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The Holy Spirit as Illuminator

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Introduction

Sceptics of the Bible attempt to undermine God's Word in many different areas. It should come as no surprise that they have not ceased their efforts when it comes to the Holy Spirit's role in illumination. Some believe that one can read Scripture and understand on their own; apart from the Holy Spirit.¹ They believe that the Bible is self-illuminating.² There are others who believe that revelation is not complete in Scripture and continues today.³ Still, there are others who completely dismiss the Holy Spirit all together.⁴

Additionally, much research has been done on the Father and the Son. However, the Holy Spirit, being just as much God as the Father and Son, has been both "neglected and distorted."⁵ To lack in knowledge of any part of the Holy Trinity is to be missing a part of God.⁶ Therefore, it is important to explain the Holy Spirit's role in illumination using the biblical text in order to tackle misunderstandings and strengthen the church.

What is clear is that there is a lack of understanding in regard to the Holy Spirit in general, and certainly in the area of His role in illumination today. In order to understand the Holy Spirit's role in illumination one must go to Scripture, with full dependence on the Spirit of God. An exegesis of John 16:12-15, 1 Corinthians 2, and 1 John 5:6 are used to show that the Holy Spirit is not only present but illuminates the depraved minds of the God's chosen people. In

¹ Carl F. H. Henry, *God, Revelation and Authority* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1999), Ch 12. Logos Bible Software.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ J. D. Douglas, and Merrill C. Tenney, revised by Moises Silva, *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Dictionary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 619; Henry, *God, Revelation and Authority*, Ch 12.

⁶ M. X. Seaman, *Illumination and Interpretation: The Holy Spirit's Role in Hermeneutics* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2013), 7, accessed July 14, 2020. Kindle Reader.

the end, one may conclude that the Holy Spirit's role in hermeneutics is to illuminate those God has chosen, allowing them to understand the truth of Scripture.

There are a few terms that need to be defined in order to bring clarity. Advocate is "one that pleads the cause of another."⁷ The term can also refer to Christ but will refer to the Holy Spirit within the confines of the verses selected for interpretation and due to the subject at hand.⁸ Another term of importance is Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the "Third person of the Trinity."⁹ As noted previously, the Holy Spirit is God. Since there is a focus on illumination, one must define such a term. One can gain an understanding of this term by examining its meaning in 2 Tim 1:10, when Christ is said to have, "brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." The Greek word for light is *phōtizō*, and means "to shed rays, i.e. to shine or (transitive) to brighten up (literal or figurative): - enlighten, illuminate, (bring to, give) light, make to see."¹⁰ Additionally, revelation or revealed must be defined. Where the word revelation is mentioned it will not refer to the book of Revelation unless otherwise noted, rather, it will be addressing God's revelation through His Word. There is general revelation, and special revelation.¹¹ However, general revelation will not be discussed. Therefore, special revelation must be defined. Special revelation is a term that is used to describe how "God reveals Himself" to those He has chosen.¹² Christ is revealed throughout Scripture, although He is concealed in the Old Testament. Those who penned Scripture by way of the Holy Spirit documented God's truth, and the Holy Spirit helps believers in their understanding of what has already been revealed.

⁷ Douglas and Tenney, revised by Silva, *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, 31.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Chad Brand, Archie England, and Charles W. Draper, eds, *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary* (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2003), 1252-1253, accessed July 12, 2020. ProQuest Ebook Central.

¹⁰ Strong, "φωτίζω," *Strong's Greek Hebrew Dictionary* (2012). Courtesy of WORDsearch. Retrieved from <https://app.wordsearchbible.lifeway.com>.

¹¹ Douglas and Tenney, revised by Silva, *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, 1232.

¹² Brand, England, and Draper, eds, *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, 2175.

The limitations of this study were that extrabiblical sources were somewhat limited, although not nonexistent. Like any other subject dealing with Scripture, time was a limiting factor, because one could endlessly learn more, bringing further clarity to the subject.

The study is confined to the New Testament. While other aspects of the Holy Spirit are discussed, they are only touched on briefly in order to explain the Holy Spirit's role in illumination. The scope of the study is further narrowed down to a set of key text found in John 16:12-15, 1 Corinthians 2, and 1 John 5:6. Other Scripture passages are used to understand the primary texts at hand.

The methodology is to ensure that the context is clear, before moving on to translation, interpretation, and application. As the Holy Spirit is the illuminator of Scripture, prayer was continuously sought throughout the whole process of biblical exegesis.

John 16:12-15

Context

Although there is some debate on authorship, the Gospel of John is most likely written by the apostle John while he was residing in Ephesus.¹³ The date has also been debated, but between the range of AD 80-90 appears to be the most accepted.¹⁴ This places John's Gospel after the "destruction of the temple in AD 70."¹⁵ John's audience consists of mostly, "Greek-speaking diaspora Jews, converts to Judaism (proselytes), and gentile 'God-fearers.'"¹⁶ However, this is

¹³ Colin G. Kruse, *John* (Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2008), 26, accessed July 9, 2020. ProQuest Ebook Central.

¹⁴ Murray J. Harris, *John* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2015), 6, accessed July 9, 2020. ProQuest Ebook Central; Kruse, *John*, 32; Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of John: 2 Volumes* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010), 142, accessed July 22, 2020. ProQuest Ebook Central; Douglas and Tenney, revised by Silva, *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, 750.

¹⁵ Harris, *John*, 5.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

not his only audience, as indicated in (Jn 13-16) where believers are being encouraged and comforted by Jesus prior to His death, burial, resurrection, and ascension.¹⁷ What is clear is that John is giving “an eyewitness” account regarding Jesus, and that he is urging his readers to believe his testimony (Jn 20:30-31; 21:24).¹⁸

The text surrounding Jn 16:12-15 makes it clear that Jesus has not yet been glorified, but that He is preparing the disciples for that time, as it is fast approaching (Jn 12:23-28). The text also describes one who will come after Jesus has been glorified, in order that He may be glorified all the more (Jn 16:14). The “Spirit of truth,” “the Advocate,” the Holy Spirit is coming and just as the Father does not leave His Son alone, Christ does not leave His sheep alone (Jn 16:7, 13, 32).

Translation

In order for one to understand the meaning of the text, and the Holy Spirit’s role in illumination, a word study must be performed. Jn 16:13 mentions “the Spirit of truth.” The Greek word for Spirit in this particular passage is *pneuma* which means, “a current of air, i.e. breath (blast) or a breeze; by analogy or figurative a spirit, i.e. (human) the rational soul, (by implication) vital principle, mental disposition, etc., or (superhuman) an angel, dæmon, or (divine) God, Christ's spirit, the Holy Spirit :- ghost, life, spirit (-ual, -ually), mind” (Jn 16:13).¹⁹ However, Acts 1:8 and Acts 2:1-4 are evidence that the Spirit spoken of in Jn 16:13 is the same Spirit, “the Holy Spirit,” spoken of in Acts (Acts 1:2; 2:4). The Spirit being “of truth” hints to the Trinity (Jn 16:13). Jesus is self-described as “the truth” in Jn 14:6, and God is mentioned as He

¹⁷ Kruse, *John*, 23-25.

¹⁸ Douglas and Tenney, revised by Silva, *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, 750.

¹⁹ Strong, “πνεῦμα,” *Strong's Greek Hebrew Dictionary*.

“who does not lie” in Ti 1:2.²⁰ This concept is further understood when reading the relational language in Jn 16:13-15. The Greek word for guide is *hodēgeō*, and means, “to show the way (literal or figurative [teach]) :- guide, lead” (Jn 16:13).²¹ Teaching is certainly an aspect of this guidance as one will see in 1 Cor 2:12-16. The Greek word for all seems rather insignificant but is actually important (Jn 16:13). All, or *pas* means “all, any, every, the whole” (Jn 16:13).²² This may mean a complete understanding of the truth, so as to change the way that one sees everything. Believers are said to make “judgements about all things” in 1 Cor 2:15. However, since the disciples are the ones being spoken to, it most likely means all truth about Jesus that the disciples had not previously understood (Jn 2:2; 7:39; 12:16; 16:13).²³ The words “what is yet to come” refers to the period after the outpouring of Holy Spirit (Jn 16:7, 13). For the disciples, this is referring to the future. The immediate context does not appear to provide an answer as to exactly what is being referred to in the future. This could possibly be taken to mean the events that would take place after Jesus ascended and the disciples seemed to be alone and without guidance [though they had the Spirit], or the eschatological events described “in the book of Revelation” where Jesus returns and their future glorification is at hand (Rom 8:23).²⁴ Jesus’ hour had repeatedly been mentioned as “not yet come” (Jn 2:4; 7:8, 30). Perhaps, He is now addressing the disciple’s hour; one of glory. Whatever the case, one must remember that the disciples are being spoken to, so Jn 16:13 should not be taken to mean that there is some further revelation being given to the believer.²⁵

²⁰ Harris, *John*, 278; Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1037.

²¹ Strong, "ὁδηγέω," *Strong's Greek Hebrew Dictionary*.

²² *Ibid.*, 3956.

²³ Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1038; Kruse, *John*, 327.

²⁴ Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1040-1041; Harris, *John*, 278; Kruse, *John*, 329.

²⁵ Harris, *John*, 278.

Interpretation

What Jesus had told the disciples was all that they could handle at the time (Jn 16:6, 12). However, there would come a time after Jesus' glorification, when the disciples would receive the Holy Spirit who would teach and guide them "into all the truth" (Jn 16:13). He would enable them to understand the whole picture as to why the Son of God, their Messiah, would die, be buried, raised, and ascend to the Father (Acts 2:14-41; Jn 16:13).²⁶ The Holy Spirit would bring to mind things that Jesus had said to them which did not make sense at the time (Jn 14:26; 16:13).²⁷ Jesus also did this after His resurrection and prior to His ascension, but this was temporary in the sense that He was still physically with them at this time (Lk 24:45-49). The Holy Spirit would also enable them to understand things that would occur in the future (Jn 16:13). What the disciples know will glorify Jesus, because it is from Jesus that the Spirit receives what is made known to them (Jn 16:14). This is why Jesus says that the Spirit will "glorify me" (Jn 16:14). There is this downflow of truth [yet shared between Father, Son and Spirit] from the Father and Son, to the Spirit, and on to the disciples (Jn 16:14-15). This shows the unique relationship of the Trinity, and hints at the Spirit's role in illumination, with His focus on revealing God to the believer (Jn 16:14-15).

Application

Although the passage is speaking to the disciples, it still holds meaning for believers today. There is no waiting for the Holy Spirit to come, Jesus has already been glorified. Once a person is saved, they have the Holy Spirit dwelling inside of them. He will guide them into the

²⁶ Kruse, *John*, 327.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

truth of what has already been revealed in Scripture. To be clear, the Spirit is not providing additional revelation by the words “what is yet to come,” this has already been documented in Scripture itself (Jn 16:13).²⁸ Rather, the Spirit is illuminating the minds of believers, allowing them to see what is clearly written.²⁹ This is in contrast to those who cannot understand the truth, though it is there in plain sight (Jn 3:9-12; 8:42-47; 10:25-30).³⁰ Augustine explains illumination of the mind by the Spirit when he says, “so, too, do errors and false opinions contaminate life when the rational mind itself is vicious. Such was my mind at that time when I did not know that it required to be illumined by another light, so that it might participate in the truth.”³¹

1 Corinthians 2

Context

Paul identifies himself as the author of 1 Corinthians in his opening statement found in 1 Cor 1:1-3. He wrote this letter to the church in Corinth while in Ephesus, presumably between AD 54-57.³² The letter was in response to word that Paul had received about wicked things happening within the church, and possibly some questions that had been raised by its members (1 Cor 5:1; 7:1, 25; 8:1; 12:1; 16:1).³³ These two situations prompted Paul to write the letter as a way “to warn” his recipients, and to address what had been written to him (1 Cor 4:14).³⁴ The city of Corinth was a lively port city, and had “a diverse population which also included Greeks,

²⁸ Seaman, *Illumination and Interpretation*, 48-49.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 27.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 39.

³¹ Saint Augustine, *Confessions* (Baltimore, MD: Catholic University of America Press, 1953), 95, accessed July 9, 2020. ProQuest Ebook Central.

³² Thomas R. Schreiner, *1 Corinthians: An Introduction and Commentary* (Westmont, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2018), 9, accessed July 9, 2020. ProQuest Ebook Central; Douglas and Tenney, revised by Silva, *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, 310.

³³ Schreiner, *1 Corinthians*, 10.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

immigrants and Jews.”³⁵ Being “a Roman city,” there were no shortage of deities to worship.³⁶ Although, Christians would have “stood out” as different from those surrounding them, the Corinthian church is labelled as being “still worldly” according to Paul (1 Cor 3:1).³⁷ It is clear that assimilation to the culture around them was an ever present danger (1 Cor 16:13-14).³⁸

Translation

In 1 Cor 2:1, the words eloquence and wisdom stand out. The Greek word for eloquence is *hyperochē*, and means, “prominence, i.e. (figurative) superiority (in rank or character) :- authority, excellency” (1 Cor 2:1).³⁹ The word for wisdom in Greek is *sophia*, and means, “wisdom (higher or lower, worldly or spiritual)” (1 Cor 2:1).⁴⁰ Paul makes it clear that he is referring to “human wisdom” (1 Cor 2:1, 5). He compares “human wisdom” which was sought after to a different kind of wisdom, “God’s wisdom” (1 Cor 2:1, 5, 7). The word mature, found in 1 Cor 2:6 must also be understood. The Greek word for mature is *teleios*, and means either “complete (in various applications of labor, growth, mental and moral character, etc.)” or “completeness :- of full age, man, perfect” (1 Cor 2:6).⁴¹ The word cannot be taken to mean maturity as in age; even the “rulers of this age,” some who surely would have been mature in age, could not understand it (1 Cor 2:6, 8). It could be taken to mean those who are also able to understand “God’s wisdom” (1 Cor 2:7). Indeed, 1 Cor 2:10 explains that this is a wisdom revealed by the Spirit. Only those who are saved have the Holy Spirit (Eph 1:11-14). The mature

³⁵ Schreiner, *1 Corinthians*, 1-2.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 2-3.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 3.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ Strong, "ὑπεροχή," *Strong's Greek Hebrew Dictionary*.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 4678.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 5046.

then, are likely believers (1 Cor 2:14-15).⁴² In 1 Cor 2:10, the word revealed in Greek is *apokalyptō*, which means, “to take off the cover, i.e. disclose :- reveal.”⁴³ This translation is interesting considering the Gospel being referred to as veiled in 2 Cor 4:3-6 (2 Cor 3:18).⁴⁴ In 1 Cor 2:12, “what God has freely given us” refers to the grace received only by salvation through faith in His Son, Jesus (Eph 1:3-10). The “deep things of God,” must also be examined (1 Cor 2:10). The words “deep things” in Greek is *bathos*, and means, “profundity, i.e. (by implication) extent; (figurative) mystery :- deep (-ness, things), depth (1 Cor 2:10).”⁴⁵ This seems to refer to “God’s wisdom” that was said to be “a mystery” (1 Cor 2:7).⁴⁶ In 1 Cor 2:15 the word judgements in Greek is *anakrinō*, and means: “properly to scrutinize, i.e. (by implication) investigate, interrogate, determine :- ask, question, discern, examine, judge, search.”⁴⁷ Although, the Greek word for discerned in 1 Cor 2:14 is the same word that is used for judgement in 1 Cor 2:15, they appear to have different meanings based on the wording.⁴⁸ The Greek word for mind in 1 Cor 2:16 is *nous* and means, “the intellect, i.e. mind (divine or human; in thought, feeling, or will); by implication meaning :- mind, understanding.”⁴⁹ In Romans 12:2, one can learn that having “the mind of Christ” is connected to discerning “God’s will” (1 Cor 2:16).

Interpretation

Paul is saying that he did not present himself as wise by human standards (1 Cor 2). He simply came and proclaimed the Gospel message (1 Cor 2:2). In his weakness, the “Spirit’s

⁴² Schreiner, *1 Corinthians*, 81.

⁴³ Strong, "ἀποκαλύπτω," *Strong's Greek Hebrew Dictionary*.

⁴⁴ Seaman, *Illumination and Interpretation*, 55-56.

⁴⁵ Strong, "βάθος," *Strong's Greek Hebrew Dictionary*.

⁴⁶ Schreiner, *1 Corinthians*, 82-83.

⁴⁷ Strong, "ἀνακρίνω," *Strong's Greek Hebrew Dictionary*.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 3563.

power” was displayed (1 Cor 2:4). Paul’s reliance on the Spirit, would make it so that his hearers might rely on “God’s power” instead of “human wisdom” (1 Cor 2:5). Although, Paul does not speak in “human wisdom,” he makes it clear that he does speak a certain kind of wisdom (1 Cor 2:5-6). It is in fact, “God’s wisdom” that he speaks (1 Cor 2:7). Even though this is a hidden wisdom, Paul mentions that it is “destined for our glory before time began” (1 Cor 2:7). Paul is speaking to believers. The words “our glory” in 1 Cor 2:7 appear to be referring to the final glorification of believers, based off of the use of the word “prepared” in 1 Cor 2:9 (Rom 8:16-25, 30; Jn 14:3). In 1 Cor 2:10, Paul is saying that the Spirit revealed to him, and another, or others “God’s wisdom” which is considered a “mystery” (1 Cor 2:7). The use of “us” could refer to believers in the sense of what is revealed in Scripture itself (1 Cor 2:10). However, it is likely to refer to Paul, and Sosthenes, or the apostles (1 Cor 1:1).⁵⁰ Paul appears to still be referring to why he will not boast in himself, but “boast [s] in the Lord” (1 Cor 1:31). He cannot boast, because the Spirit has revealed these things to him (1 Cor 1:31; 2:10). What should be clear is that neither interpretation leads to the idea of additional special revelation outside of Scripture.⁵¹ The word used is revealed; past tense, not reveals; present tense (1 Cor 2:10). Paul goes on to explain that the Spirit “searches all things,” including “the deep things of God” (1 Cor 2:10). In other words, “God’s wisdom” that is labelled as hidden and a mystery is not hidden to the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 2:7). Just like one person cannot hear another’s thoughts, they cannot know “God’s thoughts” (1 Cor 2:11).⁵² However, the “thoughts of God” and the “Spirit of God” are connected (1 Cor 2:11). There is a comparison between the “spirit of the world” and the “Spirit of God” (1 Cor 2:11-12). The “spirit of the world” when looking back on 1 Cor 2:11, is possibly the human

⁵⁰ Henry, *God, Revelation and Authority*, Ch 12.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² Schreiner, *1 Corinthians*, 83.

spirit void of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 2:12; Jn 14:16-17; 2 Tim 1:7).⁵³ Without God's Spirit, there is no understanding "what God has freely given us" (1 Cor 2:12). In fact, unbelievers consider such things as "foolishness" (1 Cor 2:14). The "Spirit of God" teaches and explains "spiritual realities" using "Spirit-taught words" (1 Cor 2:11, 13). Without the Holy Spirit, these spiritual things cannot be understood (1 Cor 2:13-14). Believers make "judgements about all things" (1 Cor 2:15). However, believers are "not subject to" judgements by unbelievers (1 Cor 2:15). They would essentially be making judgements about the "Spirit of God" who dwells in the believer, and their judgements would likely be off, because they "cannot understand" spiritual things (1 Cor 2:11, 14). The Spirit affects the mind of the believer in a way that unbelievers would not understand (1 Cor 2:15-16; Rom 12:2; Eph 4:20-24, 29-30; Col 3:1-11).

Application

Paul's message to the church at Corinth is a message for both believers and unbelievers today. Believers are not to rely on "human wisdom" (1 Cor 2:5). They are instead, to rely on the Holy Spirit who leads them to understanding by teaching them spiritual things, that without the Holy Spirit's instruction they would not know (1 Cor 2:13-15). Unbelievers rely only on "human wisdom," and will misunderstand the spiritual things that are only discerned by the "Spirit of God" (1 Cor 2:5, 11, 14). Paul was careful in the way he spoke, relying solely on the Spirit, in order to not bring attention to himself. He did not want people to notice him, but instead, "God's power" (1 Cor 2:5). In 1 Cor 2:15-16, it appears to be asserting that God is residing in the believer.⁵⁴ Therefore, it can be said that believers "have the mind of Christ" (1 Cor 2:16; Jn

⁵³ Schreiner, *1 Corinthians*, 83.

⁵⁴ Seaman, *Illumination and Interpretation*, 11.

10:30). However, relying on the Spirit is essential, since human nature is still sinful (Rom 7).⁵⁵ This is why believers are told not to “grieve the Holy Spirit of God” (Eph 4:30). It is also why believers are told to “put off” the “old self” and “put on the new self” in Eph 4:20-24.

1 John 5:6

Context

The first epistle of John was most likely written by “the apostle John.”⁵⁶ Just like the Gospel of John, 1 John was probably written while he was residing in Ephesus.⁵⁷ The letter was likely written sometime between “A.D. 85-100.”⁵⁸ It is clear that John is addressing believers in the language he uses, such as: “dear children,” and “Dear friends” (1 Jn 2:1, 7). Additionally, 1 Jn 2:12-14, 20-21 and 5:13 make it clear that believers were the desired recipients of his letter. John also states the purpose for his letter in 1 Jn 2:26. There were clearly people “trying to lead” these believers astray (1 Jn 2:26). While John deals with the “false teaching,” he is also uplifting the church.⁵⁹

Translation

The word one in 1 Jn 5:6 refers to Jesus Christ as indicated in the same verse. The Greek word for water in 1 Jn 5:6 is *hydōr* and means water; either the literally or figuratively.⁶⁰ The word blood in Greek is *haima* and can mean blood; either literally or figuratively, or “(the

⁵⁵ Seaman, *Illumination and Interpretation*, 36.

⁵⁶ Douglas and Tenney, revised by Silva, *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, 753.

⁵⁷ Brand, England, and Draper, eds, *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, 1489.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 1489-1490.

⁶⁰ Strong, “ὕδωρ,” *Strong's Greek Hebrew Dictionary*.

atonement blood of Christ); by implication bloodshed, also kindred :- blood” (1 Jn 5:6).⁶¹ The words “water and blood” have been interpreted in a few different ways (1 Jn 5:6). Some believe it refers “to Jesus’s birth and death,” some to his “baptism and” death, and others to the “blood and water” that flowed from His side after His death (Lk 2; 3:22; Jn 19:30, 34).⁶² The words “came by” do not make sense if one is referring to His death alone (1 Jn 5:6).⁶³ Although, Jesus’ birth and death are possible, His “baptism and death” make the most sense.⁶⁴ In Mt 3:16-17, when Jesus is baptized, the “Spirit of God” rests on Him, and the Father says, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.”⁶⁵ This was the beginning of Jesus’ ministry, which provided many signs that Jesus was God’s Son.⁶⁶ He also came to die, so that others may have life (Rom 7:4; Mk 10:45). Altogether, one has Jesus’ ministry, His death; which resulted in his burial, resurrection, and ascension, and the Spirit that testify that Jesus is the Son of God and Messiah (1 Jn 5:7). The word “testifies” in Greek is *martyreō* and can also mean to bear witness (1 Jn 5:6).⁶⁷ It was important at the time that there were “two or three witnesses” to make any case (Mt 18:16; 2 Cor 13:1; 1 Tim 5:19).

⁶¹ Strong, "αἷμα," *Strong's Greek Hebrew Dictionary*.

⁶² Constantine R. Campbell, *1, 2, and 3 John* (Grand Rapids, MI: HarperCollins Christian Publishing, 2017), 156-157, accessed July 26, 2020. ProQuest Ebook Central; David Walls, *Holman New Testament Commentary - 1 and 2 Peter, 1 2 and 3 John and Jude* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 1999), 221-222, accessed July 9, 2020. ProQuest Ebook Central.

⁶³ Campbell, *1, 2, and 3 John*, 157.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 158.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 157-158.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 157.

⁶⁷ Strong, "μαρτυρέω," *Strong's Greek Hebrew Dictionary*.

Interpretation

Jesus came by baptism and as an “atoning sacrifice” “for the sins of the” world (1 Jn 2:2). It was not merely His baptism and subsequent ministry that were signs of Jesus as both divine and human. He died, and He did it for sinners, so that they might be seen as righteous in the eyes of God (Rom 4:18-25; 5:8; 8:28-30). Although, the Spirit testified, He also currently testifies that Jesus is “the Son of God” who gives true life (Rom 1:4; 8:11; Lk 3:22; 1 Jn 5:6-12). The Spirit “is the truth” and must bear witness, because His character is truth, which is in direct opposition to the “spirit of falsehood” mentioned in 1 Jn 4:6 (1 Jn 5:6; Jn 14:6).

Application

The Spirit currently testifies along with what is written about Jesus in Scripture (1 Jn 5:6). All of these are God’s testimony (1 Jn 5:9). This is showing the active involvement of the Spirit in the lives of those who God has chosen (Ti 3:3-8; Rom 8:16-17; 12:2). If believers want to understand the truth, they need to rely on the Holy Spirit who “is the truth” (1 Jn 5:6).

How the Passages Work Together to Understand the Spirit’s Role in Illumination

When all verses are taken into consideration, much can be learned about the Holy Spirit’s role in illumination. In 1 Jn 5:6 one learns that the Holy Spirit testifies about Jesus, and Jn 5:7-12 makes it clear that it is with the goal of salvation. However, that is not the only goal. The Spirit also guides believers into the truth of God’s Word (Jn 16:12-15). He is actively involved in the believer’s life, informing them with words from God (Jn 16:12-15). “Human wisdom,” though it appears wise and attractive to the human ear, is no wisdom at all (1 Cor 2). True wisdom is

“God’s Wisdom,” and absolutely no human can know this wisdom apart from the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 2:7). God’s thoughts are His, but “The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God” (1 Cor 2:10). Since believers have received the Holy Spirit, they have the ability to understand spiritual things (1 Cor 2). However, since they are “discerned only through the” Holy Spirit; one must rely on Him (1 Cor 2:14). In 1 Corinthians 2, one sees that the human mind does not understand spiritual things. There is a lack of judgment, and a mindset that laughs at, and disregards “God’s Wisdom” (1 Cor 2; Phil 3:18-21; Rom 1:18-32; 8:5-8). Sin is at the core of this futility toward God (Rom 1:18-32). When it comes to Scripture, the believer can either rely on “human wisdom,” or be like Paul who relies on Spirit (1 Cor 2:1-5). Relying solely on “human wisdom” will most certainly lead to misunderstanding the text (1 Cor 2:5, 14).

Although, even in someone’s effort to rely on the Spirit, they are prone to seek their own wisdom (Gal 5:16-17, 25). It is clear that the Holy Spirit is involved in the minds of God’s chosen people (1 Cor 2:13, 15-16). The Spirit teaches, guides, and explains in a way that is unobservable (1 Cor 2:13; Jn 16:13). However, the work of the Spirit is evident in the believer’s life (Gal 5:22-26; Rom 12:2).⁶⁸

Conclusion

One can see that the Holy Spirit is not only necessary in the life of the believer, but also essential when it comes to the enlightening of the minds of God’s chosen to rightly understand and interpret the inspired Word of God. While some may believe that they can understand Scripture without the Holy Spirit, 1 Corinthians 2 specifically refutes this idea.⁶⁹ While others

⁶⁸ Seaman, *Illumination and Interpretation*, 41.

⁶⁹ Henry, *God, Revelation and Authority*, Ch 12.

believe that revelation still continues, specifically using 1 Cor 2:10 to make their case, both 1 Cor 2:10 and Jn 16:13 actually support the claim that there is no other revelation outside of the Biblical text.⁷⁰ Certainly, those who dismiss the Holy Spirit altogether can see that John 16:12-15, 1 Corinthians 2, and 1 John 5:6 present a different case.⁷¹ The Holy Spirit [God], as the inspirer of Scripture must intervene in the minds of sinful humans in order for them to truly understand that which is God's; His Word. Void of the Holy Spirit, humanity considers the Gospel message as foolishness (1 Cor 1:18-31; 1 Cor 2:14). There is no understanding that leads to a changed life.⁷² The life of the believer is very different, because God's Spirit dwells in them, personally convicting them, guiding them, explaining to them, and teaching spiritual things (1 Cor 2:13; Jn 16:7-13). The believer has the "foundation for" proper biblical interpretation within them [the Spirit], but their interpretation can still fall short.⁷³ Humans are both fallible and sinful, and must never cease to rely on the Spirit.⁷⁴ The Holy Spirit continues being involved in the believer's life as He conforms the person "to the image of" Christ (Rom 8:29). One cannot bring this idea home better than M. X. Seaman who states, "Indeed, the end of biblical interpretation and the Spirit's illumination is transformation."⁷⁵

⁷⁰ Henry, *God, Revelation and Authority*, Ch 12.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁷² Seaman, *Illumination and Interpretation*, 41.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 49.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 41.

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