



Good evening. Tonight, we continue our series on communication by looking to the indwelling communicator within us, who is the Spirit of God. We have seen God as the perfect communicator who declares His self-revelation through the Word. We have seen Christ our Redeemer whose life and death communicates the love of God to us and stands as the intermediary between man and God. Tonight, we will look at the communication of the Spirit who indwells all believers as a divine helper. The purpose of these first three messages is to provide a biblical foundation and models of communication which provide practical help to our own everyday conversations.

Introduction



- Throughout scripture God speaks in a single voice and with a singular redemptive purpose
- Because there is a mystery to the Trinity it can be easily misunderstood
- Scripture teaches us that the Spirit is sent to believers as a helper; one who stands alongside with strength

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We know that the Spirit is one part or one person of the Trinity. Scripture teaches us that there is a oneness within the Trinity in which each person is perfectly in harmony with the others. The unity we see is not modalism, which denies the distinctness of the three persons of the Trinity. Nor is it Unitarianism, which denies the deity of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. Rather it is a view of Godhead that is so essentially one, that though it is a community of three persons, they never act or communicate independently of the others.

Seeing the Trinity as a community brings with it then, the sense that there is communication both within the Trinity and out of it as it is expressed through each person. In fact, we can see this in the revelation of scripture which is essentially the story of God the Father sending His only Son to redeem His people within whom His Spirit dwells. Throughout scripture God speaks in a singular voice and with a singular redemptive purpose. Each person of the Trinity is fully divine, but each has different roles and expressions. As we shall see tonight, the Spirit uniquely expresses himself as the presence of God and new life within us.

Because there is a mystery to the Trinity it can be easily misunderstood. This is because as physical beings we want to understand the Trinity in a physical way. Many of you have heard of the trinity illustrated as an egg; having three parts the shell, white, and yolk. While this image is helpful, it oversimplifies the Trinity and it does not convey the sense of its indivisible oneness. Some see the Trinity as 1/3 Father, 1/3 Son, and 1/3 Spirit. But no such independent division is seen in scripture. This view obscures the unified nature of the Trinity and implies that all roles are expressed equally. We must accurately reflect the self-declaration of God's word in rightly understanding each role. A declaration that largely magnifies God's Son as the central figure and expression of God's work to redeem a people for Himself.

This evening we will be looking at several texts. Each text will show us a different role and communication that the Spirit enables through His indwelling presence within us. Scripture teaches us that the Spirit is sent to believers as a helper. The word that is used for the Spirit in the New Testament means one who stands alongside with strength. The idea here is one who is always available to help and speak for us in times of trouble. The Spirit stands with us and is ready to help and strengthen us at all times.

[opening prayer]



Scripture describes the person of the Holy Spirit in several ways. He is first and foremost divine and shares all of attributes of the Godhead. In a day and age when many are informed more by modern media than Scripture, we must be careful not to see the Spirit as just a vague spiritual force similar to the movie Star Wars. The Spirit is a real and eternal part of the Godhead. God the Father sent the Son into this world to save us and we are given the Spirit as an expression of His redeeming love to us. The Spirit gives or you could say, communicates life to us and then dwells in us to help us work out our salvation in the joys, trials, and everyday moments of life.

As God's indwelling presence within us, there are three principle ways in which the Spirit acts as a communicator. The first of these is to help us understand God's word. The Spirit help us to see and learn the truth of God's self-revelation communicated in His word. Second, the Spirit helps us to worship. The Spirit enables our praise and works in us that we may communicate praise and adoration to God. Third, the Spirit helps us to pray. The Spirit transforms our requests and conversations with God, interceding for us and aligning them with the will of God.

The Indwelling Communicator



- In Understanding
 - Our Advocate (John 14:15-17)
 - Our Instructor (John 14:25-26, John 15:26-27)
 - Our Guide (John 16:12-15)
 - Our Interpreter (1 Corinthians 2:9-16)

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We will start tonight looking at the Spirit's role in communicating and revealing to us the spiritual truths of God's word. Without the Spirit we are blind to spiritual truths. We are simply unable to understand the things of God. We are unable to fathom the depths of our sin. We are unable to know the depths of God's love in the death of his Son on a cross. And we are unable to know the riches of truth contained in God's word.

Please turn to the Gospel of John, Chapter 14. The first text we will look at starts in Chapter 14 and verse 15. Please follow along as I read God's word. *"If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you."*

As he prepares to go to the cross, Jesus tells His disciples two things about those who love Him and are true believers. First, they will obey His commands. And second, He will ask the Father to send an advocate to them. The word here has in mind a legal counselor or one who strongly communicates on our behalf. To the early Christians, this would have conveyed the idea of a family attorney who was available to help and speak for the family in times of trouble. In this way, the Spirit is our spiritual family attorney who stands with and for us as we go through life.

The Spirit is one who speaks out and communicates on our behalf. Note also that John refers to this Counselor as the Spirit of truth. The Spirit dwells within us, communicates truth, and bears witness to the truth of Father and Son to help us believe and obey. The Spirit is our personal helper whose abiding presence within us is necessary for us to communicate with and experience a relationship with our God.

Jesus again speaks to the disciples about the Holy Spirit in verses 25 and 26 of Chapter 14 and verses 26 and 27 of Chapter 15. Turn to Chapter 14 verse 25 and follow along again as I read. *“These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. 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 that I have said to you.”* Jumping to John, Chapter 15 and verse 26, we read this. *“But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me. And you also will bear witness, because you have been with me from the beginning.”*

Another role of the Spirit whom the Father sends at Jesus’ request is to help us understand and remember the truths that Jesus taught. The Spirit is our instructor who helps us to learn all that Jesus taught and brings those truths to mind. He reminds us of the right truths at just the right times. The Spirit helps us to have a complete and correct understanding of all that Jesus taught. Note the ministry of the Spirit here is to communicate to us the truth of all that was revealed in Christ. Note that he does speak to us with new revelations that are outside what God has given us in His word. The Spirit must always bear a faithful and accurate witness to Jesus, communicating the truth of Christ’s work to in us and through us.

John continues explaining the role of the Spirit to the disciples in Chapter 16, verse 12 through 15. Turn to John 16:12 and follow along again as I read. *“I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.”*

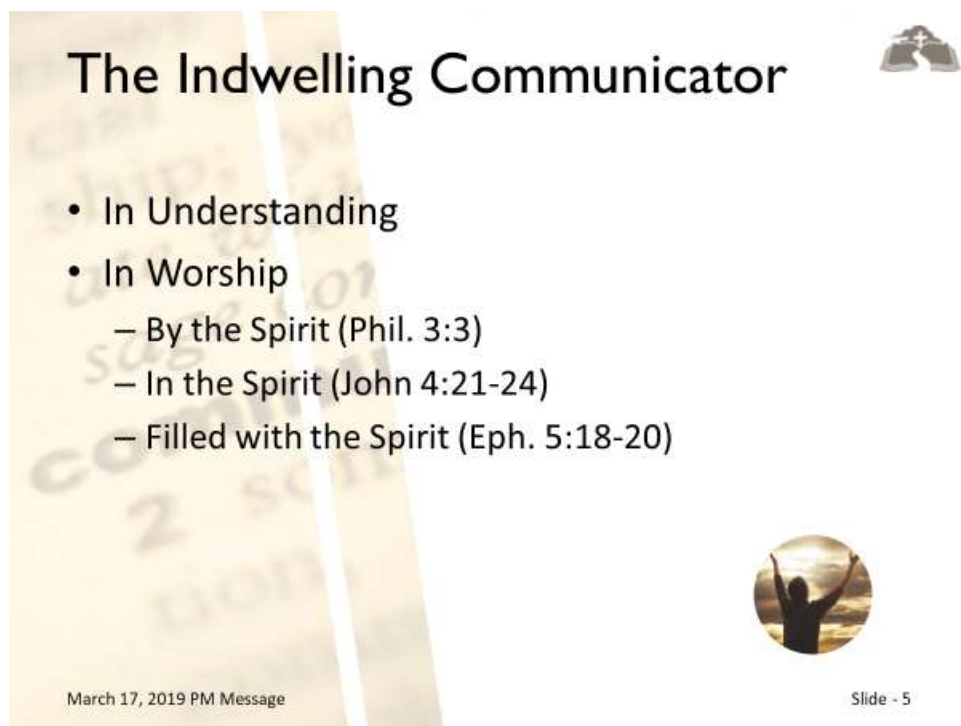
While this passage is similar to the one that we just looked at, here we see that the role of the Spirit is to guide us to all truth. John writes of this role as the Spirit speaking and declaring to us the culmination of God’s self-revelation in the person of His Son. We can count on the Spirit leading and directing us to essential truth of the Son, communicated in perfect unity with the Godhead.

Why does the Spirit guide us to truth? For the glory of the Son. D.A. Carson writes in his commentary on John, *“Just as the Son by his ministry on earth brought glory to his Father, so the Paraclete by his ministry brings glory to Jesus: that is his central aim.”* A principle role of the Spirit is to guide us to Christ for the glory and honor of His name. And as we are guided though the speaking of the Spirit to bring glory and honor to the Son, we bring glory and honor to God the Father.

Let’s look at one additional passage on the Spirit helping us to understand. Paul speaks of the role of the Spirit in 1 Corinthians 2. We will pick up in verse 9. Please listen closely as I read God’s word. *“But, as it is written, “What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him”— these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. For who knows a person’s thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit*


of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God. And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual. The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. The spiritual person judges all things, but is himself to be judged by no one. "For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?" But we have the mind of Christ."

There is much we could say here. But here is what I would like us to focus on. The truth and wisdom from God is spiritual. Our physical, natural minds are not able to comprehend or understand them. For us to know spiritual truth we must have it revealed or interpreted so that we can understand. The Spirit searches and knows the depth of God's truth. Those truths are imparted, taught, and communicated to us through the Spirit. Certainly, there is a mystery here. But the implication is that as believers, the Spirit is a means of communication to us. The Spirit reveals and conveys to us by spiritual means all that we need to know about God recorded in His word. The truths that we hear preached from Scripture and the truths that we read from God's word are opened to us and believed by us because of the work of the Spirit within us.



The Indwelling Communicator

- In Understanding
- In Worship
 - By the Spirit (Phil. 3:3)
 - In the Spirit (John 4:21-24)
 - Filled with the Spirit (Eph. 5:18-20)

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The second area in which we see the Spirit enabling our communication is in our worship. When we think of worship here, we are not just talking about corporate worship. We must keep in mind the greater context of worship as a part of all that we are and do in Christ. As Jesus warned the Pharisees, worship is not just an action of the lips. It requires hearts that are near and united with Him. This can only happen for the believer through the presence of the Spirit within them.

Let's first turn to Philippians Chapter 3 and verse 3. Paul is speaking here to believers. The point he is making is to not put confidence in the flesh. Let's look at this short verse – Philippians 3:3. *“For we are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh”*. The point here is that true circumcision is not of the flesh, but of the heart. In the same way, true believers do not and cannot worship God in the flesh. We worship God by the Spirit. Authentic worship can only be communicated to God by believers who have a relationship with God because it is enabled by the Holy Spirit. We cannot worship God in the flesh. We cannot communicate words of praise from hearts that are far from God and His presence.

Let's also look at the passage in John where Jesus talks to the women at the well about worship. Turn to John 4, verse 4. Follow along as I read. *“Jesus said to her, “Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.””*

Jesus is answering the Samaritan woman's question about the right or best location to worship. What he notes in His answer provides important truths about worship. There is much going on here, but for this message I want to focus on the point Jesus makes that God cannot be worshipped by earthly means or physical locations. God must be worshipped in Spirit and truth. God must be worshiped by spiritual means. And God can only be worshipped through His self-disclosure expressed in the truth of His word and in His Son. The Spirit enables our worship as we reflect on God, who is the sole object of our worship. Through the Spirit, our spiritual eyes are lifted up to see God as both the object and enabler of our worship.

Let's also turn to Ephesians, Chapter 5 and verse 18. Follow along as I read verses 18 through verse 21. *“And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.”*

Note the three aspects of communication that describe those who are filled with the Holy Spirit. First, we address or speak to one another in various forms that involve gathered worship. The idea here is that we experience worship as a community through the Spirit. There is a horizontal element in our communication to and with one another that expresses our unity in and through the Spirit. Second, we communicate and sing to God with all our hearts. The Spirit-filled heart will express praise and submission to our great God. Lastly, we communicate with an ever-abiding sense of thanksgiving for all the God has done. In these ways, the Spirit directs our hearts to communicate worship that glorifies God and humbles our hearts before Him.

The Indwelling Communicator



- In Understanding
- In Worship
- In Prayer
 - In the Spirit (Eph. 6:18, Jude 20)
 - As the Spirit Intercedes (Rom. 8:26-28)

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The last aspect of the Spirit's communication is seen in our prayers. It should come as no surprise that the Spirit who enables our understanding of scripture and giving of worship, would help us to communicate in conversation with God in prayer. As we read earlier in 1 Corinthians 2, the Spirit of God searches and knows the thoughts of God. Who better then to aid us in the frailty of our human prayers? We pray within the limitations of a physical world and a human mind. Thankfully, the Spirit who dwells within knows none of those constraints.

Let's begin by looking at Ephesians 6, verse 18. Here is what God's word says. *"praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints"*. Listen to the similar thought in Jude verse 20. *"But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit"*. In both these verses, believers are commanded to pray in the Spirit.

The broader sense of prayer is that it is our communication to God, in the Spirit, and through the power of Jesus name. Prayer then is in a sense, our communication to God in response to the truths He has communicated to us about Himself through His word. But what does it mean to pray in the Spirit? The answer to that question could be a single message in itself. But let me quickly summarize by saying that to pray in the Spirit means communicating in a way that expresses knowledge of God, submission to God, and love for God. While there is a place to pray for God's help in the trials and suffering of life, too often those prayers are focused on our own wants and desires. **Praying in the Spirit means that we pray aligned with God's will using the truths of God's word in a way that seeks God's glory above all else.**

Humanly speaking, our flesh is weak and this is impossible for us to do. Our prayers will always be tainted with some level of self-serving desires. Thankfully, the Spirit helps us pray. Let's look at Romans Chapter 8 and verses 26 to 28. Follow along as I read. *"Likewise the Spirit helps*

us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose."

In verses 22 and 23 of Romans 8, we see that both creation and our souls grown in our fallen state. In the same way, Paul says, the Spirit intercedes for us with groans too deep for words. The Spirit helps us in the weakness of our flesh by communicating to the Father according to the will of God. In other words, the Spirit transforms our feeble prayers into perfect communion with God.

What we pray in faith, the Spirit communicates with perfect knowledge of God. When we pray, what the Father hears is our prayers asking for what is best for our good and most glorifying to Him. We may then rest in the comfort that even when we pray with selfish motives, when we do not know what to pray for, or when we cannot find the right words to say, the Spirit communicates the prayers of those who love God in a way that lines up perfectly with God's will.

The slide features a central diagram with a blue circle containing two white speech bubbles. To the right of this circle is a vertical blue line with three circular icons: an open book, a person with arms raised, and a person in prayer. Labels 'Builds Up', 'Lifts Up', and 'Lines Up' are placed to the right of these icons. The background is a light yellow with faint text. A small icon of hands is in the top right corner.

Reflect & Respond

The Spirit and God's provision should fill our hearts with wonder and thanksgiving.

Builds Up

Lifts Up

Lines Up

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I would like to wrap this up this evening by reflecting first on the goodness of God in giving us the Spirit and second on examples of communication that we have seen. As we reflect on our need for the Spirit and God's provision, it should fill our hearts with wonder and thanksgiving. As a part of God's plan of salvation, He did not leave believers alone. At the beginning of creation of the world and at the beginning of the creation of new life in our hearts, the Spirit brings spiritual life and is a seal of that new life within us. He is our Helper in a unique and

powerful way, standing with us, helping us to know God, and communicating for us. Our hearts should be filled with praise for the one who dwells within us as the very presence of God.

There are also three examples of models of godly communication that I would like us to reflect on and be challenged by. The first example I see in the Spirit's communication is that it builds up. Just as the Spirit helps us to understand God's word and grow in knowledge, so should our communication. The measure and aim of our words should be to encourage and strengthen those we speak to. Rather than bringing others down, complaining, or hurting, our words should build others up. Our intention should be to help them to know and grow. Does our communication remind each other of God's goodness and greatness as we speak with kindness and grace? Does our communication bring unity and harmony rather than divide and stir up tension? May God give us grace to communicate in ways that builds up others.

The second example I see is that the Spirit's communication lifts up. Just as worship the Spirit lifts up our eyes to our God as the sole object of our adoration and praise, so we should we in our communication. Our words should bring God glory as we remind one another of His faithfulness and goodness to us. Does our communication cause others to worship God? Does our communication demonstrate hearts that are humble and full of thanksgiving? May God give us words that lift each other's eyes to see His majesty and glory.

The last example that I see is that the Spirit's communication lines up. Just as the Spirit prays in a way that lines up with the will of the Father, so should our communication. Our words to others should be aligned with God's word and in submission to His will. Does our communication encourage others to trust God and live righteously? Does our communication seek to bring others down they are weak or does it come along side them bringing comfort and strength. May God let us communicate in way that helps others to align our hearts and lives with God's word.

[Let's pray]

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