

Truth for Today

The Bible teaching radio programme

For reply: Email: truthfortoday@aol.com

Broadcast Date: 28 February 2016

No. T0926

Speaker: Mr. Ernie Brown

The Person and work of the Spirit: The Holy Spirit in Christ

God is a Triune Being, Father and Son and Holy Spirit, as stated in Matthew 28:19.

The completeness of man as created by God

God created man, Adam, to be in the image and likeness of God. As the image of God, man is intended to represent God. He has been given the position and potential to do so. Then, as the likeness of God, man is intended to resemble God in his life. To effect these dual aims, God created man a tri-partite being, with three constituents, spirit and soul and body. 1 Thessalonians 5:23 refers to 'your **entire** spirit and soul and body'. That is, man has the capacity to exercise himself wholly, in spirit and soul and body. Genesis 2:29 tells us that God provided an adequate supply of food to sustain mankind. We read in Genesis 3:6 that

- The provision was "*good for food*", to give satisfaction to his **bodily** appetite - appealing to the members and organs of the physical body;
- It was "*pleasant to the eyes*", desirable to the **heart**, that is, the **soul**;
- It was "*to be desired to make one wise*", appealing to the **mind** - the **spirit**.

The completeness of the fall of man

However, created man is not only peccable, able to sin, and liable to sin, but peccant, guilty of sinning. From Adam in the Garden of Eden onwards, the fall of man has been complete, involving each constituent of his **entire** being. Adam readily yielded to each element of temptation and thus submitted, in body and soul and spirit, in the order in which the text outlines the case in Genesis 3:1-6. The result is seen in Romans 1:21-28, which is well worth studying very carefully in this respect.

Christ, in the days of His life upon earth, constantly demonstrated the completeness and perfection of His manhood.

In total contrast to this, during His life upon earth, the Lord Jesus was utterly devoted to the will of God, having come to do His work. In so doing, He thereby fulfilled Isaiah 42:21 "*The LORD is well pleased for His righteousness sake; He will magnify the law, and make it honourable.*" In the course of that life of perfect dependence upon His God, He gave ample evidence of the fullness of the perfection of His manhood, in spirit and soul and body. This is detailed in the Synoptic Gospels, Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Of all men, only the Lord Jesus ever fulfilled every precept of Scripture in this way. On the other hand, the Gospel by John emphasises His essential Deity, and yet the balance is preserved by reference to the reality of His manhood in every respect.

We learn from Hebrews 4:15 that He was 'sinless, yet tempted'. Because of His intrinsic purity He felt things most keenly. He suffered in temptation most intensely, because of His utter holiness and sinlessness. He was truly impeccable, incapable of sinning, and yet He felt more keenly than any other what it was to be tested to the ultimate. The first man, Adam, and his descendants, are of the earth, earthy: The Second Man, (the Lord Jesus, that is), is a new order of man, (originating in) heaven, as we read in 1 Corinthians 15:47. The Manhood He took was begun and maintained in the power and energy of the Holy Spirit of God. From beginning to end, the life upon earth of the Lord Jesus was lived in the power and energy of the Holy Spirit. Every movement of Christ in the flesh was governed by the Holy Spirit. Let us look at various aspects which emerged in or at various phases of His life upon earth.

1. His conception and birth

First of all, His conception and birth. "*Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost*" (Matthew 1:18-20).

Again, in Luke 1:34-35: *“Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.”*

2. His baptism and anointing.

Secondly, His baptism and anointing. Matthew 3:16-17 says, *“And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”* Mark 9:7 and Luke 9:35 give identical witness to that.

In Luke 4:18-21, Luke adds: *“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.”*

Likewise, in John 1:32-34 we read: *“And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.”*

The consistent witness of the Evangelists is that, anointed with power at His baptism, He went forth, first to resist temptation in the wilderness, and then returned in the power of the Holy Spirit to begin His ministry. The Apostle John wrote in John 6:27: *“Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed”* (no doubt for service in the power of The Holy Spirit). In Acts 10:38, the witness is given in the early days of the Christian church: *“God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.”*

Before the anointing, He was, in Himself, everything that could be required of man, perfect in full moral worth. The anointing was necessary to give public approbation, manifest approval, of what God already knew in His own estimation of the perfection of the Manhood of Christ.

3. The temptations in the wilderness.

Thirdly, the perfect manhood of the Lord Jesus was manifested in that He resisted completely the temptations to which Satan subjected Him in the desert, as recorded in detail in the Synoptic Gospels. Each testifies that He did this under the leading and in the power of The Holy Ghost. Read the details in Matthew 4:1-11; Mark 1:12-13; Luke 4:14-13. Luke 4:13-15 adds that *“when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season. And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round out. And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all.”*

Let us pause and consider the reality and the completeness of the temptations to which Christ was subjected. The Lord Jesus Christ entered voluntarily into real, full manhood, with spirit and soul and body. He was tempted, tested, in every part of Him, spirit and soul and body, and proved the reality and perfection of His manhood by resisting the temptations of the devil in every respect. Matthew, Mark and Luke are consistent in their record.

The first temptation involved turning the stones into bread. This temptation was presented to His bodily appetite, involving the members of His **body**.

In the second temptation, He was taken up to a high mountain, where Satan promised Him all power, if the Lord Jesus would worship him. In this temptation His **heart** was exposed to the sin of covetousness, involving His holy **soul**.

In the third temptation, Satan offered Jesus all the kingdoms of the world. This was an appeal to the mind, that which may be impressed, involving the personal **spirit**.

His victory over every kind of temptation, testing every part of His moral being, was total and complete. Jesus said, *“The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me”* (John 14:30). Throughout His life upon earth, but manifested particularly at the outset of His public ministry, in demonstration of His absolute moral fitness to take up the service of God, the Lord Jesus demonstrated His utter perfection in every respect, spirit and soul and body. The Manhood He took was begun and maintained in the power of the Holy Spirit. He resisted each temptation by the

application of the word of God, in the power of the Spirit of God. These resources are also available to us when we are tempted.

4. Justified in Spirit

Fourthly, His inner, personal sense of being well-pleasing to God, at all times and in all things.

1 Timothy 3:16 says, *“And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.”* In this pithy summary of the life of Jesus on earth, we are instructed that at all times, and in every situation throughout that life, and in the face of every kind of opposition, Jesus always and ever had that inward vindication, in His personal spirit, and in the power of the Holy Spirit, that He was well pleasing to the Father who had sent him into the world.

In Luke 10:21, we are told, *“In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.”*

5. His Public Ministry

Fifthly, as to His public ministry, we read in Acts 10:38-39, *“God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him. And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem.”* Romans 1:4 confirms that *“He was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by resurrecting dead persons from the dead.”*

Nevertheless, in His Holy Manhood, the Lord Jesus, the Son of God, Messiah of Israel, and Saviour of the world, suffered fully, in every part of His being, in spirit and soul and body. He suffered every kind of abuse-physically to His body, emotionally in His holy soul, and psychologically in His pure, personal spirit. He suffered from men, He suffered for righteousness. This is seen throughout the scriptures, typically and prophetically in the Old Testament, historically in the Gospels, and by teaching in the New Testament Epistles. A simple study of that central scripture on the sufferings of Christ, Isaiah 52:13-53:12, shows this very clearly.

6. His Death

Sixthly, at the end of His perfect life, lived in all ways and at all times in the power of the Holy Spirit, we read, in Hebrews 9:14 *“... through the eternal Spirit [He] offered himself without spot to God.”* That is, He entered into death in the energy, power and purity of the Holy Spirit. At the end of that perfect life, we read in Luke 23:46, *“And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost.”* In death He suffered before God. He suffered as a propitiatory sacrifice before God, God’s remedy for sin, and in substitution for all who trust Him.

7. His Resurrection

Then, seventh, having lived a perfect life, and died a solemn, perfect death, all in the power of the Holy Spirit, He was raised by the power of the Holy Spirit. *“For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit”* (1 Peter 3:18).

8. His Commission of Servants or Disciples

Eighth, in resurrection, and before His ascension back to where He was before, but now in manhood, He gave commandments to the disciples by the Holy Spirit: *“He was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen”* (Acts 1:2).

9. His Ascension

Finally, ninth, the path of His spotless life lay, through death, followed by His resurrection, in ascension in manhood to the right hand of God, the only appropriate terminus for that perfect life.

Scripture is perfectly plain that subsequent to the ascension of the Lord Jesus to heaven, The Holy Spirit would come, and did come, to provide the power of, and guidance for, Christians that had been so evident in the life of the Lord Jesus while He lived on earth. God grant that we shall be willing to follow the leading and avail ourselves of the power and guidance thus available to us, as the Lord Jesus in His moral perfection did during His sojourn on earth.

By the Spirit, He is now the reservoir or fountain of that spiritual fullness which dwells in Him for us. The abiding Manhood of Christ is effective towards us by the Spirit of God. Because of Pentecost, and since Pentecost, the moral features of Christ continue to be seen on earth in lives controlled and empowered by the Holy Spirit. When our blessed Lord comes again to take us to be with Himself, then shall our salvation be gloriously complete; spirit, soul and body, enjoying with Him all the bliss of His presence in the power of that self-same Spirit.

Conclusion

Before we close, let us remind ourselves that it is only because of the value to God of the work of Christ, and in the power and energy of the Holy Spirit, that we Christians have the joy and privilege of entering into the enjoyment and appreciation of that which God has revealed of Himself in the Person of His Son here upon earth in the days of His flesh. Only those who are in the good of the sacrificial death of Christ are able to enter into the true blessedness of all that perfection and beauty which permeated the life and service of Christ, lived on earth to the glory of God. This gives substance, adds substance, indeed is a major element of the substance, of that which, by the Holy Spirit, we offer to the blessed God, in praise, worship and adoration. Amen.

Please Note:

We encourage you to use this transcript for your personal or group Bible studies. This material should not, however, be used in any publications without the express permission from Truth for Today, whose contact details can be found on page 1. Large Print copies of this document are also available upon request.