

Son and Spirit

John 1:29-34

What united the thoroughly-human Son with the thoroughly-transcendent Father? The Holy Spirit. Father and Son shared the same Spirit, the same Breath, the same Life.

Seven hundred years before the Word became flesh, the Father described the Messiah as a man of the Spirit:

*The Spirit of the Lord will rest on Him,
The spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of counsel and strength,
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.
(Isaiah 11:2; see also Isaiah 42:1; 61:1)*

Before Jesus was born and while He was still a helpless infant, the Spirit was at work:

- The angel Gabriel told Zacharias that his son John the Baptist would be *“filled with the Holy Spirit while yet in his mother’s womb”* (Luke 1:15, NASB).
- We see that promise fulfilled when Mary visited her cousin Elizabeth, pregnant with John.
“When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the baby leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. And she cried out with a loud voice and said, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb” (Luke 1:41-42, NASB).
- As John the Baptist and his mother Elizabeth had testified to the unborn Christ through the Spirit, so would John’s father, Zacharias:
*“His father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying,
‘Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,
For He has visited us and accomplished redemption for His people’”* (Luke 1:67-68, NASB).
- The Holy Spirit had promised Simeon that he would not die before he had seen Messiah. The Holy Spirit remained on him, and when the day came, the Spirit moved him into the temple courts so that he could see and testify to the Lord’s Anointed Son (Luke 2:25-30).
- The Spirit not only testified to the infant Jesus but conceived Him in Mary’s womb. Thus in a unique and literal sense, the man Jesus was the only-begotten Son of God:

“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” (Luke 1:35, NASB).

When John the Baptist introduced Jesus, he testified to the intimate connection of Father, Son, and Spirit:

“I have seen the Spirit descending as a dove out of heaven, and He remained upon Him [the Son]. I did not recognize Him, but He who sent me to baptize in water [the Father] said to me, ‘He upon whom you see the Spirit descending and remaining upon Him, this is the One who baptizes in the Holy Spirit.’ I myself have seen, and have testified that this is the Son of God” (John 1:32-34, NASB; bracketed portions added for emphasis)

Later in his ministry, John affirmed that the Son was able to speak the very words of God because God had given His Spirit to His Son fully and without reserve (John 3:34).

Notice that from the very beginning, John said that Jesus not only came filled with the Spirit, but He came to baptize all God’s people with that same Holy Spirit (John 1:33). Jesus came sharing with us the constant, intimate, all-enabling fellowship with the Father that He enjoyed through the Spirit. This became a recurring theme throughout Jesus’ ministry.

He told Nicodemus that each of us must be born of the Spirit to enter the Kingdom of God (John 3:5). And a bit later, He offered the constant, all-satisfying flow of the Spirit to all who simply trusted Jesus:

“If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, ‘From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.’ But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified” (John 7:37-39, NASB).

Jesus spent much of His last evening with His disciples talking about the Spirit whom they were about to receive.

- Jesus was the way to the Father, the truth about the Father, and the life of the Father. He promised that by His return to the Father He would give them their own intimate relationship with the Father (John 14:4-14).
- They would do Christ’s works and do even greater ones. In fact, whatever they asked of the Father in Christ’s name, He would do it (John 14:12-14).
- The Spirit would be the companion that Christ had been to them, only better. The Spirit would be constant, universal, and within them, unlimited by a physical body (John 14:16, 28; 16:7). Contrast this with the Old Testament, where the Spirit was given only to specific people, for specific times, for specific tasks.

- The Spirit would guide them into all truth (John 14:16-17, 26; 15:26-27; 16:13).
- The Spirit would enable them to share in Jesus' resurrected life (John 14:17-19).
- Through the Spirit, all believers would live in the loving oneness of the Father and Son. Father and Son would love them and come to them and make their home with them (John 14:20-23).
- After the resurrection, but before returning to the Father, Jesus used a living parable to show that the Spirit they were about to receive would be Jesus' own breath (John 20:22).

Jesus came in the power of the Spirit, lived in the power of the Spirit, and rose in the power of the Spirit. After returning to His Father, He poured out that same Spirit on all believers. The Spirit is Messiah's gift to each and every person who believes in Him.

Listen & Sing: "In the Father, Son, and Spirit"
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