

The Doctrine of the Christian Life

I. The Christian Life:

- A. There is none apart from the work of the Holy Spirit.
- B. We must know WHO He is!

- 1. He is called *paraclete*. This is translated as “Counselor” and “Comforter”. One who speaks on your behalf. He even prays through you! He counsels and comforts through the Word of Christ.

Romans 8:15-16: ***“For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, ‘Abba! Father!’<sup>16</sup>The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.”***

Romans 8:26: ***“Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.”***

- 2. He is NOT an impersonal force, energy or “presence”. Take note of the personal aspects He engages in and experiences:
- 3. Romans 8:26: “...the Spirit himself \_\_\_\_\_ for us with groaning too deep for words.”
- 4. Ephesians 4:30: “And do not \_\_\_\_\_ the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.”
- 5. The Holy Spirit is God. Matthew 28:19: We are baptized also in HIS Name! Acts 5:3,4b: Ananias lies to the Holy Spirit and according to the Word, therefore He lied to God. He is present at the creation in Genesis 1.
- 6. He is the third PERSON of the Holy Trinity. He is personal and He is God. We never refer to Him as “it”!

- C. Now the Christian life is nothing other than a walking with/according to the Holy Spirit.

Galatians 5:16: ***“But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.”***

Romans 8:3-5: ***“For God has done what the law weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, <sup>4</sup>in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. <sup>5</sup>For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit.”***

D. One of the most neglected truths of the Christian Faith is the truth that Christians have the Holy Spirit.

John 14:16-17: ***“And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, <sup>17</sup>even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.”***

E. Illustration: Imagine walking around with a “counselor” (or “advocate”) who goes with you wherever you go. Not only does He comfort you with His presence, He is committed to helping you in all circumstances. Wherever you go, He is there to bless you. He loves you and is totally devoted to you. But here’s the thing: Many Christians treat Him as if He is not there. Many never ASK Him for anything. Many never EXPECT a thing from Him. We fall into the popular trap of “out of sight, out of mind.” But this is not the way we are instructed to walk:

2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 5:7: ***“For we walk by faith, not by sight.”***

Zechariah 4:6b: ***“Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord of hosts.”***

II. How We’re Kept Safe In This Spiritual Walk:

A. The Holy Spirit is inseparable from:

1. Giving glory and testimony to Jesus Christ.

John 14:26: ***“But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that \_\_\_\_ have said to you.”***

2. The Holy Spirit gives us faith to confess that Jesus is Lord!

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 12:3b: ***“...no one can say ‘Jesus is Lord’ except in the Holy Spirit.”***

3. The Word and Sacraments.

- a. The Holy Spirit works through these means of grace to touch our lives. Through these gifts, God in His grace gives to us the assurance of where He can be found. In other words, if you want to know where you can find the Holy Spirit who calls, gathers and enlightens to the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ, then find the WORD of the Lord, find His HOLY SACRAMENTS, the WATER and the BLOOD of Christ and you will find Him every time!
- b. Note that at Pentecost the Holy Spirit was poured out in fruition of Joel’s prophecy in connection to the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and The Sacraments:
  1. Preaching: Acts 2:14ff.
  2. Baptism: Acts 2:41
  3. Communion: Acts 2:46

B. We are completely assured of having received the Holy Spirit through Holy Baptism:

Titus 3:5-6: ***“he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, <sup>6</sup>whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior.”***

John 3:5: ***Jesus answered, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God.’***

***C. This addresses a major confusion: Is Holy Baptism a “water” baptism or a “Spirit” baptism? The answer: YES, it is both! The New Testament baptism is a “water and the Spirit” baptism. This is the reason we have this N.T. era Scripture:***

Ephesians 4:4-5: ***“There is one body and one Spirit – just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call – <sup>5</sup>one Lord, one faith, one baptism.”***

Note: The confusion is often perpetuated by the fact that John the Baptist properly limited his baptism in terms of “with water” (Matthew 3:11ff) and then goes on to describe that Christ will “baptize you with the Holy Spirit.” John’s baptism – while still based on repentance and forgiveness – was nevertheless before the accomplished work of the Lord. After Christ’s completed winning our salvation, however, JESUS GAVE AND

ESTABLISHED A NEW BAPTISM. This new baptism is our baptism in the N.T. Church. This baptism is water and the Spirit. Those who have been baptized have received the gift of the Holy Spirit.

D. The problem is not in the GIFT, but in HOW THE GIFT IS TREATED!

1. We forget these words:

*Ephesians 5:18-20: “Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit. Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

2. *In other words, we are to seek to be continually filled with the gift we have been given (as opposed to tucking Him away in a closet)!*

3. The Spirit longs to lead us to live in the Lord Jesus Christ through these signs of a living faith:

a. True contrition: Daily sorrow over sin so that we would be humbled every day and call on the Name of the Lord for the grace and forgiveness He alone gives.

b. True confession: Psalm 51 is not a once in a life-time thing, but a constant confession!

c. True faith in Christ.

d. Walking in the Spirit to live that faith that produces FRUIT.

E. The fruit of the Spirit: Read Galatians 5:22-23. There are 9. Stott gives these categories:

1. 1-3: applies esp. to our relationship with God.

2. 4-6: applies esp. to our relationship with our neighbor.

3. 7-9: applies esp. to our relationship with ourselves.

III. The Battle:

A. The above walking with the Spirit, leads us to a constant and active battle.

B. The Christian life is an ACTIVE turning from SIN and an ACTIVE turning to Christ.

- A. However, our sinful flesh is utterly against this enterprise.
- B. Thus, a battle erupts: Galatians 5 and Romans 7.
- C. However, the Lord leads us to win this battle through...
  - 1. Worship or Divine Service: God gives us His gifts through Word and Sacrament.

***See Attachment on Worship***

- 2. Prayer: How often? Read 1<sup>st</sup> Thess. 5:17 and Eph. 6:18.

Luke 11:9ff:   ASK                                   SEEK                                   KNOCK

***“If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”*** (vs. 13)

- a. Know that prayer is multi-faceted (it is best kept connected with the WORD):
  - 1) Adoration (aka Praise)
  - 2) Confession
  - 3) Thanksgiving
  - 4) Supplication (includes Intercession)
- b. Prayer is not for changing God, but is the expression of faith, trust in God. The Father has already promised the Kingdom to His children, but our typical problem is that we resist asking and we resist believing. Prayer kills this sinful tendency.
- 3. Service: That is we crucify our flesh, so that we will not follow the flesh’s desire to live for self. The result is that God uses us for service to others: Read 2<sup>nd</sup>. Cor. 5:15.
- 4. Witness: By the Holy Spirit, we become active in the fulfillment of The Great Commission (Matthew 28, 1<sup>st</sup>. Peter 2:9 and 1<sup>st</sup>. Peter 3:15). St. Peter describes you as a “royal priest” and a priest stands between God and their neighbor. You speak to God about your neighbor in prayer; and you speak to you neighbor about God in witness.

## II. The Gifts of The Holy Spirit.

1. The fruit of the Spirit should also be considered among His gifts. Furthermore, those aspects related to the first article of the Creed (creation) and the second article of the Creed (redemption) are also gifts. At the same time, the Scriptures also teach about further gifts within our sanctification as Christians. These are sometimes referred to as “spiritual gifts.”
2. These gifts under consideration are:
  - a. Exceptional
  - b. Individual Christians receive at least one
  - c. They are for the good of the Church
3. The catalogs of gifts are Romans 12, 1<sup>st</sup>. Corinthians 12, Ephesians 4 and 1<sup>st</sup>. Peter 4.
4. If a Christian feels that they do not know what their gift is, what should they do about it?

## III. Worshipping in Spirit and Truth:

- A. Why do we worship the way we do?
- B. What does it mean?
- C. Who is serving whom?

Catechism: 3<sup>rd</sup>. Article of the Creed, pgs. 147-168; The Lord’s Prayer, pgs. 174-201.