

The Revealer

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[0 : 0 0] So, in the evening worship, we're looking at the person of the Holy Spirit. We've done that for a couple of weeks and we're going to be doing it for quite a while as we look into His life, into His character, into His life and also His role and what it means to have the Holy Spirit in our lives.

We recognize Him as God, don't we? We see Him as the third person, the Trinity, God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The equal in power and in glory with the Father, the same in substance.

Now, what I want to do this evening, what we're going to look specifically at this evening is His role as a revealer, okay? Inspirer or teacher.

And we're going to look at two things with respect to the role of the Holy Spirit in our lives. First is that, seeing that He's the divine author of the Bible.

Now, there's kind of, they are basic truths, but very important truths. In other words, He's the one who brings life to the Bible. He has breathed life into it. It's God's word and it's a living word and the Holy Spirit is integral and critical in the inspiration of Scripture.

[1 : 2 0] And also, the second thing is He's the divine revealer of truth. So not only does His word, or does He bring life through the word, but He brings light as He teaches and illuminates that word to us.

So these are the two things we're going to be looking at this evening with respect to the person of the Holy Spirit and applying that, I hope, to our own lives and hearts. So He's the divine author of the Bible.

We read in 2 Timothy 3, very famous, verse 16, all Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction and training and righteousness.

The man or the person of God may be complete, equipped for every good work. So the Bible, the Scripture is breathed out by God.

The breath of God, the spirit of God is what makes the Bible living and authoritative and unique among all the books that have ever been written in the world.

[2 : 2 2] There's roughly, I'm told by that great source of all knowledge, Google, that there is around 130 million books being written since the printing press in 1440.

And among all these books, the Bible is completely and utterly unique. It stands alone. So the fact that we have the Bible this evening, we'll read in the Bible, is a significant reality for us because it's a unique book that we have because it's breathed out.

All Scripture is God breathed, is spirit breathed. It comes from God's breath. It is given by God, a book of divine origin that the Holy Spirit was integral in being involved in its composition.

Second Peter 1, 2021, it says, above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation of things for prophecy.

Never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. I'll say a little bit more about that in a moment.

[3 : 37] But the context of that is Peter is speaking to those to whom he's writing, and he's saying that they were eyewitnesses of the glory of God, that they were those who saw what Jesus had done.

They saw Him on the Mount of Transfiguration. It's not stories they'd made up. It was fact. It was true. And he then goes on to speak about the Holy Spirit, breathing life into what they had recorded and what they had seen primarily.

It speaks of the Scripture that was written in the Old Testament. But we know that in 2 Peter, for example, he calls Paul's letter Scripture. So there's this recognition that the work and the message that was brought by the apostles and by Paul were to become Scripture, both the Old and the New Testament.

And it's that Scripture which Jesus spoke of in John saying, it cannot be broken. So there's this recognition that what God has inspired and brought through the New Testament writers and through the Old Testament writers is uniquely God's word that cannot be broken.

He is, as we know, and as we've seen in our various studies, he's the spirit of truth, John 16. But when he, the spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth.

[4 : 59] He will not speak on his own. He will only speak what he hears. He will tell you what is yet to come. And in that whole passage in John, you've got the idea of a Trinitarian involvement, a Trinitarian word being brought to ultimately to our hearts from the Father through the Son and by means of the Holy Spirit given to us.

And so the Bible is his inspired word. It's breathed out by God, and that is the work of the Holy Spirit. And we remind ourselves that that then makes God's word infallible.

It's true. It's not exhaustive, doesn't tell us all truth, but the truth that it tells us is absolutely accurate.

It is the account of God's redemptive historical work, a word that Jesus had confidence in.

And we recognize that it's a complete book in itself. And within that then we recognize that it's a progressive revelation, and that's important to know.

[6 : 11] We also recognize that it's a book which interprets itself as it's inspired by the Spirit of God. And we recognize that it gives us all that we need to know.

Not about everything, but it gives us all we need to know about living, following, being saved, and coming to know and following Jesus Christ.

His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through the knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and goodness, 2 Peter 12.

So it gives us, it's exactly what we need. The Spirit has made sure that that is the case, that the Bible has just not too much and not too little.

It's exactly right. It's exactly what we need. And it's infallible as God's Word brings truth to us. But of course it's truth that comes through human authors.

[7 : 11] And that's important to recognize. That passage that I quoted earlier in 2 Peter speaks about the Holy Spirit carrying the authors along. And the word that's used there is the same word for a boat being moved along by the wind and its sails.

That's recognition that if a boat is going to be moved by the sails, there's got to be people in the boat and they've got to be putting the sails up. But there's this sense in which the direction and the way it's going is carried by the power of the wind, by the power of the Holy Spirit.

So we move away from the idea that it's like the Mary Celeste boat, which is empty of any kind of human involvement. The inspiration of God doesn't make the people like Celestial tape recorders.

That's an old illustration. No one would have heard of a tape recorder anymore. Actually, the people over 70 are laughing. Sorry, 50. But it's not like that. It's not necessarily...

It's not simply the Spirit dictated His truth to everyone, although there was instance when He did. So we recognize that the writers were still children and prophets of their own time.

[8 : 27] And so it's good and important for us as students of the Word, inspired by the Holy Spirit, to understand the context and the culture and the social and the spiritual background into which the Scriptures were written.

That helps us understand. God expects us to use our minds so to do. They're not magically divine words. They are words that the Spirit of God inspired through the human authors.

He worked through them. There was times when He dictated messages to them, thus says the Lord. There's times He wrote Himself and the stones of the Ten Commandments.

But there's other times that the Spirit inspires authors to be carefully investigating truth or to organize things in certain ways, whether it's the writers to the Proverbs or Dr. Luke, saying that He witnessed, He interviewed many different witnesses, eyewitnesses of Jesus, or whether it's through the poetic creativity of David or Asaph or the wisdom of Daniel or the personalities of Peter or Paul or John, indeed, as we're seeing in One John and His characteristic style of writing.

But the Holy Spirit inspired them, oversaw them, governed what they were saying and what they wrote down so that they said what He wanted them to say, so that these writers were bringing God's Word to us, so that we might be saved and God might be glorified.

[10 : 10] So there's a redemptive theme from Genesis to Revelation, and there's a clear message, a God-given message that comes through each of these authors and binds them together.

These 66 books by 40 authors over 1,500 years speak one message, speak one clear message of redemptive historical revelation that focuses on and is centered by the revelation of Jesus Christ, great unity in that that comes from God's Spirit who oversees the Scripture.

And because it's inspired by God and because it is breathed out by the Holy Spirit, it's therefore self-attesting.

It can't look to any higher authority to claim its authenticity. It can't cite anything greater than itself. It is self-attesting at that level.

We are convinced of its truthfulness and by its claims because of the internal witness of the Holy Spirit. I'll say a little bit more about that later. And that seals its truthfulness and validity to us.

[11 : 34] But it is clearly an inspired book that is confident and comfortable in its own claims.

The New Testament itself quotes the Old Testament as authoritative 900 times. And God said or God spoken is over 3,000 times in the Scriptures.

It's its own self-attesting testimony of the Word of God from God inspired by the Holy Spirit.

So the Scripture is divinely authored and inspired by the Holy Spirit. Now the implications, I'm sure are many for that, I'm just going to say a couple.

The first that we recognize that as it's unique and it's uniquely from God and has this divine intentionality that is governed and overseen and given by the Holy Spirit, it must, we should treat it accordingly.

[12 : 42] We should treat it accordingly. We should value it greatly. It's a great peril of rejecting or ignoring or adding to or taking away from Scripture.

We might not add to it. Well, sometimes we do. But maybe we're more prone to take away from it bits we don't like, bits we don't understand, bits that seem contradictory, bits that are out of date, bits that make us walk a different way to the world in which we live.

We need to remember this incredible work of the Holy Spirit that is given specifically to us by the Holy Spirit, inspired for us, molded and governed and overseen for our lives, for our knowledge, for our salvation, and for our growth in grace.

He takes the word of the Father and He makes it suitable for us and for our lives.

So as Christians, if we are Christians this evening, you need to know it and protect it and learn all about it and wrestle with it and wrestle with the difficult bits.

[14 : 04] Don't just ignore them or reject them or go for a quick Twitter-type snapshot every day.

Don't just go for the easy passages that we can grip, but work through its truth, listen for what it's saying, and recognize it's His living Word, it's much more than simply historical revelation.

It is His ongoing living Word. It is good to contextualize, it is good to look at the authors, it is good to see it in its original context, but never to forget that it remains a living Word for today and a living Word from the living God inspired by the Holy Spirit.

When we loosen our grip or we shrug our shoulders or we say God is wrong, we're listening to another Spirit and it's not God.

And there's the recognition that we're in a spiritual battle. And there is one who will take the Word of God and one who seeks to be an angel of light, who will disrupt and twist and confuse us.

[15 : 32] God speaks to us through His living Word, it's unique. And that brings me to the second point, which is not as easy as the divine inspirer of Scripture, but He's the divine revealer of truth.

Cory this morning was speaking about assurance, and he mentioned the fact that there are ways that we can be assured that we're Christians, and that's a great theme, a great topic.

And we'll maybe say more about the assurance of the Spirit at another time. And we'll also say more about the critical need for the Holy Spirit in our rebirth, in our coming to faith in Jesus Christ.

But I want us to focus a little bit on the fact that not only does He inspire Scripture for us as Christians when we become Christians through His power, but He continues to illuminate Scripture to be the light that we need to understand Scripture.

And He testifies with our own spirit. There's an internal work that goes on of God, and that is an ongoing work where He applies what Jesus has accomplished.

[16 : 53] He assures us, spoke about assurance this morning, He assures us that it's the Word of God. For example, we could have a couple of people come to, I could have one of you down here as a Christian, and you could sit down there, and you could have another person beside you who's not a Christian, and you could both read the crucifixion story together.

There's no difference between these two people intellectually, or maybe in age, or even culture and background.

One of them doesn't believe it, and one of them as a Christian clearly does. And the difference is the work of the Holy Spirit in that person.

He enables us to see things differently. He illuminates Scripture for us. And so His work is not simply to inspire the Word of God itself, but He is the one who reveals God to us.

Primarily reveals God. Remember we've been talking about that from 1 John, that fellowship with God is kind of the aim of our lives, to just know God and to love Him and serve Him.

[18 : 00] Well He reveals God to us. One Corinthians 2, we read that. However, as it is written, what no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, what no human mind has conceived, the things of God is prepared for those who love Him.

These are the things God has revealed to us by His Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. It's impossible for us to know God, to be in relationship with God, to trust our lives to God, to love Him without the work of the Spirit in our hearts.

We need Him to reveal to us the deep things of God, tremendously significant. It's never simply an intellectual truth or knowledge that we have of God.

We need the person of God and the person of the Holy Spirit to be in us, illuminating, restifying, bringing it to life and making us say, yes, absolutely.

I believe that and I'm entrusting my life to Him. If we only have the Bible alone and we're reading it kind of simply intellectually, then it's a dead word to us.

[19 : 16] And I think sometimes there's a danger of us falling into deadness even as believers and failing to recognize and see that it is the Spirit alone who will take us into the deep things of God who will reveal to us, who will help us to search all things and to know God and to deepen our relationship with Him as our Father and as our King and as our Lord.

So He reveals God, He reveals by bringing light. He inspires and brings life to it, but He reveals by bringing light and He not only teaches and reveals God to us, but He teaches us God's truth.

Now if you do have time this evening or some other time, read John 14 to 16. It speaks a lot about the work of the Holy Spirit. And one of the things Jesus says in John 14, 26, is the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, Trinitarian, call again, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

And that takes us back to the original passage in 2 Timothy where the Word of God is, Scripture is breathed out and is able to teach us and rebuke us and correct us and train us in righteousness.

Because that's what the Word of God does as the Holy Spirit works with us and works through us to help us understand more clearly.

[20 : 49] So when we open the Word as believers, the great thing to remember as we open the Word is that the Spirit of God is with us, that we're not alone in other words, that God is with us as we open the Word.

He is in us and He's with us forever. It's a powerful reality, and His work is to reveal God and to teach us wisdom for living, to understand ourselves.

That's why the Bible I think is called the Mirror of Scripture, because it reveals ourselves, it reveals what we're like.

It is, and challenges and transforms us, so we find out and understand much more about ourselves as we cooperate with the Spirit and as we recognize Him as our teacher.

And of course He works through others, of course. And we will see that the Spirit of God will enable us to learn what to do. He will guide us.

[22 : 00] He will show us what to say. He will give us the wisdom we need, and He will move us towards peace, shalom, even in the hardest of circumstances, enable us to be unafraid and strong when we feel weak, and open up true life to us, and the blessings and joy that it brings.

So we see the two things there that the Holy Spirit is the revealer. He's the Inspirer of the Bible. He's the one that brings it alive. It's a living word for us.

And He's also the one who takes His living word and teaches us and guides us and leads us. So I think in closing the implications of that for me are twofold at least, and I'm sure many more.

The first is to know, to understand how much you are loved by God.

It's kind of as if the Holy Spirit is assigned to you as a specific role. He's assigned to God's people.

[23 : 19] He's been given the role of revealing God to us in His Word, to inspire the writers so that they bring to us what we need to hear from the living God.

And Jesus goes back to the Father and He sends the Holy Spirit to us. He is given, that's how much God loves us, that He gives us Himself, of course, in the person of the Holy Spirit.

He has this assigned role to enable us to live our Christian lives. And He's a God His Spirit and the Spirit of God is invisible to us, and we often think we're alone, I think, as Christians.

But it couldn't be further from the truth that we are in dwelt and we are befriended, and the specific role of the Holy Spirit is for His people, is for you and for me.

And I think that's important and significant. There's of all the persons in the Godhead, in many ways the Holy Spirit is the most intimate to us.

[24 : 32] And I don't think we often think that. We mostly think of Jesus as the closest, most if we can, I'm not sure if it's right to talk in these terms, but we often think of Jesus as the one, or even sometimes God the Father.

And the Spirit seems a little bit ethereal and a little bit wispy and a little bit impersonal, maybe. Some of us maybe have grown up hearing it called the Holy Ghost, and maybe that's just, there's a bit scary about that as well.

But yet in a sense, the Holy Spirit is the most intimately close person of the Godhead to us if we can talk that way, in His role at least, specifically for us.

And also the other implication surely is for us to have a tremendously strong independent life of prayer, independence on the Holy Spirit.

When we come to Scripture, that we pray God's Spirit to illuminate and to enlighten us. We pray for wisdom as we live our lives. We pray each time we come to church that God will use His Word that will become an inspired and powerful time together, that we simply live lives of dependent prayer.

[25 : 56] Don't depend on your knowledge. Don't depend on your intelligence. Don't depend on the Holy Spirit and show that by a life of prayer.

May that be true of each of us as we learn a bit more about the Spirit as the Inspirer, the Divine Author of Scripture and the Divine Revealer of Truth for us.

Let's pray. Father God, help us to know You better. Help us to thank You for the Holy Spirit's work. Thank You for this great Word, the Bible, the complete revelation of God for all we need to know for life and for salvation.

Thank You for its wisdom, for its living relevance. May it become the bedrock of our lives as it reveals the Word Himself, Jesus, and as the Spirit takes that revelation and applies it to our hearts.

Thank You for the intimate work of Your Holy Spirit. And Holy Spirit, we thank You this evening for what You do for us, for Your incredible patience and interest in our lives, for Your gentle, powerful teaching, for the way You lead us and keep us in many ways, maybe in a million ways we don't know, keep us from danger and from error and schism and failure.

[27 : 25] And yet we give thanks and rejoice that You continue with us and are committed to us in Your role as the teacher and as the comforter, as the one who comes alongside.

And we pray that You would continue to help us understand the living God more and more in our lives. Bless us, we pray, in Jesus' name.

Amen.