**The Gift that Changes Everything**

John 14:15-22; 15:26-27; 16:7-15)

Daniel Henderson - [www.strategicrenewal.com](http://www.strategicrenewal.com)

**Introduction:**

There are certain words spoken in life that can radically affect our lives . . .

* Pres. Kennedy has been assassinated . . .
* The world trade centers have collapsed
* I’m pregnant . . .
* I’ve been fired . . .
* I’ve been transferred . . .
* I have terminal cancer . . .
* There’s been an accident . . .
* I won a gold medal . . .

Jesus’ words that changed everything . . .

* “The new covenant in my blood” (Luke 22:17-20)

Luke 22:17–20 -” 17 19 And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” 20 And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, “This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.

Covenant = Testament

For many – “mush” – Illustration – Dog sled

*“Instead of understanding the full benefits of the new covenant in Christ, most in the church live in a no-man’s land between Jesus and Moses” Jim Cymbal*

Jesus’, gift that changes everything . . .

Gifts - New engagement, New baby, New promotion

* “The Helper” and “The Spirit of Truth” . . . (John 14:15-22; 15:26-27; 16:7-15)

The Helper – 4 times

*Paraclete* is rooted in the compound verb in the Greek with the prefix *para*, meaning “alongside” and the verb *kaleo*, “to call.” It can be understood as a “strengthener, helper, comforter, advocate, supporter, advisor, ally or senior friend” who is called alongside. Jesus promised this personal expression of His own presence would be *in* them

Spirit of Truth – 3 times (helper) 4th time - primary function -> teach

This makes the communication of divine truth central to His purpose of glorifying Christ. As the Spirit of truth He is the designated communicator of the heart, mind, truth, and will of the triune God. He speaks only what He hears in the counsels of the Trinity. He takes all Christ is, all Christ has done, and all Christ’s purposes, and declares them to us.

* We have seen his glory, full of grace and truth
* Worship in spirit and in truth

Andrew Murray declared, “If we are to look carefully at what the new covenant promises mean, we shall see how the ‘Sending, forth of the Spirit of his Son into our hearts’ is indeed the consummation and crown of Christ redeeming work.”

*“The new covenant comes with ‘batteries included’… The Spirit internalizes the new covenant so that the people of God are motivated to do God’s will.” Carl B. Hoch, Jr.*

***TEXT: John 14:15–22 (ESV)***

*15 “If you love me, you will keep my commandments. 16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, 17 even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you. 18 “I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. 19 Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. 20 In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. 21 Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.”*

1. **A love gift (**14:15 & 21)

*15 “If you love me, you will keep my commandments. 16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, 17 even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him.*

*21 And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.”*

God so loved the world – gave son – So loved the church – gave us his Spirit

1. **A lasting gift (14:16)**

“…to be with you forever…”

Illus – Gifts that break, become obsolete, or uninteresting

In OT –

* Spirit would come and go – coming upon people to empower them, filling them over periods of time for service –
* David prayed, Psalm51 – take not you Holy Spirit from me –
* Collectively – the spirit would fill the temple – but then he left the temple – He presence was dependent on their obedient. –

In NT

His presence in us is based on Christ’s obedience – unto –death, even death on a cross – and our repentance and faith in him.

Granted, not all of us is filled/controlled by the Spirit as we should be- not all of us demonstrate the fruits of his character as we are called to do – but

Sealed by the Holy Spirit until the day of redemption

1. **An indwelling gift – (14:17)**

You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.

OT – vs NT

Pentecost – First time in biblical history that every believer was indwelt by the Holy Spirit – permanently and powerfully.

Same Spirit - Creation- Empowered the Prophets –Raised Christ from the Dead – Lives in you

Bible is the only book – author lives inside you to help you understand what he wrote – how it applies

Not an outside in work – but an inside out work

2 Corinthians 3 – tablets, hearts

4:6-7 - For God, who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. **7**But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us.

Hebrews

“The writer to the Hebrews has the new covenant in the back of his mind from the beginning to the end of his epistle… “Christ has brought a better hope (7:19), a better covenant (7:2 to), better promises (8:6), better sacrifices (9:23), better possessions (10:34), a better homeland (11:16), better resurrection (11:35), and better blood (12:24). “In so doing the author of Hebrews reminds his readers of the superiority and finality of the new covenant over against the old covenant. Any retreat back to the old covenant is apostasy and will result in eternal loss.””

*And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.” (Ezekiel 36:26–27)*

*“. . . I will make a new covenant . . I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. . .they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.” (Jeremiah 31:31–35)*

*Text: with you and will be in you.*

Encourage you – as you read the NT – look for” in, within”

* Able to do exceedingly abundantly, beyond – acc. To the power that works within us.
* He who began a good work IN you . . .
* It is God who works IN you both to will and to do . . .

“Within you! Within you! . . . God created man’s heart for His dwelling . . . the kingdom of God is within you. It is within we must look for the fulfillment of the new covenant. . .. The Spirit of Christ himself is to be within us as the power of our life. Not only on Calvary, or in the resurrection, or on the throne is the glory of Christ the conqueror to be seen – but in our heart. Within us is to be the true display of the reality and glory of His redemption.” Andrew Murray

1. **A personal gift** – (14:18)

*18 “I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. 19 Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. 0 In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. 2*

Points toward adoption – the most intentional, relational word picture you can imagine.

*“For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!” The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God. (Romans 8:15–16)*

*“And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!” (Galatians 4:6)*

The Aramaic term *Abba* was a term in Jesus’ day used by a child who was in personal, assured, intimate fellowship with this father. It was a term Jesus used in speaking to the Father (Mark 14:36).

John Piper comments, “when he adopts us. . . He does not leave us with no feelings of acceptance and love. Rather, he pours his Spirit into our hearts to give us the experience of being embraced in the family. . . .Therefore, in adopting us, God gives us the very Spirit of his Son and grants us to feel the affections of belonging to the very family of God.”[[1]](#endnote-1)

Not only is the adoption metaphor one of the compelling themes of the New Testament, but it is also a truth that helps us understand that the Holy Spirit’s work in us is ultimately personal. What idea could more powerfully reflect a merciful, loving, secure and intimate *relationship* than adoption? The relational aspect of our life in Christ is deeply rooted in a vital truth: The Spirit is a person, abiding, working, and living through us.

No less a person that the Father or the Son.

As I have traveled the nation, speaking in a wide assortment of congregations, I have observed a troubling trend of language that depersonalizes the Holy Spirit. Rather than the indwelling, supernatural, and personal indwelling of God’s Spirit, the language of songs, and even preachers, might lead many to believe that the Holy Spirit is some ethereal “force” that periodically appears, perhaps blowing in from the building’s ventilation system. I get the feeling in many places that we are conjuring up an elusive “it” rather than celebrating and cherishing the transforming presence of the person of the Spirit of God.

According to a recent study by Lifeway Research, 56 percent of evangelical Christians say the Holy Spirit is a force rather than a person. In that same study, a quarter (28 percent) said the Spirit is a divine being but not equal to God the Father and Jesus. Half (51 percent) disagreed. Twenty-one percent were not sure.[[2]](#endnote-2)

I am convinced that even among those who intellectually and theologically affirm that the Holy Spirit is a person, many still speak of Him as a “force” that paranormally arrives from some other location. Many who intellectually believe the Holy Spirit is a person still sing and speak about Him as if He is a force. They describe Him in obscure third person language as “The Presence” or a “power” in the atmosphere. I am deeply concerned that the Holy Spirit, even in contexts where His work is emphasized and His presence evoked, has become the “misrepresented God.”

Francis Chan agrees: “He is not an indistinct ‘power’ or ‘thing.’ I often hear people referring to the Spirit as an ‘it,’ as if the ‘Spirit’ is a ‘thing’ or ‘force’ that we can control or use. This distinction may seem subtle or trivial, but is actually very serious misunderstanding of the Spirit and his role in our lives.”

I’ve been to some churches that I think should be called “The Star Wars Community Church” because much of how they sing and speak leave me with a salient message: “The force is with you.” When you add the environmental smoke, digital lights, massive amplification (and even some sound effects), I’m ready to pull out my light saber and take on Darth Vader. Or maybe it is supposed to be the devil. Who knows?

All personal pronouns in NT –

Fruit of the spirit – , “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, **2**gentleness, self-control” (Galatians 5:22–23).

1. **A manifested gift - (14:21)**

*1 Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.”*

*“manifest” == “to make apparent, present or evident to the experiences or senses.” In the New Testament, it primarily refers to the manifestation of the character and plan of God in the person and work of Jesus (Mark 4:22; John 17:6; Romans 3:21; 1 Timothy 3:16, 1 John 1:2).*

* Spirit manifests Jesus to us and through us –
* Spirit also manifests his life in us - to others –

Most of my life – taught – omnipresence of the Spirit, the indwelling presence of the Spirit, manifest presence of the Spirit –

3rd one is not taught in the New Testament –

As if some ethereal thing – outside of us happened. –

Have I experienced – times of extraordinary spiritual fruit – power – grace – brokenness – unity?

Yes – Not IF those time occur – but WHY and HOW do they occur. Answer 🡪 biblical validity of the experience.

1 Cor 12:1-11 -

v. 7 - “Manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.”

Inside Out –

Unbelievers see this – hear the word – God is truly among you – and he is among us because he is within us.

Too often it is as if we want to see the manifest presence of God – the NT teaches that we need to be the manifest presence of God.

1. **A purposeful gift – (15: 26-27; 16:14)**

Purpose driven life –

*John 15:26–27 (ESV) - 26 “But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me. 27 And you also will bear witness, because you have been with me from the beginning.*

To us and though us – BEAR WITNESS

*He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. (John 16:14)*

The Purpose driven Spirit

J. I. Packer offers a helpful illustration

* The first is of a floodlight in a beautiful building, which does not exist for its own glory but to make clear and visible the splendor and wonder of its object by illumining its features.

. Gordon Fee affirms, *“The ultimate criterion for the Spirit’s activity is the exaltation of Jesus as Lord. Whatever takes away from that, even if they be legitimate expressions of the Spirit, begins to move away from Christ to a more pagan fascination with spiritual activity as an end in itself.”[[3]](#endnote-3)*

Francis Chan concurs: “A sure sign of the Holy Spirit’s working is that Christ is magnified, not people . . . The Spirit is here to accomplish God’s purposes, not ours.”[[4]](#endnote-4)

“Christian worship is new covenant worship; it is gospel-inspired worship; it is Christ-centered worship; it is cross-focused worship.” D.A. Carson

1. **A superior gift – (16:7)**

 *7 - Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you.*

“Jesus claimed that having the Holy Spirit *in* them would be better than having Jesus *beside* them.” J.D Greear

 **8. A sufficient gift – (16:8-13)**

**Sufficient to convict the lost**

*7 8 And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: 9 concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; 10 concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer; 11 concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged. 12 “I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.*

**Sufficient to communicate to us**

*13 When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.* (death, burial, res, ascension, Pentecost, the church, the Bible, missions, God’s plan)

*14 He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. 15 All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you*

*---*Charles Spurgeon, perhaps the greatest and most widely read preacher of recent centuries, exemplified a humble reliance on the Holy Spirit. His ministry, based at the Metropolitan Tabernacle in London in the late 1800s, resulted in scores of people coming to Christ along with the launching of an orphanage and a pastor’s college. As he mounted the pulpit each week to preach to thousands, he silently declared to his own heart, with each of the fifteen steps, **“**I believe in the Holy Spirit. I believe in the Holy Spirit. I believe in the Holy Spirit.”

Spurgeon wrote: “Without the Spirit of God we can do nothing; we are as ships without wind, or chariots without steeds; like branches without sap, we are withered; like coals without fire, we are useless; as an offering without the sacrificial flame, we are unaccepted.”[[5]](#endnote-5)

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“I have been very deeply impressed with one thought. It is that our prayer for the mighty working of the Holy Spirit through us and around us can only be powerfully answered as *His indwelling in every believer* is more clearly acknowledged and lived out. We have the Holy Spirit within us;

Only he who is faithful in the lesser will receive the greater. As we first yield ourselves to be led by the Spirit, to confess His presence in us; as believers rise to realize and accept His guidance in their daily lives, God will entrust to us larger measure of His mighty working.

 If we give ourselves entirely into His power, as our life, ruling within us, He will give himself to us, take more complete possession of us, and work through us…It is as an *indwelling* life that Holy Spirit must be known. In a living, adoring faith, the indwelling must be accepted and treasured until it becomes part of the consciousness of the new men: The Holy Spirit possesses me. Andrew Murray

**CONCLUSION:**

Treasuring the Giver and the Gift . . .

This is the new covenant. You are loved by Christ and indwelt by His Spirit

More about Jesus would I know,
More of His grace to others show;
More of His saving fullness see,
More of His love who died for me.

More about Jesus let me learn,
More of His holy will discern;
Spirit of God, my teacher be,
Showing the things of Christ to me.

More about Jesus, in His Word,
Holding communion with my Lord;
Hearing His voice in every line,
Making each faithful saying mine.

More about Jesus on His throne,
Riches in glory all His own;
More of His kingdom’s sure increase;
More of His coming, Prince of Peace.

More, more about Jesus,
More, more about Jesus;
More of His saving fullness see,
More of His love who died for me.”

1. John Piper, http://www.desiringgod.org/messages/adoption-the-heart-of-the-gospel [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. http://blog.lifeway.com/newsroom/2016/09/27/americans-love-god-and-the-bible-are-fuzzy-on-the-details/ [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Gordon D. Fee, *God's Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul* (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrix son publishers, 1994) 157-158 [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *The Unknown God: 25 Sermons on the Subject of the Holy Spirit* (LOCATION: Fox River Press, 2003) [↑](#endnote-ref-5)