

## PNEUMATOLOGY (33)

Floyd Barackman writes: “The conception of Jesus’ human nature came about by the creative act of the Holy Spirit rather than by the agency of a man. He created of Mary’s substance a complete, sinless, human nature, which was assumed by God the Son at the time of this unique conception” (Floyd H. Barackman, *Practical Christian Theology*, p. 149).

**Way #2** - The Spirit was involved in Christ’s development .

Although this specific point is nowhere stated, it is very safe and accurate to assume that the Holy Spirit was intimately involved in the development of the life of Jesus Christ. This may be assumed from the following observations: 1) The Spirit’s involvement was clearly from pregnancy to birth (Luke 1:35), therefore the Spirit’s work continued in the time development; 2) Christ’s knowledge and understanding level at age twelve indicates a unique work of the Spirit, for the Spirit is involved in giving knowledge and understanding (Lk. 2:41-42, 46-47; Eph. 1:17); 3) His continual ability to grow in favor with God, lends itself to the Spirit’s presence and work.

Again we cite Mr. Barackman, who states: “Although it is nowhere stated what Jesus’ relationship to the Holy Spirit was throughout His private life in Nazareth, we suppose that He lived by the same means as He did during His public ministry” (*Ibid.*, p. 149). As we shall demonstrate, Christ’s public ministry was definitely associated with the Holy Spirit.

Our assumption is this—We can biblically establish that the Holy Spirit was intimately connected to Jesus Christ from conception to birth. We can also biblically establish that the Holy Spirit was intimately connected to Jesus Christ during His public ministry. We can also biblically establish that Jesus Christ was very unique in His knowledge, purity and development by age twelve. We may safely assume that this development was definitely connected to the Holy Spirit.

**Way #3** - The Spirit was involved in Christ’s messianic ministry .

It was the Spirit who identified and anointed Jesus Christ for this ministry (Luke 3:21-22; John 1:32). It was the Spirit, in all fullness, who protected and directed Christ (Luke 4:1, 14; John 3:34).

It was the Spirit who anointed His preaching and healing ministry (Luke 4:18-19; Acts 10:38). It was the Spirit who sanctioned Christ’s ministry to the Gentiles (Matt. 12:18-21). It was the Spirit who demonstrated Christ’s power over demons (Matt. 12:28).

There is structure in the Godhead and there are various responsibilities for each member. When Jesus Christ, the Son of God and Messiah was here on earth, the Spirit of God was critically involved with every part of His life and ministry. The entire Godhead was focused on Him.

**Way #4** - The Spirit was involved in Christ’s death .

It was clearly predicted in the O.T. that the Spirit of God would be closely involved in the judicial death of the Messiah (Is. 42:1; 52:15 - 53:12). When we examine a passage like Heb. 9:14, we can certainly see that God’s Spirit was closely associated with Christ’s death.

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We must remember that Jesus Christ became a man; therefore, the terrible things that He suffered on our behalf were experienced and felt as a man. The sufferings inflicted upon Him were very real and very painful. In one of the more moving passages that pertain to this event, we learn that God the Father forsook God the Son (Matt. 27:46). In other passages we learn of Him being misused and mistreated by men (Matt. 26:67; 27:26-35). Still, in other passages we learn that He was laying down His life for our sins (Matt. 20:28; John 10:18). When we learn of these truths, we must realize that the willingness and the ability of the Son of God to experience all of this is far beyond the norm of what another individual would or could experience. What other person would be willing to be forsaken by God for someone else? There can be no question that part of His great power to accomplish all of this was being supplied by the Holy Spirit. As one theologian said, it is the Spirit “who leads the Servant to bear the sins of many...” (J. Dwight Pentecost, *Moody Handbook of Theology*, p. 264).

The Spirit was involved in the death of Christ and all things that pertain to it, including His suffering.

**Way #5** - The Spirit was involved in Christ’s resurrection .

All members of the Godhead were involved in the resurrection of Jesus Christ: God the Father (Gal. 1:1; Eph. 1:17-20); God the Son (John 10:18); and God the Spirit (Rom. 1:4; 8:11; I Pet. 3:18).

There is no question that the resurrection of Jesus Christ is a monumental event. The resurrection of Jesus Christ declares Christ as the Son of God (Rom. 1:4). It guarantees the believer a complete deliverance from sin (Rom. 6:4). It guarantees our own resurrection (I Cor. 15:20). Obviously Christ’s resurrection is a critical reality in the mind and program of God. It should come as no surprise to us, then, to find the entire Godhead involved in the resurrection. Again, as Pentecost said, “I would question whether there is any great work of God revealed in the Word of God in which all of the members of the Godhead do not work together to accomplish God’s purposes” (*Ibid.*, p. 264).

When Jesus Christ personally visited this earth in human form, all of the Godhead was focused on Him. As a result, the Spirit of God was involved in everything He did and said. He led Him, filled Him, anointed Him, comforted Him and empowered Him. God’s Spirit was definitely involved in everything pertaining to God’s Son.

**QUESTION #9** – Can we establish that this present Church Age is a very unique age which features the Holy Spirit in a very unique way?

As we shall clearly and biblically demonstrate, the answer to this question is an emphatic YES ! We most definitely can demonstrate that this present age is one marked by a very special work of the Holy Spirit .

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In order to understand how unique this age really is, it is necessary to see some peculiar features of this present age:

**Feature #1** - This present age is an intercalation.

What this means is that this present Church Age was inserted into the Old Testament prophetic program pertaining to Israel. This age was unforeseen and unaccounted for in all Old Testament predictions. The anticipation of the Old Testament was that the future would feature Israel immediately entering her kingdom. In fact, the Apostle Peter records that the O.T. prophets, even though at times were actually writing about the suffering of Jesus Christ, which would bring about salvation, had no understanding as to what they were writing (I Pet. 1:10-12). The prophets themselves anticipated a Messiah who would deliver the nation to the kingdom, not suffer and die for salvation. Even after Christ had suffered, died, arose and ascended, and even after the Spirit of God had come to indwell the believer, there was still uncertainty about this age (Acts 15:6-18).

When we read such things in Scripture, we cannot help but conclude that this present age took the entire theological world by surprise. As Dr. Chafer says of this age, “the present dispensation is not only unforeseen by prophets of old (cf. I Pet. 1:10-11), but is wholly unrelated to that which went before and as wholly unrelated to that which follows” (Vol. 6, p. 81).

**Feature #2** - This present age has a new purpose.

There is a very unique divine purpose for this age, which will not be found in any other—to call out people for God’s name, comprised of both Jews and Gentiles. This purpose is carefully discussed and developed in many N.T. passages: Acts 15:14; Rom. 3:9, 29-30; I Cor. 12:13; Eph. 2:11-18.

When this age ends, the focus once again will be upon Israel (Rev. 7:4-8). But this present age is one in which the Bride of Christ is being formed out of both Jews and Gentiles.

**Feature #3** - This present age has the peculiarity of witnessing.

When God was specifically working with Israel, there was no Gospel to proclaim and no great commission to be carried out. Israel was not involved in carrying out some “missionary enterprise,” although as a nation she certainly made a powerful statement for God.

Even when Jesus Christ was here, He limited His ministry to Israel and purposely did not reach out to Gentiles (Matt. 15:24). When He sent His disciples out to minister, He restricted their ministry to Israel (Matt. 10:1-6, 7-42).

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However, just before He left this earth, He commanded these same disciples to take the Gospel to the whole world (Mark 16:15). Later, the Apostle Paul realized that this responsibility of preaching to others in the world was something committed to him (II Cor. 5:18-19). Paul was so burdened with his calling to preach God's Gospel to the world that he said, "...for woe is me if I do not preach the gospel" (I Cor. 9:16).

All of this leads to the proper conclusion that this present age has a very distinctive mandate which is to proclaim the Word of God, especially in unlocking the message of the saving grace of God found in Jesus Christ. This message is to reach out beyond the boundaries of Israel to the whole world.

**Feature #4** - This present age is distinct in that there is a blindness in Israel .

During this present age, no Jewish covenants are being fulfilled and there is a temporary blindness upon Israel, so that, as a nation, it is not responding to God. This blindness has been ordained by God (Rom. 11:8), and during this time God is allowing His program to include Gentiles (Rom. 11:11). Israel has not been forsaken by God nor forgotten by God, and God makes it clear that He has preserved a remnant from Israel (Rom. 11:5).

This is the only age in which this blindness is given, and, as a result, this is the only age when God's program is not totally focused on Israel as a nation. Although Israel is and always will be the "apple of God's eye," and although God still blesses those who bless Israel and curses those who curse her, Dr. Chafer's evaluation of this age is accurate: "This is the one peculiar age in which there is 'no difference' between Jew and Gentile, though in former times God Himself had instituted the most drastic distinction between these two classes of people" (Vol. 6, p. 83).

**Feature #5** - This present age is distinct in that it has a special level of evil .

There is, in this present age, a unique level of evil which is clearly biblically sanctioned. It is, in part, this truth that establishes a unique work of the Holy Spirit .

- 1) Paul identified this present age as an evil age. Gal. 1:4
- 2) Christ, in His parables, illustrated that the age of "seed sowing" would be characterized by a unique growth of evil (Matthew 13).
- 3) Paul said that there is, in this age, a form of lawlessness which is similar to that which will exist worldwide during the Tribulation (II Thess. 2:7-9).
- 4) Both Paul and Peter teach that during this age, individual believers are at war with Satan and his demons (Eph. 6:10-11; I Pet. 5:8).
- 5) The Scriptures clearly identify Satan as the "god of this age" (II Cor. 4:3-4).
- 6) As we move toward the end of this age, evil intensifies (II Tim. 3:1-7).