



What the Holy Spirit Does

Suppose one night you had a dream that you were being rich and powerful. In this dream you owned huge and beautiful homes, fast and flashy cars, private jets, skyscrapers with your name written on them.

Then you woke up from your dream.

What's the difference between your life in the dream world and now? You might be tempted to say, "Everything." But, actually, there is one great gift you possessed in both worlds. It is a gift that holds everything together. Without it you won't be able to own anything at all, not even one single second of happiness. That gift is the gift of life. Even the richest man in the world loses every penny when his life ends.

Have you ever given much thought to the gift of life?

Since life is the most essential gift a human being can possess, we will take a look at what the Bible teaches about the Holy Spirit and what He does.

- The Holy Spirit Gives Life
- The Holy Spirit Gives Spiritual Gifts
- The Holy Spirit Prepares a Dwelling Place for God

The Holy Spirit Gives Life

The Holy Spirit gives the gift of life. In Romans 8:11, Paul says, "If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you." Paul is clearly saying that it was the Holy Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead. On the other hand, in John 5:21, Jesus says, "For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom he will". Is this a contradiction? No, to say that the Father gives life, or that Jesus gives life, or that the Holy Spirit gives life is to say that God gives life. God is three persons but one God. Each of the three persons can be called givers of life. In our study today we will limit our focus to the activity of the Holy Spirit giving life. That does not mean that the Father or the Son don't also give life. One way of understanding the three persons of the Trinity is by understanding what each of the three persons does. In this lesson we will look only at what the Holy Spirit does for believers.

The Holy Spirit gave life to Jesus' on two important occasions. At His conception, the Holy Spirit produced the life of Jesus within Mary's womb (Matthew 1:18, 20), and when Jesus was resurrected from the dead, He was "vindicated by the Spirit" (1Timothy 3:16) when the Holy Spirit raised Jesus from the dead.

The Holy Spirit also gives life to believers (Romans 8:11). In John 20:22 the risen Jesus breathed on His disciples and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit." This was Jesus' announcement to His disciples that He was giving them the Holy Spirit who would transform them by giving them the life of the coming age. Jesus' act of breathing on His disciples, reminds us of a moment at the beginning of humanity's creation, when God breathed life into Adam (Genesis 2:7). As He had done before, Jesus was breathing a new kind of life, eternal life, into His disciples.

Ezekiel had a vision about a valley of dried bones, God said: "Behold, I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live" (Ezekiel 37:5). That breath is the Holy Spirit that comes from God. God has the power to bring life to dead, even dried up bones. This power of the Holy Spirit that Ezekiel saw in his vision, is the Holy Spirit giving life to those who were dead in their sins. Those who are in Christ have received this gift of life from God.

In Acts 2, after Jesus ascended to Heaven to sit on His throne (Revelation 5:1&7), He sent the Holy Spirit to believers gathered in Jerusalem for the Feast of Pentecost. The Holy Spirit descended from Heaven onto the believers as fiery tongues. This visible sign demonstrated that the Heavenly power of the Holy Spirit was breaking into this world. This reminds of us of when God descended on Mount Sinai in the form of fire and revealed His law to Moses (Exodus 19:18). At Pentecost God revealed His presence again.

The Holy Spirit's power demonstrates that the new creation had begun. Paul calls the Holy Spirit a "down payment" or a "guarantee" (2Corinthians 5:4). The Holy Spirit is an actual taste of what believers can experience now before they receive all God has for them in the future.

The Holy Spirit Gives Spiritual Fruit

Isaiah prophesied that God would restore Israel, and the land would be very fruitful (Isaiah 32:15-17).

¹⁵ until the Spirit is poured upon us from on high,
and the wilderness becomes a fruitful field,
and the fruitful field is deemed a forest.

¹⁶ Then justice will dwell in the wilderness,
and righteousness abide in the fruitful field.

¹⁷ And the effect of righteousness will be peace,
and the result of righteousness, quietness and trust forever. (Isaiah 32:15-17, ESV)

Paul interprets this "fruitfulness" as the fruits produced by the Holy Spirit in the life of believers (Galatians 5:22-23). Isaiah's prophecy of fruitfulness is fulfilled when believers bear spiritual fruit.

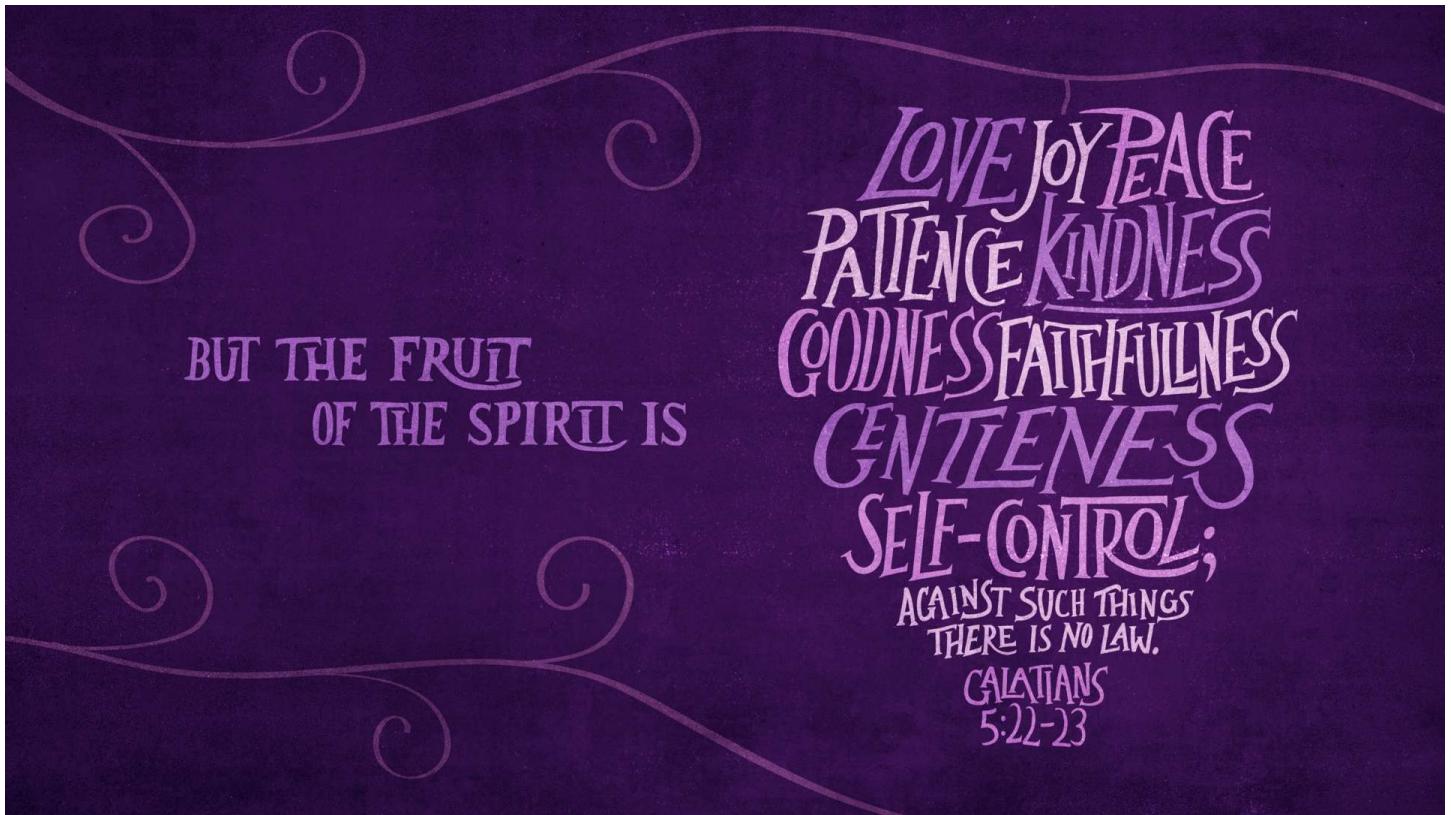
²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

²³ gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. ²⁴ And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. (Galatians 5:22-23, ESV)

The "fruits of the Spirit" produce spiritual holiness in believers. Paul gives a list: "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control." This list gives us an idea of what kind of spiritual fruits the Holy Spirit produces in the lives of believers. These spiritual fruits are given to every believer.

Notice that each of the names for the "fruits of the spirit" can be used to describe ways that believers interact with each other. God's work in the heart of each believer becomes visible through their loving actions and words to others. Jesus said we shouldn't try to hide the light He gave us (Matthew 5:14-16). By using the "fruits of the spirit" to empower our actions toward each other, believers let His light shine brightly. Jesus means that we shouldn't let fear of rejection prevent us from doing what is right. Jesus always did the right thing. We should do the right thing as well, even when it may bring difficulty and pain into our lives. By the power of the Holy Spirit, believers are given the ability to follow His example and to do the right thing.

Life with Jesus isn't easier, but it is filled with overflowing love. It isn't always fun, but it always leads to more joy. If the Holy Spirit convicts you of sin, then you will need to confess your sins, but you will enjoy a deeper reality of peace with God when you do. Those who believe in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior receive the fruits of the Spirit so that they can share them, and by sharing them, more fruit will be given to them.



The Holy Spirit Prepares a Dwelling Place for God

Ephesians 2:22 (ESV)

²²In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

Believers are “built up” not only for their personal benefit, but also for the benefit of others. When the fellowship of believers is actively building each other up, according to God’s plan, then that fellowship of believers becomes a dwelling place of God. An individual person cannot do this alone. Each believer needs to be in fellowship with other believers so that this will take shape the way God intends.

We should not hoard the “fruit of the spirit,” and try to keep them all for ourselves. We need to share them. Jesus said, “Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends” (John 15:13). Jesus proved His love by sacrificing His life on the cross (1 John 3:16). Believers should be willing to lay down their lives for fellow believers (1 John 3:16, EVS). In fact, Jesus said: “Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it” (Matthew 10:39, ESV).

The goal of fellowship abundant with the fruits of the spirit is not merely to make believers happier. The goal is that God will be glorified through believers being filled and sharing the fruits of the spirit. As Paul said in Ephesians 2:22, when believers bear the fruits of the spirit, and share them, they will become a suitable dwelling place for God. When God establishes His residency in the fellowship of believers, He will reign.

When I was in high school, I was part of a youth group in a small church that had a revival. Many teenagers who had never come to church before accepted Christ. Many of them brought their parents with them to church. Some of their parents and also became believers. Many lives and families were changed.

I believe there are periods of time when God breaks through the normal patterns of this world. He pours out His Spirit on people. During those times I believe we have the privilege of seeing God in action. He is always at work in our midst, but sometimes His work is more visible. Times of revival are times when His work is undeniable.

Even when we can't see that God is at work He is still busy. We may not be able to see what He is doing but we know His ability to get things done is not limited to what we are able to understand. I remember some of my classmates in seminary. They wanted to skip their education in God's word and get to work immediately. They felt that studying to prepare for ministry might be a waste of time. But even Jesus spent many years preparing for His ministry. Maybe there will be times when God wants you to prepare and not to just jump right in.

Whether you can see God at work or not, He is at work. If you can see what God is doing, then join in the work He is doing. If you can't see that God is at work, then follow the teaching of the Bible and know that He is with you. But in all circumstances do what you can to join in fellowship with other Christians and grow together with them as you seek to reflect the nature of God and grow closer to God, so that God may make His home with you.

Conclusion

Jesus' death on the cross paid for sin. Jesus' resurrection was the first time that a person experienced the kind of life that the Holy Spirit now gives to every believer. He has given us life.

As Christians we struggle to get along with each other. The Holy Spirit provides the gifts of the spirit that provide the ability to forgive one another, and bring out the best in fellow believers.

When believers grow in the Spirit, by using the fruits of the spirit, believers become a fellowship where the Spirit of God can really live out His identity. This is something God can do, through the Holy Spirit.

Jesus promised that God will provide everything we need. But more than meeting our needs, Jesus has provided a way for the Holy Spirit to become a living presence in our lives. Believers live in the presence of God! You can't get any closer to God than to have His Holy Spirit living within you.

In Christ,

Chap. Haslett

Galatians 5:22–23

But the **fruit of the Spirit** is **love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control;** against such things **there is no law.**

(ESV)

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