of God's decrees are the things He determines to permit. These include the free will of man and the plan of salvation. God freely offers salvation to whosoever believes on the Lord Jesus Christ. God's decrees totally encompass everything that happens. The magnitude of His decrees are so profound that only God is able to do it. We can see much of what God has planned and purposed in the Bible, yet, there are actions that only God knows anything about.

Romans 11:34 NKJV "For who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has become His counselor?"

God asked Job, "Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth?" (Job 38) Then He continued to question Job about things that are only known to God.

Creation and the execution of His decrees

From the beginning until the consummation of all things, God's sovereign will shall be accomplished by the might of His power and wisdom. When we look at the nature and attributes of God, we noticed that God is absolutely holy and incapable of partiality or unfairness. Everything that God has done from the creation of all things until the redeemed of the Lord are with Him in a new heaven and earth end in His glory. It is impossible for humanity to understand the mind and will of God in everything that He has done. When we consider the works of His hands, we stand in awe of His power, wisdom and manner in which God has accomplished His determined will.

God's sovereign rule involves His preservation and providence.

God is constantly and continuously maintaining all things together with all of their properties and powers.

Nehemiah 9:6 NKJV You alone are the Lord; You have made heaven, The heaven of heavens, with all their host, The earth and everything on it, The seas and all that is in them, And You preserve them all. The host of heaven worships You.

Colossians 1:17 NKJV And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.

Hebrews 1:3 NKJV Who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power...

He does this by the strength of His own will and power. Nothing that God has created is able to stop Him from accomplishing His determined plan. His providence is His sovereign control over His creation, (Psalms 103:19; 104:14; 147:16-18; Job 9:5-7; 37:10; 38:12-35; Acts 14:17).

God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are equally active in everything God does.

- The power to bring forth proceeds from the Father: (the authorship power).
- The power to arrange proceeds from the Son: (executive power to put plans, actions, and laws into effect).
- The power to bring to completion or to perfection proceeds from the Holy Spirit: (energizing power). (Job 33:4; Psalms 33:6; John 1:13; Romans 11:36; 1 Corinthians 8:6)

In everything, God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are co-equal, co-eternal and in perfect unity. The Holy Spirit's work in every phase and sphere is to bring to completion and to perfection all that is conceived by the Father and executed by the Son.

In relation to creation, the Holy Spirit brings order to the universe, (Genesis 1:2).

Genesis 1:2 NKJV The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

The Holy Spirit was brooding or hovering over the chaos. The will of God (the Father) is for order to supersede or follow disorder. The Word of God (God's Son) announced His will, "Let there be light." The Son pronounced the will and plan of the Father. Then the Spirit's brooding over chaos produced light, creating and garnishing the heavens. So, what the Father purposed, the Holy Spirit was bringing to completion and perfection.

Psalms 33:6 NKJV By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, And all the host of them by the breath of His mouth.

By the Word of God and by the breath of His mouth came all of the systems in the fulness of their entirety.

Psalms 104:30 NKJV You send forth Your Spirit, they are created; And You renew the face of the earth.

It is the continual work of the Holy Spirit that sustains the present physical order and supports life, (Psalms 104:10-14, 30). After God formed the man out of the dust of the ground, God breathed the breath of life into his nostrils and man became a living being, (Genesis 2; Genesis 2:7; Job 33:4). God made the material man of the dust and His breath made him a spiritual and living being.

In relation to Revelation, the Holy Spirit is the Author of the Scriptures

He gave special gifts and qualifications for the edification of believers, (1 Corinthians 12:4, 8-11, 28, 29). What was unknown in other ages about the mystery of Christ, the Holy Spirit has made known to the apostles and prophets, (Ephesians 3:2-5). The revelations that were given to prophets were independent of their own thinking.

2 Peter 1:21 NKJV For prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

The prophets spoke of things they were not certain of, but the Holy Spirit imparted prophetic knowledge of things that would happen, (1 Peter 1:10-12). What is revealed through the gospel is preached to you by those individuals the Holy Spirit has sent. The Scripture repeatedly lets us know that the Holy Spirit spoke, witnessed and revealed all prophetic utterances, (Hebrews 3:7; 10:15,16; Psalms 95:7,8; Jeremiah 31:33...). He gave the thought and words, (1 Corinthians 2:13) and inspired the Scriptures, (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 3:15,16).

He is the interpreter of the Scriptures.

John 16:14 NKJV He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you.

1 Corinthians 2:9-14 NKJV But as it is written: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him." But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. These things

we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

The Holy Spirit in the New Testament

In the Old Testament, chosen individuals were the object of the Spirit's grace. In the New Testament, the body of Christ, the church, is the object of the Spirit's grace, (1 Corinthians 12:13).

In the Old Testament the Holy Spirit came upon, took hold and passed into certain individuals. When the Spirit of God came mightily upon them they were equipped and changed, (Samson, Saul, David...). Their works, words, and testimony was of the power of the Spirit that was on them. By coming upon them those individuals, they were equipped to do the work the Holy Spirit had purposed. The Holy Spirit dwelt in some of those (Joseph, Moses, Joshua, Elijah). Whenever the Holy Spirit was active on individuals, they were fitted, filled and equipped for special service to God.

The Holy Spirit's work in relation to Christ.

The Holy Spirit was involved in the incarnation, in Christ's ministry, and resurrection.

Incarnation

During the Messianic period, John the Baptist announced One Whose distinguishing work would be baptizing people with the Holy Spirit and with fire, (Luke 3:16). The Holy Spirit filled and empowered John the Baptist, (Luke 1:15-17), and his mother and father, (Luke 1:46, 67).

In Luke 1:35 When the angel of the Lord appeared to Mary, he said, *"The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God."*

As a result of the Holy Spirit's work, Mary was enabled to give birth although she was a virgin. The generative power of the Holy Spirit gave Jesus His physical nature and human body. By the same power of the Holy Spirit, Jesus was enabled to live a sinless life and do the work of the Father.

Jesus' Ministry

Acts 10:38 NKJV "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him."

When Jesus was ready to embark on His divinely appointed ministry, He went

to the Jordan River to be baptized by John. As Jesus came up out of the water, the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove, and a voice came from heaven which said, *“You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased,”* (Luke 3:21-22). Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil, (Matthew 4:1-11; Mark 1:12-13; Luke 4:1-13). After arising victorious over every temptation, Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, (Luke 4:14).

In Acts 10, Jesus' earthly life, ministry, and resurrection were through the power of the Holy Spirit. He received wonderful gifts of power to accomplish these things. It was through the eternal Spirit that Christ offered Himself and His blood as a sacrifice to God to cleanse our conscience, (Hebrews 9:14). This is an important point for each of us to consider. The Holy Spirit gives power to live a victorious life even in the face of death and sacrifice.

Resurrection

1 Peter 3:18 NKJV For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit,

After Jesus was resurrected from the dead, He gave special instructions to believers that were gathered together. He told them that the Holy Spirit would be given as the Promise of the Father, (Luke 24:49, John 20:22; Acts 2:33).

The Holy Spirit's work in the Church

The ministry and work of the Holy Spirit through the church was made possible by Christ's victory and ascension.

The Promise of the Father

John 7:38-39 NKJV He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.” But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

The Promise of the Holy Spirit spoke of something entirely new and different that would happen.

Acts 1:4-5 NIV On one occasion, while he was eating with them, He gave them this command: *“Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.”*

Acts 1:8 NIV 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.

Jesus spoke about this Promise several times before.

John 14:16-17 NIV 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 14:26 NIV 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 15:26 NIV 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 16:7 NIV 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.

John 16:12-14 NIV I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. 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. He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you.