

Creed (3): I Believe in the Holy Spirit

(Luke 24:44-49)

I. Introduction

- A. **Old Joke:** Sunday school teacher invited the boy from neighborhood to Bible class
1. He was afraid someone would steal his bike; teacher said, “*Holy Spirit will watch it*”
 - a. The lesson was on prayer; part of the class was everyone took turns saying a prayer
 - b. The boy took a turn and ended his prayer, “*In the name of Father and Son, Amen*”
 - 1) The teacher looked a bit puzzled, “*So what happened to the Holy Spirit?*”
 - 2) The kind answered, “*You told me that he’d be outside watching my bike.*”
 - c. OK, I don’t have “*pause for laughter*” in my notes. It raises a question for us.
 2. Suppose someone from distant place (*Mars?*) did an observational study of church
 - a. They had no prior knowledge of churches or church history— only the Bible
 - 1) All they did was to compare our church to the church in Acts and the epistles
 - 2) Might they ask with Sunday school teacher, “*What happened to Holy Spirit?*”
 - b. The Holy Spirit is virtually every page of the NT—phrase appears 91 times in NIV
 - 1) The word “*spirit*” appears almost 400 times (*sometimes refers to other things*)
 - 2) **Question:** How long can we go in church without mentioning the Holy Spirit?
- B. We’ve been in a series looking at the Apostle’s Creed— *Creed: What Christians Believe*
1. We won’t repeat creed, but the phrase we’re looking at “*I believe in the Holy Spirit*”
 - a. Do we? Rubel Shelly, in book *In Step with the Spirit*, makes this bold statement *It borders on a lie for some orthodox Christians to confess a trinitarian view of deity*
 - 1) We must acknowledge there is a Holy Spirit (*must do that if we read the Bible*)
 - 2) Many don’t have a lot of room in their worldview for Him to do much anything
 - b. Shelly goes on to suggest, that for many the Spirit is “*silent partner of the godhead*”
 2. An area preacher gave a formal presentation at area preachers meeting years ago
 - a. His was a formal presentation (*with charts*) of the informal view that I grew up with
 - 1) Jesus came to earth, did his job (*died on cross*) and then went back to heaven
 - 2) Spirit came to earth, did his job (*gave us Bible*) and has gone back o heaven
 - b. Now both Jesus and Holy Spirit are in heaven waiting to see what we do with things
 3. When I say, “*I believe in the Holy Spirit,*” I believe NT teaches something different
 - a. God still visits His people in power (we sang earlier). It’s power we look at today.
 - b. The place to begin, as with most things, is with Jesus (**Reading: [Luke 24:44:-49](#)**)

II.I Believe in the Holy Spirit: Power from on High

- A. This is Luke's version of Great Commission and we don't like it much! (*he skips baptism*)
1. Luke stresses another part of this story from Matt/Mark; he stresses part about power
 2. Luke says that Jesus opens their minds so they can understand scripture (**Lk 24:45**)
 - a. They had **knowledge**; what they didn't have was **power** to accomplish their work
 - b. They were to take the message to the world; they had message, they needed power
 3. What do you really need more of in your life today— more knowledge or power?
 - a. Sure, we all need to know the Bible more; none of us know the Bible as we should
 - b. But do you really LIVE out all of the Bible that you already know like you should?
 - c. We need knowledge, but what he REALLY need is more POWER to live for God.
 4. Jesus said the apostles would receive power; they received miraculous power (**Acts 2**)
 - a. But nothing limits the power Jesus mentions to Pentecost— *that's just the beginning*
 - 1) Think about it. How were the apostles transformed from **timidity** to **boldness**?
 - 2) It wasn't miracles; they did those while Jesus there. *The power of the Spirit*
 - b. The power that they would need to follow and live for God came from God's Spirit!
 5. Is it possible this same spiritual power is available to us? Not miracles, but power!
- B. Christianity isn't just a philosophy or moral ethic; it is a living faith in a living God.
1. The NT says a lot about power; listen to some verses we hear but don't LISTEN to
 - **1 Cor 4: 20**- "*The kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power.*"
 - **Rom 15:13**- "*May overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.*"
 - **1 Thes 1:5**- "*Not simply with words, but also with power, with the Holy Spirit*"
 - **2 Tim 1:7**- "*the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power... "*
 - **2 Cor 4:7**- "*to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us*"
 2. Apostles were to be given power they needed from the Spirit to fulfill their ministry.
 - a. They were called by God to live for God—and the power would come from God
 - 1) Acts has miracles; it's the church's creation story and we'd **expect** miracles
 - 2) What is stressed in epistles is isn't miracles but rather power for godly living!
 - b. The NT points to power that is outside ourselves and within ourselves—Holy Spirit
 3. When we say, "*I believe in the Holy Spirit,*" we're saying that this power for us is real
 - a. God does not expect us to live spiritual lives only by the power of our flesh
 - b. God does not expect us to face Satan and his minions in our own strength alone
 - c. Very quickly, notice just a few points Paul makes about the power available in us

III. The Spirit and Resurrection Power

- A. Paul connects the Holy Spirit to the power of the resurrection of Christ (**Rom 1:4**, NLT)
1. Paul says that the ultimate proof the Jesus was the Son of God was his resurrection
 - a. And the ultimate power of the resurrection came from the Holy Spirit
 - b. The Spirit showed or “*declared*” (ESV) or “*appointed*” (NIV) Jesus as Son in
 2. But not just in His resurrection; the Holy Spirit had been at work in Christ all along
 - a. Power of the Holy Spirit that came upon Mary in Christ’s conception (**Luke 1:35**)
 - b. It was the Holy Spirit that powered Jesus throughout his ministry (**Luke 4:14**)
 - c. Jesus was filled with joy through the Holy Spirit... and worshipped (**Luke 10:21**)
 3. Not only was the Spirit the engine that drove the early church... He drove Jesus too!
- B. The point we want to look at—the power of the Holy Spirit raised Jesus from the dead
1. In **Romans 8**, Paul is going to build on that idea and makes it very personal
 - a. He will focus on the life that we are to live through the power of the Holy Spirit
 - b. We need that, because left to my own devices, I don’t have much spiritual power
 - 1) Left to my own devices, I can’t hope to live the spiritual life, right? (**Rom 7:24**)
 - 2) But because of Jesus, I have not been left to my own devices (**Rom 7:25a**)
 - c. **Problem:** What if after Jesus forgave me, I’m then left to my own devices (**7:25b**)
 - d. **Men’s Group:** “*We’ve been baptized, but the devil doesn’t get drowned*” (Atchley)
 2. **Paul’s Point:** There is no condemnation for those in Christ (**Rom 8:1**)
 - a. Cross forgives us, but the Spirit gives us the power to live spiritually (**Rom 8:2**)
 - b. Notice how he Paul goes on to explain, or at least elaborate on, how this works
 - 1) If the Spirit lives in us, then we are not controlled by sinful nature (**Rom 8:9**)
 - 2) If the Spirit does not live in us, then we don’t belong to Christ (**Rom 8:9**)
 - 3) The Spirit that raised also gives life to us as well (**Rom 8:11**)
 3. I heard Paul Faulkner use this illustration for a Christian life without the Holy Spirit “*It’s like the dry heaves; no matter how hard you try no comes up and you feel terrible*”
 - a. That’s not a pretty picture—but maybe that describes why many of us fail
 - b. We’re trying to gen-up a goodness and holiness from in us that just isn’t there
 - c. Paul tells us by contrast that we are to “*keep in step with the Spirit*” (**Gal 5:25**)
 - 1) If we listen to His voice within us, there’s a power available that’s beyond us
 - 2) We too can be clothed with a power that is from on high if we will only listen

IV. Conclusion

- A. What we have seen is that the NT speaks of spiritual power from the Holy Spirit
1. It is important that we understand what this does NOT mean
 - a. It does not mean that we are possessed by the Spirit like the exorcist in reverse
 - b. It does not mean that we are like Jedi knights channeling some mystical forces
 - c. It does not mean hopping around in church (not high you jump, straight you walk)
 - d. It does not mean that spirituality requires less effort from us (just the opposite)
 2. What it DOES means is that God does not leave us to live spiritually in power of flesh
 - a. It DOES mean God give us wisdom when we diligently ask Him for it (**James 1:5**)
 - b. It DOES mean as we struggle in prayer, we do not struggle alone (**Rom 8:26**)
 - c. It also means we must discard excuses like “*Just how I am*” or “*I just can’t help it*”
- B. Christianity is not just about **spiritual knowledge**; it is about **spiritual power**!
1. Paul wants Ephesus to know (that is to *grasp*) some spiritual things (**Eph 3:18-19**)
 - a. Interesting. How can we ever come to know a love that surpasses knowledge?
 - b. One way. Paul prayed for them to receive power from God Himself (**Eph 3:16-17**)
 - 1) I can’t explain exactly how God does that— but I don’t have explain the how
 - 2) I just have to believe it. And I do— “*I believe in the Holy Spirit*”
 2. It’s because God gives us power through the Spirit that Paul ends like this (**3:20-21**)