

Awe of the Holy Spirit in Jesus' Ministry

March 24, 2019

Last week we concluded our study of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament by looking at passages that looked ahead to the Holy Spirit's involvement in the life of the Messiah. This morning we're going to look at the fulfillment of some of those passages in the life and ministry of Jesus as we discover the Holy Spirit's involvement in Jesus' life. And my hope is for a deeper appreciation and awe of the Holy Spirit's role in Jesus' life and ours as well. And it's important to remember up front that the Holy Spirit who equipped and empowered Jesus to live his life and do ministry is the exact same Holy Spirit that is living inside of every believer for those exact same purposes.

1. The Holy Spirit was instrumental in and around Jesus' birth

The first involvement of the Holy Spirit in the human life of Jesus occurred before he was ever born and actually didn't directly involve Jesus. It involved his cousin, **John the Baptist**. It occurred when the angel appeared to John's father, **Zechariah**. In an incredible moment, when Zechariah, was lighting the altar of incense, suddenly an angel appeared and told him that he and his elderly wife, Elizabeth, were going to be blessed by God with a child. And that wasn't all. He was also told that he would be a very special child. The angel said: *He will be a joy and delight to you, and many will rejoice because of his birth, 15 for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He is never to take wine or other fermented drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even before he is born.* Luke 1:14-15 *"Filled with the Holy Spirit even before he is born."* This marks a stark contrast to the Spirit's involvement in people's lives in the Old Testament. Back then the Spirit would land on people to empower them to perform remarkable tasks, like serving as a prophet or king, or building the Tabernacle. But the Holy Spirit would come upon people, and always after they were born. So, right here we see a change in how the Holy Spirit operated prior to this. We don't have any record of someone being filled with the Holy Spirit prior to them being born, except perhaps Jesus.

The next appearance we see of the Holy Spirit was in the conception of Jesus himself.

- When the angel informed **Mary** that she was going to get pregnant with a child she naturally was confused, since she was a virgin, as to how this was going to happen. The angel explained it to her this way. Luke 1:35 (NIV) *The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.*
- Later this same angel confirmed that this is exactly what happened in explaining Mary's pregnancy to a very confused and no doubt heartbroken **Joseph**. (Matthew 1:19-20)
- We also read during this time that both of John the Baptist's parents, **Zechariah and Elizabeth** were filled with the Holy Spirit: Elizabeth in reaction to Mary visiting her and Zechariah to enable him utter words of prophecy right after his son was born. (Luke 1:41, 67).
- 40 days after Jesus' birth, his parents went to present him in the temple and there's another fascinating occurrence of the Holy Spirit's work. **Luke 2:25-28 (NIV)** *Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was on him. 26 It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. 27 Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required, 28 Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying:*

Here we have a great example of the Spirit's work in someone's life.

1. First we read that the Spirit was upon him (like in the O.T.), revealing that he wouldn't die until he saw the long awaited Messiah
2. and then prompting him to go to the temple on the very day that Jesus was to be presented.
3. And the Spirit must have pointed out who the Messiah was.

2. The Holy Spirit conveyed the Father's blessing

Matthew 3:16-17 (NIV) *As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. 17 And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."* (also Mk 1:9-11; Lk 3:21-22; John 1:32-34)

3. The Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted by the Devil

Matthew 4:1 (NIV) *Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.* (Mark 1:12-13; Luke 4:1-2) Why would the Spirit do this. After all didn't Jesus teach us to pray, *"Father, lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil"*? But the truth is that temptations are designed by Satan to cause us to sin, they can actually be opportunities for great spiritual growth when we rely on God to deliver us. And that's exactly what Jesus did. Every single time Satan tempted him in the wilderness Jesus merely quoted from God's Word. He let God's words do the fighting for him, which is a great model for us.

Additionally, the Spirit leading Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted is a stark and powerful reminder that even in the midst of our temptations God is still right there with us, just like He was with Jesus. **1 Corinthians 10:13** reminds us that God will always provide a way out of every temptation, and that way out may be reminding yourself that God is right there with you and is ready, willing and capable of bringing you successfully through it.

4. The Spirit empowered Jesus for ministry.

Right after he was tempted Jesus went back home and it says, *Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside.* Luke 4:14 (NIV)

Shortly after arriving home Jesus went to the synagogue to worship. And as he was there he was asked to read the daily Scripture. And this is what happened...

He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:

"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him. He began by saying to them, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing." Luke 4:17-21 (NIV) Jesus is claiming that he's the fulfillment of that prophecy. And it says everyone spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips. However, the next statement from their lips was, "Isn't this Joseph's son?" In other words they are saying, we know this man, he grew up in our neighborhood. He's as common as you and I. What right does he claim to be the Messiah. Jesus responds with a couple of examples from the Old Testament of God rejecting the Israelites and bringing His message of hope and healing to Gentiles. In response to that they drove him out of the synagogue, out of town and to the edge of a cliff to throw him off. However, he walked right through the crowd and went on his way.

This Holy Spirit empowerment included having the power to cast out demons and perform miracles. The Apostle Peter, in recounting Jesus great deeds to Cornelius said:

Acts 10:38 (NIV) *...God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him.* (see also Mt. 12:28; Luke 5:17b)

5. The Spirit gave Jesus great joy

After the 70 disciples returned from preaching the good news about the coming of God's kingdom and demonstrating it by healing the sick and casting out many demons it says:

Luke 10:21 (NIV) *At that time Jesus, **full of joy through the Holy Spirit**, said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this is what you were pleased to do.*

6. The Holy Spirit empowered Jesus' teaching

The Spirit gave Jesus the words to say

John 3:34 (NIV) *For the one whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God gives the **Spirit** without limit.*

John 6:63 (NIV) *The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you—they are full of the **Spirit** and life.."* (see also Acts 1:1-2; John 14:10b)

7. The Spirit empowered Jesus to die on the cross

Hebrews 9:14 (NIV) *How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who **through the eternal Spirit** offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!*

I take it from this statement, that God was giving Jesus the strength to get through the most excruciating experience of his whole earthly existence. Similarly, God will give you the strength to get through every difficult experience in your life. A good practice, if you feel exhausted by what you're going through is to simply say to God, "God help me!" And according to **Romans 8:26** the Spirit will intercede for you to the Father. The Spirit will convey your aching heart to the Father. I'll talk more extensively about that in 2 weeks when we focus on the Holy Spirit's role in our lives.

8. The Spirit raised Jesus from the grave

1 Peter 3:18 (NIV) *For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but **made alive in the Spirit**.* (see also Romans 8:11 and

- The Father raised Jesus (Acts 2:24) and
- Jesus said he would raise himself (John 2:19; 10:18)

9. The Spirit is now dispensed by Jesus

Acts 2:33 (NIV) *Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised **Holy Spirit** and has poured out what you now see and hear.* Peter proclaims this to the crowd gathered in Jerusalem for the observance of Pentecost 50 days after Jesus' death. The reason the crowd saw and heard the disciples speaking in various tongues allowing them all to understand God's message of salvation was because Jesus was now seated with the Father in heaven and pouring out the Spirit on everyone. This was the dawning of a whole new day in the history of the Kingdom of God and everyone was now eligible to be a recipient of the Holy Spirit in their lives.

10. The Holy Spirit will continue Jesus' ministry:

- a. He will remind us of what Jesus taught (John 14:26)
- b. He will convict the world of guilt and sin (John 16:8-11)
- c. He will glorify Jesus (John 15:26; 16:14)

Conclusion of the Spirit and Jesus:

When Jesus came to earth he let go of his Godly attributes and was born as a man in a human body. And so, as we read about Jesus' life we see a man living his life unlike anyone has ever done before, by living totally dependent upon the Holy Spirit in every aspect of his life. The Spirit was instrumental in his birth and then came down in a remarkable way at his baptism and led him the whole rest of the way, even in his ascension back up to heaven to be seated beside the Father.

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