

ANCHORED: The Apostle's Creed | Holy Spirit

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In our series entitled *Anchored*, we're working through The Apostles' Creed. Our goal is to get 'anchored' in the truth of the Word of God.

The world will tell you that truth is relative, but Christianity says there is a universal, objective truth found in the Person of Jesus Christ, Who says, "**I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me**" (John 14:6).

Today, we're talking about the Person of the Holy Spirit—yes, the *Person*—the third Person of the Holy Trinity. Trying to unpack all of Who He is in one sermon is impossible, but I want you to get the gist of what He does for us. Many believers don't know.

Personal—I wasn't surprised to wake up to an ice storm here in Middle Tennessee today. It reminded me of my very first encounter with the Holy Spirit. It was decades ago, and I was so young in Christ, and a friend encouraged me that I needed the Holy Spirit. I had a 40-minute drive to get to this guy's house, and on this particular evening we experienced a rare Southern California rainstorm, and it was a deluge. I had this long drive ahead in really awful weather, but something in me said, "Don't let the weather keep you from what I want to do in your life." I didn't then, and I am here to tell you today—

**Don't let the weather—or anything—
keep you from what the Holy Spirit wants to do in your life!**

Please note:

1. **In this series, we're not preaching the Apostles' Creed, we are preaching the Bible.** The Apostles' Creed is a *framework* for this series, but Scripture is the *authority*.
2. Whenever the Creed is read aloud in a community, it is simultaneously a rebellion and an allegiance. It is a rebellion against the unbiblical ideologies of our day, and it is a pledge of allegiance to God and His Kingdom. It's a reminder that we are not ambassadors for the kingdoms of men, but for the Kingdom of God.
3. The word *catholic* in *holy catholic church*, doesn't mean Roman Catholic. It means *universal*, and it is a reference to the universal Church, which is composed of every follower of Jesus throughout human history.

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to hell.

The third day he rose again from the dead.
He ascended to heaven
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there he will
come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy
catholic* church, the communion of
saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and the life
everlasting. Amen.

As we talk about the symbolism, source, and substance of the Holy Spirit, I'm believing He will descend
upon you and do a fresh work in your life today!

Symbolism
Source
Substance

Symbolism

Symbolism refers to vivid *natural* pictures that communicate *supernatural* truths about the Holy Spirit.

Genesis 1:1–3

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light.

- The first mention of Holy Spirit is in the second verse of the Bible. That's His place of prominence!
- **The earth was without form and void**—Before God touched it by the power of the Spirit, the earth was chaotic, disorderly, and indistinguishable. It was a total mess.
- **Darkness covered the face of the deep**—This doesn't refer just to absence of light. It means the earth was miserable and dead. It was an awful, dark place.
- Because God was not willing to leave the earth in this condition, what happened? **The Spirit hovered**—The symbolism is of the relaxed fluttering of a bird. The Holy Spirit had a confident anticipation of the Word of God giving command and being spoken to release the Spirit to do something incredible!
 - And when God spoke, "Let there be light," the Holy Spirit moved on the situation and brought light and life to a dead and dark world!

1. The Holy Spirit Flutters and Hovers with Confident Anticipation

Matthew 3:16

When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him.

- The Old Testament symbolism of the fluttering of the Holy Spirit is fulfilled in the New Testament when the Spirit of God descended like a dove upon Jesus!
- The New Testament shows us in the natural the Old Testament symbolism of the Holy Spirit in its greatest fulfillment in the person of Jesus.

2. The Holy Spirit Gives Light and Life

Ephesians 2:1–2

And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience . . .

- Remember that Genesis said the earth was without form and was void, dark, and dead?
- Ephesians 2 tells us that we too were dead and void and dark in our trespasses and sin, walking according to the course of this fallen world, going from one sin to the next, with no sense of guidance or of light and life and purpose.

Colossians 1:13

He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love.

**In the first three verses in the book of Genesis
we see what the Holy Spirit does for a dead and dark world.
Then in the pages in the New Testament
we see the fulfillment of this power and work
in the lives of every believer.**

Application—From the very beginning, we get a symbolic picture of what the Holy Spirit does to create new life in chaotic, disorderly, dark, and dead situations. When we are faced with situations that are dark and deadly and miserable, because of the Holy Spirit, we don't have hopelessness!

**He is fluttering over our circumstances with confidence,
ready to bring life and hope and light!**

Apply this truth to your life and to the life of this nation. Don't wash your hands of individuals and of nations. Historically, when a nation seems to be at its worst, this is when the fluttering Holy Spirit hears God say, "Let their be light"—and something powerful and miraculous happens!

3. The Holy Spirit Flows like a Mighty River

Genesis 2:10–14

Now a river went out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it parted and became four river-heads. The name of the first is Pishon; it is the one which skirts the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. And the gold of that land is good. Bdellium and the onyx stone are there. The name of the second river is Gihon; it is the one which goes around the whole land of Cush. The name of the third river is Hiddekel; it is the one which goes toward the east of Assyria. The fourth river is the Euphrates.

- Four rivers flow out of God's new creation.
 - Pishon, which means *increase*
 - Gihon, which means *bursting forth*
 - Hiddekel, which means *rapid*
 - Euphrates, which means *fruitfulness*

John 7:37–39

On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." But this

He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

- Four rivers in the Old Testament symbolically describe the increase and bursting forth and rapid fruitfulness of God’s new creation.
- Jesus brings some New Testament light to that Old Testament truth in John 7. He says, *When you believe in Me and receive the Spirit of God, what will happen in your life is like rivers of living water bursting forth from your innermost being for abundant fruitfulness.*

**God’s intention from the very beginning
for His new creations in Christ
is to *increase*
and *burst forth*
with *rapid fruitfulness*
as the Spirit flows through us like mighty rivers!**

This is what God wants in His Church, and this is what we get back to as we align with His purposes—Holy Spirit-infused impact in the world for Jesus Christ!

Source

Source refers to seeing and depending upon the Holy Spirit as our source of life and power.

John 14:16–17

I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.

- The Holy Spirit is to be our source, our hunger, our dependency. He is to be **with** us and **in** us.
- He is the One we trust so that when we go out into the world, we are not trusting in our own fallen resources. We trust in nothing less that power of the living God and His Spirit!

Acts 1:8

But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.

- Just before He spoke this, Jesus had breathed on His disciples and said to them, “**Receive the Holy Spirit**” (John 20:22).
- When you believe in the resurrected Christ, the Holy Spirit is **with** you and **in** you. You are sealed, and He is the guarantee of your salvation.
- **But there is more.** Scripture tells us that we don’t get everything at the moment of conversion. Before we go out and try to fulfill the Great Commission, something else has to happen. The Holy Spirit must come **upon** us.

Application—When the Holy Spirit is **with, in**, and then **upon** you, you will be a witness to the world. You can experience the power of the Holy Spirit no matter where you go. You have the same power and Person of the Holy Spirit at all times and in all places as you live your life as a witness for Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 5:18

... but be filled with the Spirit . . .

- Paul encourages believers to be continually filled with the Holy Spirit, over and over again.

**We get a measure of the Holy Spirit as He is with us.
We get a greater measure as He is in us.
And then we get an even greater measure
as He comes upon us and fills us over and over again.**

Prayer—Almighty God, I’m getting ready to go out into the world. I want to make a difference for Jesus. But I can’t do it in my own strength. I need the Holy Spirit to fill me afresh and anew for whatever mission you have for me today. Amen!

God never intended for us to do life apart from the Holy Spirit being *with* and *in* and *upon* us with power! When we get busy about our Father’s business, the Father gets busy filling us with the power of the Holy Spirit to do His business.

Substance

Substance refers to how the Holy Spirit operates in us and through us in substantive ways. What is the substance of what he came to do? What does he do for us?

1. The Holy Spirit Teaches Us

John 14:26

But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

- He teaches us all things and brings to our remembrance the things He’s taught us.
- You can’t approach God’s Word like it’s a mere textbook. It needs to be spiritually discerned and understood as the Spirit—the great Paraclete—comes along side and teaches you.

Question—Are you reading the Word? *Or is the Word reading you?* Is the Holy Spirit coming alongside you and speaking to you and teaching you?

Warning—It’s possible to know the Word without knowing the Word. It’s possible to know the print without knowing the Person. The Holy Spirit’s job is to bring you into understanding and relationship with God, not just to give you head knowledge.

- **Matthew 22:29**

Jesus answered and said to them, “**You are mistaken, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God. . .**”

- Jesus told the Sadducees that they knew neither the Scriptures nor the power of God right after they had cited Scripture to Him. Jesus says memorizing Scripture is useless if you miss out on the Person of Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit.

- **John 5:37–40**

And the Father Himself, who sent Me, has testified of Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His form. But you do not have His word abiding in you, because whom He sent, Him you do not believe. You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me. But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.

- Don’t satisfy yourself with the mere study of the Word. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide and teach you in all things so that you will have life through relationship with the Person of Jesus Christ.

2. The Holy Spirit Guides Us and Tells Us Things to Come

John 16:13

However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.

- He guides into all truth, He speaks to us, and tells us things to come.
- The intimacy of the picture Jesus paints is that of a loving Father taking the hand of His child and guiding him or her into something beautiful and wonderful.
- Where there is the spirit of error and antichrist everywhere, we dare not try to read the Word of God apart from the Holy Spirit.

3. The Holy Spirit Gives Us Supernatural Gifts

1 Corinthians 12:4, 7

There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. . . . But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all . . .

- The Holy Spirit gives supernatural gifts *to everyone*. You are not too young or too old or too dumb or too smart or too anything that you are excluded from the gifting of the Holy Spirit.
- He gifts us so that others may profit and benefit through us, and so that we can make a substantial difference in people's lives.

Application—Read the following verses, and then with hunger in your heart begin to cry out to the Holy Spirit and ask Him what He has uniquely given you so that Jesus can be lived through you to make a Kingdom difference in this world.

1 Corinthians 12:8–12

. . .for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.

Romans 12:6–8

Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

**Realize that the Holy Spirit has given you something.
Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal what you've been given.
Ask mature believers around you what they see in you.
Then let those gifts flow through you.
Put them to use.
Discover, develop, and deploy your spiritual gifts.**

Conclusion

When we look at the Holy Spirit—His beautiful symbolism, as the Source being upon us with power, and the substance of what He has come to do in us and through us—we can understand why Jesus said what He said in John 16:7.

John 16:7

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 depart, I will send Him to you.

- Jesus in His limited, natural, flesh-and-bones body could only be in one place at one time.
- But because He departed through the glorious ascension to His Father, He could send His Holy Spirit, Who is not limited by time or space.

No wonder the Holy Spirit is our Advantage!

- He hovers over chaotic, dark, deadly circumstances, confidently awaiting a word from God to change the world and to move in our lives.
- He acts as the Word of God spoken to bring new life that flows like mighty rivers.
- He is with us and in us and upon us—unlimited in power and presence.
- He gives us power to be a witness for Jesus by teaching us, guiding us, speaking to us, reminding us, and telling us things to come.
- He will touch open hearts wherever He finds them.

Luke 11:13

“If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!”

- The word *ask* means to beg, crave, and hunger for.
- Are you hungry for the Holy Spirit? If you will be obedient and hungry, if you will be prayerful, if you will be receptive to how the Holy Spirit wants to manifest Himself in your life, God promises you that the Holy Spirit will come and touch your life in a supernatural way.

Be hungry for the Holy Spirit.

Be consumed with fulfilling the will of God in your life.

Be prayerful. The disciples waited 10 days in prayer and belief before the Holy Spirit came as tongues of fire resting on their shoulders. They didn't quench or grieve the Spirit with unbelief and fear. They believed and prayed and hungered, and then He came, and the world has never been the same.

Note: At Grace Chapel we have always given a prominent place to the Holy Spirit, so if you are hungry to learn more, to dig deeper, and to know Him better, we have resources for you. Stop by the bookstore or ask a staff member for help.

Discussion Questions

1. Discuss the symbolism of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament and New Testament. How is the sameness of the Holy Spirit's work in fluttering in confident anticipation to burst forth with new life and light for dark and dead things revealed from the beginning of time to now?
2. What are the differences between the Holy Spirit being with, in, and upon you? Have you ever considered these distinct manifestations of the power of the Holy Spirit? What are the implications for your life?
3. Why does it matter that we be filled with the Holy Spirit over and over again?
4. Is the Holy Spirit your teacher when you read the Word? What does the Holy Spirit want to accomplish in guiding and teaching you?
5. Do you know your spiritual gifts? Spend time discussing with mature believers what your gifts may be. Commit to praying about discovering your gifts, developing them, and putting them to Kingdom use in the world.
6. How is the Holy Spirit our Advantage? What lessons can we learn from the disciples about accessing the power and presence of the Holy Spirit?

NOTES