

The Holy Spirit
First Baptist Church Dandridge
Winter 2026

Session Three: The Holy Spirit and Christ

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Christological/Pneumatological Moments: In theology, Jesus' life and ministry have been defined in terms of "Christological Moments," which are the specific works and events that clearly identify who Jesus is and what he came to accomplish. According to John Macquarrie these events are "critical moments in the revelation given in Christ." These specific moments include Jesus' conception, baptism, temptations, mighty works, transfiguration, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension. However, Scripture reveals that these Christological Moments were empowered by the Holy Spirit, which some refer to as "Pneumatological Moments." In other words, The person and work of Jesus, God the Son, was empowered by God the Spirit.

"The ministry of Jesus in word and deed was carried forward in the power of the Holy Spirit. In everything he did, Jesus knew in himself a mighty force working that was beyond himself...Jesus lived and moved in the presence and power of the Holy Spirit." – J. Rodman Williams, *Renewal Theology*

1. The Holy Spirit and Messianic Prophecy

- a. **Prophecy:** While all messianic prophecies were revealed in the Old Testament through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, there are certain prophecies that detail the Holy Spirit's role in the life and ministry of Jesus. These prophecies reveal that Jesus will depend on the Spirit's power in his life.
 - **Isaiah 11:1-10** – "There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit. And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. He shall not judge by what his ears hear, but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. Righteousness shall be the belt of his waist, and faithfulness the belt of his loins."
 - **Isaiah 42:1** – "Behold my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my Spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations." (cf. 61:1-2)
 - **Theology:** According to Philippians 2:6-7, God the Son "emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in likeness of men." While the emptying did not mean that Jesus gave up his divinity, it did mean that he chose to live within certain human limitations.

These limitations made him dependent on the Holy Spirit for direction, power, and wisdom. However, God revealed in the Old Testament that the Son would be led and empowered by the Spirit.

2. The Holy Spirit and the Incarnation

The Incarnation took place when the Son entered the world and took on human flesh, being fully God and fully man (the God-man). John writes, "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (1:14). The Holy Spirit was involved with the incarnation in two ways.

- a. **The Prophetic Announcement:** Following centuries of silence from God, the Spirit of prophecy emerges to announce the arrival of Christ.
 - **Luke 1:13, 15, 17** – *"But the angel said to him, 'Do not be afraid Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John...and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb....and he will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready for the Lord a prepared people."*
 - **Luke 1:41-42** – *"And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, and she exclaimed with a loud cry, 'Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb!"*
 - **Luke 2:25-26, 30** – *"Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. 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.... 'for my eyes have seen your salvation.'"*
- b. **The Miraculous Conception:** In light of Mary's status as a virgin, she becomes pregnant through the agency of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit's presence is essential for Christ's divine and holy nature, and therefore is essential to our salvation.
 - **Matthew 1:20** – *"But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, 'Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.'"*
 - **Matthew 1:23** (cf. Isaiah 7:14) – *"Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel (which means, God with us)."*
 - **Luke 1:35** – *"And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God."*

- **Quote:** “The Holy Spirit effects a *supernatural preservation* of the sinless humanity of Christ in the incarnation, since natural generation would have *entailed depravity*.”

3. The Holy Spirit and Christ’s Baptism

- a. **Spiritual Restart:** When Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist in the Jordan River, the Holy Spirit played a necessary role in identifying the purpose of Jesus’ mission—an event that was so important it’s recorded in all four gospels. John’s baptism ministry was designed to call the nation to repentance. His prophetic voice called for Israel to go back to the beginning of its journey on the other side of the Jordan and symbolically start over anticipating through faith in the anticipated Messiah.
 - **Matthew 3:11** – “I baptize you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.”
- b. **Spiritual Identification:** The symbolism of the opening heavens and the sudden descent of the Spirit strongly suggests a grand revelatory moment is taking place. Someone of great significance now stands before Israel. This is the Son of God, the promised Messiah.
 - **Mark 1:10-11** – “And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, “You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.”
 - **John 1:29-34** – “The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! This is he of whom I said, ‘After me comes a man who ranks before me, because he was before me.’ I myself did not know him, but for this purpose I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel.” And John bore witness: “I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’ And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God.”
- c. **Spiritual Israel:** As Jesus was baptized in the Jordan, not only is he identifying with the people that he came to save who are in need of repentance, but Jesus is revealing himself to be the True Israel, the One who would perfectly accomplish all that God called national Israel to be in the Old Covenant. Like ancient Israel, Jesus is crossing the Jordan and entering the Promised Land, where he will be completely victorious over his enemies—Satan, sin, and death—securing salvation for believers, delivering them to the new heavens and new earth.

4. The Holy Spirit and Christ's Temptations

- a. **Christ's Temptations:** Jesus' messianic identity and mission does not go untested. Like Adam and Eve, Jesus is tempted by the devil. Satan tries to lure Jesus in three ways: (1) To follow his own will instead of the Father's by providing for himself in the wilderness; (2) To put God to the test by leaping from the temple; and (3) To worship the tempter/devil in exchange for an earthly kingdom. And these temptations were arranged by the Holy Spirit.
- **Mark 1:12-13** – *"The Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. And he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan."*
 - **Luke 4:1, 14** – *"And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness for forty days, being tempted by the devil...and Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee."*
- b. **Theology:** Since Matthew and Luke both contain records of Jesus' genealogy, linking him to Abraham and Adam, Jesus' triumph over these temptations is another example of how he remained sinless and faithful where Adam and Israel failed. Jesus is the second, perfect Adam and the second, perfect Israel ("I am the Vine"). Therefore, those connected to Jesus through faith receive credit for his righteousness and are justified before God (Phil. 3:7-9).
- **Quote:** *"At the outset of his ministry, Jesus is depicted as overcoming the evil one who stands in opposition to the work of the kingdom through the all-sufficient power of the Spirit of God."* – Gerald Hawthorne