

Pneumatology  
*The Doctrine of the Person and Work of the Holy Spirit*

## INTRODUCTION

**Definition of Pneumatology:** A study of the person and work of the Holy Spirit.

### Importance of Pneumatology

- A. Theologically: The doctrine of the Holy Spirit for His is the source of the Christian's spiritual life: both its origin and continuation. Thus both salvation and sanctification are related to the Holy Spirit.

*The Holy Spirit is to our spiritual lives what the Creator is to this world. Without God, the Creator, the world would never have come into existence, and without his continuing, sustaining, preserving work, the world would crash out of existence. Similarly, without the Spirit of God, the Christian would never have been born again, and without the Spirit's ever-present sanctifying influence, the spiritual life of the Christian would drop back into the spiritual deadness from which it came. (Edwin H. Palmer, *The Holy Spirit*)*

Nor should the work of the Holy Spirit be limited to salvation and sanctification, for He is related to creation, inspiration and revelation, Jesus Christ, etc.

- B. Biblically: The doctrine of the Holy Spirit takes on prominence in the New Testament, and, without an understanding of progressive revelation in relation to the person and work of the Holy Spirit, one will never be able to put together a consistent interpretation of Pneumatology.

*The Holy Spirit is not so prominent in the Old as in the New Testament; and this is natural, because, although working in the world before Christ became incarnate, yet His special office was that He should be manifested to the world after Christ had come in order that He might continue Christ's work of redemption. Again, He occupies greater prominence in the New Testament, because then for the first time men are able to comprehend the fact of, and doctrine of, the Trinity, consequent upon the fullness of revelation which the Lord Jesus brought (A. W. Habershon, *The Person of the Holy Spirit*, p. 4).*

- C. Historically: In the history of the church the doctrine of the Holy Spirit has often been neglected. Long controversies have centered, for example, around the deity of Christ, the Trinity, grace, atonement, and the sacraments, but shorter controversies around the Holy Spirit. Systematic theologies stress the work of the Holy Spirit to the individual but seem to neglect His other works. The Reformation gave great

impetus to the Holy Spirit, especially in the areas of salvation and illumination. The Reformer's teaching on sovereign grace demanded a heavy emphasis on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there has been an increased emphasis upon the work of the Holy Spirit in the believer's life but a woeful neglect of His work in other vital areas.

- D. Covenantally: READ **APPENDIX 1** - The Promise of the Spirit
- E. Practically: The Holy Spirit is the power for Christian living. Apart from the Holy Spirit there can be no spiritual experience and the Christian is commanded to be rightly related to the Spirit in his daily walk (Eph. 5:18).

*However Christians may differ on the means to spiritual power, all agree that it is the work of the Holy Spirit. No subject, therefore, could be of greater significance to the child of God than that of the Holy Spirit. A Christian is one who has received Jesus Christ; a spiritual Christian is one who displays Christ living through his life, and this is done by the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. (Ryrie, *The Holy Spirit*, p. 7)*