

Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes
First Quarter 2017: *The Holy Spirit and Spirituality*
Lesson 4 “The Personality of *the Holy Spirit*”

Read for this week’s study

John 16:13, 14; Romans 8:14- 16; Romans 15:13; John 14:6; John 17:17; Romans 5:5.

Memory Text

“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 I said to you” (John 14:26, NASB).

Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. Jesus’ Description of the Holy Spirit
- III. Personal Aspects of the Holy Spirit: Part 1
- IV. Personal Aspects of the Holy Spirit: Part 2
- V. The Spirit of Truth
- VI. Why Does It Matter?
- VII. Further Study

Questions and Notes for Consideration

Facilitator: Daniel Duda

1. “This week we will learn more about the personality of the Holy Spirit as He is described in Scripture. This truth will help us better understand the role of God’s divine Spirit in our lives. And it will help us to gain a deeper understanding of the importance of the belief of the personality of the Holy Spirit for our spiritual life. Only if we entertain right thoughts about Him can we render to Him that love, reverence, confidence, and submission that are His due.” (Sabbath afternoon)
2. Which personal characteristics do Jesus and Paul attribute to the Holy Spirit?
3. Jesus speaks about the Holy Spirit as “the Spirit of truth”. “In the Western world which has been shaped by Greek philosophy, truth often is very abstract and theoretical. However, in the Bible, and particularly in John’s Gospel, truth carries a rather personal and specific meaning: Jesus is the truth (*John 14:6*). While God’s Written Word is truthful (*compare with John 17:17, Psalm 119:142*), God’s truth is revealed in a supreme way in the person of Jesus Christ.” (Wednesday’s lesson)
4. How does our understanding of the Holy Spirit as a person alter our relationship with him?

5. “If we think of the Holy Spirit only as a mysterious divine power, our thoughts will be: *How can I have more of the Holy Spirit?* But if we think of the Holy Spirit as a divine Person, we will ask: *How can the Holy Spirit have more of me?* The decisive point is: Do [we] want to possess the Holy Spirit, or do [we] want the Holy Spirit to possess [us]?” (Thursday’s lesson)
6. If the Holy Spirit can “teach and bring to our remembrance” (John 14:26), then it must be a person.
7. At the Last Supper Jesus said to his disciples: “Do this in remembrance of me.” You understand that Jesus says more than just: “*Guys, it would be nice if you could remember something from tonight.*” What he meant was more than a mere calling to mind something past and gone. Remembering deals with the question: So what? Remembering gives new purpose and new meaning. Therefore the work of the Holy Spirit gives new purpose, new meaning to the death of Jesus in the great cosmic conflict, the storyline of the Bible.
8. Proper understanding of the Holy Spirit brings a more complete experience of the larger context in which God is accomplishing his eternal purposes within his universe.
9. All three Persons of the Godhead are involved in the work to bring us back to “at-one-ment”.

Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

The closing events of human history are being held back because we have not yet been sealed. Now, what could it mean to be sealed? What would sealing mean to the early Christians, when they heard this section of Revelation being read out loud to them? Had they received any help in understanding the meaning of sealing? Like as not, they were in Ephesus. That is where the scroll arrived from the Isle of Patmos. Someone arose and read it out loud. If it was in Ephesus, you recall Paul’s letter that eventually became known as the letter to the Ephesians. And in the letter to the Ephesians, Paul has quite a lot to say about the sealing and how this is the work of the Holy Spirit. Look at Ephesians 4:30 for example: “Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.” (NIV)

That raises the question of how is the Holy Spirit involved in our being sealed? Look at Ephesians 1:13: “In him [that is, in Christ, in union with Christ], you also, who have heard the word of truth, the gospel [that is the good news], of your salvation, and have believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit.” (RSV)

Note the emphasis on truth, the emphasis on the gospel, the good news, along with this sealing work of the Holy Spirit. What is this truth? What is this good news? It is the whole subject of our conversations about God. The truth is—the good news is that God is not the kind of person

his enemies have made him out to be. You could finish that good news by now, I am sure. Compare then, Ephesians 1:17. Paul says: "I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation [so that you may know something], so that you may know Him better." (NIV)

Notice "to know him better." That is the truth. That is the good news. This is the work of the Spirit of truth. You remember how much Jesus said about the Holy Spirit coming to lead us into truth so that we might know the Father better. There is so much of it in John. It would have filled many pages. But just looking at John 14:26; 15:26; 16:13 on the Bible Reference Sheet:

The Holy Spirit . . . will be your teacher and will bring to your minds all that I have said to you. . . . When the Helper comes, that is, the Spirit of Truth . . . He will speak plainly about me. And you yourselves will also speak plainly about me [notice the two always go together. We also speak plainly. The Spirit helps us to see the truth. We help other people to see the truth]. . . . He will guide you into everything that is true. (Phillips)

John, who wrote about sealing in Revelation seven, also wrote the gospel in which he included so much information about the Holy Spirit coming to guide us into the truth, to convince us of the truth, to settle us into the truth. He also knew about Paul's information given in his letter to the Ephesians. John knew when he wrote that the believers would have some background for understanding what it would mean to be sealed. It means "to be so settled into the truth, both intellectually and spiritually, that one cannot be moved." Some of you know who wrote those great words.

Now, in more detail, what is this truth in which we simply must be settled and sealed, so that despite the devil's most convincing efforts to the contrary, we cannot be moved? What would you suggest for the list of truths? Is it the truth that God exists and that he is infinitely powerful? Well, the devils believe that and it scares them. Is it the truth that the end is coming soon? Satan agrees that it is coming soon and he works all the harder. He is settled into those two things. Is it the truth that the seventh-day is the Sabbath? Is it the truth that we should keep all ten of the Ten Commandments, that we should read our Bibles faithfully as God's word? Is it the truth that we should pay a careful tithe and be very careful about what we eat and be very careful how we associate with sinners who might lead us astray? Not to minimize those matters.

Should we not recall, as a warning, the very pious beliefs and practices of those who nailed Jesus to the cross and then rushed home to keep the seventh-day Sabbath holy, with their tithe paid up and no forbidden food in their stomachs? Evidently the truth into which we must be sealed is far more than just the list of beliefs I mentioned, important as they are.

Throughout the Bible, the all-important truth, the saving truth, is above all else the truth about our God. Jesus came to bring us this truth about his Father, so that we might be won back to

God in love and trust. God can heal and save all who trust him. You remember all that Jesus said in the verses from John 14, above. When the Spirit comes, he will bring to our remembrance the things that Jesus has said about the Father. Remember in Ephesians 1:17 above, the Holy Spirit will come so that we may know God better. That's the consistent picture of the truth, the subject of the truth, the essence of the truth that runs all through Scripture. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #18, "God Waits For His Children to Grow Up" recorded June, 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/18MMCAG>*

Further Study with Ellen White

The Spirit of truth has been sent to guide men into all truth. And upon the authority of the Son of God it is declared: "Seek, and ye shall find." "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine." Matthew 7:7; John 7:17. {GC 528.2}

At the cost of infinite sacrifice and suffering, Christ has provided for us every essential to success in the Christian warfare. The Holy Spirit brings power that enables man to overcome. It is through the agency of the Spirit that the government of Satan is to be subdued. It is the Spirit that convinces of sin, and, with the consent of the human being, expels sin from the heart. The mind is then brought under a new law—the royal law of liberty. {OHC 152.3}

The Holy Spirit was promised to be with those who were wrestling for victory, in demonstration of all mightiness, endowing the human agent with supernatural powers, and instructing the ignorant in the mysteries of the kingdom of God. That the Holy Spirit is to be the grand helper is a wonderful promise. . . . {RC 132.3}

In the plan of restoring in men the divine image, it was provided that the Holy Spirit should move upon human minds, and be as the presence of Christ, a molding agency upon human character. Receiving the truth, men become also recipients of the grace of Christ, and devote their sanctified human ability to the work in which Christ was engaged—men become laborers together with God. {TDG 51.2}

The Author of this spiritual life is unseen, and the exact method by which that life is imparted and sustained, it is beyond the power of human philosophy to explain. Yet the operations of the Spirit are always in harmony with the written word. {AA 284.2}

Through the agency of the Holy Spirit, the soul is enlightened, and the character is renewed, sanctified, and uplifted. {1SM 134.1}

The Holy Spirit is the breath of spiritual life in the soul. The impartation of the Spirit is the impartation of the life of Christ. It imbues the receiver with the attributes of Christ. . . . {ML 46.4}

The Holy Spirit causes the truth to shine in every mind, and speaks through every discourse where the minister surrenders himself to its working. The Holy Spirit walks with the soul by the way, and talks with the human agent. It is He who gives the atmosphere that surrounds the soul, and speaks to the impenitent through words of warning.—Lt 29, 1895. {VSS 285.1}

Repentance toward God and faith in Jesus Christ are the fruits of the renewing power of the grace of the Spirit. Repentance represents the process by which the soul seeks to reflect the image of Christ to the world. {ML 49.3}

Christ gives them the breath of His own Spirit, the life of His own life. The Holy Spirit puts forth its highest energies to work in heart and mind. The grace of God enlarges and multiplies their faculties, and every perfection of the divine nature comes to their assistance in the work of saving souls. Through cooperation with Christ they are complete in Him, and in their human weakness they are enabled to do the deeds of Omnipotence. {ML 49.4}

Through the ministry of the angels the Holy Spirit is enabled to work upon the mind and heart of the human agent and draw him to Christ. . . . But the Spirit of God does not interfere with the freedom of the human agent. The Holy Spirit is given to be a helper, so that man may cooperate with the Divine, and it is given to Him to draw the soul but never to force obedience. {TMK 57.2}

Christ is ready to impart all heavenly influences. He knows every temptation that comes to man, and the capabilities of each. He weighs his strength. He sees the present and the future, and presents before the mind the obligations that should be met, and urges that common, earthly things shall not be permitted to be so absorbing that eternal things shall be lost out of the reckoning. The Lord has fullness of grace to bestow on every one that will receive of the heavenly gift. The Holy Spirit will bring the God-entrusted capabilities into Christ's service, and will mold and fashion the human agent according to the divine Pattern. {TMK 57.3}

The influence of the Holy Spirit is the life of Christ in the soul. We do not now see Christ and speak to Him, but His Holy Spirit is just as near us in one place as another. It works in and through every one who receives Christ. Those who know the indwelling of the Spirit reveal the fruit of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith. {TMK 57.5}

“That in me ye might have peace”—peace in Christ, peace through belief of the truth. The Comforter is called the Spirit of truth because there is comfort and hope and peace in the truth. Falsehood cannot give genuine peace; this can be received only through the truth. . . . {OHC 329.2}

It is the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, which Jesus said He would send into the world, that changes our character into the image of Christ; and when this is accomplished, we reflect, as in a mirror, the glory of the Lord. That is, the character of the one who thus beholds Christ is so like His, that one looking at him sees Christ's own character shining out as from a mirror. Imperceptibly

to ourselves, we are changed day by day from our ways and will into the ways and will of Christ, into the loveliness of His character. Thus we grow up into Christ, and unconsciously reflect His image. {RC 20.3}

It is the work of the Holy Spirit from age to age to impart love to human hearts, for love is the living principle of brotherhood. {8T 139.2}

Recommended Reading: *The Acts of the Apostles* chapter 5 – “The Gift of the Spirit”

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