

The Spirit of Christmas

Dr. John Carmichael

[Luk 1:15 NASB95] 15 "For he will be great in the sight of the Lord; and he will drink no wine or liquor, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit while yet in his mother's womb.

[Luk 1:35 NASB95] 35 The angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy Child shall be called the Son of God.

[Luk 1:41 NASB95] 41 When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.

[Luk 1:67 NASB95] 67 And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying:

[Luk 2:25-32 NASB95] 25 And there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; and this man was righteous and devout, looking for the consolation of Israel; and the Holy Spirit was upon him. 26 And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. 27 And he came in the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to carry out for Him the custom of the Law, 28 then he took Him into his arms, and blessed God, and said, 29 "Now Lord, You are releasing Your bond-servant to depart in peace, According to Your word; 30 For my eyes have seen Your salvation, 31 Which You have prepared in the presence of all peoples, 32 A LIGHT OF REVELATION TO THE GENTILES, And the glory of Your people Israel."

- **The Holy Spirit is one of the primary characters in the Christmas story surrounding the birth of John the Baptist and the Lord Jesus Christ.**
- **To many believers, the Holy Spirit is one of the least known persons of the Trinity. However, He is at work today as He was in the Christmas story.**

What is the Holy Spirit doing today?

The Holy Spirit is working in the world and in believers.

I. The work of the Holy Spirit in the world.

- a. **[Jhn 16:8-11 NASB95] 8 "And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment; 9 concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me; 10 and concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father and you no longer see Me; 11 and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged.**
- b. **The three-fold work of the Holy Spirit in people, as described in John 16:8-11, involves convicting the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment:**
 - i. **Conviction of Sin**
 1. **The Holy Spirit convicts people of their sin, particularly their unbelief in Jesus Christ.**
 2. **This conviction leads to:**
 - a. **Awareness of one's sinful nature**
 - b. **Recognition of the need for repentance**
 - c. **Understanding the gravity of rejecting Christ**
 - ii. **Conviction of Righteousness**

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1. The Holy Spirit convinces people of true righteousness, which is found in Jesus Christ.
2. This involves:
 - a. Revealing the insufficiency of human efforts to achieve righteousness
 - b. Pointing to Christ's perfect righteousness
 - c. Guiding believers to live according to God's standards
- iii. Conviction of Judgment
 1. The Holy Spirit convicts people regarding judgment, specifically the judgment of Satan, the ruler of this world.
 2. This conviction includes:
 - a. Awareness of the reality of divine judgment
 - b. Understanding that Satan has been defeated through Christ's work
 - c. Recognizing the urgency of aligning with God's kingdom
- c. These three aspects of the Holy Spirit's work are interconnected and aim to lead people to salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. The Spirit's conviction serves to illuminate truth, reveal the way of salvation, and empower believers to live according to God's will.

II. The work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer.

- a. The three-fold work of the Holy Spirit in the life of a believer is typically understood as:
 - i. Regeneration and Salvation –
 1. The Holy Spirit brings about spiritual rebirth and enables faith in Christ.
 2. Like John 3:5-6 [Jhn 3:5-6 NASB95] 5 Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. 6 "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.", where Jesus tells Nicodemus that one must be "born of water and the Spirit" to enter God's kingdom.
 3. The Spirit convicts people of sin and draws them to salvation.
 - ii. Sanctification and Transformation –
 1. After salvation, the Holy Spirit works to progressively make believers more like Christ through an ongoing process of spiritual growth.
 2. This involves developing the fruit of the Spirit ([Gal 5:22-23 NASB95] 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.) and being transformed in character and conduct.
 3. The Spirit helps believers put to death sinful practices and develop godly habits.
 - iii. Empowerment for Service and Witness –
 1. The Holy Spirit equips believers with spiritual gifts and power for ministry and witness.
 2. As seen in Acts 1:8 ([Act 1:8 NASB95] 8 but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."), Jesus promised that believers would receive power when the Holy Spirit came upon them to be His witnesses.
 3. The Spirit enables effective service, ministry, and sharing of the gospel.
- b. These three aspects work together as the Holy Spirit indwells believers, guiding them in truth (John 16:13), helping them in prayer (Romans 8:26), and conforming them to Christ's image (2 Corinthians 3:18).

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- **Jesus said, "Receive the Holy Spirit." [Jhn 20:22 NASB95] 22 And when He had said this, He breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit."**
- **This Christmas season, willingly open your heart to a greater work of the Holy Spirit in your life. The Holy Spirit comes upon and overshadows Mary, God did a great work in the conception and birth of Jesus. When you open yourself up to the Holy Spirit He will do in and through you a great work.**