
a *Grace Notes* course

Doctrines of the Christian Faith
Doctrine 100

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Lesson 7 of 10

The Ascension and Session of Christ
The Holy Spirit's Salvation Ministries
The Holy Spirit's Sustaining Ministries

Grace Notes

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Section I - Lesson 7

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The Ascension and Session of Christ

The resurrection body of the Lord Jesus Christ went from a point just outside Jerusalem all the way to the third heaven. Acts 1

Once He arrived in heaven, Jesus Christ was seated at the right hand of God the Father. This is called His Session. Ps. 110:1; Rom. 8:34; Eph. 1:20; Col. 3:1; Heb. 1:3,13; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2; I Pet. 3:22.

The Ascension and Session of Christ form the basis for His total victory in the conflict with Satan. Heb. 1:3-13.

The Ascension and Session of Christ begin a new phase in this conflict. Eph. 1:20-22; 4:7ff. Therefore, the believer of the church age is involved in the intensified stages of this warfare. Eph. 6, the armor of God.

The Ascension and Session of Christ are the beginning of the march to victory culminating in the crushing of the head of Satan, when Satan is made the footstool of Christ. This is prophesied in Psalm 110:1 and quoted in Luke 20:42,43; Acts 2:33,34; Heb. 1:13.

The crushing of the head of Satan, representing his final defeat, will take place at the Second Advent of Christ, Dan. 7:13,14; Zech. 13:2; Col. 2:15; Rev. 20:1-3.

The Ascension and Session of Christ completes the glorification of Christ in His hypostatic union. Acts. 2:33; 5:31; Phil. 2:9; I Pet. 3:22.

The Ascension and Session of Christ explain the uniqueness of the Church Age and the importance of having a royal family, John 7:37-39.

The Ascension and Session of Christ make possible the second high-priestly function of our Lord, namely, intercession. Heb. 7:25.

The Holy Spirit's Salvation Ministries

Introduction.

God the Holy Spirit did seven things for each Church Age believer at salvation. None of these

ministries make you feel better or any differently. There is no emotional experience with a spiritual connotation. All emotional experiences have a human connotation.

These seven things done for the believer by the Spirit at salvation form the basis for unity among believers.

Efficacious Grace

Efficacious grace is the enabling power of the Holy Spirit to the believer in Christ, or the work of the Holy Spirit which enables the believer to have an effective faith in Christ as Savior. It is the Holy Spirit picking up a person's positive signals of faith in Christ and carrying them to the point of salvation.

When we hear the Gospel we are spiritually dead. When we believe in Jesus Christ, it is the faith of a spiritually dead person. How can a dead man hear anything? Furthermore, what good is the faith of a spiritually dead person? Therefore, we were totally helpless to procure eternal salvation in our spiritually dead state.

But God the Holy Spirit in His matchless grace comes to our rescue. First, He makes the Gospel clear to us. This is common grace. Then He makes our faith in Christ effectual, giving our faith life, as it were. This is efficacious grace.

In Jn 10:27-28, Jesus said, "I give unto you eternal life, and you shall never perish, neither shall anyone pluck you out of My hand." It is the ministry of the Holy Spirit to make our faith effective so that we can be given eternal life.

Therefore, the ministry of the Holy Spirit in common grace may be regarded as the inhale of the Gospel. The ministry of the Holy Spirit in efficacious grace may be regarded as the exhale of faith in Jesus Christ.

When the spiritually dead person believes in Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit takes that faith and makes it effective for salvation.

The origin of our faith is from a spiritually dead person, and therefore it has no ability in itself. Spiritual death means total inability to do anything by which we can enter into an eternal relationship with God.

Therefore, the Holy Spirit's ministry at salvation is one of fantastic grace, both in making the Gospel understandable and in making our faith effectual.

So in salvation, the spiritually dead person believes in Jesus Christ, while the Holy Spirit makes that faith effective for salvation.

The positive volition of the spiritually dead person does two non-meritorious things.

- He listens to the Gospel; the Holy Spirit makes the Gospel message lucid.
- He believes in Jesus Christ; the Holy Spirit makes his faith effective.

Being spiritually dead, we cannot understand what we hear as unbelievers. Therefore, without the ministry of God the Holy Spirit in common and efficacious grace, none of us would have eternal salvation.

Effectual faith means the power to produce the intended effect and purpose, i.e., salvation.

Eph 2:8, "For you have been saved by grace [efficacious grace] through faith [effectual faith], and this [matter of being saved] is not from yourselves; it is a gift from God, not from works, lest any man should boast."

So in our salvation, there are two acts of sovereign grace:

a. The first is the ministry of the Holy Spirit in making the Gospel understandable. Common grace means that, being spiritually dead, we can't begin to understand any spiritual phenomena, including the Gospel.

b. The second is the ministry of God the Holy Spirit in making our faith effectual, called efficacious grace.

For those who reject the Gospel there is no efficacious grace.

Mt 22:14, For many are called [the entire human race], but few are chosen [i.e., elected, become believers]."

Efficacious grace is a part of the sealing ministry of the Holy Spirit, Eph 1:13-14.

God the Holy Spirit makes your faith effective for salvation and then guarantees it, seals it.

Regeneration.

The second ministry of the Holy Spirit at salvation is called regeneration. It is taught in Tit 3:5; 1 Pet 1:23.

Regeneration is the technical term for being "born again," because that's the way it is described in Jn 3:1-18, in our Lord's discussion with Nicodemus. Verses 6-7, "That which is born of flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I say to you: you must be born again."

Being born again is a result of faith in Jesus Christ, and occurs at the instant you personally believe in Jesus Christ.

We are born physically as dichotomous, having a body and soul, but no human spirit. However, at the moment we believe in Christ, God the Holy Spirit creates a human spirit, making us trichotomous.

The moment God the Holy Spirit creates a human spirit, God the Father imputes eternal life to that human spirit.

Remember that any kind of life must have a place to reside. The human soul is where human physical life resides, imputed at our physical birth. The human spirit is where eternal life resides, imputed at our spiritual birth.

Soul life exists forever. The believer will live forever in heaven; the unbeliever will live forever in the Lake of Fire.

Jn 3:36, "For he that believes on the Son has everlasting life. But he that does not believe on the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."

So regeneration means the creation of a human spirit for the imputation of eternal life. The soul is the residence of human life; the human spirit is the residence of eternal life.

The fact that the believer in Jesus Christ is trichotomous is found in 1 Thess 5:23; Philemon 25.

Just as the soul is the residence for soul or human life, so the human spirit is the residence for eternal life.

Conception is the origin of the human body; this is biological life. When biological life emerges from

the womb, God creates human life and imputes it to the human soul.

The Baptism of the Spirit

The baptism of the Spirit was prophesied in Acts 1:5. It is mentioned in principle and mechanics in 1 Cor 12:13; Gal 3:26-28; Eph 4:5.

At the moment we believed in Christ, God the Holy Spirit took each one of us and entered us into union with the person of Jesus Christ.

As a result of being in union with Christ, we share what Christ has.

- a. We share His eternal life (1 Jn 5:11-2), giving us a double portion of eternal life.
- b. We share His righteousness, giving us a double portion.
- c. We share Christ's destiny under predestination.
- d. We share Christ's election.
- e. Jesus Christ, seated at the right hand of the Father, has a third royal title. We share in His royalty as His royal family.
- f. We become a new spiritual species, 2 Cor. 5:17

Once you are put into union with Christ (positional sanctification), you can never get out. There is no sin or human good or evil you can perform that can disqualify you from being in union with Christ.

The baptism of the Spirit is the basis for the new spiritual species and the royal family of God. This is a unifying factor in the body of Christ. We have equal privilege and opportunity to execute God's plan.

The Indwelling of the Holy Spirit

At the moment you believe in Christ, God the Holy Spirit indwells your body, 1 Cor 3:16, 6:19-20; 2 Cor 6:16.

1 Cor 6:19-20, "Your body is a temple of the Spirit who is in you."

The purpose of the indwelling of the Spirit is to provide a temple for the indwelling of Jesus Christ as the Shekinah Glory. This is necessary because we all have the old sin nature resident in the cell structure of our bodies, with a predilection to sin in certain areas.

In the Holy of Holies in the tabernacle and temple, our Lord Jesus Christ dwelt between the cherubs as the Shekinah Glory. His presence there was a guarantee of blessing to Israel through their unconditional covenants.

Just as Christ indwelt the Holy of Holies in the temple in Jerusalem as a guarantee of blessing to Israel, so He indwells us as a guarantee of our escrow blessings. He lives in your body as a greater guarantee of blessing than the guarantee given to Israel. For Jesus Christ is the escrow officer; He is the one who makes the distribution of our blessings for time and for the eternal state.

The indwelling of Christ says that, if the indwelling of Christ in sacred buildings during the Age of Israel was so important, how much more important is it that Jesus Christ now indwells your body. In fact, it is so important that the Holy Spirit preceded Him and made a temple for His indwelling.

The indwelling of the Holy Spirit relates to the body of the believer, while the filling of the Holy Spirit relates to the soul of the believer.

The indwelling of Jesus Christ and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit have nothing to do with your spiritual life experientially. It is the filling of the Holy Spirit that has to do with your spiritual life. The filling of the Spirit is when the believer "walks by means of the Spirit," where the Holy Spirit controls his soul, which is distinct from his body.

So the indwelling of the Spirit and the filling of the Spirit are not related; they are separate ministries.

The indwelling of the Holy Spirit has nothing to do with your personal life, how you act, or how you conduct your life. It is permanent. The filling of the Holy Spirit, however, is affected by our thinking or behavior, because personal sin is a factor, as shown in the next section.

The Filling of the Holy Spirit

The filling of the Spirit is taught in Eph 5:18; Gal 5:16.

We are filled with the Spirit at salvation when God the Holy Spirit takes us and enters us into fellowship with Himself.

Thereafter, the believer is filled with the Spirit, which is the same as being under the enabling power of the Spirit, and this continues as long as he does not sin.

When we sin, we lose the filling of the Holy Spirit. We grieve the Spirit. We quench the Spirit. But through the use of confession of sin, we can once again become filled with the Spirit.

To recover the filling of the Spirit after sinning, we must use confession, which is described in 1 John 1:9.

The Sealing Ministry of the Holy Spirit.

The sealing ministry of the Spirit is found in Eph 1:13-14, 4:30.

The sealing ministry of the Spirit is a signature guarantee of:

- a. The Holy Spirit's ministry in efficacious grace.
- b. Eternal life.
- c. Eternal security in time.
- d. Your assets of divine blessing (Eph. 1:3)

This is His ministry whereby the Holy Spirit signs the guarantee of our salvation, eternal life, eternal security, and invisible assets. He puts His signature to our lives that we actually have our blessings.

Both the indwelling of Christ and the sealing of the Holy Spirit guarantee our blessings.

The Sovereign Distribution of Spiritual Gifts to each Believer.

All three members of the Trinity are actually involved in the distribution of our spiritual gifts.

God the Father was involved in the distribution of spiritual gifts as a witness to the strategic victory of Jesus Christ after His ascension. This began in the dispensation of the Hypostatic Union. Heb 2:4.

God the Son was involved in the initial distribution of spiritual gifts to the first generation of the body of Christ or royal family. This follows the analogy of a Roman triumphal procession. This was a part of the distribution of blessings as a result of the triumph of our Lord Jesus Christ which terminated the dispensation of the Hypostatic Union, in His resurrection, ascension, and session. Eph 4:7-8.

After the first generation of the royal family, God the Holy Spirit is involved in all subsequent distribution of spiritual gifts, 1 Cor 12:11.

At the very moment you believed in Jesus Christ, you were given a spiritual gift.

The distribution of spiritual gifts at the moment of salvation is the manifestation of team action in the body of Christ. It is the basis for administration and service in the royal family. It is the expression of the *modus operandi* of the Church Age believer, both as a royal priest and as a royal ambassador.

The Two Post-Salvation Ministries of the Holy Spirit.

After salvation, the Holy Spirit has two post-salvation ministries.

The enabling power of the Spirit, for believers who are in fellowship, is called the filling of the Spirit in Eph 5:18, and it's called walking by means of the Spirit in Gal 5:16.

The teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit can only occur when a believer is in fellowship. This is the enabling ministry of the Spirit to understand doctrine.

Therefore, the post-salvation ministries of the Holy Spirit are related to our understanding of Bible doctrine, Jn 14:26, 16:12-14; 1 Cor 2:9-16.

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The Holy Spirit's Sustaining Ministries

During the period of the First Advent, the humanity of Christ was sustained by the indwelling and filling of the Holy Spirit. The humanity of Christ had to be sustained by God the Holy Spirit, just as the members of the royal family, the Church, would be sustained by the

enabling power of the Holy Spirit during the Christian life.

The Prophecy of this Ministry

Isa 11:1-3, 42:1, 61:1a.

The sustaining ministry of the Holy Spirit occurs first at the virgin birth,

Mt 1:18-20; Ps 40:6 cf Heb 10:5.

The Holy Spirit is the source or agent of conception. The Father planned Christ's human body. The Holy Spirit was the agent carrying out the mechanics of the virgin birth. He provided the perfect chromosomes which fertilized the female ovum. The Holy Spirit is thus the agent in the execution of the Hypostatic Union.

The ministry of the Holy Spirit begins at the Incarnation: Jn 3:34.

1. Not only does the Holy Spirit indwell the body of Christ, but He also filled His soul .
2. This is the total sustaining ministry to royalty. Our Lord, in His humanity, was born into royalty as the son of David.
3. His spiritual royalty is different. His spiritual royalty is being totally sustained by the Holy Spirit.
4. There was no spiritual royalty in the Old Testament. The Holy Spirit had no indwelling of the body of any Old Testament believer .
5. Glorification of Christ by means of the Ascension and Session instituted battlefield royalty. This caused the Age of Israel to be interrupted so that the royal family of God, the Church, could be formed. This is accomplished by means of the Baptism of the Spirit, which is the Holy Spirit entering us into union with Christ .
6. Therefore, the Church Age believer is also royalty by being in union with Christ. As royalty we have the privilege of being indwelt by God the Holy Spirit.
7. Christ as King of kings and Lord of lords is true royalty. Therefore, His body is indwelt by the Holy Spirit and His soul is filled by the Holy Spirit. This is why Church Age believers have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and are commanded to be filled with the Holy Spirit .

8. Thus, the total ministry of the Holy Spirit to the incarnate Christ has been continued in the Church.

The Ministry of the Holy Spirit Related to the Baptism of Jesus Christ: Matt 3:13-17.

The dove speaks of the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit. Water represents the kingdom of God. Converts identified themselves with the kingdom of God by being baptized. They were testifying to the fact that they no longer had any responsibility to Judaism. Our Lord in the water represented the plan of God for the Incarnation. Christ in the water represented to others His dedication to the plan of God.

The Ministry of the Holy Spirit Related to the Public Ministry of Christ: Mt 12:18.

Jesus quotes the prophecy of the Spirit's sustaining ministry of Isa 42:1. In the same context, He says that His miracles were performed in the power of the sustaining ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Lk 4:14-21 tells us that the teaching ministry of our Lord was also performed in the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit had a part in the resurrection of Christ: Rom 8:11.

The indwelling of the Holy Spirit is a guarantee of resurrection for the royal family: 1 Pet 3:18-19.

The sustaining ministry of the Holy Spirit is transferred to the royal family.

Just as the Holy Spirit sustained the humanity of Christ during the incarnation, so now the Holy Spirit sustains the believer during his life.

Jesus Christ was sustained as perfect royalty; we as Church Age believers are sustained as sinful royalty.<

The strategic victory of Christ demands the tactical victory of the royal family on earth during the intensified stage of the angelic conflict.

The total ministry of the Holy Spirit, which never occurred before Christ, includes both the indwelling of our human body and the filling of our soul. This is the ministry of the Holy Spirit to royalty only .

This ministry to the royal family demands the filling of the Spirit and applied doctrine (edification). This is why Paul wrote in Gal. 4:19, "until Christ is formed in you." This is synonymous with the believer's spiritual self-esteem, which is the beginning of spiritual adulthood .

This is why we are commanded in Eph 5:18; Gal 5:16, to be filled with the Spirit and to walk by means of the Spirit.

The sustaining ministry of the Holy Spirit is then transferred from the resurrected glorified Christ at the right hand of the Father, to the royal family of God on earth

The believer is commanded to avail himself of the sustaining ministry of the filling of the Holy Spirit, Rom 13:14.

The filling of the Holy Spirit sets aside the lust pattern of the old sin nature which distracts from the perception and application of doctrine.

The Royal Family's Glorification of Christ through the Ministry of the Holy Spirit.

1. The purpose of the sustaining ministry of the Holy Spirit in the Church Age is to glorify Christ, Jn 7:38-39. "Rivers of living water" means the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Compare Jn 16:13-14 .

2. It is the present ministry of the Holy Spirit to glorify Christ. He accomplishes this through the metabolization of doctrine, and the many expressions of that doctrine that come from maturity.

3. Edification (growth in Christ) causes the believer to be a letter of commendation written by the Holy Spirit and read by men of our generation, 2 Cor 3:1-3. The letter of commendation principle is the royal family in maturity.

4. At the point of spiritual self-esteem, there exists in the soul of the believer a balance of residency between the filling of the Holy Spirit and maximum applied Bible truth resident in the soul .

5. At this point Christ is formed in you, Gal 4:19, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit becomes a real working power, Eph 3:16-17; Acts 1:8.

6. The fulfillment of the transitional ministry of the Spirit and its results in the life of the believer are found in Phil 1:20-21.

"For me to live is Christ and to die is gain."