

THE HOLY SPIRIT OF PROMISE

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THE HOLY SPIRIT OF PROMISE

Introduction

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.
(Genesis 1:1)

From this very first mention of God in the book of Genesis, the Hebrew word, *Elohiym*, (el-o-heem) was used in the original manuscripts. This plural Hebrew noun is frequently used for God throughout the Old Testament and yet, Scripture clearly states that there is only one God (as in: Mark 12:29, Mark 12:32, James 2:19).

Most Christians recognize that we serve a triune God – three persons in one God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Jesus taught His disciples to pray to “our Father” in Heaven. Before He ascended, Jesus told them that He must leave for the Holy Spirit to come to them and teach them many things.

But the Comforter, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance, whatever I have said to you.
(John 14:26 MKJV)

Who is this teacher constantly abiding with each of us? Why do some Christians honor Him, listening for His still, small voice (1 Kings 19:12) while others hardly take notice of Him? If those who are unaware of His presence get any creative thoughts or revelation, they often assume that it was their own great idea, not recognizing any input that might have come from the Holy Spirit. On the other hand, what seems at first to be a “good” idea is not necessarily “good” or from Him. If we want to do God’s will, we must submit all of our thoughts and ideas to Him for verification, “*bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.*” (2 Corinthians 10:3-5)

Of this we can be certain – God is very relational. Some people believe that God is distant, but I have no doubt that God does want to communicate with each one of us on a regular basis by the Holy Spirit. He is, after all, the Comforter who Jesus promised would guide us with His truth in our journey along life’s pathways, from deep pits of pain and darkness to mountaintops.

If you believe, instead, that our reading the Holy Bible is the only way God wants to relate to us, then picture this in the natural: Would you be satisfied if you and a close relative or friend never again had a conversation or visit, but you just sent each other an insightful book that you each had composed? A book could never substitute for loving communion and friendship. Those of us who are learning to “listen” for the Holy Spirit’s voice and inspiration are not only blessed by what He has expressed in His Holy Bible, but by His proceeding word:

*But He (Jesus) answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that **proceeds** from the mouth of God.'"* (Matthew 4:4)

It would be safe to say that of the three persons in the Trinity, the Holy Spirit is the most neglected. The following pages address this question: What can we do to change that neglect in our own lives and in the lives of those with whom we have influence? Examining our perspective and expectations in our daily walk from the revelations of Scripture will help us to understand and grow in our relationship with the Holy Spirit and in our effectiveness as citizens of God's kingdom.



Dear Holy Spirit, I invite You to inspire and guide me as I study what Your presence can mean in my life. I don't want to dishonor You in any way or to miss anything You have for me.

AMEN

1. The Holy Spirit's Function in our Commissioning

We can see from Scripture that the Holy Spirit is not merely a force, an energy, or a power, but He is a person. In John 14:26, Jesus refers to the Holy Spirit as a person and as masculine:

“But the Comforter, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance, whatever I have said to you.” (MKJV)

In this verse, three key points are evident. First, “the Comforter” is the masculine *ho paracletos* in Greek, the original language of the New Testament (Strong's Greek Dictionary says this word also means consoler, advocate and intercessor). Second, when the text says *He* will teach you all things, this pronoun (Greek *ekeinos*) is used in the masculine singular. This is significant because if the Holy Spirit is an impersonal force, Jesus would not have referred to Him as “He,” but as “it” and would have used the neuter *ekeino*. Third, notice that Jesus says the Holy Spirit will teach and remind us of “all that Jesus has said to us.” Jesus always refers to the Holy Spirit as a person (*He*), not as an impersonal force. The evidence is overwhelming.

Before Jesus ascended into Heaven, He gave this most precious gift to His disciples when He began to equip and commission them to follow in His footsteps:

*“So Jesus said to them again, ‘Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.’ And when He had said this, **He breathed on them**, and said to them, **‘Receive the Holy Spirit.’**”* (John 20:21-2)

Mark's gospel reports more details about this commissioning:

*“And He said to them, ‘Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. And **these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues (languages); they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.**’”* (Mark 16:15-18)

Some think that when the last of the original 12 apostles died, all these signs discontinued. Verse 17, however, says that the signs were given not only to the 12 apostles but to all who would become believers. Note that the word “signs” (*semion* in Greek) can also be translated as miracles and wonders.

After Jesus breathed upon them and imparted the Holy Spirit to them (John 20:21-22), Luke 24:49 relates one of the last instructions Jesus gave to His disciples – that they should wait in Jerusalem to become equipped with Holy Spirit power – a second and different impartation of the Holy Spirit.

In the first impartation, they received the Holy Spirit as an indwelling presence (Him in us), but in the second impartation, they would be immersed (baptized) into the Holy Spirit (us in Him).

This is similar to the placement of Jesus and the Father as Jesus described in John 14:10 “Do you not believe that **I am in the Father, and the Father in Me?**”

Luke relates more details of Jesus’ instructions in the beginning of the book of Acts:

*And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, “which,” He said, “you have heard from Me; for John truly baptized with water, but **you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit** not many days from now.” (Acts 1:4-5)*

This encounter with the Holy Spirit was not only for the 12 apostles, but 120 believers followed His instructions as they gathered together in Jerusalem in an upper room for their annual feast of Pentecost.

When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues (languages), as the Spirit gave them utterance.

And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven. And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language. (Acts 2:1-6)

So they were all amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, “Whatever could this mean?” Others mocking said, “They are full of new wine.”

But Peter, standing up with the eleven, raised his voice and said to them, “Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and heed my words. For these are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day.

*But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: ‘and it shall come to pass **in the last days**, says God, that I will pour out of my spirit **on all flesh**; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams and on my menservants and on my maidservants I will pour out my spirit in those days; and they shall prophesy.*

I will show wonders in heaven above and signs in the earth beneath: blood and fire and vapor of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the coming of the great and awesome day of the Lord and it shall come to pass that whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.’ (Acts 2:12-21)

Many Christians today have never experienced or practiced anything supernatural except for being born again when they accepted Jesus’ blood atonement for their sins. They view the Bible as a historical and metaphorical book that inspires belief in God, His provision for our salvation and rules for living. They claim that the healings and miracles, such as what we see in the book of Acts, are not for this time, and with few exceptions, were only given to the early apostles to start the church. When they pray for someone in need of healing, they speak in terms of “if it is Your will.”

As a result of little or no expectation of God supernaturally empowering us, many churches have become congregations of audiences watching the show on the stage instead of active participants in ministry as the Body of Christ.

Some even believe God sends us injury and sickness to teach us lessons, which is contrary to our New Testament relationship as adopted children of our Heavenly Father. A spanking or losing some privilege might be appropriate for certain transgressions, but if you broke your child's arm or deliberately infected him with a deadly disease to "teach him a lesson," you would rightly be accused of abusing your child.

For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God... (Romans 8:15-16)

If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!" (Luke 11:11-13)

Others fearfully suggest that if anything supernatural occurs, these are the lying signs and wonders performed by false messiahs and false prophets that Jesus referred to in Matthew 24:24. They fail to see the important distinction between those who perform supernatural works that **draw people away from Jesus** into the occult and the worship of a false messiah, versus followers of Jesus Christ who speak words of life and perform supernatural wonders glorifying Jesus and **drawing people to Him**.

New Age religion does indeed have similarities to Christianity both doctrinally and experientially. In 1966 Raphael Gasson, an ex-spiritualist medium, wrote a book entitled *The Challenging Counterfeit*. Yes, there are counterfeit spiritual activities designed to deceive and lead people astray. Just as there are no real \$3.00 bills, and it would be illogical for a counterfeiter to create one, so it is with spiritual matters.

Just as thieves will try to copy real \$10.00, \$20.00, and \$50.00 bills, Satan, our enemy, will try to counterfeit the Holy Spirit's spiritual signs and wonders. Keep in mind, however, that similarity of manifestation does not equal similarity of causation. God's presence and His manifestations will always glorify Him.

For an in-depth study of God's miraculous gifts at work today, I recommend Randy Clark's book, *The Essential Guide to the Power of the Holy Spirit*¹ where he refutes cessationists' arguments both from Scripture and from historical evidence.

The bottom line for dealing with this issue:

*Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. **By this you know the Spirit of***

God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world. (1 John 4:1-3)



Dear Jesus, I acknowledge that You are the way, the truth and the life and the light of the world. I pray that You will lead me into Your truth, Your way, Your life and Your light. I commit to You that I will not grasp with a closed mind what I consider to be truth but will hold “truth” open-handedly so that You can adjust it as I journey with You through life. As I surrender all to You, I trust You to safeguard me from a self-centered ego and deceptive reasoning and judgments.

AMEN

2. Welcoming Versus Blocking the Holy Spirit's Presence and Activity

Throughout Scripture, we often see shaking or trembling as man's reaction to God's presence or to a visitation of one of His angelic messengers. Here are some examples:

My flesh trembles for fear of You, and I am afraid of Your judgments. (Psalm 119:120)

Hear the word of the LORD, you who tremble at His word; (Isaiah 66:5)

Do you not fear Me?' says the LORD. 'Will you not tremble at My presence, (Jeremiah 5:22)

My heart within me is broken because of the prophets; All my bones shake. I am like a drunken man, and like a man whom wine has overcome, because of the LORD, and because of His holy words. (Jeremiah 23:9)

Suddenly, a hand touched me, which made me tremble on my knees and on the palms of my hands. And he said to me, "O Daniel, man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak to you, and stand upright, for I have now been sent to you." While he was speaking this word to me, I stood trembling. (Daniel 10:10-11)

And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it. His countenance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow. And the guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead men. (Matthew 28:2-4)

Another reaction noted in Scripture is a person falling to the ground:

When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am Almighty God; walk before Me and be blameless...Then Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him... (Genesis 17:1, 3)

So I arose and went out into the plain, and behold, the glory of the LORD stood there, like the glory which I saw by the River Chebar; and I fell on my face. (Ezekiel 3:23)

Then it happened, when I, Daniel, had seen the vision and was seeking the meaning, that suddenly there stood before me one having the appearance of a man...So he came near where I stood, and when he came I was afraid and fell on my face (Daniel 8:15, 17)

Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" (Acts 9:4)

But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or an uninformed person comes in, he is convinced by all, he is convicted by all. And thus the secrets of his heart are revealed;

and so, falling down on his face, he will worship God and report that God is truly among you. (1 Corinthians 14:24-25)

And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, "Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last..." (Revelation 1:17)

Some observers in the multitudes following Jesus actually accused Him of being empowered by the devil as He went about healing and working miracles. Jesus reasoned with those challengers that a kingdom divided against itself cannot stand. (Luke 11:17-18). How would it serve Satan if his performance of lying signs and wonders leads people to follow and worship God when Satan's entire purpose is to draw people away from the Lord?

Jesus described the great works of those who would believe in Him (that's us):

*"Most assuredly, I say to you, **he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do**, because I go to My Father. And **whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.**" (John 14:12-14)*

Jesus told them more about the Holy Spirit, identifying Him as the Spirit of Truth who would guide them into all truth. This revelation was important for them to value and hold onto because of the difficult times ahead, and because the old covenant was no longer in effect and they were now part of a new covenant with God.

I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. However, when He, the Spirit of Truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth. For He shall not speak of Himself, but whatever He hears, He shall speak. And He will announce to you things to come. He will glorify Me, for He will receive of Mine and will announce it to you. (John 16:7-14 MKJV)

Before Jesus ascended into Heaven, he clearly described the spiritual actions and miracles which would be done by His believers as they ministered in His name (again, that's us):

*And these signs will follow **those who believe**: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover." (Mark 16:17-18)*

Peter spoke of this promise on the day of Pentecost when he explained to those who witnessed the outpouring of the Holy Spirit but who thought Jesus' followers were drunk:

"But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: 'and it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, that I will pour out of my spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams. And on my menservants and on my maidservants I will pour out my spirit in those days; and they shall prophesy.

I will show wonders in heaven above and signs in the earth beneath: blood and fire and vapor of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the coming of the great and awesome day of the Lord. And it shall come to pass that whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

(Acts 2:16-21)

*"Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. **For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.**" (Acts 2:38-39)*

So then, why do we see very few healings and miracles among mainstream Christians today? It is largely because our faith, and therefore our expectation, plays such a powerful role in what we can or cannot experience. *"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen"* (Hebrews 11:1). Jesus, Himself, could only do a few miracles when He visited His home town because of their unbelief (Matthew 13:58). We can overcome this by praying as did the father of the young man who was convulsed by an unclean spirit, *"Lord, I do believe; help my unbelief"* (Mark 9:24).

Jesus made it clear that we have a vital part to play in getting what we ask from God:

Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them. (Mark 11:24)

A short example of how faith in God's promises works: My father called from Miami one day to let us know he had filled an old suitcase with mangos from his tree and had shipped them to us by Greyhound bus. He said they would be arriving the next day or two and I could go to the bus station to pick them up. I was delighted because our whole family loved mangos. Just thinking about them made my mouth water.

Later that same day, I had occasion to call Dad about another matter. At the end of our conversation, I thanked him again for sending the mangos and could hardly wait to start enjoying them.

Recently, when I was praying about a healing I needed, I asked God to show me how to pray in faith. God reminded me about the mango incident and instructed me to have the same anticipation for receiving my healing that I had when I thanked my dad for sending the mangos before the shipment arrived. I had full confidence that Dad had sent them as he said he had and that we would be able to pick them up and begin to enjoy them. Faith in someone's word is based upon trust in that person.

Do I have faith in my Heavenly Dad's word? Or do I waver because I don't really trust in His love for me?



Dear Father, I trust in Your perfect, unconditional love for me. I do believe in Your word promising that I am totally accepted by You as Your child, even though I sometimes think and behave like a naughty toddler. Oh, how I need and appreciate Your loving kindness as You correct and train me. And I do trust in your promises that as a believer I would receive the empowering presence of Your Holy Spirit enabling me to be all that You created me to be and to do all that You created me to do.

AMEN

3. What does it mean to Quench the Holy Spirit? What does it mean to Grieve the Holy Spirit? & What is Blasphemy against Him?

The Holy Spirit wants to express Himself in our lives, but there are two actions that will block Him from operating in the life of a believer: quenching and grieving the Holy Spirit.

When we do not follow the leadings of the Holy Spirit, we quench Him like pouring water on a fire (1 Thessalonians 5:19-21). This can happen unintentionally when we don't recognize His inspiration; or it can happen when, because of self-centered desires, fears, or even our mistaken doctrines and unbelief (choosing not to believe), we oppose His working through us in a supernatural manner.

As for grieving the Holy Spirit, Ephesians 4:17-32 and Galatians 5:19-21 list many sinful attitudes and actions that grieve Him, such as: lying, stealing, cursing, being bitter and unforgiving, envy, drunkenness and sexual immorality in thought or deed.

Both quenching and grieving the Spirit are similar in their effects. Both hinder a Godly, Spirit-led lifestyle. Just as we ourselves do not like to be grieved nor do we seek to quench what we consider good, so we should not grieve or quench the Holy Spirit by refusing to follow His leading. Keep in mind that after Jesus' baptism, the Holy Spirit descended upon Him like a gentle dove, not aggressively swooping in as a hawk or an eagle would (Luke 3:22). Like a sensitive, gentle dove, the Holy Spirit will sometimes draw back from us when He sees He is not welcome, but wherever He sees any openness, however small it may be, He will strongly persist, pouring His life and His truth over us until we finally "get it" and submit to His presence and His will.

Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit

In contrast to grieving or quenching the Holy Spirit, there is a sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit that Scripture states cannot be forgiven:

And whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him. But whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, either in this world or in the world to come. (Matthew 12:32)

In *Explore the Book*, Baptist minister J. Sidlow Baxterⁱⁱ defines blasphemy against the Holy Spirit as "ascribing the Holy Spirit's gracious and holy activities to the devil." The very fact of a person's fearing he might have committed the unpardonable sin proves that he has not. If he had, he would be incapable of recognizing that possibility or even caring that he might have done so.

Catholic priest John L. McKenzie, in *Dictionary of the Bible*, explains the reason this sin is not forgiven is not because of a lack of God's mercy but because the person in question views all of the input he receives from the Holy Spirit as undesirable.ⁱⁱⁱ This rejection of the Holy Spirit's influence in his life obstructs the urgings of the Holy Spirit which would draw the person to repent and to ask for forgiveness. In this way, a person can become progressively cut off from

the Holy Spirit's input by quenching His influence and denying Him control over his life. In his final state, that individual views the Lord's ways as evil, and Satan's ways as good, making his repentance followed by God's forgiveness impossible.

Holy Spirit Outpourings Since Pentecost

From Pentecost in Acts 2 until the present time, history proves that the Holy Spirit is still actively working through believers with signs and wonders, healings, deliverances and even people being raised from the dead.

There may have been lulls in His level of activity, but He has never ceased doing what He began in the early days of the Church. These lulls were likely due to both the clergy's and the average believer's ignorance of God's word and God's will. The Bible as it exists today was not available until translations from the Greek and Hebrew began to be written in the sixteenth century and over time became available to the common people in their own languages.

Some believers in the first three centuries A.D. who were empowered by the Holy Spirit to bring miraculous healing and deliverance to others and whose ministry has been accepted as true workings of the Holy Spirit by mainstream Christianity are: Justin Martyr, Hermas, Tertullian, Irenaeus, and Origen. In Augustine's *City of God*, written in 426 A.D., he notes many healings in his district such as the miraculous healing of a blind man.^{iv} Though he initially doubted the validity of these miracles, he later acknowledged that they were of the Holy Spirit.

Healings, prophecies and other gifts of the Holy Spirit continued, but by the 10th century, church doctrine had taken an unscriptural downturn into an imbalance of power and expression between the clergy and the laity to the point that the people could only sit passively under the authority of the clergy. This undermined the operation of the Holy Spirit in the Body of Christ.

Although there were a number of movements over the next several centuries such as the Great Awakening led by Jonathan Edwards, and the Baptist Shantung Revival in China in the 1930's, led by those who believed that God was still in the healing business, the clergy often opposed them.

In the first publication of Mary Crawford's book, *The Shantung Revival*, she described the manifestations and works of the Holy Spirit, but almost all the reports of miracles were eliminated when her book was reprinted in the 1970s.^v The deletions contained references to manifestations like laughing, falling under the power of the Holy Spirit, healings and trembling such as what also was experienced in the Azusa Street Revival in 1906, the Latter Rain Revival of the 1940s and the Toronto Airport Church revival in the 1990s as well as many other outpourings of the Holy Spirit.

Those who reject the Holy Spirit as the source of these manifestations and label them as mere emotionalism should see the point of the apostle Peter's words to the crowds of observers who witnessed the first Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2:15: "*For these are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day...*"

In spite of all the historical evidence to the contrary, some Christians still hold to a cessationist doctrine and insist that miracles ceased when the last of the original twelve apostles died.

Why?

Are they ignorant of history? Or have they decided that rather than admit they are wrong, they must hold to their doctrine and that all evidence to the contrary must be of the devil? Consider this: if that is their position, they may be not only quenching the Holy Spirit's activity in their own walk, but also grieving Him.

Keep in mind that nowhere does scripture say that the empowering, indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit (who Jesus promised His followers in Acts 1:8 that they began to experience in Acts 2) would be available for only a limited time "just to get the church started."

These questions have remained for all believers down through the centuries:

- Do you want a deeper relationship with the Father, with Jesus, AND with the Holy Spirit?
- Do you want to be a Holy Spirit empowered witness as a member of the Body of Christ?
- Do you want to experience the reality of Romans 8 and 1 Corinthians 12-14?

If your answer to these questions is "Yes," what would this look like in your life?

**There is only one appropriate response to the Lord of Glory for any believer:
ABSOLUTE SURRENDER TO HIM**

Then, He will pour into us more of Himself and we will experience a deeper relationship with Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Our becoming Holy Spirit-energized members of the Body of Christ will be as unique in each one of us as He has made each person's fingerprints. Total surrender to God enables us to live as citizens of His kingdom by the empowering, nurturing presence of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is a prime mover in our citizenship within God's kingdom. In order to relate to God and others with righteousness, we need the fruit of the Holy Spirit operative within us: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23).

Some people define the Kingdom of God as a government that God will establish after Jesus returns at the end of the age. At that time, of course, we will see His kingdom in its fullness, but throughout His ministry, Jesus clearly stated and demonstrated that God's kingdom had already begun and believers now could and should enter it.

Amazingly, the establishment and growth of God's kingdom on Earth during the times of five political eras was foretold centuries before Jesus' birth in the prophet Daniel's interpretation of

King Nebuchadnezzar's dream. Starting in Daniel 2:25, Daniel describes the king's dream and explains God's message:

Your Majesty, in your vision you saw in front of you a huge and powerful statue of a man, shining brilliantly, frightening and awesome. The head of the statue was made of fine gold, its chest and arms were of silver, its belly and thighs were of bronze, its legs were of iron, and its feet were a combination of iron and clay.

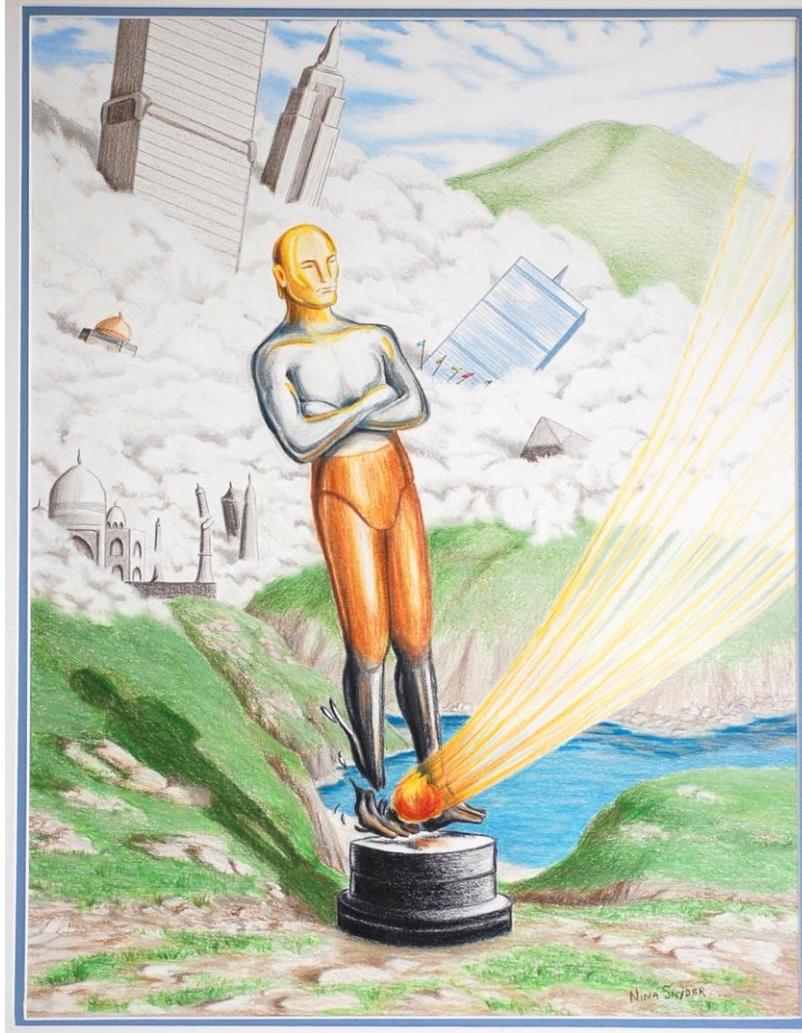
*But as you watched, a rock was cut from a mountain by supernatural means. It struck the feet of iron and clay, smashing them to bits. The whole statue collapsed into a heap of iron, clay, bronze, silver, and gold. The pieces were crushed as small as chaff on a threshing floor, and the wind blew them all away without a trace. **But the rock that knocked the statue down became a great mountain that covered the whole earth.** That was the dream; now I will tell Your Majesty what it means. (Daniel 2:31-36 NLT)*

After describing the kingdoms that would follow Nebuchadnezzar's, Daniel ends his interpretation when he proclaims:

*"...And in the days of these kings the **God of heaven will set up a kingdom** which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; **it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.**" (Daniel 2:44)*

Daniel declares that this prophecy of God's kingdom is not conditional, but will happen:

"...the great God has made known to the king what will come to pass "The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure." (Daniel 2:45)



My explanation of the Daniel 2 drawing:

In this drawing, I portray the exact moment in Nebuchadnezzar's dream in Daniel 2:34-35 when the rock hits the statue and it begins to disintegrate. In the background, the impact creates the dust clouds from buildings that are coming down. These buildings symbolize a variety of cultures, in past and present kingdoms.

The statue itself, although representing specific kingdoms throughout the ages, also resembles the statuette awarded to Hollywood's elite in the entertainment "kingdom" which has corrupted the modern world with its glorification of sin. All the world systems are being demolished as the Lord establishes His kingdom.

I see Nebuchadnezzar's dream as a simplified overview of the end times. The dreams and visions that Daniel has following that dream are details of the end times plus, of course, other scriptures dealing with this topic. I have no idea where we are on the time line. But I can pray sincerely, "Come quickly, Lord Jesus."

Jesus teaches about the Kingdom of God

Before Jesus ascended into Heaven, He taught His followers for forty days about the kingdom of God which would be activated in them with their baptism (immersion) in the Holy Spirit who would equip them to spread the good news and the demonstration of God's kingdom all over the world.

He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. (Acts 1:3)

"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." (Acts 1:8)



Dear Holy Spirit, I thank You for Your presence and for Your patient persistence in teaching me Your attitudes and Your ways. I want to be open to You as my ultimate decision maker. I surrender all decisions to Your leadings so that even when I open my mouth to speak, You will fill it with Your words of love, wisdom, power and life.

AMEN

4. What is the Kingdom of God? and What is its Importance?

Note: There is some confusion that might exist in biblical translations between the use of the terms “kingdom of God” and “kingdom of Heaven.”^{vi} In several cases, they are clearly referring to the same thing. For example, see Matthew 13:31 and Luke 13:18-19. Both of these gospel accounts describe Jesus’ parable of the mustard seed. If you compare the synoptic gospels -- Matthew, Mark and Luke, you will find that Matthew's "kingdom of heaven" exactly parallels Mark's and Luke's "kingdom of God." So there is no doubt that they are different terms describing the same thing.^{vii} Although another perspective states that the meanings of “kingdom of God” and “kingdom of Heaven” depend upon the context of the passage, for this study we take the position that the terms simply refer to God’s kingdom both now and when it comes in fullness at the end of this age.

When we view earthly kingdoms throughout history, we see a country ruled by a king or queen. Sometimes, though, they are just figureheads with very little authority while another person or group actually has control over the people. So, when the Pharisees questioned Jesus about the kingdom of God, they probably found it difficult to visualize a government such as He described:

Some Pharisees asked Jesus when the Kingdom of God would come. His answer was, "The Kingdom of God does not come in such a way as to be seen. No one will say, 'Look, here it is!' or, 'There it is!' because the Kingdom of God is within you." (Luke 17:20-21 GNB - Good News Bible)

Within us? How does that work? Further complicating the concept, Jesus called some children over to Him and said to the adults:

... "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God. Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it." (Luke 18:16-17)

Explaining the connection of the kingdom of God with the Holy Spirit, Paul comments in his reference to Old Testament dietary laws that “...*the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit*” (Romans 14:17). Having a dynamic relationship with the Holy Spirit is essential for us to be fully energized by Him and to be able to operate as He leads us in the kingdom of God. Jesus encourages us in Matthew 6:33 to not worry about our physical well-being and needs “...*But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.*”

Reviewing Jesus’ accomplishments when He lived on Earth will help us to gain clarity on the work of the Holy Spirit and His significance in the Kingdom of God:

- Jesus came to Earth to redeem mankind from the tragic results of the fall in the Garden of Eden (John 12:47).
- Jesus came as the “last Adam” to do what the first Adam failed to do as God’s delegated authority on Earth (John 12:49-50).
- Jesus demonstrated how to live and function in the kingdom of God:
 - a. In absolute surrender to the Father’s will (John 13:14-16)
 - b. With sacrificial love for others (John 13:34-35)
 - c. Under the anointing of the Holy Spirit (Luke 3:22)
- Before ascending to Heaven, Jesus transferred the same Kingdom authority in His name to *all* His followers:

*"Most assuredly, I say to you, **he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father. And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.** (John 14:12-14)*

Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit to each believer in the Body of Christ in order to do the following:

- Holy Spirit testifies of Jesus through us (John 15:26)
- Holy Spirit will guide us into all truth and tell us about things to come (John 16:13)
- Holy Spirit will glorify Jesus (John 16:14)

Jesus also stated that the Holy Spirit would rebuke worldly unbelievers of sin, righteousness and judgment (John 16:7-11)

One exciting aspect of the Body of Christ’s empowerment is declared by Paul in Ephesians 3:10-11:

*...to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known **by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places**, according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Here Paul explains to the reader how God intends that His wisdom would be revealed to the evil principalities and powers in the heavenly places **by redeemed mankind** – the very beings that Satan used in the Garden of Eden when he tried to thwart God’s plan. Is it any wonder that Satan tried to exalt himself as God and why he hates redeemed mankind and tries to deceive us, to feed us with unbelief, to immobilize us with sickness and death, and to dis-empower us with a false perspective of the Holy Spirit’s empowering presence in the lives of believers?

Now, God has turned the tables on him by redeeming us and then empowering us with authority as He did when Jesus sent out 70 of His disciples to minister in several cities:

Then the seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name."

*And He said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. Behold, **I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you.**" (Luke 10:17-19)*

How can this be and how can we do this?

We are adopted children of God and joint heirs with Christ (Romans 8:16-17), spiritually seated with Christ in heavenly places (Ephesians 1:20) where He is seated at the right hand of the Father (Ephesians 1:20), far above...

...far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all. (Ephesians 1:21-23 NASB)

Cessationists would have us believe that promises such as these no longer apply to Christians since the last of the twelve apostles died, but Paul makes it clear that "*Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever*" (Hebrews 13:8) and that...

*...all of God's promises have been fulfilled in Christ with a resounding "Yes!" And through Christ, our "Amen" (which means "Yes") ascends to God for His glory. It is God who enables us, along with you, to stand firm for Christ. He has commissioned us, and He has identified us as His own by placing the Holy Spirit in our hearts as the first installment **that guarantees everything He has promised us.** (2 Cor. 1:20-22 NLT)*

The Holy Spirit's input to us is necessary not only for everyday decisions and for healthy relationships, but especially as we come to the end of this age when the anti-Christ and his false prophet begin to rule on the earth. In fact, those in the Body of Christ who shun the Holy Spirit's voice and His empowerment are more vulnerable to deception than those who rely upon His directions. Especially in times of possible danger, we definitely need to be led by the Holy Spirit who will guide us with His wisdom and truth.

We can see a pattern throughout history of God's people worshipping Him alone and obeying His words and rules for life, followed by a period of falling away from that devotion and even worshipping false gods. Usually, this occurs when the spiritual leaders die, and their generation fails to pass on to the next generation true devotion and honor for God.

For example: in Joshua's last address to the Israelites (Joshua 24:17-31), he reminded the people how God had brought them out of bondage into the promised land and did great signs in their sight. Afterwards, Joshua died at age 110 and all the elders also passed away who had known all the works of the Lord. The story of the Israelites' fall into spiritual darkness continues in the

book of Judges 2:7-13 when the people *“forsook the Lord God of their fathers who had brought them out of the land of Egypt; and they followed other gods...”*

Another example of one generation failing to follow the example of the previous generation can be read in Judges 8:33-34 when as soon as Gideon died, the children of Israel again *“played the harlot with the Baals, and made Baal-Berith their god.”*

These are not isolated cases. Is this not also happening in our culture today? Over and over, we read about (or if we are old enough, we ourselves have seen) great movements of God with signs and wonders, healings, deliverance from demonic oppression and large numbers of people repenting and surrendering their lives to the Lord. But if that movement’s generation fails to teach their children that God is very present in their lives and that He has not ended or decreased His blessings since Jesus and His early disciples walked the Earth, then they will have no anticipation for His presence to impact their lives today and they will be drawn away easily by the enemy of our souls.

Many young people today see God as very distant and uncaring if they believe in Him at all. In today’s culture, pornography and sensuality is rampant. Pursuit of self-satisfaction is the norm. In the 1950’s, the public schools in the U.S. began each day with prayer and even a reading from scripture; but from the 1963 Supreme Court ruling against that practice to the present time, with rare exceptions, public schools shun the mention of moral standards and anything having to do with Godly principles.

American culture and society as a whole has departed from our original roots as a people dedicated to God and His Word, more and more trending to even twist the former perspective and now define evil actions as “good,” and what the Bible defines as good, society now defines as “evil.”

We Christians cannot place the blame on unbelievers or look to them for the remedy. Any turnaround of our culture that may still be possible is up to us.

If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land. (2 Chronicles 7:14)

Our surrender to the Lord must be total, not selective. We cannot allow ourselves the tiniest departure from holiness in our words, deeds or attitudes. Compromise of any degree will also carry over into our example to our children and grandchildren. On the positive side, if the younger generation is made aware of God’s loving presence they will be strongly motivated to turn to Him not only for salvation from sin so as to avoid hell, but will want the stirring experience of personal communication, guidance and empowerment in their daily walk with the Holy Spirit.

At this writing, there is a new movement of the Holy Spirit gaining momentum across this land and several other countries. God is doing wonderful acts of salvation, healing, and deliverance

through His believers, both young and old. Marriages are being restored, and individual members of the Body of Christ are increasingly being activated into supernatural ministries.

And again, here come the naysayers: “Oh no. this can’t be of God.”

Remember – God so loved the world that He sent His Son to pay the penalty for our sins so that we wouldn’t have to. He didn’t do it to *get* something from us, but to *give* us eternal life as His adopted children. True love is an end in itself, not a means to an end. The same is true of worship. We don’t worship God just to get something from Him. We worship Him because He is worthy of all our worship.

Don’t let the enemy rob you of your inheritance as a child of the living, loving God. God loves you as much as He loved the believers of the first century. He didn’t love them more than He loves His 21st century children. Why would He offer healings and other supernatural gifts to them but not to us? His promises recorded in scripture are just as true today as they were when He first spoke them.

Cessationists cannot point to any scriptures which prove that these supernatural gifts would come to an end. It would appear that they came up with a “getting the Church started” reasoning when they needed an explanation for why they didn’t experience the signs and wonders, built on faulty reasoning rather than scriptural pronouncements. Since God’s promise was that these signs will follow those who believe, then maybe the key reason for their periodic disappearance is that God’s people began to believe that God no longer wanted them to cast out demons, speak with new tongues, be protected from poisonous harm, or be able to heal the sick.

*“Most assuredly, I say to you, **he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father. And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.** (John 14:12-14)*

*“**But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.**” (Acts 1:8)*

*“**And He said to them, ‘Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues (languages); they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.’**” (Mark 16:15-18)*

*...**And these signs will follow those who believe!***

5. Closing Reflections

Throughout this writing I have attempted to present Scripture-based doctrine rather than basing my understanding upon what I or others have experienced. Now, however, I would like to submit how we have demonstrated that God's Word – His promises – His Holy Presence is no different today than it was at the first outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2. We have proved it by finding His promises in the Bible, believing them, and seeking to experience them.

In 1965, when I first became aware that my sister-in-law Helen was claiming Pentecostal experiences, I thought it was pure emotionalism. I didn't believe she was really having encounters with God or that He was empowering her to heal or do anything supernatural. Over the next two years as I searched through the Bible and read books on the subject, looking for proof of what she claimed had happened to her, I gradually became hungry for more of Him. Whenever I prayed the Lord's Prayer, I wanted to know Him intimately as a close, loving Father, not as a distant, detached, father-in-name-only being.

My personal experiences with casting out demons, speaking in spiritual languages, laying hands on the sick and having them recover, began in 1967 when my husband, Tom, had come down with the flu with high fever and weakness. As he lay in bed, I read to him from "Would You Be Healed," a tract proclaiming God's healing promises in Scripture. When I finished, he threw off his covers and got out of bed completely healed. All symptoms of the flu were gone in an instant! That was just the beginning.

I began to read from Scripture hungrily. I couldn't get enough of God's Word. Since those early days, I have read through the whole Bible at least 20 times using a plan based on a 1973 paperback book entitled, *Through the Bible Day by Day* by Ward Bjerke. This has a simple monthly reading schedule that takes the reader through 3-4 chapters each day. Daily Scripture reading has nourished and enriched my spiritual health immensely.

My prayers changed also from formal messages to God written by others into relational words that flowed out of my heart. And I began to seek what I recognized in Scripture as promises to all who are called by His name.

Beyond my salvation, I did experience what Jesus said would happen in Mark 16. I worshipped in a new prayer language (tongues), I cast demons out of people who were suffering demonic afflictions, I laid hands on some who were sick and they quickly recovered. Helen, Tom and I were instrumental in my parents' salvation and baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Within two years, my father, Frank Marzullo, Sr., left his work as a pastry chef and began a full-time international healing and deliverance ministry which he continued until he passed away at the age of 89. As my father and I ministered to a little boy in South America who had been born with a deformed shoulder blade, I felt the bone flatten out under my hand. I supernaturally received words of knowledge about people when they came forward for prayer and they repented and were delivered from oppression they had suffered for years.

I am part of today's worldwide outpouring on a vast and growing company of Holy Spirit-filled and empowered Christians. Who am I? I am nobody special. I am just like you, dear reader, a child of God.

Do you want to experience more of the Lord? You can. Just ask Him. Draw near to Him with expectation (faith), and He will draw near to you. (James 4:8)



Dear Lord, I need You now, more than ever. I need your loving empowering presence; I need to feel your nearness; I need to hear from you for enlightenment as I try to sort through all the problems and decisions that I face every day. I need your protection from dangers of every kind. Thank you Father, thank you Jesus, and thank you Holy Spirit that you are with me always. I love you, Lord.

AMEN

ADDENDUM

6. How does the Holy Spirit relate to the Father, to Jesus and to the Body of Christ?

(Note: This chapter may be too technical for some readers, but hopefully, the two illustrations will help to explain the concepts.)

Revelation 13:8 identifies Jesus as, "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." Considering man's creation from the perspective of eternity rather than from the realm of time, we may conclude that mankind was patterned after Christ, the last Adam (1 Corinthians 15:45), and not vice versa.

Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." (Genesis 1:26)

Even though man is not an exact replica of God, it is accurate to say God created man similar to Himself. We are unable to conduct a physical examination of God, but since man is made in God's image and likeness, it is likely that examining man will provide us with some clues.

Some might fear this approach would be exchanging "*the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man*" (Rom. 1:23). Paul, however, holds that God's "*invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made.*" (Romans 1:20 NASB)

Unger's Bible Dictionary^{viii} states the resemblance between God and man is in the areas of spirituality, personality, holiness, love, and dominion. These concern character and authority, but in order to understand how we are made in God's image and likeness and how to relate to each person of the Trinity, we must know something about God's internal functioning and operations. Ephesians 4:4-6 speaks of one body, one Spirit, one Lord, and one God. Verse 12 identifies that one body as the Body of Christ and verse 15 recognizes Christ as its head. It is this model that we will examine.

In 1 Cor. 12:14-18, Paul identifies the ear, eye, and nose as parts of the body, not as parts of the head. The control center of these and all other parts of the body is the brain. This point is essential in determining how Christ functions in relation to His body and in seeing a definitive comparison between the natural and the supernatural.

The triune head of man

The human brain can be roughly divided into three major sections: (A.) the left hemisphere, (B.) the right hemisphere, and underneath these, (C.) the lower portion of the brain, consisting mainly of the cerebellum. Each hemisphere has specific, though often overlapping, functions and

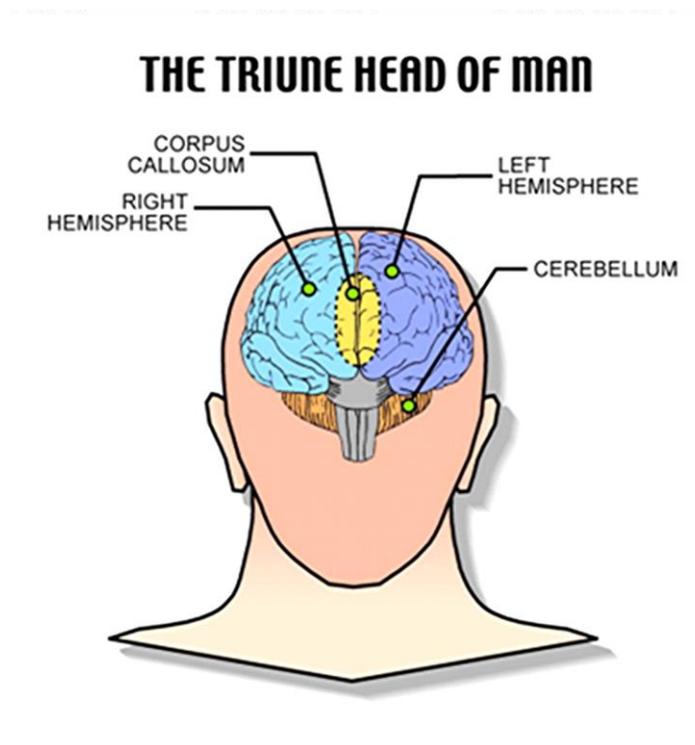
capabilities. Together with the lower brain, they initiate, coordinate and regulate all of the movements, processes, and operations of the body.

The left hemisphere, dominant in the vast majority of individuals, controls the right side of the body which is why most people are right-handed. It specializes in spoken and written language, abstract and rational thinking, analysis, mathematics, and logic. Keep in mind that the term “dominant” refers to that hemisphere’s relationship with the body in regard to handedness and **does not imply dominance over the other hemisphere or the cerebellum.**

The right hemisphere, usually the non-dominant, controls the left side of the body. It specializes in spatial perception (perceiving and understanding objects relative to each other in space); is non-temporal and intuitive; and has instantaneous, global insight (spontaneous grasp of the whole picture).

Some authorities believe it is specialized in synthesis (the putting together of parts to form a whole) and analogous relationships (seeing similarities in some respects between things otherwise unlike).^{ix} Although speech is mostly an operation of the left hemisphere, certain elements of speech, such as using and understanding tonal innuendoes, seem to be processed by the right hemisphere.

Whatever the actual contribution of each hemisphere, they do work in cooperative harmony. In a normal, healthy individual, both cerebral hemispheres collaborate in processing incoming and out-going data through electrochemical impulses which travel across the corpus callosum, a thick bundle of 200 million nerve fibers, which connects the two hemispheres.



Sperry's split-brain studies

During the 1950's, this vital link between the two hemispheres was severed surgically in a number of severely afflicted epileptic patients to prevent the transmission of epileptic activity from one side of the brain to the other. Some of these patients had been suffering numerous and, in some cases, almost continuous seizures with little relief.

Until R.W. Sperry, R.E. Myers, and Michael Gazzaniga began the split-brain studies of these patients, most people had assumed their mind was a unitary system, not a pair of mental twins which inhabit the same body. A person usually refers to himself as "I," not "we."

Sperry and the others developed ways of presenting both visual and auditory stimuli to only one of the hemispheres by means of a special device, and discovered one hemisphere could receive information apart from the other. Consequently, one side of a person's brain could know what the other hemisphere did not,^x with the one responding to various stimuli, much to the other's surprise.^{xi}

How does this relate to the Trinity?

My brain resembles God in the same way my two cerebral hemispheres are both "me" and at the same time are "we," as was demonstrated in the split-brain patients. Although Jesus existed in the form of God (Phil. 2:6), when He came to earth as a baby He *"emptied himself, taking the form of a bond-servant being made in the likeness of men."* (Phil. 2:7)

Jesus' emptying of Himself was like severing the corpus callosum which had previously connected an epilepsy patient's two hemispheres together. The Father (illustrated by the dominant hemisphere) sent Jesus on a mission that used His specialties (remember how Jesus taught with perfect parables). Now that the Son had emptied Himself (severed from the Father), the Father could know what the Son didn't know.

Then, when Jesus ascended back to the Father, His former position and condition were restored, just as Col. 2:9 tells us, "in Him, all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form." There Jesus sits at the right hand of the Father (Mark 16:19), as the non-dominant hemisphere sits to the right of the dominant left hemisphere.

How does the Holy Spirit interact with the Father and the Son?

Beneath the cerebral hemispheres is the third portion of the brain, comprised of several highly specialized parts. The largest of these parts is the cerebellum or "little brain." Although it doesn't initiate motor activity, it co-operatively plays a crucial role in voluntary muscle movements, including the mechanics of speech, eye-hand coordination, posture, and fine motor skills.

The cerebellum adjusts the force and range of the body's movement. More than being merely a communication center between the cerebral hemispheres and the body, the cerebellum operates

in a synergistic way with the two cerebral hemispheres. That is, working together, they have a greater total effect than the sum of their individual actions.

The cerebellum receives information from the two cerebral hemispheres about actions which are planned. While movement is in progress, the cerebellum continually receives information about motor performance, comparing commands for activity with the actual movements themselves. It is then able to correct and modify subsequent movements.^{xii}

No matter how comprehensive the concept, or how well the strategy planned, no work of art, no symphonic phrase, no graceful arabesque in ballet could ever be performed without the cerebellum. In this way, the Holy Spirit is like the cerebellum. His activity flows out of his communication with the other two members of the Godhead. It was through the work of the Holy Spirit the heavens were garnished (Job 26:13), all the animals on earth were created (Ps. 104:24-30), and life was breathed into man (Job 33:4).

From its connection with both cerebral hemispheres and with the brain stem at the top of the spinal cord, the cerebellum directs the movements of the body. In like manner, the Holy Spirit communicates His corrections and affirmations, as well as the purposes and insights from Father and Son, to the Body of Christ in order to influence its life.

In the fullest sense of his functioning within the Body of Christ, the Holy Spirit is probably more completely typified by the entire lower brain, which includes the involuntary functions of glands, organs, etc., rather than by the cerebellum alone.

Although Mary was "*with child by the Holy Spirit*" (Matt. 1:18), John calls Jesus the "*only begotten from the Father*" (John 1:14). In Isaiah 48:12, Jesus, who identifies Himself as "*the first*" and "*the last*," tells us in verse 16 the Lord God (Adoni Yehovah) **and** His Spirit have sent Him.

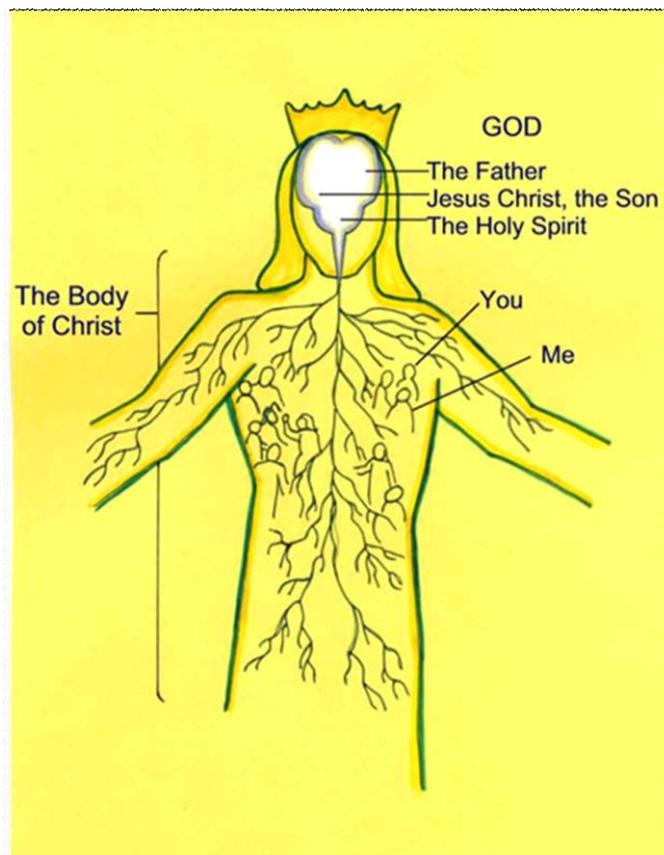
The specialties each hemisphere contributes in speech and movement are communicated almost simultaneously to the cerebellum. The cerebellum adds its own refinements and transmits its electrochemical impulses to the body which then responds. It was the Father (as illustrated by the dominant hemisphere) who initiated the earthly begetting of the Son, and it was the Holy Spirit (illustrated by the cerebellum) who carried out the act by His divine energy. The distinctive powers of both Father and Holy Spirit acted together.

When Jesus walked the earth, the Holy Spirit was with Him, enabling Him to move in unity with the Father. The same is true in our analogy. Despite a severed corpus callosum in split-brain patients, the cerebellum communicates with the cortex (the outer surface) of each hemisphere. In this way, the cerebellum can still coordinate each side of the body in actions, such as walking, even where direct connection between the two hemispheres has been lost.

Although we know that following His resurrection Jesus physically ascended into heaven and there sits at the right hand of the Father, we also know, in the spiritual sense, He never left us: "*I will never leave you nor forsake you*" (Hebrews 13:5).

In John 17:21 we read that Jesus desired we would all be one as He and the Father are one, and we would be in Them. God intended this union not only for eternity, but also for this present age, as Jesus spoke to the Father: so *"the world may believe that You sent Me."*

All three persons of the Godhead spiritually indwell us in this way, both corporately as members of the Body of Christ and as individual believers: just as every healthy human being has only one left hemisphere (typifying the Father), one right hemisphere (typifying the Son), one cerebellum (typifying the Holy Spirit), and one body (typifying the Church), so it is with God and the Body of Christ. The Son sits at the right hand of the Father, and together with the Holy Spirit, through Divine energy, enlivens our mortal bodies (Rom. 8:11). We believers are individually members (or cells) of His body (1 Cor. 12:27).



We are seated together with Him in heavenly places (Ephesians 2:6) where we are *"hidden with Christ in God"* (Colossians 3:3). As members of the Body of Christ, we are one with God in the same way individual cells which make up a person's body are one with the person's head. As long as a cell is connected, it has the life of that person in it. Since we individually are in Christ, we therefore have Christ's life in us.

In John 17:21, Jesus speaks of the profound unity of the Godhead as a pattern for us. God's internal union is based upon His essence in the mutuality of His love (1 John 4:8), of His light (1 John 1:5), and of His holiness (Psalm 99:9). Just as the flow of electrochemical energy courses among the brain's left and right hemispheres and the cerebellum, so it is within the Godhead.

Each person of the Trinity is so joined to the others in the flow of their unity, it cannot be distinguished where one leaves off and the other begins.

Knowing that God is one being who has created man as a representation of Himself, frees us from unscriptural prohibitions in relating to Him. With this picture in focus, we are free to pray without restriction to God as a triune being or to each person of the Trinity as a part of the whole.

In so far as we consider and experience the truth that we are in Christ, the unity of the Body of Christ will resemble God's unity in love, light, and holiness. Our love for each member of the body, defined by 1 Corinthians 13:4-8, builds up the body (Ephesians 4:16). Walking together in the light of truth brings us into authentic fellowship with one another (1 John 1:7) and our uncompromising morality preserves the integrity of our common life together (1 John 3:3).

"When He appears, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is" (1 John 3:2). Then, we shall experience the fullness of all He intended us to be when He created us in His image and likeness.

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Dear Lord, I bow to Your majesty and am overwhelmed by Your beauty. Even as I learn more about You, I realize You are too wonderful for words. I can't begin to understand what it means that You created mankind in Your image and likeness when You are so marvelous. The mystery of Your Being leaves me speechless. I worship You, Lord – my Creator, my Heavenly Father, Prince of Peace, Holy Spirit of the living, loving God who rules and reigns forever.

AMEN

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All Scriptures are taken from the New King James Version of the Bible unless otherwise stated. Also, all emboldening of words in Scriptural quotations are added for emphasis.

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