

**The 1689 Confession of Faith; Chapter 2, Paragraph 3 – “Of God and the Holy Trinity”,
Message # 73 – “Communion with the Holy Spirit”, Presented in the Adult Sunday
School Class by Pastor Paul Rendall, on April 25th, 2021.**

Paragraph 3 – In this divine and infinite Being there are three subsistences, d) the Father, the Word or Son, and Holy Spirit, of one substance, power, and eternity, each having the whole divine essence, e) yet the essence undivided: the Father is of none, neither begotten nor proceeding; the Son is f) eternally begotten of the Father; the Holy Spirit g) proceeding from the Father and the Son; all infinite, without beginning, therefore but one God, who is not to be divided in nature and being, but distinguished by several peculiar relative properties and personal relations; which doctrine of the Trinity is the foundation of all our communion with God, and comfortable dependence on him.

d) 1st John 5: 7; Matthew 28: 19; 2nd Corinthians 13: 14; e) Exodus 3: 14; John 14: 11;

1st Corinthians 8:6; f) John 1:14,18; g) John 15:26; Gal 4: 6)

John 14: 26 – “But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.”

John 16: 13-15 – “However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own *authority*, (or from Himself) but whatever He hears he will speak; and He will tell you things to come.” “He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you.” “All things that the Father has are Mine.” “Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you.”

Here we see the Father is mentioned specifically as the Person sending the Holy Spirit. But you will notice that it says that He will send the Spirit in Jesus name; that is, His sending is with the the full concurrence of the Son, both in purpose and in the actual act of sending the Spirit to the Church. For the Lord Jesus would ascend to the Father 40 days after His Resurrection, and when He would “go away” to heaven, the Spirit would be sent to the Church.

When Jesus says that He shall Personally send the Spirit to His disciples from the Father, it shows us that the Spirit is sent both by the Father and the Son; that the Spirit would proceed from them both as Persons of the Godhead, equal in authority and power, one in purpose and love for the Church, in relation to the application of Christ’s redemption to all of His elect people.

We saw in our last session that –

1. The Holy Spirit Proceeds from the Father and the Son eternally.

The Personal Property of the Holy Spirit is His proceeding from the Father and the Son. Just as it is the Personal Property of the Father was to beget the Son from all eternity, and just as it was the Personal Property of the Son to be begotten of the Father, so it was the Personal Property of the Spirit to proceed, to be spirated, to be breathed out from the Father and the Son, from eternity past on into eternity future and forever, as an eternal act. Eternal Generation was the work of the Father alone. But Spiration was and is the work of the Father and the Son.

An attempted Definition of the Spirit’s Procession (This definition helps us to understand how we as men can view spiration, or the Procession of the Holy Spirit. The Procession of the Holy Spirit is incomprehensible to us in terms of the reality of it in the Godhead.)

From our finite standpoint we should think of it in terms of its outworking in time and space in relation to the sending of the Spirit following Christ’s resurrection, and more specifically, on and following the Day of Pentecost.

I would define it as the Father and the Son, as the 1st and 2nd Persons of the Divine Trinity, breathing out and sending forth the Holy Spirit, as the 3rd Person of the Divine Trinity, in His coming to have a Divine Mission Peculiarly assigned to Him by them; to be a Divine Workman in the creation of the world, and of man, to strive with consciences of sinful men, to be the Comforter and Helper of all believers in Christ in all generations, and in His taking the things of Christ and making them known to men according to their mutually agreed purpose as the 3 Persons of the Godhead.

2. Christ Personally breathed the Holy Spirit upon the apostles in order that they might fulfill their commission personally, and have communion with the Holy Spirit.

John 20: 19-23 – “Then, the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, ‘Peace be with you’.” “When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side.” “Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord.” “So Jesus said to them again, ‘Peace to you!’” “As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.” “And when He said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit.’” “If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.”

Here we see that at the same day at evening when Christ rose from the dead, the first day of the week, when the doors of the house where they had gathered were shut, because of their fear of the Jews, Jesus then came and stood in the midst of them. Some commentators say that He came through the doors, others say that, no, His resurrection body could not come through the doors. The way that the verse is worded seems to lend credence to the fact that He did pass through the doors. There is no mention, as there is in Acts 12: 10, that when Peter and the angel who was bringing him out of prison were making their escape that “they came to the iron gate that led to the city, and it opened to them of its own accord”. No, it seems reasonable to believe that if Jesus, when He had finished speaking to the two on the road to Emmaus, that it says that He “vanished from their sight”, (Luke 24: 31) that it was possible for Jesus to do with His resurrection body what no man who has not been glorified, can do now. He came through the doors by inter-dimensional passage without opening them. (See also Luke 24: 37)

Christ said “Peace be with you” to calm their frightened hearts; frightened by seeing Him who they thought was a spirit, and frightened by the idea of the Jews finding them together as the group of apostles; criminals in the sight of the rulers of Israel. To prove that it was Himself, He showed them His hands and His side. This convinced the apostles and it says that they were now glad when they saw that it was Christ, who showed them His hands and His side; the wounds that he received in His crucifixion. And then He said to them again – “Peace to you!” You are worried about what’s going to happen next; what is going to happen to My cause and kingdom, and you are afraid that you will not have the strength to continue on if I am not here with you? He therefore recommissions them as apostles and says – “As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.” And then when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit’.

This receiving of the Holy Spirit was the beginning of their communion which they would each personally have with the 3rd Person of the Divine Trinity; that even as the Father had begotten the Son and sent Him into the world in His Incarnation, to be born, to grow up, and to fulfill the ministry and mission that He sent Him on, even so, now the Son would breathe out the Spirit to them and upon them, to give them assurance that He would equip them by His presence and by the gifts that He would bring to them on the Day of Pentecost, the spiritual power and ability to preach the gospel in such a way that it would bring tangible results in the conversion of sinners, and lead to the building of the foundation of the New Testament Church. He was breathing on them, giving them assurance that this 3rd Person of the Divine Trinity would be their Helper, their Comforter, their Divine Teacher and their guide, into all the truth of how they would speak the word of God and eventually write it down infallibly in the books of the New Testament Scriptures.

Just as the Lord Jesus in His pre-Incarnate form in the Garden of Eden knelt down and fashioned the first man Adam, and “breathed into his nostrils the breath of life”, and man became a living being; even so, now, at this point, He breathed upon His disciples and those who would be the master-builders of the New Testament Church would be assured that they were going to have the authority and power needed to accomplish their part in the building of the New Testament Church. So they received the Holy Spirit in accordance with this renewal of their Commission, and they were told that if they forgave the sins of any they would be forgiven. They would tell all the people that they were sent to the truth about Jesus’ life and ministry; that the Father had sent Him to accomplish redemption, and that if they would repent and believe this gospel, they would most certainly be forgiven, justified, and given the Holy Spirit to teach them and lead them into all the truth as well. And if they, the apostles, thought that any professed Christian needed to have corrective discipline taken place upon them, because they were unwilling to repent, then they could tell them that their sins would be retained. An incident like this happened to the apostle Peter when he encountered the duplicity and hypocrisy of Ananias and Saphira in Acts chapter 5, verse 4, for holding back some of the price of the land which they said that they had sold and given to the poor. Peter said to him- “Why have you conceived this thing in your heart?” “You have not lied to men but to God.” And Ananias fell down and breathed his last, it says there.

Matthew Barrett in His book, *Simply Trinity*, says this: Our English word procession is how we translate the Greek word *ekporeusis*. On P. 269 he says – “The spiration of the Spirit is distinct from the generation of the Son. But one should not assume that the spiration of the Spirit has nothing to do with paternity and filiation.” (that is, the Divine Properties of the Father and the Son established from all eternity past) “The reason the Spirit is spirated (or breathed) from the Father and the Son is because it is in Eternal Generation that the Son is empowered to spirate the Spirit.” “Gilles Emory says, ‘The Father, in begetting His Son, gives to His Son the power to ‘breathe forth’ or to “spirate” the Holy Spirit.’” “What does this look like for each Person of the Trinity?” “The Father, as Father gives to the Son the power to spirate with Him the Holy Spirit, and the Son as Son receives from the Father the power (the active power) of spirating with Him the Holy Spirit.” “Or think of it this way, ‘The power of spirating the Holy Spirit is included in the generation of the Son: by His His generation, the Son receives from the father to be with the principle of the Holy Spirit.’” “What does this entail for the Spirit?” “The ‘procession of the Holy Spirit is inscribed in the mutual relation of the Father and the Son.’” “This means that the process of the Holy Spirit is connected in itself to the generation of the Son by the Father.” (The Trinity, P. 116)

Truths to Remember:

a) The Divine Essence neither begets nor is begotten. Rather, it is a Divine Person in the Essence (the Father) that begets, and a Divine Person in the Essence, (the Son) that is begotten. Essence does not beget essence, but Person begets Person, otherwise there would be more than one essence: So, even though there are more Persons than one in God, yet there is not more than one essence in God. God is One. He is Simple in His Being. (See Gill’s – The Doctrine of the Trinity, P. 125 and 126) **b)** Even so, we can say, that Divine Essence does not send or proceed forth from itself. It is a Divine Person, the Holy Spirit, who proceeds and is sent forth to His mission and work. The Mission and Work of this Blessed Person proceed from eternity past, even as in the Eternal Generation of the Son, and proceeding from the Eternal Generation of the Son