

The Nature and Ministry of the Holy Spirit

SERMON NOTES

Point: To affirm the person of the Holy Spirit and explain His work and ministry.

Old theology, that stretches back to at least the third century AD: Paul of Samosata. Elected bishop of Antioch in 260 AD. About the time of the “Protestant Reformation two men, Laelius Socinus and his nephew Faustus Socinus revived the theory” (The Coming of the Comforter, Froom) that the Holy Spirit was merely a force, not a distinct person in the Godhead. Several of our Adventist pioneers, in fact, tended toward similar views on the Holy Spirit. Ellen White, however, never taught or supported them. By the beginning of the 19th century the pioneers were clearly moving toward a more Biblical understanding of the nature of the Holy Spirit as a distinct person. Today, the Seventh-day Adventist church embraces the Biblical teaching that God is three persons, all equals, all uncreated and self-existent, all divine.

Satan has sought to rob the church of the precious gift of the Holy Spirit by creating confusion and false information about His nature and work.

STUDY OF THE SUBJECT CALLS FOR HUMILITY.

“It is not essential for us to be able to define just what the Holy Spirit is. Christ tells us that the Spirit is the Comforter, “the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father.” It is plainly declared regarding the Holy Spirit that, in His work of guiding men into all truth, “He shall not speak of Himself.” John 15:26; 16:13.

“The nature of the Holy Spirit is a mystery. Men cannot explain it, because the Lord has not revealed it to them. Men having fanciful views may bring together passages of Scripture and put a human construction on them, but the acceptance of these views will not strengthen the church. Regarding such mysteries, which are too deep for human understanding, silence is golden.” *Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 51-52.

In our *brief* study of the Holy Spirit we will focus on the obvious meaning of Scripture and accept that mystery on the subject is entirely unavoidable.

The Nature of the Holy Spirit

1. The Godhead, heavenly trio

-Cruel experiment: 1248 Holy Roman Emperor, German King: Frederick II. His question: what language do babies naturally speak? The babies were given no touch and were never allowed to hear language. The study was never completed because every single baby died. Italian historian Salimbene said: “They could not live without petting.” Love cannot exist without someone to share it with. This very reality has been woven into our natures by our loving Creator who has existed in community forever—the community of the Godhead, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

-Gen. 1—Elohim, plural of Eloha.

-Gen. 1:26—Moses uses a singular; God uses a plural. Cannot be angels, they are never referred to as active agents in creation

-Echad = one flesh Deut. 6:4; Gen. 2:24

-1 John 4:8 love is by nature relational . . .

-“There are three living persons of the heavenly trio; in the name of these three great powers -- the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit – those who receive Christ by living faith are baptized, and these powers will co-operate with the obedient subjects of heaven in their efforts to live the new life in Christ.” *Evangelism*, 615.

2. Holy Spirit, divine, eternal being

-A personal being

-Matthew 28:19

-Acts 5:3-4 Lying to the Holy Spirit is lying to God

-John 14:16, 17, 26

-John 16:7 (pneuma is neuter, genderless—yet Jesus uses a personal pronoun)

-Helper (paraklytos)(14:26) is always a person, never simply a force

-Speak (Acts 8:29),

-Teach (John 14:26)

-Bear witness (John 15:26)

-intercede on behalf of others (Rom 8:26-27)

-distribute gifts to others (1 Cor 12:11)

-forbid or allows certain things (Acts 16:6-7)

-Grievable Ephesians 4:30

-Exercises will 1 Corinthians 12:11

-“We need to realize that the Holy Spirit, who is as much a person as God is a person, is walking through these grounds.” Evangelism, 616.

2. The Ministry of the Holy Spirit

1. Christ as an abiding presence IN US through the Spirit.

-External vs Internal John 16:7

-John 15:18 / Revelation 5:6 (SC 80)

-John 14:16, 17; 21-23

2. Author and interpreter of Scripture.

-1 Corinthians 2:10, 11

-2 Pet 1:21

-John 14:26

3. Agent in conversion and transformation

-John 3:8

-John 16:8-11

-Galatians 5:22-25

4. Mission-power

-Acts 1:8

-1 Corinthians 12:11

5. Evidence of believer's salvation

-Ephesians 1:13, 14

6. Remnant and its mission

-2 Timothy 3:5

-Joel 2:28+

-Early and later rain of Spirit. Ripening the harvest

7. Sealing agency

-Revelation 7:3, 4

-Ephesians 4:30

-The work of sealing is the imprinting in the human heart the image of the divine so deeply that no force can persuade them to deviate from right.

Conclusion

“But near the close of earth’s harvest, a special bestowal of spiritual grace is promised to prepare the church for the coming of the Son of man. This outpouring of the Spirit is likened to the falling of the latter rain; and it is for this added power that Christians are to send their petitions to the Lord of the harvest “in the time of the latter rain.” In response, “the Lord shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain.” “He will cause to come down ... the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain,” Zechariah 10:1; Joel 2:23. {AA 55.1}

“But unless the members of God’s church today have a living connection with the Source of all spiritual growth, they will not be ready for the time of reaping. Unless they keep their lamps trimmed and burning, they will fail of receiving added grace in times of special need.

“Those only who are constantly receiving fresh supplies of grace, will have power proportionate to their daily need and their ability to use that power. Instead of looking forward to some future time when, through a special endowment of spiritual power, they will receive a miraculous fitting up for soul winning, they are yielding themselves daily to God, that He may make them vessels meet for His use. Daily they are improving the opportunities for service that lie within their reach. Daily they are witnessing for the Master wherever they may be, whether in some humble sphere of labor in the home, or in a public field of usefulness.” *Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 55.