



CHRIST COMMUNITY
CHURCH
Changed Hearts. Changed Lives. Changed Community.

The Holy Spirit

in the Gospel of John

Introduction

Throughout the history of the church, numerous theologians and scholars have made the observation that the Holy Spirit is the least understood member of the Trinity. Despite John Calvin being referred to by B.B. Warfield as the “theologian of the Holy Spirit,” churches within the Reformed tradition have been accused of shying away from teaching and preaching on the Holy Spirit.¹ This is particularly troubling given Abraham Kuyper’s assertion that, “When God comes into direct contact with (us) it is the work of the Holy Spirit to effect such contact.”² This means that we cannot understand or interact with God the Father without the work of the Holy Spirit. Martin Luther makes an even bolder claim when he writes, “Neither you nor I could ever know anything of Christ, or believe on him, and obtain him for our Lord, unless it were offered to us by and granted to our hearts by the Holy Ghost through the preaching of the gospel.”³ Ultimately, we cannot know and be redeemed in Christ the Son to God the Father without the intercession of the Holy Spirit. Given the critical role that the Holy Spirit plays personally in our redemption in Christ and reconciliation with God the Father, we must grow in our understanding of His person and work before seeking to understand His giving of gifts and miraculous workings.⁴ Sinclair Ferguson makes the same point in this way: “The fact that within the economy of the divine activity (the Holy Spirit) does not draw attention to himself but to the Son and the Father is actually a reason for us to seek to know him better, to experience communion with him more intimately, not the reverse. He is to be glorified with the Father and the Spirit.”⁵ We hope that this sermon series from the Gospel of John will help us grow in our knowledge of the Holy Spirit and enjoy greater communion with Him as well as the Father and the Son as a result.

¹ Many other churches and denominations are guilty of narrowly focusing on the benefits of the Holy Spirit like the charismatic gifts and miracles at the neglect of His person and work.

² Abraham Kuyper, *Concise Works of the Holy Spirit* (Chattanooga: AMG Publishers, 2009), 34.

³ Martin Luther, *Luther’s Larger Catechism* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1978), 73.

⁴ Understanding what and how the Holy Spirit works in and through us (i.e. the fruits, gifts, and supernatural workings) will also be important after establishing a firm foundation in His purpose for coming and serving the glory of God in testifying of Christ. Thus, the current preaching plan is to have a yearly sermon series on the Holy Spirit (in addition to passages that show up in other series on biblical books) so as to build on this foundation being laid.

⁵ Sinclair B. Ferguson, *The Holy Spirit: Contours of Christian Theology* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 186.

The Gospel of John serves as the best place to find the biblical formation of our doctrine of the Holy Spirit given the several discourses by Christ Himself on the person and purpose of the Holy Spirit. The other Gospels contain a few passing references to the Spirit with no synoptic parallels to John's teachings from Christ on the subject.⁶ Dave Jenkins summarizes John's teaching on the Spirit in this way: "John has intentionally demonstrated in his Gospel a view of the Holy Spirit that is relational, personal, and intimate: One who longs to breathe new life into those who come to Jesus and to sanctify the Beloved in the Word by washing them with the sanctifying power of the Word of God."⁷ The early chapters of John concerning the life of Jesus detail His and our need for the Holy Spirit as a result of our shared limitations in our humanity. According to Bruce A. Ware, the fact that Christ needed the Holy Spirit in His earthly ministry serves as evidence of His true humanity:

"...what could the Spirit of God contribute to the *humanity* of Christ? The answer is: everything of supernatural power and enablement that he, in his human nature would lack. The only way to make sense, then, of the fact that Jesus came in the power of the Spirit is to understand that he lived his life fundamentally as a man, and as such, he relied on the Spirit to provide the power, grace, knowledge, wisdom, direction, and enablement he needed, moment by moment and day by day, to fulfill the mission the Father sent him to accomplish."⁸

Christ's need for the Spirit reveals our even greater need for the person and work of the Holy Spirit given our greater limitations as a result of our fallen nature. Chapters 14-16 in John contain Christ's most concentrated discourses on the Spirit as He prepares to suffer death by crucifixion for the sins of God's people. As John Owen observes, "It is the Holy Spirit who replaces Christ's bodily absence and who brings to fulfillment all the promises made to the church."⁹ In condescending to replace Christ's bodily presence in this world, the Holy Spirit becomes our Comforter, Advocate, Helper, and Truth. Stanley Hauerwas and William H. Willimon summarize the benefits of these names in this way: "The advocate continues to plead for us, to represent us to God in ways greater than our ways, and to speak on our behalf to God better than we could speak for ourselves. At the same time the advocate is God representing God to us, revealing God to us in ways that we could not have come up with on our own."¹⁰ For us to grow in our knowledge of the Holy Spirit is to grow in our knowledge of

⁶ The Gospel of Luke is a distant second in references to the Holy Spirit.

⁷ Dave Jenkins, "The Work and Person of the Holy Spirit in the Gospel of John," Blue Letter Bible, 5 March 2013, <http://blogs.blueletterbible.org/blb/2013/03/05/the-work-and-person-of-the-holy-spirit-in-the-gospel-of-john/>

⁸ Bruce A. Ware, *The Man Christ Jesus: Theological Reflections on the Humanity of Christ* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2012), 34.

⁹ John Owen, *The Holy Spirit*, abridged by R.J.K. Law (Carlisle: Banner of Truth Trust, 1998, reprint 2017), 35.

¹⁰ Stanley Hauerwas and William H. Willimon, *The Holy Spirit* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2015), 19.

ourselves, Christ the Son, God the Father, and the relationship between each one. These teachings in John serve as the firm biblical foundation for our understanding of the Holy Spirit and shape how we interpret the rest of the New Testament's teaching on our Helper and Advocate. May the Lord grant us growth in our understanding of the person and work of the Spirit for His glory and our joy, peace, and hope!

We will continue to seek nourishment from our historic faith and the Old and New Testaments for our weekly devotion and worship. The calls to worship will come from various **Psalms** in which the Lord condescends to engage with His Creation. We will confess together each week **Question and Answer 53 from the Heidelberg Catechism** to help form a basic understanding of the person and work of the Holy Spirit. The assurances of pardon will come from **the Gospel of John** to help frame out the surrounding redemptive purpose and context for our sermon texts. Our benedictory blessings each week will come from **Romans 15:13** to remind us of the blessed power of the Holy Spirit in shaping our joy, peace, and hope in Christ. The goal of these various elements is to show us that the person and work of the Holy Spirit is critical to our understanding of the person and work of Christ as well as the glory of God.

This devotional is designed to encourage daily meditation and prayer in personal devotions and/or family worship. You are encouraged to use it the week prior to the associated sermon so that you and your family are prepared for worship. In addition to the Scriptures and associated questions, there are opportunities to pray for the various aspects of the Church. On Wednesdays, we will pray for the various missionaries, church plants, and missional ministries that we support at CCC through Faith Promise and Local Missions. We also have the opportunity to pray on Saturday for the Holy Spirit to cultivate our heart for and draw people to worship, or prepare for the appropriate sacrament. On Sunday, the Lord's Day Sabbath, we will pray to prepare ourselves for worship in the presence of the Lord. Our desire is to continue to facilitate and grow in our dependence on the Lord through prayer.

May God bless our time in personal devotion, family worship, and corporate worship as we seek to for the Church to grow in the joy of salvation and unity in Christ for the sake of its mission in the world!

Soli Deo Gloria!

Sermon Schedule

<i>Date</i>	<i>Call to Worship</i>	<i>Assurance of Pardon</i>	<i>Benediction</i>	<i>Sacrament</i>
<i>Sunday, 1/6:</i> John 1:19-34	Psalm 104:24-35	John 1:14-18	Romans 15:13	<i>Bread and Cup</i>
<i>Sunday, 1/13:</i> John 3:1-21	Psalm 139:1-12	John 3:31-36	Romans 15:13	
<i>Sunday, 1/20:</i> John 6:41-71	Psalm 51:7-17	John 6:35-40	Romans 15:13	<i>Bread and Cup</i>
<i>Sunday, 1/27:</i> John 7:37-52	Psalm 63	John 8:12	Romans 15:13	
<i>Sunday, 2/10:</i> John 14:15-31	Psalm 143	John 14:1-7	Romans 15:13	
<i>Sunday, 2/17:</i> John 15:18-27	Psalm 54	John 15:12-17	Romans 15:13	
<i>Sunday, 2/24:</i> John 16:1-15	Psalm 19	John 16:33	Romans 15:13	
<i>Sunday, 3/3:</i> John 20:19-23	Psalm 33	John 20:30-31	Romans 15:13	<i>Bread and Cup</i>

Weekly Congregational Confession

53. Q. What do you believe concerning the Holy Spirit?

A. First, He is, together with the Father and the Son, true and eternal God. Second, He is also given to me, to make me by true faith share in Christ and all His benefits, to comfort me, and to remain with me forever.

The Heidelberg Catechism

The Week of January 6th

John 1:19-34

Monday, 12/31: Psalm 104:24-35: What aspects of God's creation cause you respond in awe and wonder at His power and goodness?

Tuesday, 1/1: John 1:14-18: Prayerfully consider the ways in which Jesus' first coming grants you the opportunity to receive grace upon grace. Share what comes to mind with someone else.

Wednesday, 1/2: Pray for the Robertsons serving with MTW in South America that their service would result in many being redeemed in Christ and baptized in the Holy Spirit.

Thursday, 1/3: John 1:19-34: What are some of the ways in which you have been transformed spiritually through your union with Christ in the baptism of the Holy spirit?

Friday, 1/4: Romans 15:13: Give thanks for the various ways that God is the God of hope in your life.

Saturday, 1/5: Take time to read the preparatory letter and pray to for the Holy Spirit to grow your appreciation for the redemptive work of the Lamb of God.

Sunday, 1/6: The Lord's Day Sabbath with Bread and Cup: Pray for the means of grace to nourish our faith in Christ alone who baptizes in the Spirit alone.

The Week of January 13th

John 3:1-21

Monday, 1/7: Psalm 139:1-12: Meditate on God's persevering presence throughout your life. Give thanks for His willingness to dwell with you even in your darkness.

Tuesday, 1/8: John 3:31-36: What are some ways in which Christ has granted you the Holy Spirit without measure?

Wednesday, 1/9: Pray for Wes Calton as he serves with RUF at KSU that the Holy Spirit would grant many to be born again in Christ as they share the Gospel in various ways.

Thursday, 1/10: John 3:1-21: How has your life changed since you were born again in the power of the Holy Spirit? What changes are you continuing to cultivate through the means of grace in the Spirit?

Friday, 1/11: Romans 15:13: Reflect on and share with someone else the ways that God fills your life with joy in the knowledge of Christ.

Saturday, 1/12: Pray for the Holy Spirit to draw people to worship tomorrow who need to be born again in His power.

Sunday, 1/13: The Lord's Day Sabbath: Pray for the means of grace to reveal the depths and breadth of God's love for us in the comings of both Christ and the Holy Spirit.

The Week of January 20th

John 6:41-71

Monday, 1/14: Psalm 51:7-17: What does a broken spirit and contrite heart look like in you?

Tuesday, 1/15: John 6:35-40: Meditate on how Christ satisfies your various hungers and thirsts both now and in His return when He will make all things new.

Wednesday, 1/16: Pray for Chris Foglesong and Mountain City Church that many in Jasper would receive the Bread of Life in the power of the Holy Spirit through their ministry.

Thursday, 1/17: John 6:41-71: What are the specific struggles that you battle in your flesh that war against spiritual things? What has proved most helpful in this battle?

Friday, 1/18: Romans 15:13: Reflect on and share with someone else how God has blessed you with peace in Christ.

Saturday, 1/19: Take time to read the preparatory letter and pray to prepare for the Lord's Supper. Give thanks for God's provision for us to come to Him as hopeful children.

Sunday, 1/20: The Lord's Day Sabbath with Bread and Cup: Pray for the means of grace to grant us satisfaction and joy in Christ as the true Bread of Life.

The Week of January 27th

John 7:37-52

Monday, 1/21: Psalm 63: What does it look like for you to earnestly seek the Lord? What most helps you find your satisfaction in Him?

Tuesday, 1/22: John 8:12: What are some of the ways in which you once walked in darkness? Rejoice in Christ the Light of the World who bid you to come out of that darkness!

Wednesday, 1/23: Pray for Jim Whittle with Equipping Leaders International that the Holy Spirit would bring springs of living water in the Gospel across India.

Thursday, 1/24: John 7:37-52: Meditate on how the Spirit refreshes you regularly bringing life more abundant even amid difficult circumstances. If you are not experiencing refreshment in the Spirit, what should you do?

Friday, 1/25: Romans 15:13: Give thanks for the ways in which your belief in the Gospel of Christ is growing and bringing greater joy and peace in your life.

Saturday, 1/26: Pray for the Holy Spirit to draw people to worship tomorrow who need refreshment and renewal in Him.

Sunday, 1/27: The Lord's Day Sabbath: Pray for the means of grace to nourish our hearts with the peace that surpasses all understanding in Christ.

The Week of February 10th

John 14:15-31

Monday, 2/4: Psalm 143: Give thanks for the various ways in which God has recently heard and answered your prayers using His Spirit to lead you on level ground.

Tuesday, 2/5: John 14:1-7: What comfort do you draw from knowing that Christ has gone ahead to prepare a place for us?

Wednesday, 2/6: Pray for Avery Mayes serving as an intern with RUF at KSU that the Holy Spirit would help her to teach others the Gospel of Christ.

Thursday, 2/7: John 14:15-31: What are some ways in which the Holy Spirit has served as a Helper to teach you about Christ and bring them to your remembrance when needed?

Friday, 2/8: Romans 15:13: Consider the ways in which the Holy Spirit has helped you to abound in hope even in tough times. Who would benefit from you sharing this with them?

Saturday, 2/9: Pray for the Holy Spirit to prepare our hearts and minds to grow in our understanding of God's love for us in Christ.

Sunday, 2/10: The Lord's Day Sabbath: Pray for the means of grace to help us practically understand the ways in which the Holy Spirit is truly our Helper.

The Week of February 17th

John 15:18-27

Monday, 2/11: Psalm 54: Meditate on the ways in which God has loved you by being your Helper and Upholder of your life in times of trouble. Share this with someone this week.

Tuesday, 2/12: John 15:12-17: What fruit are you bearing as a result of union with Christ? Are you growing in your love for others as evidenced in words and deeds?

Wednesday, 2/13: Pray for the First Care Women's Clinic in Marietta that the Holy Spirit would help them to continue to faithfully endure in serving others despite persecution.

Thursday, 2/14: John 15:18-27: How is the Holy Spirit helping you to bear witness of Christ in your spheres of influence? Where has this proved costly or resulted in resistance?

Friday, 2/15: Romans 15:13: Give thanks for the blessing of the victorious work of Christ. What are some ways that you are intentionally cultivating your hope in His victory?

Saturday, 2/16: Pray for the Holy Spirit to prepare us to bear a joyful and hopeful witness of Christ's redemptive love for us as we gather for worship tomorrow.

Sunday, 2/17: The Lord's Day Sabbath: Pray for the means of grace to strengthen our willingness and ability to bear reproach for Christ's sake in our spheres of influence.

The Week of February 24th

John 16:1-15

Monday, 2/18: Psalm 19: How does the Lord's sovereign rule affect your worship of Him?

Tuesday, 2/19: John 16:33: Rejoice in Christ's ultimate victory in overcoming the world. How does this truth affect you live in the world?

Wednesday, 2/20: Pray for the Sawyers serving in Kenya that the Holy Spirit would use their ministry to convict those in Maasai Mara of their need for Christ as Victorious Savior.

Thursday, 2/21: John 16:1-15: What is the purpose of the Holy Spirit according to Jesus in this passage? How should this shape our doctrine of the person and work of the Holy Spirit?

Friday, 2/22: Romans 15:13: Consider how God is growing you in the power of the Holy Spirit to abound in hope, and share this with someone over a meal or coffee.

Saturday, 2/23: Pray for the Holy Spirit to bring people to worship who need to be convicted of their sin and need for righteousness in Christ alone as the Victorious Savior.

Sunday, 2/24: The Lord's Day Sabbath: Pray for the means of grace to guide us into the truth of who we are in Christ and indwelt by the Holy Spirit.

The Week of March 3rd

John 20:19-23

Monday, 2/25: Psalm 33: What are some things you could give praise-filled thanks to the Lord for over the past 2 months?

Tuesday, 2/26: John 20:30-31: Meditate on the various ways in which believing in Christ has granted you greater life in His name. Take time to share this with someone else.

Wednesday, 2/27: Pray for the Larsens with NEXT that the Holy Spirit would prosper their equipping of others to serve the youth in various places around the world.

Thursday, 2/28: John 20:19-23: What role does the Holy Spirit play in Christ's sending of the Apostles? What does this reveal about the divinity of the Holy Spirit?

Friday, 3/1: Romans 15:13: Ask the God of hope to fill you with joy and peace in believing so that, by the power of the Holy Spirit, you may abound in hope.

Saturday, 3/2: Take time to read the preparatory letter and pray to prepare for the Lord's Supper. Give thanks for.

Sunday, 3/3: The Lord's Day Sabbath with Bread and Cup: Pray for the means of grace to prepare us to go into the world to bear witness in both words and deeds to the forgiveness of sin in Christ alone by faith alone through grace alone.