

June 6, 2008  
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## **The Holy Spirit Worldview—Biblical Theology**

### **A. Theme: The Holy Spirit—Power to Do the Impossible**

#### **B. Purpose**

The purpose of this series is to help the listeners understand the role of the Holy Spirit in their lives, particularly in respect to developing the ability to live as effective disciples of Christ in all areas of their lives.

This concept is very important to address, for unlike any other religion, Christianity does not simply tell men and women how they ought to live, but it also provides a supernatural power to do so. The intent behind this series is to help people become more sensitive to the power that is available through the Holy Spirit to enable them to live for the glory of God in spite of Sin and personal weaknesses (sins and character flaws). When discipleship is truncated from an emphasis on the power of the Holy Spirit, it often results in legalism (see for instance Stephen Dintaman, “The Poverty of the Anabaptist Vision” *Conrad Grebel Review* (Spring 1995): 205-208).

#### **The logic of the series is as follows:**

Message 1 establishes some basic concepts about the Spirit, particularly the notions of “sealing” and “indwelling.”

Message 2 emphasizes the role of the Spirit in resisting the inherent human tendency to distrust God. One of the critical roles of the Spirit is to reassure our hearts in regards to God.

Message 3 will emphasize the power that is available through the Holy Spirit to do those things that are necessary for the building of the Kingdom and yet seem impossible to do from a human perspective.

#### **C. Evangelism, Apologetics, Education**

This series can serve an evangelistic purpose, as we remind the audience of the reality of Sin, salvation in Jesus Christ, and transformation and power to live the new life through the power of the Spirit.

The apologetics and educational purposes are served by providing the audience with a strategy that may enable them to grow in Christ and face the various challenges they have (domestic—parenting, professional, personal, witnessing, etc.).

### **D. Further Ideas**

It may be helpful to identify one person or two who could provide a short testimony of how they have experienced the power of the Holy Spirit in their lives in terms of facing personal challenges they have (ex. a person who is overcoming a bad temper, managing an addiction, etc.).

My personal hope is to encourage people to become more “charismatic” in the good and sober sense of the term.

This series could also represent a good opportunity to begin to raise the whole issue of the gifts of the Spirit.

### **E. Themes**

#### **Message 1**

Theme: Who is the Holy Spirit?

Some ideas:

Why a series on the Holy Spirit (see suggestions above)?

The fundamental role of the Holy Spirit

**“Seals” the believer.**

**Ephesians 1:13-14** <sup>13</sup> And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, <sup>14</sup> who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession-- to the praise of his glory (NIV).

This is a very important concept, particularly for new believers (and perhaps some older ones) who are plagued by fears and uncertainties regarding their position in Christ. One of the most difficult concepts to understand in the Christian faith is the concept of grace. We are saved by grace, adopted into God's family by faith, and maintained in that family by faith. The “sealing” of the Holy Spirit is the absolute guarantee that once we embrace the person of Christ, we become children of God. We become indwelled by the Spirit of God.

See also 2 Cor. 1:22; Gal. 4:6; etc.

#### **Indwells the believer.**

If the “sealing” of the Spirit is something that is more “ontological” (being) in character, the indwelling relates more specifically to the “existential” work of the Spirit. Under this second heading, the speaker can highlight the various roles the Spirit plays in our lives:

\*Helps us pray.

\*Gives us victory over sin.

\*Enables to see how we can partner with God.

\*Etc.

See for instance: John 7:37-39; 14:26; 15:26; the multiple allusions to the work of the Spirit in the Book of Acts; Rom. 5:5; 8:1-27; 14:17; 2 Cor. 10:2; Gal. 3:2; etc.

Michael Green's book: *I Believe in the Holy Spirit* can be a very good resource to get at some of the basics.

If the speaker is to adopt a systematic or thematic approach, the message can emphasize the two elements noted above: **the sealing of the Spirit** (the baptism of the Holy Spirit) and **the indwelling of the Holy Spirit**. The first emphasizes human "positioning"—adoption into the family of God. The second emphasizes the power we need to live as children of God. Both concepts are important for new (and older) Christians to have a sense of subjective peace as far as their status as children of God is concerned, and divine power and ability to overcome the power of sin in their lives and do what God asks them to do. This thematic could also be the object of two distinct messages.

**Overall, it is most important thing to connect the power of the Spirit available to believers to mission. This means that the speaker must also remind people of the life-and-death mission the Church has been given and, by extension, each Christian.**

### Message 2

Genesis 1:2: "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" (NIV).

Genesis 1:2 emphasizes the love and care that God shows towards humanity by using the image of the Spirit who "hovers" over creation. The verb "to hover" emphasizes profound care and attention (similar to a mother "hovering" over a newborn).

The foundation of effective and joyful service is the knowledge and conviction that we are loved.

### Message 3

A case-study: Samson (Judges 13-16).

The Spirit of God is given to enable men and women to do those things that seem humanly impossible and yet necessary for the furtherance of the Kingdom of God.