

Assurances of the Holy Spirit

There is no more maligned, no more misunderstood, no more misrepresented, no more insulted, no more dishonoured, and no more blasphemed member of the Trinity in our contemporary church culture than the Holy Spirit, and we sort of give a free pass to people.

But we need to rethink that, because the Holy Spirit is God.

Listen to Exodus 20, I'll read the opening seven verses.

(OHP) “Then God spoke all these words, saying, ‘I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing lovingkindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.’ – then this – ‘You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain.’”

That is the first clear command to worship God and God alone; that's kind of at the beginning of the Bible. At the very end, there is kind of a **(OHP)** repetition of that command; let me read it to you. **It's in Revelation 22: “Worship God,” verse 9. “Worship God.”** That's how the Bible begins and that's how the Bible ends.

Jesus said in John 4 that He had come to seek worshipers who would worship the Father in spirit and in truth.

The whole reason for **redemption / restoration / our deliverance from sin; salvation ...** is to create true worshipers of God. That's what we'll do forever.

(Amazing Grace....there 10 thousand years...still)

Get a little visit into heaven in the fourth and fifth chapter of the book of Revelation, and we find the saints there surrounding the throne.

All they're doing is worshipping, and worshipping, and worshipping God. That will be our everlasting occupation.

And the true worship of the true God assumes a true worship of the Father, and a true worship of the Spirit, and a true worship of the Son. That also assumes a true understanding of the nature of the Father and the Spirit and the Son.

The most fundamental of all human duties is to worship God.

In fact, that is so fundamental, again, that that is the very reason we have been **redeemed**, because the whole fallen world **refuses** to worship God.

And then rather than worship God they recreate God in their own image, or they make **idols**.

This is the standard rebellion of the fallen human heart.

*But **God in His grace and mercy** has called out a people to become true worshipers, who **worship Him in spirit and in truth**, and will do so forever.*

Now thinking about verse 7 for a moment we are warned not to take the name of the Lord your God in vain, or we will not go unpunished.

What does it mean to take the Lord's name in vain?

It doesn't mean to say a swear word simply or only, although that's certainly one way to take the Lord's name in vain.

But taking the Lord's name in vain could be defined this way:

(OHP) to speak of God in any untrue or irreverent way...

What would that be?

To misrepresent His attributes, to misrepresent His works, to misrepresent His words.

Anything that misrepresents God is taking His name in vain.

It is emptying God of some of His glory.

(OHP) To think of Him or speak of Him irreverently, to diminish His glory is to attribute words and deeds and attributes to Him that are not true or remove from Him attributes and words and deeds that are true.

Most important thing you'll ever do in your life is get God right: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

You cannot come to God unless you know Him.

Taking His name in a vain way is to ignore what is true about Him, or to declare things about Him that are not true of Him.

This is such a serious sin that it is the one sin condemned in those opening seven verses of the Ten Commandments.

You do not want to misrepresent God.

Again, it is that which caused our Lord, at the beginning and the end of His ministry, to throw people out of the temple.

That is a graphic illustration of the kind of punishment meted out on people who take the Lord's name in vain. Serious sin.

Still dealing with the Pentateuch and with Moses, in **Deuteronomy 28**, I just read for you verse – we'll start at verse 58.

And now we know what's going on in Deuteronomy: the second giving of the law as the people are on the brink of going into the Promised Land after forty years in the wilderness.

(OHP) And the Lord reveals His will again to them, verse 58 of Deuteronomy 28:

“If you are not careful to observe all the words of this law which are written in this book,” – and then this – “to fear this honoured and awesome name, the Lord your God, then the Lord will bring extraordinary plagues on you and on your descendants, even severe and lasting plagues, and miserable and chronic diseases.”

Wow. “

A failure to honour this awesome name, the Lord your God, will result in you being judged by God with terrible calamitous diseases.”

This again is a warning not to take the name of the Lord in vain, not to empty it of any of its true glory, and not to ascribe to God things that are not true of Him.

And I would say that the most commonly dishonoured member of the Trinity is the Holy Spirit.

And all that warning applies to how we think and how we speak of the Holy Spirit.

Taking His name in vain will not go unpunished.

Diminishing His true glory and ascribing to Him things that are not true of Him will not go unpunished.

In spite of such a serious statement, in spite of such a serious reality from the very Word of God itself, the Holy Spirit is incessantly misrepresented in the church.

And again, we are usually pretty eager to rise to the defence of God the Father.

When somebody attacks the character or the nature of God, we seem eager to defend His deity and to defend His sovereignty and to defend His omniscience and omnipotence and immutability.

And we are pretty eager to do that with the Son.

There are myriads of books written on God and the attributes of God. There are myriads of books written on Christ and the person of Christ and the work of Christ.

But the evangelical church of today has become very comfortable with the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit; goes on all the time.

His name is taken in vain incessantly by whole movements within evangelicalism.

In the name of unity and in the name of love we tolerate it as if somehow we could clearly define the character of God and clearly define the character of the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, but somehow the Holy Spirit can just be anything we want Him to be; we can just kind of shape Him like a piece of clay.

My objective in thinking about the Holy Spirit with you is to help you to worship and glorify Him in a way that does not take His name in vain and does not go toward divine punishment.

So let's talk about the Holy Spirit a little bit.

(OHP) His titles speak of His majestic glory.

He is called the breath of the Almighty.

He is called the eternal Spirit.

He is called in Psalm 51 the generous Spirit.

Psalm 143, the good Spirit.

(OHP) Psalm 51, Ephesians 1, Ephesians 4, the Holy Spirit.

He is also called the Spirit of the living God, the Spirit of God, the Spirit of the Father, the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of the Son, the Spirit of life.

He's the spirit, in Isaiah 11, of wisdom, the spirit of counsel, the spirit of might, the spirit of understanding, the spirit of knowledge, the spirit of fear or worship, the Spirit of the Lord.

In John 14 and 15, He's the Spirit of truth. Romans 1, the Spirit of holiness. [Revelation 1:4](#), the sevenfold Spirit, which harks back to Isaiah 11. And then that beloved title, He is called the Comforter, the paraklētos, the Paraclete.

In [Luke 1:35](#), He is called the power of the Highest.

(OHP) This is the Holy Spirit.

(as we said last week)... The term for “spirit” in Hebrew is ruach, and the familiar word in Greek is pneuma.

Ruach is an **onomatopoetic** word.

That means its meaning sounds like it: ruach.

That's air in motion.

The fundamental meaning of ruach is power, energy, life. It's not about something that's immaterial, that's not the essence of it. It's about

power, something that goes forth from life with life, conveying life. **That is the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the very life of God coming out from God, energizing all other life.**

Interesting insight into the word ruach in the Old Testament: a third of the Old Testament uses of it refer to God, and they refer to God as violent force.

God is the most violent force in the universe obviously. He is the force with which everything was basically brought into existence in a violent, immediate act of creation.

Yahweh's ruach is the blast of God.

The irresistible power by which He creates, the irresistible power by which He brings everything into existence, and the irresistible power by which He destroys.

And one day will bring everything out of existence in an implosion of the universe.

By the ruach of God, He creates everything, including the hosts of heaven, [Psalm 33:6](#). By the ruach of God He gives power, the power of life to men.

(OHP) So the Holy Spirit is the power of God acting from creation, through redemption, to consummation.

(OHP) The Holy Spirit is fully God, has all of God's attributes, participates in all God's works and words, is in perfect harmony with the Father and the Son.

He is as holy as the Father, as gracious as the Son; as powerful as the Father, as merciful as the Son; as sovereign as the Father, as loving as the Son. He is to be worshiped fully, as is the Father, and is the Son.

(OHP) Puritan Thomas Goodwin said this:

“Our worship is sometimes with the Father, then with the Son, and then with the Holy Spirit. Sometimes the believer’s heart is drawn out to consider the Father’s love in choosing, and then the love of the Son in redeeming, and sometimes the love of the Holy Spirit that searches the deep things of God and reveals them to us. We should never be satisfied in our worship until all three Persons” – (I love this) – “lie level in us, and we sit there in the midst of Them while They all manifest Their love to us.”

(OHP) John Owen in 1657 wrote on [2 Corinthians 13:14](#), which is that beautiful doxology, **“The saints fellowship is with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.”**

Owen wrote a whole document on that. And how we worship the Father for His divine love, we worship the Son for His divine grace, and we worship the Spirit for His divine power.

(OHP) I think it’s time for us to restore to the blessed Holy Spirit the worship He is due.

Where are the sermons on the Holy Spirit?

Where are the books on the Holy Spirit? Where are the songs of praise to the Holy Spirit? “No,” – someone says – **“He points us to Christ.”**

Yes, as a **ministry**. But He doesn’t therefore divest Himself of the right to worship; that’s just His ministry.

(Touch upon only ...Prosperity Gospel) The essence of the prosperity gospel is that you are God, or you have enough of God or a strong enough connection with God to create your own world. You can speak it into existence with your words. What role does the Holy Spirit have in that?

What do you need the Holy Spirit for? You are God. You are, as Kenneth Copeland says, little gods.

You are these powerful god-men – hyphenated – is the language they use.

You can speak your own reality into existence, decide what you want, visualize it, speak it into existence, and you have it.

What role does the Holy Spirit play? Zero, no role

You know, I want to remind people of a verse that is equally frightening as the one I read you in Exodus 20. Listen to [Matthew 12:32](#), **“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 age or in the age to come.”** What?

You’d better be careful about how you speak of the Holy Spirit.

And one way to dishonour the Holy Spirit is to elevate yourself as if you, in a new kind of high anthropology, have all the power to do the things that Scripture says only the Holy Spirit can do.

You have now made yourself into God? You are gods, you are little gods?

In the prosperity gospel movement you don’t need the Holy Spirit because you’re connected to God yourself; you are the ruach of God. You are the force of God; you are the blast of God, it comes through you.

Be warned: if you speak anything against the Holy Spirit, anything that is not true of Him, that’s not going to be forgiven you.

And that was in the context, of course, of saying that the works that Jesus did by the Holy Spirit were actually being done by Satan, and that was the ultimate blasphemy.

They said that what the Holy Spirit was doing Satan was doing.

What is the current work of the Holy Spirit?

If we’re going to be engaged in true Trinitarian worship of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, thankful that the Father initiated salvation, the Son validated salvation, and the Spirit activated

salvation, we must glorify each member of the Trinity. It is the Spirit, blessed Holy Spirit, who gave us the revelation.

(OHP) The sixty-six books of the Bible are inspired by the Holy Spirit.

It is the Holy Spirit who convicts us of sin and righteousness and judgment, John 16.

It is the Holy Spirit who regenerates us, John 3, gives us life and faith and repentance and salvation.

It is the Holy Spirit, according to [1 Corinthians 6:11](#), who justifies us. I know you don't think about justification as a work of the Spirit but listen to what it says: "You were justified in the name of our Lord Jesus by the Spirit of our God."

He gave us the revelation.

He gave us conviction of our sins.

He gave us regeneration.

He granted us justification.

Romans 8 says we are adopted. The doctrine of adoption is a work of the Holy Spirit, [Romans 8:14](#) to 16. But the Holy Spirit has taken up residence in us, [Romans 8:9](#), 1 Corinthians 6.

We're the temple of the Spirit of God. It is the Holy Spirit who baptized us, placing us literally through Christ into the body, 1 Corinthians 12.

It is the Holy Spirit who empowers us, Ephesians 3.

It is the Holy Spirit who gifts us with our spiritual gift, our capabilities to minister to the body of Christ, that the body would be built up into Christlikeness.

It is the Holy Spirit who has poured love in our hearts, and along with that love – joy, peace, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control – all the fruit of the Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit who is illuminating us all the time – 1 Corinthians 2, [1 John 2:27](#) – the anointing we have from God.

So we don't need human teachers because we have an anointing from God, the Holy Spirit, who illuminates the Word of God.

(OHP) When is the last time you've run down that list and said, "**Blessed Holy Spirit, thank You.**

Thank You for the revelation You gave me in Holy Scripture.

Thank You for the conviction of my sin that led me to fear judgment.

Thank You for the regeneration of my dead soul. Thank You for justification.

Thank You for adoption, putting me into the family of God.

Thank You for taking up residence in my life and living in me permanently.

Thank You for placing me into the body of Christ, immersing me into the union of all believers with the Lord Himself.

Thank You for empowering me.

Thank You for gifting me.

Thank You for producing fruit in me.

Thank You for illuminating me. Thank You for filling me.

If you look at Romans 8 – and we'll just close with this thought.

Read Romans 8 sometime today.

Just take a little time and read Romans 8, it's the Holy Spirit's chapter.

And in Romans 8 it says the Holy Spirit gives us life, the Holy Spirit enables us to keep the law, the Holy Spirit changes our nature, the Holy Spirit empowers us over temptation, the Holy Spirit confirms our adoption as sons of God. All this is the work of the Holy Spirit.

The goal of the Spirit's work in us in Romans 8 is to conform us to the image of God's Son.

What is the Holy Spirit doing in your life?

He is conforming you to Christ.

And I want to stop there and say this: the model of a Spirit-controlled life was Jesus.

I don't know if you've ever thought of it that way.

He is the model.

The Holy Spirit was Christ's inseparable companion from womb to tomb to throne.

So if you want to know what a truly Spirit-controlled, Spirit-empowered life looks like, look at Him.

The incarnation, **the kenosis**, the self-emptying, He gave up all of His own divine prerogatives – not His nature, but His prerogatives – and He yielded Himself to the will of the Father and power of the Spirit.

(Prayer) Father, we again are so grateful that You have revealed Yourself to us. Blessed Holy Spirit, what can we say? We are so sad, so grieved, so distressed and disturbed at the misrepresentations of You, that you are largely ignored. And sometimes You are given the responsibility for what Satan does – horrendous to even think about. We desire You to be honoured and glorified, blessed Holy Spirit, in our lives, to begin with, in our understanding, and in our conduct.

Blessed Son, we honour You. Father, Son, Holy Spirit, great triune God, three in one, one in three. We would never want to take Your name in vain, to think of You, to ascribe to You anything that's untrue of You, or to diminish Your glory by failing to understand the things that are true of You. We want to know You fully and totally as You have been revealed in the Holy Scripture, that we might worship You as we should.

"And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." (KJV)