Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

Reclaiming the Worship of the Holy Spirit
Scripture: Romans 8
Code: SC12-2

2012 Shepherds' Conference (Session 03)

As you are, in the routine of preaching all the time, and when I come to this conference, this is when I just kind of pour out my heart to you and that's what I've been encouraged to do. And notwithstanding, everything I said this morning about focusing on the person of the Lord Jesus Christ and the glory and majesty of Christ which we have done here at Grace Church and we will do as we look together to the Word of God in the future in the Old Testament, there's another Movement that I would like to start and I would like to start a Holy Spirit Movement.

I feel very deeply about this. In fact, I have postponed the series on the Old Testament for three months because I have been so burdened to speak to this congregation at Grace Church about the Holy Spirit to restore the true honor and worship of the Holy Spirit to the church. I am convinced that the Holy Spirit is the most ignored, the most misrepresented, the most insulted, the most dishonored person in the Godhead. And I know that you know that from the first command to worship God in Exodus 34, to the final command to worship God in Revelation 22, when we are told to worship God, we are told to worship the Triune God. When the angel says at the end of Revelation 22, or near the end, to the Apostle John, "Worship God," I can assume that the angel was including the Holy Spirit, worshiping the one true God who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This is the most fundamental of all duties and is the essential foundation of salvation and I want to talk to you about the urgency and the importance of recovering the worship of the Holy Spirit in the church in our time.

Listen to the words of God Himself in Exodus 20. "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 loving kindness to thousands to those who love Me and keep My commandments." And 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 commandment is well known to us, but I don't know that we always think about the full range of the intent of that commandment. It means a lot more than using one of the names of the Trinity as a curse word. It means a lot more than using the name of God in a frivolous or a trivial way, it means a lot more than that. It means to refer to God in any way that is inconsistent with who He is. To speak of God, of course, in an

irreverent way or in a way that misrepresents Him in His nature, in His attributes, in His words, or in His works. Yes, to think of God irreverently is a violation of that command, but so is to assign to God, any member of the Trinity when I say God, things that are not true of Him, or on the other hand, ignore those things for which He is to be worshiped and honored and glorified. It isn't just swearing as we think of it, it is misrepresenting the person of God the Father, the person of God the Son, or the person of God the Holy Spirit, or the works of each member of the Trinity. And it is a clear warning that anyone who commits this sin comes under judgment. He will not be held guiltless who violates this command.

Why would anyone misrepresent the Holy Spirit? Why would anyone misrepresent the Son? Why would anyone misrepresent the Father? Why would people ignore what is true about the Trinity and espouse what is not true about the Trinity and think they would be guiltless in so doing that? But it goes on, as we all know, all the time.

Warnings to people who misrepresent God are familiar to us, probably the most familiar set of such warnings come in the twenty-eighth chapter of Deuteronomy. Let me read you what it says in verse 58. "If you're not careful to observe all the words of this Law which are written in this book, to fear this honored and awesome name, the Lord your God, then the Lord will bring extraordinary plagues on you and your descendants, even severe and lasting plagues and miserable and chronic sicknesses. He will bring back on you all the diseases of Egypt of which you were afraid, they will cling to you. For what sin…what sin? Failing to fear this honored and awesome name, the Lord your God." This is fundamental to us…fundamental. People who do that will not go unpunished.

You heard Tony make reference to the disastrous misrepresentations of the Holy Spirit that are now abounding in the Middle East Misrepresentations of the Holy Spirit destroyed the church in Latin America. Misrepresentations of the ministry of the Holy Spirit, I was told today by an Indian pastor in my office, have destroyed the church in India. And we all know the misrepresentations of the work of the Holy Spirit have destroyed and are destroying churches all across Africa.

My attitude toward this is an attitude of grief. I have to borrow the words of Psalm 69:9, words that came out of the lips of our Lord when He first assaulted the temple, "The reproaches that fall on you are fallen on Me, zeal for your house has eaten Me up." One of the marks of loving God is that you feel the pain when He's dishonored. And I feel the pain in the dishonoring of the Holy Spirit. I have to tell you that. And it is not a light burden for me to bear, it is a deep pain and I know what this misrepresentation of the Holy Spirit has done to damage the church, to completely confuse people about what Christianity is, as well as to ignore the realities of the person and work in particular of the Holy Spirit.

There is very little interest in the Holy Spirit in our time, even in evangelicalism. There seems to be very little recognition of His majesty. The majestic deity of the Father we understand. Even the

majestic deity of the Son we understand. But the Holy Spirit's majesty seems to be lost on us. Have we forgotten that He is called in Scripture the breath of the Almighty? That He is called the eternal Spirit, the generous Spirit, the Good Spirit, the Holy Spirit, 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, the Spirit of Grace, the Spirit of wisdom, counsel, might, understanding, knowledge, the Spirit of the Lord, the Spirit of truth, the Spirit of holiness, the Spirit of glory, the seven-fold Spirit, the Comforter? And in Luke 1:35 He is called the Power of the Most High, a panoply of identifications that help us to see the glory of His nature. The New Testament word for…for the Spirit is *pneuma…pneuma,* an onomatopoetic word which means it means like it sounds, or it sounds like its meaning. It means air in motion. The Old Testament word is *ruach*, air in motion. The fundamental meaning of the Spirit when we identify God the Spirit, the fundamental meaning of the Spirit is not immateriality, it is energy, it is power, it is motion. He is the power of the Most High. When you think of the Holy Spirit, it's not enough to think of Him as immaterial, He must be understood as the very breath of the Almighty. As Sinclair Ferguson calls Him, "The Blast of God." That's the Holy Spirit.

In Micah 3:8 we read, "I am filled with power with the *ruach* of God." One third of the uses of *ruach* in the Old Testament refer to God. And in the Hebrew language, this *ruach* is a violent force. *Yahweh's ruach* is the irresistible power by which He accomplishes His purpose, whether for creation or destruction. Psalm 33:6 says, "By *ruach*, God created everything. Judges 3 says, "By *ruach* He dispenses His power to men."

The Holy Spirit is the power of God acting from creation to consummation and everything in between. He is fully God, He has all the attributes of God in the fullness that belongs to God. There is no sense in which He is God diminished. He is fully God. He possesses all of God's attributes, and listen, He participates fully in all God's works. He is as holy as the Father and as gracious as the Son. He is as powerful as the Father, and merciful as the Son. He is as sovereign as the Father, and loving as the Son. He is divine perfection in its fullness. He is to be worshiped as fully as the Father and as fully as the Son.

I love what Thomas Goodwin said, and I'm going to quote it because it's so rich. "Our worship is sometimes with the Father and then with the Son, and then with the 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 His heart is drawn to the love of the Holy Spirit that searches the deep things of God and reveals them to us." And then I love this, Goodwin says, "We should never be satisfied with our worship until all three persons lie level in us and we sit in the middle of them while they all manifest their love to us."

Do you do that? Do you worship the Holy Spirit? Do you sit in the middle of the Trinity where they all lie equal to you? John Owen in 1657 and it had been mentioned earlier, wrote on 2 Corinthians 13:14 which talks about the love of the Father, the grace of the Son, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit in

that benediction and he wrote something titled, “The Saints Fellowship With the Father, Son and Holy Spirit Unfolded.”

Well I would like to suggest it’s time to give the Holy Spirit His rightful place. It’s time to restore Him to a rightful place of full and complete and total worship. Where are the sermons on the Holy Spirit? Where are the books on the Holy Spirit? Where are the songs to the Holy Spirit?

“Oh,” someone says, “no, no, no, no, you’re not supposed to do that.” In fact, after a message on this subject three months ago, I was virtually assaulted by a woman outside who started waving her finger in my face and excoriating me for suggesting that we could ever pray directly to the Holy Spirit and offer Him praise because—she said—He points us to Christ, He points us to Christ, He points us to Christ.” Yes, as a ministry, as a ministry. But that does in no way diminish His deity. We should worship Him all the more for pointing us to Christ.

You know, over the last hundred years, the evangelical church has faced strong attacks on God the Father through, you know, the effects of higher criticism, and all of those things, and we’ve risen to fight all of that and to battle against that for the dignity of God and the honor of God, and the glory of God, and even in more recent years when God was assaulted in the openness theology and His omniscience was called into question, His sovereign control of the future, His ability to even know the future let alone predict the future and God was being assaulted. There was a mass of literature that came back to answer the horrors of the heresy of Openness. We amassed some of our finest guns and we laid the enemy to rest.

At the same time, over the last hundred years we have faced attacks on God the Son, massive attacks against His deity and we have fought that battle for the deity of Jesus Christ. And in more recent years, we have really amassed a formidable force to counter the attacks not so much on His deity but on His atonement, right? The new perspective on Paul, whatever it is that somehow undermines the nature of the atoning work of Jesus Christ has called forth the army and we’ve seen the books come flying at that, to lay that enemy level.

And we should have done that. And we’ve gotten together, the Gospel Coalition, together for the gospel. And the Reform Movement is booming and Reform Movement literature focuses on the work of Christ on the cross. And we sing about God the Father and we sing about God the Son, and we sing about the Gospel. We draw worship from the Old Testament that exalts the Father. We draw worship from the New Testament that exalts the Son. We have conferences on the gospel, conferences on Reformed Theology, endless array of books, good and helpful books. And the whole evangelical church seems martial to proffer a true understanding of God and Christ. Where’s the equal emphasis on the Holy Spirit?

You know we've really tooled up our forces. I mean, we are armed to the teeth against those few obscure little theologians in their ivory towers who attack our God and attack our Christ. And in reality, those are puny assaults compared to the massive nature of the assault on the Holy Spirit. It is massive, it is global. And a little bit of research, I could only find one significant book in defense of the true ministry of the Holy Spirit in the last eight years…no, take it back, the last…well it was in the mid-1990's so the last seventeen years…one. Why? What is going on? Why don't we care?

Well there might be some answers. The Seeker Movement which has dominated the church have a general indifference to the Holy Spirit because they can do the work of the ministry by their own technique. They're clever enough to get people converted without the Holy Spirit. Innovation will do it.

And then there are the Rock Star churches, designed to appeal to worldly tastes. You don't want to talk a whole lot about the Holy Spirit in that kind of environment because they're trying to get the people in the church to live as close to the world as they possibly can and that's really not consistent with what the Holy Spirit wants to do. And then you have a whole bevy of non-cessationists who for reasons that I don't know and defenses that I haven't seen adequate, work against the Holy Spirit by their scholastic position and saying, "Well, we don't want to say that miracles can't happen, and we don't want to say that tongues isn't legitimate and we don't want to say that this is phenomena, this happens totally phenomena, has ceased. And so they leave people susceptible even in Reformed circles to supposed visions. Some of them, strangely enough even pornographic, to listening to the voice of God. Open the door for subjective feeling, impressions, misconstrued as revelation. They weaken objective standards for authority in discerning the truth. You know the whole drill.

And from that position, they say very little that's helpful about the abuses of the Holy Spirit. And I always want to ask the question, "Doesn't it seem strange that anyone could embrace Reformed Theology that comes from such a pure stream and be open to Charismatic Theology which comes from such an impure stream?" I don't know how they bring them together.

So let's get to the real issue here. We have in the Christian world a sort of a three-column reality. There's the Roman Catholic Church, there's the Protestant Church, and then there's the Pentecostal Charismatic Third Column, third force. This Movement purports to be the Movement of the Holy Spirit and is, in fact, for the most part a Movement against the Holy Spirit. And this Movement is the reason why the Holy Spirit is so dishonored, misrepresented today. The attack on the Holy Spirit from the Pentecostal Charismatic Movement is pervasive and it is highly successful. As I said, it's gone on for a long time without really being confronted.

Now let me just give you a perspective. It's the fasting growing form of religion in the last hundred years anywhere in the west. There were no Pentecostals and Charismatics in the year 1900. There are now currently, latest statistic a couple of weeks ago, half a billion and that's a low estimate in a hundred years. And in particular since 1960 where it launched itself in a new way in mainline

denominations in an Episcopalian church just down the road here, Van Nuys, California, it has exploded in the last 25 years. No Movement in the last hundred years has grown faster or done more damage to the church of Jesus Christ, the Gospel, the Cause of Christ, the true interpretation of Scripture than this Movement. The Pentecostal Charismatic Movement ignores the truth with reckless license and no restraint and is guilty of doing something that I think you need to think of in these terms. Jesus in Matthew chapter 12 condemned the Pharisees because they attributed the works of the Holy Spirit to Satan. Remember? They attributed the works of the Holy Spirit to Satan. And I think the Modern Movement is attributing the works of Satan to the Holy Spirit. They flipped that.

We are warned in the Scripture not to quench the Spirit, not to grieve the Spirit. In the book of Hebrews, we are warned of the seriousness of insulting the Holy Spirit, *enubrizo* from which we get the word hubris, an insult and we are certainly warned not to blaspheme the Holy Spirit.

A silly book full of untruths called Heaven Is For Real says the Holy Spirit is a blue transparent fog you can see through, who shoots down power bolts from heaven. And this is the report of a four-year-old who went to heaven and also said, “Jesus is a very short person, He’s a lot shorter than Michael but He makes up for it in having more power.” And that book sold five million copies in ninth months. This Movement constantly attributes to the Holy Spirit words and experiences that He has nothing to do with and would have nothing to do with. Visions, revelations, gibberish, false prophecies, false miracles, all kinds of crazy physical behaviors that have nothing to do with the Holy Spirit and may have a lot to do with Satan. This Movement has demanded acceptance for its myriad of unbiblical ideas, deceptions, confusions and lies. It has corrupted the church in a thousand ways by blunting its will to discern and expose error. It is a haven for self-promoters whose brash egotism has frankly spilled over into the mainline evangelical world and we have some of that same brash egotism in even evangelical pastors. It has cultivated a desire for a motion-driven, superficial, carnal stimulation falsely called worship. It has polluted the biblical doctrines of prayer, faith, contentment, humility and attacked the sovereignty of God and made man sovereign and God His slave. It has spawned all kinds of unrighteous forms of religion while condemning as loveless those who question its validity and fight for the biblical way.

In earlier times, its proponents would have been labeled as heretics. Instead, they set the rules for what has to be tolerated and they then dominate the media with their deviant ideas. And they market themselves very effectively as you heard tonight. Everywhere I’ve ever been on the planet…everywhere I’ve ever been, they are there with their terrible misrepresentations of the sovereign, all-glorious, majestic Holy Spirit. And they attribute all of this kind of phenomena nonsense to the Holy Spirit.

I feel the pain. I feel the pain very deeply. No group has done more to dishonor the Holy Spirit, and not everybody in the Movement is equally dishonoring of the Holy Spirit, but it seems to me that everyone in the Movement is unwilling to step up and call out those who do because there are no

objective criteria. They claim the Holy Spirit is the power in their Movement. Their counterfeit experiences dribble over the edges into evangelical churches. I think they've kidnapped the Holy Spirit and demanded immunity for the crime. And they've gotten it, they've gotten that immunity. Nobody says anything…nobody says anything.

This is that, I think that Hebrews 10:29 *enubrizo*, a compound word. This is that violent insult against the Holy Spirit. When you go against who the Holy Spirit is and what the Holy Spirit affirms, that is a violent insult to the Holy Spirit.

There is a new Movement, just to give you an up-to-date illustration, called The NAR, The New Apostolic Reformation, I don't know if you've read anything about the New Apostolic Reformation. A rapidly expanding new emphasis by some of the same ole troubling charismatic leaders who have been wrong on everything all through their whole careers. They're back and they're going global, people like the Kansas City Prophets, Peter Wagner, Mike Vickel, Lou Engels, Cindy Jacobs and a lot of lesser lights. They claim that we are now in the second apostolic age and it began with them in 2001 when the long-lost office of Prophet and especially Apostle was restored and that they now have equal authority, a power and ability to do miracles with the Apostles.

One of them recently claimed that He stopped Mad Cow disease in Germany by Holy Spirit power. The Movement is marked by ecstatic emotion and bizarre behavior, really bizarre. And where this becomes kind of a big issue is not too many months ago, Governor Rick Perry from Texas was in the running for the Republican nomination for the Presidency and he held a Houston Prayer Breakfast that was sponsored by the NAR. That's right, it was sponsored by the New Apostolic Reformation, two pastors who are Apostles called Rick Parry's office to tell him that God had told them that Texas was going to be the state God had chosen to lead the United States into revival and Godly government, and Rick Parry was the key guy.

At the prayer breakfast, Rick Parry had the two Apostles lay hands on him. They claim that God speaks directly to them in visions and specific revelations and they all come by the Holy Spirit. And, they claim, that if you fail to listen and obey, catastrophe will come like earthquakes, terrorist assaults and economic collapse. One of them says the Democratic Party is controlled by Jezebel and three lessor demons and they see these demons in public places so they engage in elaborate rituals with branding irons, stakes and plumb lines and they've done that in every county in Texas. God told them to take over the government, they say. Another quote, "We're called to World Dominion, they have a 50-state network of apostles and prophets. Their representatives visited every Masonic Lodge in Texas to cast out the demon Baal who controls, they say, Free Masonry.

A book came out which sounded like a kind of a reasonable book. I looked at it, called Bridging the Racial and Political Divide. It sounds pretty sensible, published in 2010. In that book it says they were at a convention and they saw Jezebel, the demon Jezebel with her skirt lifted up to expose little Baal,

Ashtoreth and a whole bunch of other demons hovering around Jezebel's skinny legs.

You know, these people are on the level of someone who thinks he's a poached egg. You know, it's one thing to laugh about this and you would say this is the kind of insanity that you put away. But this is all supposedly the work of the Holy Spirit. So what do you think the average guy who just watches all of this and sees all this thinks about Christianity?

I was watching a baseball game one time and a guy walked up to me and said, "You're a preacher, aren't you?" And I said, "Yeah, I am."

He said, "Well what kind of preacher are you?" I said, "Well I don't know what you mean."

He said, "Well I know there are two kinds. So which kind are you?"

I said, "Well what are the two kinds?"

He said, "Well, there's the Jimmy Swaggart kind and the Robert Schuler kind, so which one are you?"

Okay, there's three kinds. Wow. So if you were to do a man-on-the-street interview and say, "What in your view does the Holy Spirit do?"

Well, He knocks people down; He produces silly giggling and uncontrollable laughter. Sometimes He looks like He hypnotizes people or knocks them into a trance. You might even conclude if you listen to the testimonies of people who come under His power, that He produces convulsions, hiccups, stupor, quivering, temporary paralyses, gibberish, animal sounds, thrashing, levitation or Holy Ghost punching, slapping and jumping.

Really! And Benny Hinn says, this is somewhat of a quote, "That when I need power I go to the graves of Kathryn Kuhlman and Aimee Semple McPherson and the power comes on me so strongly and sometimes it's so strong on me that I rub my coat on myself and then wave my coat in the air and the power knocks the whole audience down. This is the Holy Spirit.

If that doesn't pain you, then you're insensitive to the one that you need to be very sensitive to. Why the silence on the part of evangelical leaders? Why the silence? In the honor and worship of God, the eternal Spirit is our highest priority. Why do we stand for this? You wouldn't sit by if they turned the Father into some kind of clown, or the Son into some kind of clown. Why don't we respond to this stuff?

If you just go back to the origins, I just read the biography of Charles Fox Parham, boy was that a painful experience. Phil Johnson gave it to me and said, "Read this." I mean, that was agonizing. He's the one that sort of launched the beginning of the whole thing in Topeka and then it moved to

California, William Seymour, Azusa Street, A.A. Allen, Oral Roberts, Kenneth Hagen who drew his stuff from E.W. Kenyon who got it out of Christian Science. So why do we accept any of this? Its origins are so corrupt.

So what I'm just doing is taking advantage of my opportunity tonight to encourage you. Men, be a part of a force to restore the honor and true worship of the Holy Spirit to the church. And let's…let's be bold in this. We have been intimidated into silence by these people who want to be accepted. And the only way they can be accepted in mainstream evangelicalism is if they can get us silent on the true ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Look, the Father initiated salvation. The Son validated salvation and then demonstrated it. But the Spirit activates you. You are what you are now in the Kingdom of God because of the direct work of the Holy Spirit. Have you ever thanked Him, ever? Do you praise Him? Do you honor Him? Do you glorify Him? Just think about the work of sanctification. I want to talk about that a little bit. Talk about two things, sanctification tonight, and maybe security on Friday. The two great works of the Holy Spirit for believers, sanctification and security to glorification. These are two, the two greatest works; the two most precious things going on in your life now are the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit and the securing work of the Holy Spirit. Those are the two greatest things happening in your life now. The fact that the Spirit of God is conforming you to the image of Christ and is holding you till your final glory. Those are the two greatest works and those are two works that the people in the Charismatic Movement either do not comprehend at all, or reject. They're consistent in their misrepresentation of the Holy Spirit. They're paradigm for sanctification is completely external and phenomenal. It is not spiritual and internal. And they deny the doctrine of security.

So we would expect if they're wrong on the Holy Spirit, everywhere else they would be wrong at the two most important points. And you can even add to that. They're wrong about the doctrine of generation which is the very initial work that the Spirit of God does in the life of the believer when He gives life to one who's dead.

The Father planned your salvation. The Son provided for your salvation. But the Holy Spirit produces your salvation. Think about it. One day you and I came to the conviction of sin, why? Jesus said, "When the Spirit comes, He'll do—what?—John 16, He'll convict the world of sin and righteousness and judgment. The reason that one day you saw your sin so differently, the one day that you began to see a dramatic difference in how you viewed the wretchedness of your own heart was the work of the Holy Spirit. Light in your darkness, life in your deadness. And then He gave you life. You must be born of the Spirit; you must be born from above, John 3.

Do you know that the Spirit of God is even involved in your justification? You say, "Well wait a minute. Justification is a forensic thing; it's a declaration by God." Listen to these words, 1 Corinthians 6:11, "You were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God." You were

justified by the Spirit of our God. As I said before, the Holy Spirit is fully involved in every work of God, including your justification. But uniquely, and I don't know how this all sorts out in the Trinity, so don't ask me, but uniquely it is the Spirit who convicts, it is the Spirit who gives life, it is the Spirit somehow who effects the justification that the Father wills and the Son provides for. And that's just getting started.

And then John Calvin said, "The greatest privilege of salvation is adoption." And we have been adopted, Romans 8:14-16, right? We have been adopted and we say, "Abba, Father," the Spirit of adoption has placed us into the family of God. In Romans 8:9, the Spirit takes up residence. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he's none of His." He lives within us. We have been baptized into the body of Christ, 1 Corinthians 12, by Christ through the means of the Holy Spirit. I don't know how all that works, I just know that that's the Spirit's ministry.

Ezekiel 36:27 says that when we're saved, God puts His Spirit within us. He enables us to do things that we would never be able to do otherwise. First Corinthians 12 says, "He dispenses gifts to us." We heard Tom talk about that. Galatians 5 says, "He gives us the fruit of His presence; love, joy, peace, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control." First Corinthians 2 says, "He illuminates the Word to us." He is the anointing, in 1 John 2:27, so that we don't need a man to teach us because we have an anointing from God who teaches us all things.

You don't give any honor to the Holy Spirit when you attribute to Him falling over, slapping, jumping, barking. This is a bizarre dishonor of the Holy Spirit.

You want to know how much honor the Son gave the Spirit? I know we all say He points to the Son, He points to the Son. But listen to the time when the Son pointed to Him, John 16:7, He said this, "It is better for you if I go away."

What? "Because if I go away, the Holy Spirit will come." Better than the Son? Better to have the Spirit than the Son? Do you ever thank Him for that? Do you ever thank the Son…the Spirit for all the ministries that He carries on endlessly in your life? He said, "Better for you, He'll lead you into all truth, He'll show you all the things concerning Me. He'll do His work.

Well maybe a glimpse of sanctification in Romans 8. Turn to Romans 8. While you're turning, some of you that can write music, write some hymns and songs to the Holy Spirit and send them to me. Make sure they rhyme. I don't really do well with free verse. Romans 8 is the Holy Spirit's chapter. Romans 8 is the Holy Spirit's chapter. It's just such a powerful testimony. "There is no condemnation now for those who are in Christ Jesus because for the Law of the Spirit of Life," stop there. Do you know why there's no condemnation for you? Because the Spirit has gone into action on your behalf. He set you free from the law of sin and death. He set you free from the Law of sin and death. He is even called the Spirit of Life. That's that *ruach*, that blast of God, that energy, that power, freed you from the

dominating principle of sin and death. Paul talked about that in Romans 6, you were slaves of sin, you're not servants or slaves of righteousness.

Verse 3, "He enables you to do what you couldn't do and that is obey the Law of God. You were weak in the flesh, you couldn't do it. But because of the wonderful salvation provided in Christ, you now have a new ability, verse 4 says, to fulfill the requirement of the Law because you no longer walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. So what does the Spirit do? He gives you life, He frees you from the principle, the dominating principle of sin and death. He enables you to keep the Law of God.

Not only that, in verses 5 through 11 He changes your nature. Yeah, you're a new person. You no longer are according to the flesh, but you are according to the Spirit. So you set your mind on the things of the Spirit and your mind is now on the Spirit, verse 6, and it produces life and peace whereas the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God and not subject to the Law of God, not even able to be subject, can't please God. However, you're not in the flesh, you're in the Spirit. The Spirit of God dwells in you.

Oh, this is a dramatic change in nature. You were dead, verse 10, now you're alive and the Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you. And the one who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give power to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you. You are made alive spiritually in the Spirit and one day He'll give life to your mortal body and you'll be a glorified body in the presence of the Lord.

In other words, the Spirit of life has come upon you and totally changed your nature. That's regeneration. Verses 12 and 13, He empowers us over temptation. We're not obligated anymore to live according to the flesh. We can live now by the Spirit and kill the deeds of the body and live. And then verses 14 to 16, He is the Spirit who causes us to cry, "Abba Father," who witnesses, or testifies with our spirit that we are the children of God. And if children, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ who will one day be glorified with Him.

This is the ministry of the Holy Spirit, not the utter nonsense that is attributed to Him. Then starting in verse 17, the Apostle Paul launches into the ministry of the Holy Spirit with regard to our future glory. You see, being glorified with Him, a statement at the end of verse 17, that remains the theme all the way to the end of the chapter in verse 39, it's all about being headed in the direction of future glory. I wish we had time to explore all of it. But I want you to focus on one thing, and I don't know how much time I'll have, maybe we'll pick it up a little bit on Friday night. What is the objective of our glory? And Tom talked about it, and I don't want to add much to that, but just a few thoughts. Go down to verses 29 and 30…verses 29 and 30. "For those whom He foreknew He predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son so that He would be the *prototokos*, the premiere one among many brother." Now this is the goal of our salvation. This is the final objective. This is that we would be…here's the

secondary purpose of salvation, secondary purpose. “To become conformed to the image of His Son,” that’s the secondary purpose. The primary purpose is so that once we are conformed to the image of His Son, He would be the premiere one among many who had been made like Him. so the primary objective of our salvation is the glory of Christ. The secondary is our glorification for the primary purpose of glorifying Him.

Now we could develop that. That is just a sweeping reality. I don’t want to take the time to do that, but I want you to understand it from the perspective of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit desires to fulfill the divine objective of conforming us to the image of Christ so that we then can exalt Him as the preeminent one. The Holy Spirit’s work is conforming us to the image of Christ, the e*ikon* of Christ, the exact representation, not accidental but intentional. That’s the Holy Spirit’s work and that’s what sanctification is. So you can look at your life and ask the question, “Am I being sanctified?” and you can answer it by saying, “Am I more like Jesus? Am I more like Jesus? Am I more like Jesus?” That’s what the Holy Spirit does.

So let’s talk about that from the ministry of the Holy Spirit perspective. The Holy Spirit was the inseparable companion of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit was the inseparable companion of Jesus from the womb to the tomb. The Lord emptied Himself, didn’t He? The Lord emptied Himself of His divine prerogatives and the personal use of His power. And He voluntarily turned Himself over to the will of the Father and the power of the Spirit, okay? He voluntarily turned Himself over to the will of the Father, “I only do what the Father shows Me to do, tells Me to do, wills Me to do, and He did it all in the power of the Spirit.” That’s why He said to those leaders in the twelfth chapter of Matthew, when you say I do what I do by the power of Satan, you have blasphemed the Holy Spirit…cause it was the Holy Spirit working through Him. He functioned, in that sense, as a man. While He had full access to all of His deity and all the powers of deity, He chose not to use that, but to submit Himself to the Holy Spirit.

Let me break it out for you. Luke 1:31 is where it all got started and you remember this wonderful statement where the angel says to Mary, “You will conceive in your womb and bear a Son and you will name Him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father, David.”

How in the world is that going to happen? Verse 35, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High, which is the same thing, will overshadow you in the same way that He hovered over the creation to turn its formlessness into form, He hovered over Mary to create the Son of God in human form. And for that reason, the reason of the power of the Most High, hovering over you, the Holy Child will be called the Son of God.” It was the Holy Spirit who created in the womb of Mary the very body, the very embryo of the Son of God. As a child, the grace of God was upon Him, Luke 2. The grace of God was upon Him surely in the power of the Holy Spirit as He grew in wisdom and stature and favor with God and man. And when He came to His public ministry and to His

baptism, we learned that the Spirit of God descended on Him at His baptism. The Spirit of God was His constant companion, but there in a kind of an authentic way, the Holy Spirit established His mark on Him for ministry.

And then in Mark 1:12 it was the Holy Spirit who impelled Him to go out into the wilderness for His temptation. And then when the temptation was over, the baptism was over and it was time to launch His public ministry, and begin to do what He had come to do after all the years of waiting, it says in Luke 4:14, He returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit. He returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, His ministry was Spirit empowered, read Acts 10:38. Everything He did He did by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Then He came to the time of the cross and time to die. And it says this in Hebrews 9:14, “How much more will the blood of Christ who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God.” The Holy Spirit empowered Him on the cross. Romans 1:4 says, “The Spirit raised Him from the dead.” Everything in His life was Spirit empowered. Everything in His life was Spirit empowered.

Why? Why? Because the Holy Spirit was going to give us the prototype of what a Spirit-powered human being looks like. He couldn’t come on a Friday, died and risen on Sunday and gone back to heaven and just done the atonement in three days, or we would be like Old Testament saints, trying to figure out what God was like but not having an image we could process. I get it in the Old Testament. “Be ye holy for I am holy.” But trying to live in the book of Leviticus is tough because your only images of God are scary things. What do you mean be like God? That does not compute.

The life of our Lord is under the power of the Holy Spirit. Jesus is the perfect man, He’s a perfect man. Why is He a perfect man? He’s a perfect man because He is fully controlled by the Holy Spirit. And that is why the Holy Spirit points us to Christ so we can see a perfect man. Yes, in His death He validated our salvation. But in His life He demonstrated it. So that’s what I’ll be like when I get to heaven. Yes! Yes! And the meantime, that’s what I long to be like. That’s the mark I press for.

This is what interests the Holy Spirit, conforming us to the image of Christ. Not knocking people over, flopping them on the floor, making them rattle off nonsense, giving them a sort of buzz in their emotions. His work is spiritual and insults Him to attribute these things, carnal things to Him. The Charismatic circus of confusion does not conform anyone to the image of Christ. It is a totally false paradigm for sanctification.

Second Corinthians 3:18, Tom read it this morning, it could never be read enough. “We all with unveiled face,” the veil is now gone, right? We’re not under the Law. In Christ the veil is removed. We now look in a glass and what do we see? The glory of the Lord. We see our Lord and we look at Him. And that’s why the Holy Spirit points us to Him because as we see what the perfect man under the perfect control of the Holy Spirit looks like, we now know what it is that we are to be. And we are

being transformed into the same image from glory…level to the next, to the next, and one day to final glory. And that's the work, I love this, of the Lord, the Spirit.

Sanctification then is the work of the Spirit by which He shows us Christ in His revelation and as the vision becomes clear and compelling, He changes us into that same image. God the Father has decided in this whole plan of salvation to restore the terribly distorted image of God in humanity by transforming us into the very image of the Son of God. Peter says, "We become partakers of the divine nature, escaping the corruption."

This is going on right now in your life. Why do we preach Christ? Why do we preach Christ? Because He's the perfect man. He's the one you want to see all the time constantly, incessantly, till He captivates your heart. And it is that vision the Spirit uses to conform you to His image.

Over and over in Leviticus, Scripture says you are to be holy for I am holy. You're to be holy for I am holy. And they must have wondered, "Well how can we even begin to be like You?" And the answer comes in some measure in the twentieth chapter of Leviticus, "I am the Lord who sanctifies you. I'm doing it. I'm doing it."

He was doing it even then. But how much more wonderful that we have the model to look at? The Holy Spirit is the efficient cause, the theologians say, of sanctification. The Scripture which presents Christ is the instrumental means. That's the work of the Holy Spirit.

It's so sad that the Pentecostal Charismatic approach to the Holy Spirit has become the default position, disastrous position in which the Holy Spirit is so consistently dishonored. Can't we change that for His glory and the good of His church? Let's pray.

Sometimes, Lord, we feel like we are such a small voice, even in the so-called church, professing church, crying out for the truth and, Lord, it's all for Your glory and Your honor that we are burdened by these things. O blessed Holy Spirit, thank You for the mighty work You have done in us, planned by the Father, provided by the Son, but produced by You. Thank You, blessed Holy Spirit, thank You for freeing us from the Law of sin and death and giving us life. Thank You for enabling us to obey the Law of God and do it with joy. Thank You for changing our nature. Thank You for adopting us into the family. Thank You for giving us triumph over temptation. Thank You for the promise of eternal glory and thank You for the sanctifying work that conforms us to Christ. Help Your church to see Christ. Help preachers everywhere to preach Christ who demonstrates what perfect humanity looks like, what totally Spirit-controlled humanity looks like. Give us Christ in all His glory. And may we honor You, blessed Holy Spirit, and may we worship You and adore You and thank You for this most magnanimous and gracious and sovereign and powerful work in our fallen souls. Be honored, be glorified, our Triune God. We ask these things for no purpose other than You are worthy…You are

worthy. And everyone said—Amen Amen.

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