



15) The Anointing of the Spirit (John 7:37-39)

Section 4: Christian Doctrine & Theology Handout

How do you describe a Christian? Three overlapping answers are: Being like our Heavenly Father, being Christlike or being influenced with God's Spirit. In each case we would by God's grace recapture the 'image of God' lost in the man's 'Fall'. Let's better understand how God restores His image in mankind through the Spirit.

A) The Age of the Holy Spirit (John 7:37-39)

"37 Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If any man is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. 38 "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, "From his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water." 39 But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified" (John 7:37-39).

- "But this He spoke of the Spirit" (39) highlights that the living water refers to the Holy Spirit. "Do you not know that you are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?" (1 Co 3:16)
- "Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified" (39) speaks powerfully of the impact of the New Covenant sealed with Christ's blood and the pouring out of the Spirit after Jesus ascended (glorified-Eph 2:6).



- "If any man is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink" reflects Jesus' inviting grace welcoming all into His abounding grace.
- "From his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water" (38) teaches us that God's intention is to now, to some large degree, restore the original hope of living out His abundance in His people (cf. Ez 47). What should this look like in your life?

Salvation => God's presence => Holiness

Being: adopt God's holy standards

Doing: conform our actions to His will



B) The Spirit's Anointing of Jesus (Luke 4:17-21; Is 61:1-2)

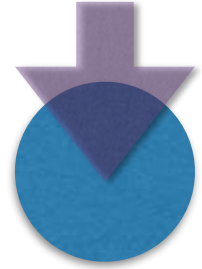
17 And the book of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. And He opened the book, and found the place where it was written, 18 "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, and to set free those who are downtrodden, to proclaim the favorable year of the Lord." 20 And He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant, and sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed upon Him. 21 And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing" (Luke 4:17-21; Is 61:1-2).

9...Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan. 10 And immediately coming up out of the water, He saw the heavens opening, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon Him (Mark 1:9-10).

- "The book of the prophet Isaiah was handed to" (17) Jesus. He stated that the Isaiah 61:1-2 prophesy was filled that day, "Today...fulfilled in your hearing" (21) linking "the Spirit..is upon me" to Jesus.
- "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me" (18) refers to the way the Holy Spirit came upon/anointed Jesus at His baptism: "the Spirit like a dove descending upon Him" (Mk 1:10). This anointing and ensuing ministry of the Holy Spirit in Jesus was immediately seen afterwards when the Spirit led Jesus into wilderness" "Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil" (Mat 4:1).

- “He anointed me” (18) describes Jesus’ life and ministry. The first of four Greek words used for anointing is the religious/sacred use (*crinio*), from which “Christ” comes, while the others are for mundane uses (eg. rub).
- “To bring good news” (4:18) sets out the Spirit–empowered mission of Jesus to preach (teach God’s Word) and otherwise display God’s grace.

Summary: What happened to Jesus is important because the Holy Spirit’s work in Him is replicated, though in a lesser sense, in the lives of His people.



C) An Anointing for Christians (1 John 2:20, 27)

“But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you all know” (1 Jo 2:20).

“And as for you, the anointing which you received from Him abides in you, and you have no need for anyone to teach you; but as His anointing teaches you about all things, and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you abide in Him” (1 Jo 2:27).

“Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and anointed us is God” (2Co 1:21).

- “But you” (2:20,27) refers to all the believers in the local church and not just to selected leaders (1 Jo 1:3-4).
- “Have an anointing from the Holy One” (2:20, 27) connects the anointing of believers with the anointing from God via Christ (remember Christ literally means ‘anointed’ One).
- “His anointing teaches you” (27) clearly identifies the Spirit of Jesus as the anointing of believers. “Received from Him” (27) is not earned but given by God the Father most likely identified with regeneration, when the Holy Spirit brings new life in us by His presence.
- “Abides in you” (27) confirms, in case we debate the meaning of anointing, that the anointing is associated with God living in His people through the Holy Spirit’s presence.
- “Anointed us is God” (1:21): Paul affirms the same as John.

Summary: This anointing is a whole other way (different from living water, temple) of confirming the characteristics of a genuine believer and the expectation of the work of the Holy Spirit in the believer.

D) Sealed by the Holy Spirit (2 Cor 1:21-22)

“Sealed” by the Spirit is used only 3 times: 2 Cor 1:22; Eph 1:13; 4:30.

“In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise” (Eph 1:13).

“And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption” (Eph 4:30).

“21 Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and anointed us is God, 22 who also sealed us and gave us the Spirit in our hearts as a pledge” (2 Cor 1:21-22).

- “Establishes us with you in Christ” (21) describes the Spirit’s present work through three past Spirit events.
 - (1) “_____ us is God” (21)
 - (2) “Who also _____ us and (22) (Also: Rev 7:5,8; 9:4)
 - (3) “_____ us the Spirit in our hearts as a pledge” (22). #2 and 3 is seen as one event, the securing of our lives to Him through the Spirit’s work.

Summary:

As the Spirit anointed Jesus, so the Spirit similarly anoints all His people. We are not only historically sealed by the Spirit but this is seen as the Spirit’s present work of creating and presenting the church of God to God.

Conclusion

Jesus was anointed at His baptism by the Holy Spirit. As believers we have a special sealing or ‘permanent touch’ (abiding) of God’s grace from the Holy Spirit in our lives stirring and guiding us. The success of our Christian lives will depend our reliance upon the Holy Spirit.

Discussion Questions

- Is it too bold to suggest that every genuine believer has an anointing from the Holy Spirit? Explain.
- What does it mean to have the Holy Spirit in our lives as believers? What should we expect?
- What indication of this anointing do you see in your own life? What more do you think should you experience?