

BIBLE CHALLENGE 2019

Week 24: June 9-15

Who is the Holy Spirit?

Read: Genesis 1:2; 6:3; Exodus 28:3; 31:3; 35:30; Leviticus 24:16; Numbers 11:17,25-26; 27:18; Deuteronomy 29:19-20; Judges 3:10; 6:34; 11:29; 13:25; 14:6,19; 15:14; 1 Samuel 10:6,10; 16:13-14; 2 Samuel 23:2; 1 Kings 22:24; Nehemiah 9:20,30; Job 32:8; 33:4; Psalm 104:30; 139:7-8,13; Isaiah 11:2; 42:5; 63:10; Ezekiel 11:24; Zechariah 4:10; 7:12; Matthew 3:16; 6:15; 28:19; Mark 1:12; 3:29; Luke 1:35; 12:12; John 14:16-17,26; 15:26; 16:7-15; Acts 8:29; 13:2; 16:7; Romans 1:4; 8:2,9,11,16,26; 1 Corinthians 2:10-11; 12:11,13; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 4:30; Hebrews 6:4-8; 10:26-31; 1 Peter 1:11; 4:14; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 2:27; 4:6; Revelation 4:5; 5:6. Read Acts 2 in full.

One of the biggest mistakes that Christians commonly make is to refer to the Holy Spirit as if he were an impersonal force. For example, speaking about the work of the Spirit, people often say, "It did this" or "It does that." This is usually simply a slip of the tongue, but to speak of the Spirit in such a way denies both his personhood and the fact that the Bible consistently refers to him with masculine pronouns.

And so, we have talked about the Trinity as a whole and about the Father and the Son independently, now it is time to talk about the Spirit. Who is he? What is he like? And, what is his role in God's plan of salvation?

He is a Person

This may seem like a pretty basic observation, but it is an important one. The Holy Spirit is the third-person within the Triune godhead. As a person, that means he is capable of communication and fellowship. This fellowship is not limited to His inter-Trinitarian fellowship from eternity past, but it also includes fellowship with believers as well.

The Spirit also shares all of the divine attributes of the Godhead (see Week 7 and the paragraph discussing the "Simplicity" of God). That means he is worthy of equal honor with the other persons of the Trinity. He is present in the Baptism of Jesus, at the Transfiguration of Jesus, and the Trinitarian benediction incorporates his name as well. In fact, the only sin that is referred to as "unforgivable" is "blasphemy against the Holy Spirit." He is further identified as our second "paraclete" (see Week 20).

He is ascribed as having intelligence, affections, and an independent will. He acts independently, often in the context of the testimony of the Gospel, our prayer, or in terms of the deep things of God.

Double Procession

One of the earliest arguments that divided the church was on the question of "from whom" does the Holy Spirit proceed? In other words, under whose authority does the Spirit come? The eastern branch of the church (today called the "Eastern Orthodox Church") debated that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father alone. The western branch of the church, at that time, under the leadership of the Bishop of Rome, argued that the Spirit proceeded from both the Father and the Son. The phrase "who proceeds from the Father and the Son" was a clause added to the Nicene Creed in western churches as a result of this debate (this was called the "Filioque Clause." In 1054, this became one of the main reasons that the Eastern and Western branches of the church divided.

The Work of the Spirit

With the completion of Christ's earthly ministry and his

being seated on the throne at the right hand of God, the Spirit engages with us in the work of ministry and sanctification. Yet, even before the resurrection, we find the Spirit at work in the plan of God.

In Creation: The Holy Spirit is involved in the creation of the world as well as in the creation of man.

Empowers the Servants of God: The Spirit regularly comes upon the Judges to empower them toward miraculous deliverances, but he is spoken of coming upon both Saul and David as well... something that foreshadows the coming of the Spirit in Pentecost.

He gives insight and wisdom: We see the Spirit giving wisdom to Elihu as he rebukes Job and his friends, to the seventy who were to serve with Moses, and to Joshua in his leadership.

He gives artistic skill: When the tabernacle was being built, God gave its artisans skill to make it according to plan.

He instructs in the Scriptures and through the Prophets: David and the prophets are spoken of as speaking the Word of God by the Spirit and the Spirit teaches God's people as well.

He governs regeneration: It is by the work of the Holy Spirit that we are given spiritual life.

He prepared a suitable body for Christ: In Mary's womb, the Spirit produced her pregnancy and prepared a body for Jesus.

He comforted and sustained Christ during his Suffering on Earth: As he comforts us now, he comforted Christ in his humanity.

He Restrains Sin: It is because of the Spirit's work that we (both elect and reprobate) are not as bad as we could be.

He enables the Elect to become the Salt of the Earth: In obedience, the people of God transform their communities and the culture around them.

He shepherds the elect from Regeneration to Glorification: This we call "sanctification."

He is the dispenser of Divine Grace: Both common and special grace is given through the work of the Spirit.

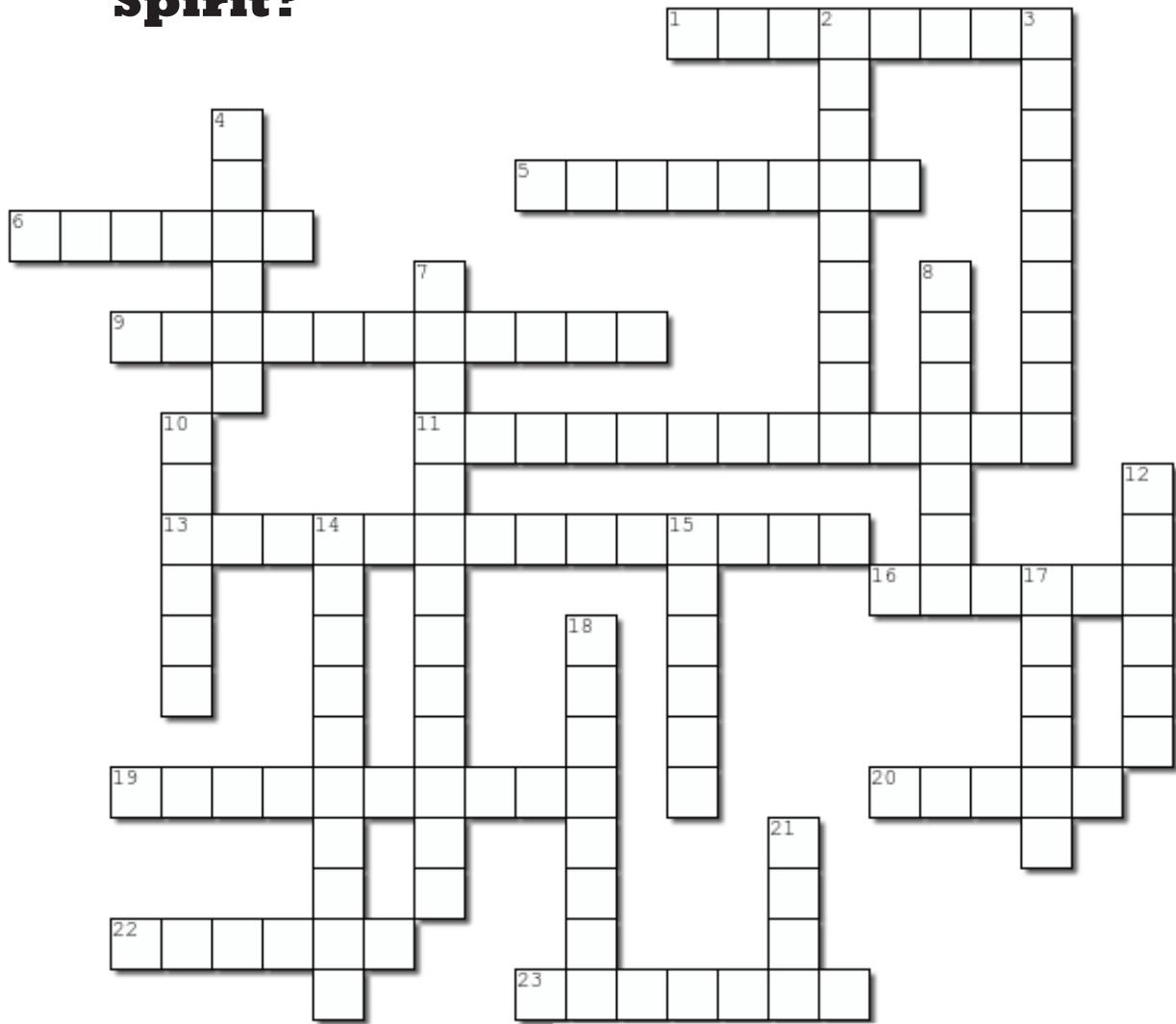
He provides gifts to the Church: The Spirit is the one who gifts and equips people for leadership and guidance of Christ's Church.

He is the one who forms the Mystical Body of Christ: The church is referred to as "the Body of Christ." As the Spirit is the one responsible for regeneration, he regenerates us into and makes a place for us within the Body of Christ, knitting us together as one.

Names Given to the Holy Spirit

He is referred to not only as the "Holy Spirit" or "the Spirit of Holiness" but also as "the Spirit of Wisdom", "The Spirit of Counsel", "The Spirit of Knowledge and Fear of the Lord", "The Spirit of Truth", "The Spirit of Life", "The Spirit of Grace", "The Spirit of Glory", and as "The Seven Spirits of God."

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Created using the Crossword Maker on TheTeachersCorner.net

Across

1. The Spirit gave these men wisdom to warn the people of Israel to repent.
5. The Spirit gave this Judge power which tragically cost the life of his daughter.
6. This of the Almighty gives me life.
9. Whoever blasphemes the Holy Spirit never has this.
11. The 'Seven Spirits' are also called the _____. (4 words)
13. One of the names that Isaiah gives to the Spirit. (3 words)
16. This is a name that Jesus gives to the Spirit.
19. 'Whoever _____ the name of the Lord shall be put to death.'
20. The Spirit descended into this Old Testament King and never departed.
22. This judge was 'clothed in the Spirit' when he blew his trumpets calling the Abiezrites to follow him.
23. He was given the skill of craftsmanship by the Spirit.

Down

2. A term applied to both Jesus and to the Spirit.
3. The Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are _____. (3 words).
4. 'The earth was without form and void...and the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the _____.'
7. The Spirit was given to these men to assist Moses. (2 words)
8. The _____ clause was added to the Nicene Creed to articulate that the Spirit descended from both the Father and the Son.
10. This man was given the Spirit to take over after Moses' death.
12. Peter refers to the Holy Spirit as the 'Spirit of _____'.
14. 'Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God by whom you are sealed for the day of _____.'
15. This Judge was given the Spirit's power to slay Philistines.
17. The Spirit directed this Apostle to go over to an African chariot.
18. 'Where shall I go from your Spirit; where shall I flee from your _____?'
21. When the Spirit descended on Jesus, He did so in the form of a _____.