

**Vespers II**  
6 December 2009  
*Concordia Lutheran Mission*  
Terrebonne, Oregon

## **“Christ Possesses the Sevenfold Gifts of the Spirit in Order to Save Men by the Cross through the Gospel.”**

“And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD ... .”

**Isaiah 11:2**

### **Introduction**

Is the Holy Spirit active in the redemption of the world? Yes, the Holy Spirit is active in the redemption of the world. Isaiah makes that plain when He states that the Holy Spirit rests upon the Savior, the Redeemer of the world.

Because the Holy Spirit rests upon the Savior He is active in the work of the Savior. The Savior came to establish perfect human righteousness on earth and, thereby, reconcile God to man, redeem, and save man.

The Holy Spirit assisted the Savior in the work by applying His wisdom, understanding, counsel, might, knowledge, and the understanding of the fear of the Lord, the Sevenfold Gifts of the Spirit, to Christ fulfilling all human righteousness. Through the work of the Spirit in Christ, man now is established in perfect righteousness pleasing to God and every sin against God is atoned for.

Furthermore, the Spirit is active in applying this work in which He cooperated with Christ to atone for the sins of the world through the Gospel. Through the Gospel the Holy Spirit works saving faith in the hearts of men and preserves saving faith by applying the atonement He helped the Savior fashion on the Cross.

The Holy Spirit, then, is active in the redemption of the world by fashioning that redemption in the Cross of Christ and applying the benefits of that redemption through the Gospel in order to forgive sins, create and sustain faith, and give to man life everlasting and the resurrection of the body.

## I. The Spirit is Active in Christ's Atoning for the Sins of the World.

### A. The Holy Spirit is active in Christ's Work to atone for the sins of the world because He is God and, therefore, Creator and Redeemer.

During this season of Advent we are meditating on Isaiah 11. Isaiah 11 is a chapter of the book of Isaiah on the Person and Work of Christ to redeem men from their sins by His atoning for the sins of the world and through the distribution of the benefits of that atonement through the Gospel<sup>1</sup>.

In verse 2 of Isaiah 11 we see that the Holy Spirit is active in Christ's Work to atone for the sins of the world, for Isaiah writes that the Holy Spirit rests upon Christ the Redeemer.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> "Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." **I Timothy 2:6.** Luther: "Note well this passage and others like it. They distinguish between redemption as an actual act and redemption as it is preached. Had Christ been crucified a hundred thousand times and had nothing been said about it, what profit would the act of His being brought to the cross have brought? But when I come to this, I must draw this act into history and publish it for all the world. Also, if anyone had seen this, he would not have thought that the work of redemption was taking place there. The work is fulfilled on the cross, but no one knows of the redemption except the Father and the Son. Therefore to the act also the use of the act must be added, that it may be declared through the Word and that one may hold it by faith and, thus believing, may be saved." *Luther's Works*, Vol. 28, p. 268.

<sup>2</sup> "But we believe, teach, and confess that God the Father has so given His Spirit to Christ, His beloved Son, according to the assumed humanity (on account of which He is called also *Messias, i.e.,* the Anointed), that He has not received His gifts by measure as other saints. For *upon Christ* the Lord, according to His assumed human nature (because, according to His divinity, He is of one essence with the Holy Ghost), rests *The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge [and of the fear of the Lord]*, Col. 2, 3; Is. 11, 2; 61, 1] ..., therefore (as the Fathers say) the entire fulness of the spirit has been communicated by the personal union to Christ according to the flesh, which is personally united with the Son of God." *The Formula of Concord, Thorough Declaration, VIII. Of the Person of Christ.* 72, 73, 74, *Triglotta*, p. 1041.

"The incarnation of the Son of God is ascribed to His [the Holy Spirit's] operation (Luke 1:35). The Holy Spirit was with Jesus in the exercise of divine power. "How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power" (Acts 10:38). Jesus says: "But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the Kingdom of God is come upon you" (Luke 11:20). Since Jesus uses the expression "finger of God," we may attribute the writing of the Law to the

From this fact we learn that the Holy Spirit was active in Christ in the redemption of man. The Rev. Dr. George Stoekhardt writes:

The Spirit of the Lord settles down upon the Son of David and so rests upon him. ... The expression calls to mind the similar statement of John the Baptist, that he saw the Spirit descending and resting upon Jesus. John 1, 32. Christ is Emmanuel, God in human flesh, the mighty God. But the Spirit of God permeates and has complete control also of his human nature, of his human life and activity from the very first. The humble, despised Branch is anointed beyond measure with the Spirit of God.<sup>3</sup>

But in popular thought, the Holy Spirit isn't really considered active in the work of Christ atoning for the sins of the world.<sup>4</sup> In popular thought, the Holy Spirit is just sort of active in doing His own thing apart from Christ. But Isaiah makes plain that the Holy Spirit rests upon the Savior. The Holy Spirit, then, is active in the Work of Christ's redeeming men from their sins because He rests upon the Savior, the Redeemer of the world.

---

Holy Spirit, for it is said that God gave to Moses 'two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God' (Ex. 31:18)." The Rev. G. Hageman, *The Abiding Word*, Vol. I, p. 52.

<sup>3</sup>*Isaiah: The First Twelve Chapters*, p. 119. "Stoekhardt, Georg; b. February 17, 1842, at Chemnitz, Saxony; received his preparatory education in the Lateinschule at Tharandt and the Fuerstenschule at Meissen; studied theology at Erlangen and Leipzig 1862- 6 ... . In 1878 he became pastor of Holy Cross Church, St. Louis, and, having since 1879 lectured on Old and New Testament Exegesis at Concordia Seminary, was elected professor in 1887. In 1903 Luther Seminary, Hamline, Minn., created him a Doctor of Divinity. D. January 9, 1913, Stoekhardt was an exegete of the first rank. Coupled with his great learning, his familiarity with the original languages, etc., and his logical mind was his firm belief in the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures and his childlike acceptance of all the teachings of Scripture, his great love of the revealed truth. He permitted nothing but the text to influence his thought. Concentrating all the powers of his believing heart and mind on the written Word, he obtained a wonderful grasp of the deep thoughts of the Spirit, and he had the rare gift of unfolding them in concise, clear, convincing language. ... The Missouri Synod owes much to him; his exegetical ability and love of the truth of Scripture made him one of the leaders with Walther, in the controversy on election and conversion and in the other battles the Church was, and is, engaged in, such as for verbal inspiration. In line with the article written on his accession to the chair of Exegesis: "How Can and Should Each Individual Lutheran Lend His Aid toward the Preservation of the Pure Doctrine by the Church?" he labored, by word and pen (his doctrinal articles in *Lehre und Wehre*, in *Lutheraner* and in the synodical reports), to conserve this most precious treasure of the Missouri Synod; and he admirably succeeded in impressing upon both his students and his readers his exegetical method, his loving reverence for the written Word." *Concordia Cyclopedia*, pp. 729, 730, s.v. "**Stoekhardt, Georg**".

<sup>4</sup>"The restoration of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, His Person and function, is largely the gift of the Reformation, growing out of the great Scriptural principle that a man is saved by faith alone and not by works. The dominant emphasis on the doctrine of justification by faith inevitably had to involved the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, not merely the personality and the deity of the Holy Spirit, but on a much broader scale his work, the application of the merits procured by Christ to sinful, helpless man." The Rev. G. Hageman, *The Abiding Word*, Vol. I, p. 40.

And this involvement of the Holy Spirit in our redemption should not surprise us, for the Spirit is God. Because the Holy Spirit is God, He, therefore, is our Creator<sup>5</sup> and cares deeply for us, His creation, and also, after the fall into sin, is deeply concerned with and involved in our redemption and salvation in Christ from sin.

The Holy Spirit created us in the beginning. Moses writes:

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness *was* upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.<sup>6</sup>

David writes:

By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.<sup>7</sup>

In Job we read:

The spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.<sup>8</sup>

And because the Holy Spirit is our Creator, it is not surprising to see also that He is our Redeemer because He is concerned with His creation after the fall into sin. St. Paul writes:

How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?<sup>9</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup>c. The Scriptures ascribe to the Holy Spirit such works as properly belong to God only. He is described as the Creator. 'And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters' (Gen. 1:2). He is the Giver of life: 'The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life' (Job 33:4). 'By the Word of the Lord were the heavens made and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth' (Ps. 33:6). In Him all creatures live and move and have their being. 'Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created; Thou renewest the face of the earth.'" The Rev. G. Hageman, *The Abiding Word*, Volume I, p. 52.

<sup>6</sup>**Genesis 1:1-2.**

<sup>7</sup>Compare, for example, the following verses: "... and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked." **Isaiah 11:4.** "And when he said this, he breathed on *them*, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whose seover sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; *and* whose seover *sins* ye retain, they are retained." **St. John 20:22-23.**

<sup>8</sup>**Job 33:4**

<sup>9</sup>**Hebrew 9:14**

The Holy Spirit is active, then, in Christ to redeem men from their sins because He is God, Creator and Redeemer.<sup>10</sup>

**B. The Holy Spirit effects reconciliation between God and man by applying the atoning Blood of Jesus Christ and His perfect righteousness for us to every infinitesimal of the infinite God.**

St. Paul says Christ offered Himself to God through the Spirit. In order for the Holy Spirit to accomplish this work, He must be able to search every last aspect of the infinite and eternal God. In order to apply Christ's atoning blood to every last aspect of the infinite and eternal God, the Holy Spirit Himself must be infinite and eternal. And so He is. St. Paul writes:

But God hath revealed *them* unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.<sup>11</sup>

And the Holy Spirit has to apply Christ's atoning blood to the deep things of God because of our sin. Because we sin against God who is infinite, then, our offense is infinite. And because we sin against God who goes on forever, then our offense goes on forever. For this reason, because we have offended the Infinite and Eternal Majesty of God, Christ Himself had to be God in order to pay our infinite and eternal debt. The Rev. Dr. John Gerhard writes:

Miserable man had angered the infinite God with his sin; therefore, he fell into an infinite evil. Such an infinite evil could be paid for and removed in no other way than with the infinite Good. Now then, apart from God nothing is infinitely good. That's why God became man, so that man be enabled to pay on the strength of the infinite divinity, so that this divine payment avail for the benefit of man on account of the personal union, and so that divine righteousness adequately accomplish this.<sup>12</sup>

---

<sup>10</sup>Ordinarily, Scripture speaks of the Father as Creator and the Son as Redeemer. This language is reflected in the Creed. But because the Holy Spirit is God, while the main work ascribed to Him is sanctification, Scripture also nevertheless ascribes to Him the work of Creator and Redeemer, as seen above. Scripture also uses the same language with the Father and the Son. While Scriptural especially ascribes Creation to the Father, and Redemption to the Son, it also ascribes to the Father Redemption and Sanctification, and the Son Creation and Sanctification, because while separate persons they are still the One, True God.

<sup>11</sup>**I Corinthians 2:10.**

<sup>12</sup>*Seven Christmas Sermons*, p. 37. "Johann Gerhard (1582-1637) has rightly been classified the 'third preeminent theologian after Luther and Chemnitz.' ... However, while Gerhard is best remembered for his great dogmatics, the *Loci Theologici*, Gerhard produced a number of devotional volumes and preach many sermons to the 'common man.' The sermons in this volume were apparently preached when Gerhard was 31 years old and already superintendent at Heldburg and a Doctor of Divinity." **Foreword** from *Seven Christmas Sermons*.

And because Christ offered Himself to God through His Holy Spirit, then, obviously, Christ's Holy Spirit, therefore, has to be infinite and eternal. And, of course, this fact that Holy Spirit is infinite and eternal should not surprise us because He is Christ's Spirit; and Christ is God and, therefore, the Holy Spirit is God's Spirit and must, therefore, be infinite and eternal.

The Holy Spirit, then, because He is God Himself, is able to search the deep things of God and apply the atoning blood of Jesus Christ to every last infinitesimal of the infinite God offended by our sins.

And the Holy Spirit offers not only Christ's atoning blood, but also His perfect righteousness<sup>13</sup> in order to reestablish God-pleasing human righteousness to every last infinitesimal of the infinite God. This perfect righteousness and holy life is called Christ's *Active Obedience*. Christ's *Active Obedience* means that Christ fulfilled the commandments perfectly, loving God and neighbor perfectly.<sup>14</sup> Christ, therefore, lived a righteous, holy and sanctified life. And because Christ is God, He has no need of this human righteousness and holiness; so, He gives it to us sinful men who are in dire need of human righteousness and holiness pleasing to God.

*Now, what could be more convincing that our holiness is without spot, blemish, or sin, than the knowledge that the Holy Spirit Himself has created our sanctified living through Christ our Savior? Nothing – because there is no greater holiness than the Holy Spirit, who is God Himself. Our holiness and righteousness in Christ is nothing less than the righteousness of God Himself.*<sup>15</sup>

---

<sup>13</sup>“Although in many passages of Scripture the work of redemption is ascribed to Christ's death and the shedding of His blood, yet this must by no means be understood *exclusive*, as if by it the holy life of Christ were excluded from the work of redemption. But it is done for the reason that nowhere does the fact that the Lord has loved and redeemed us shine forth more clearly than in His Passion, death, and wounds, as the devout older teachers say; the death of Christ is, as it were, the last line and completion, the [telos], the end and perfection, of the entire obedience, as the Apostle says in Phil. 2:8. In this merit it is altogether impossible to separate the active from the passive obedience.” The Rev. Dr. John Gerhard, quoted in the Rev. Dr. Francis Pieper's *Christian Dogmatics*, Vol. II, p. 376, footnote 81, transliteration added.

<sup>14</sup>“As my *Priest*, Christ *fulfilled the Law* in my stead perfectly (active obedience), *sacrificed Himself* for me (passive obedience), and still *intercedes* (pleads) for me with His heavenly Father.” *The Small Catechism*, question 132 B, p. 108.

The Rev. Dr. Francis Pieper writes: “This teaching of Scripture is of great practical importance. In his life of faith the Christian continually resorts to Christ's vicarious fulfillment of the Law. Luther: ‘He satisfied the Law; He fulfilled the Law perfectly, for He loved God with all His heart, and with all His soul, and with all His strength, and with all His mind, and He loved His neighbor as Himself. Therefore, when the Law comes and accuses you of not having kept it, bid it go to Christ. Say: There is the Man who has kept it; He fulfilled it for me and gave His fulfillment to me. Thus the Law is silenced.’” *Christian Dogmatics*, Vol. II, p. 375.

<sup>15</sup>“For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of

The Holy Spirit's work in Christ Our Savior began at His conception in the womb of the Virgin Mary. St. Matthew the Apostle writes:

But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.<sup>16</sup>

Unlike fallen man, who is sinful and unholy from conception, Christ is sinless and perfectly holy from conception and birth because of the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit. Luther writes:

Christ is born for you and that his birth is yours, and come to pass for your benefit. For the Gospel teaches that Christ was born for our sake and that he did everything and suffered all things for our sake ... . Christ has a pure, innocent, holy birth. Man has an impure, sinful, damned birth, as David says in Psalm 51[:5]: "Behold, in sin am I fashioned in the womb, and in sin did my mother conceive me." There is no remedy for this except through the pure birth of Christ. Now the birth of Christ cannot be distributed physically, even as that would not be of any help either. For this reason it is distributed spiritually, by means of the word, to everyone, ... so that all who firmly believe that it is given to them in this manner shall not be harmed by their impure birth; this is the manner and means to become cleansed from the stain of the birth we have from miserable Adam. Christ will be born so that we might be born in a different manner, as he says in John 3[3-6],. This happens through faith, as James 1:[18] says: "He has born us of his own will through his word of truth, so that we begin to be his new creation." In this manner Christ takes to himself our birth and absorbs it in his birth; he presents us with his birth so that we become pure and new in it, as if it were our own, so that every Christian might rejoice in this birth of Christ and glory in it no less than if he, too, like Christ, had been born bodily of Mary. ... But see to it that you make his birth your own, and that you make an exchange with him, so that you rid yourself of your birth and receive instead, his. This happens, if you have this faith. By this token you sit assuredly in the Virgin Mary's lap and are her dear child.<sup>17</sup>

---

God in him." **II Corinthians 5:21.** "but we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." **II Thessalonians 2:13-14.**

<sup>16</sup>**St. Matthew 1:20.** And so we confess in the Creed: "And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord; Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary ... ." *The Lutheran Hymnal*, p. 12.

<sup>17</sup>*Luther's Works*, Vol. 52, pp. 14, 15, 16.

The prophet Isaiah details further Christ's sanctified life engendered by Christ's Holy Spirit at work in Christ and in His Redemptive Work for us:

And the spirit of the LORD<sup>18</sup> shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD.<sup>19</sup>

**Wisdom**<sup>20</sup>: The Holy Spirit is active in Christ's redemptive work because A. He is Christ's Spirit because Christ is God<sup>21</sup> and B. because the Holy Spirit rests upon Him, the Savior. And the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Wisdom because He is Christ's Spirit; and Christ is God's Wisdom.<sup>22</sup>

Wisdom is the wholesome and useful application of knowledge.<sup>23</sup> Certainly, it was wholesome and useful knowledge when God created us in the beginning. And it is certainly the

---

<sup>18</sup>The Rev. Dr. George Stoeckhardt writes: "The first, more common name, 'ruah YHWH', the Spirit of the Lord, designates the Spirit as 'the Bearer of the entire fullness of divine power'." *Isaiah: The First Twelve Chapters*, p. 199.

<sup>19</sup>**Isaiah 11:2.**

<sup>20</sup>The Rev. Dr. George Stoeckhardt writes: "'Ruah habhemah' is the Spirit of wisdom, the 'sophia' which inquires into the essence of things, also the depths of the Godhead." *Isaiah: The First Twelve Chapters*, p. 119.

<sup>21</sup>"according to His divinity, He is of one essence with the Holy Ghost ... ." *The Formula of Concord, Thorough Declaration, VIII. Of the Person of Christ.* 72, 73, 74, *Triglotta*, p. 1041.

<sup>22</sup>The Rev. Dr. John Gerhard writes: "With this passage of Proverbs 8 I also compare the other passages of Scripture in which creation is attributed to the Wisdom of God. Prov. 3:19-20: 'The Lord founded the earth in Wisdom; in understanding He established the heavens. Through His Wisdom the abysses were divided and the clouds drop down the dew.' Ps. 104:24: 'You have made all things in Wisdom.' Jer. 10:12: 'It is God who established the world in His Wisdom and in His prudence stretched out the heavens.' *On the Nature of God and On the Most Holy Mystery of the Trinity*, tr. Richard J. Dinda, ed. and annotated by Benjamin T. J. Mayes, St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2007, p. 379. Dr. Gerhard continues: "It is clear that this Wisdom is the hypostatic Second Person of the Deity, the Son of God. This is clear not only from the New Testament (Matt. 11:19; Luke 7:35; 11:49; I Cor. 1:24; Col. 2:3) but also from Proverbs 8, where He is set forth to us as a person distinct from the Father before the creation of the world, that is, as begotten by Him from eternity, as well as from Ps. 2:7 and Prov. 30:4, where this Wisdom is called "the Son of God." *ibid.* p. 379. "Johann Gerhard (1582-1637) has rightly been classified the 'third preminent theologian after Luther and Chemnitz.' ... However, while Gerhard is best remembered for his great dogmatics, the *Loci Theologici*, Gerhard produced a number of devotional volumes and preach [sic] many sermons to the 'common man.' The sermons in this volume were apparently preached when Gerhard was 31 years old and already superintendent at Heldburg and a Doctor of Divinity." **Foreword** from *Seven Christmas Sermons*.

<sup>23</sup>"the faculty of making the best use of knowledge, experience, understanding, etc.; good judgment; sagacity." *Webster's Unabridged Dictionary*, p. 2099, s.v. "**wisdom**".

wholesome and application of knowledge when the Holy Spirit presses His infinite knowledge into the redemption of mankind from sin. The Spirit of Wisdom rebuilds a righteous relationship between God and man through Christ our Savior and, thereby, re-creates man unto life eternal with God. The Holy Spirit, therefore, is the Spirit of Wisdom because He presses His knowledge into the useful and wholesome work of saving men from sin and granting them eternal life.

**Understanding<sup>24</sup>:** The Holy Spirit has discernment and knowledge of creation because He is God. With this keen understanding, the Holy Spirit is active in Christ Our Savior to restore His creation, man, to the Image of God and a right relationship with God and, thereby, give man eternal life.

And the Holy Spirit is fully capable of carrying out the difficult and complex work of restoring the relationship between God and fallen man because He is the Almighty God and Creator of man, who is able to search and discern the deep things of God and man<sup>25</sup> and understands everything about man's condition and his broken relationship with God and how to sort the matter out for his salvation and restore an eternal relationship.

**Counsel<sup>26</sup>:** The Holy Spirit that rests upon Christ and is active in Him in the redemption of the world is the Spirit of Counsel. This Spirit is the same Holy Spirit who counseled with the Father and the Son in the beginning to create man in the Image of God.<sup>27</sup> And so, it is not

---

<sup>24</sup>The Rev. Dr. George Stoeckhardt writes: "And the 'ruah Biynah' is the Spirit of understanding or insight, which understands the distinction of things." *Isaiah: The First Twelve Chapters*, p. 119.

<sup>25</sup>"For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." **I Corinthians 2:11.**

<sup>26</sup>The Rev. Dr. George Stoeckhardt writes: "The Spirit's second double name, 'the Spirit of counsel and might', points back to the double name given the Messiah; 'Counsellor,' 'mighty God'. 9,6. He who is called 'Counsellor' and the 'mighty God', he who is anointed with the Spirit of counsel and might knows what to do when his people are in dire need and gives counsel and brings his people the long-awaited redemption." *Isaiah: The First Twelve Chapters*, p. 119.

<sup>27</sup>Luther: "Let Us make man according to Our image and likeness. Here again Moses employs a new expression. He does not say: 'Let the sea be set in motion,' 'Let the earth bring forth herbs,' or 'Let it bring forth.' He says: 'Let us make.' Therefore he includes an obvious deliberation and plan; he did nothing similar in the case of the earlier creatures. There, without any deliberation and counsel, He said: 'Let the sea be put in motion,' 'Let the earth produce,' etc. But here, when He wants to create man, God summons Himself to a council and announces some sort of deliberation. Therefore, in the first place, there is indicated here an outstanding difference between man and all the other creatures. ... But here Moses points out an outstanding difference between these living beings and man when he says that man as created by the special plan and providence of God. This indicates that man is a creature far superior to the rest of the living beings that live a physical life, especially since as yet his nature not become depraved. Epicurus holds the opinion that man as created solely to eat and drink. But this is equivalent to making no difference between man and the rest of the beasts, which also have their desires and follow them. Here the text definitely sets man apart when it says that in a special deliberation God gave consideration to the creation of man, and not only that but also to making him in the image of God. This image is something far different from the

surprising to see the Holy Spirit in conjunction with the Father and the Son active in counsel to restore in man after the fall the Image of God through Christ Our Savior and, thereby, give man eternal life. The Rev. Dr. John Gerhard writes:

The reason why this Child [Jesus], this Son, is also called **Counselor** is that He, in counsel with [the other Persons of] Holy Trinity, helped reach the conclusion of how fallen mankind could be helped again. The unending righteousness of God was offended by the Fall of Adam. Now then, there was only an unending payment required, which neither angel nor man could provide. Therefore there was no counsel either in heaven or upon earth. Thus, the Son of God, the eternal Wisdom, came up with the counsel that He would volunteer Himself as Mediator and Redeemer, that He especially in the fullness of time wanted to take into Himself human nature and within it make payment for us men.<sup>28</sup>

**Might**<sup>29</sup>: The Holy Spirit obviously possesses might and power because He is the Almighty God. In Christ, the Holy Spirit presses His Almighty power into the infinite and eternal task of establishing human righteousness pleasing to God so that once again God will dwell with man, and that forever. The fact that the Holy Spirit is Almighty is comforting because we, then, know that the Holy Spirit is not only willing but also *able* to effect our sanctification pleasing to God and, thereby, our salvation.

**Knowledge**<sup>30</sup>: The Holy Spirit possesses knowledge because He is the all-knowing God, fully capable of sorting out man's situation, dire need, and reestablishing human righteousness pleasing to God on earth that delivers man from his doom into life eternal.

---

concern of the belly, namely, food and drink, things for which the beasts also have understanding and appreciation.” *Luther's Works*, Vol. 1, pp. 55, 56.

<sup>28</sup>*Seven Christmas Sermons*, pp. 75, 76. “Johann Gerhard (1582-1637) has rightly been classified the ‘third preeminent theologian after Luther and Chemnitz.’ ... However, while Gerhard is best remembered for his great dogmatics, the *Loci Theologici*, Gerhard produced a number of devotional volumes and preach many sermons to the ‘common man.’ The sermons in this volume were apparently preached when Gerhard was 31 years old and already superintendent at Heldburg and a Doctor of Divinity.” **Foreword** from *Seven Christmas Sermons*.

<sup>29</sup>The Rev. Dr. George Stoeckhardt writes: “The Spirit’s second double name, ‘the Spirit of counsel and might’, points back to the double name given the Messiah; ‘Counselor,’ ‘mighty God’. 9,6. He who is called ‘Counselor’ and the ‘mighty God’, he who is anointed with the Spirit of counsel and might knows what to do when his people are in dire need and gives counsel and brings his people the long-awaited redemption.” *Isaiah: The First Twelve Chapters*, p. 119.

<sup>30</sup>The Rev. Dr. George Stoeckhardt writes: “The last-named pair refers to the direct relationship of the Son of David to God and his conduct toward God. ... [The knowledge of the LORD] ... is ‘knowledge grounded in love-fellowship’, and [fear of the LORD] is ‘fear of the Lord given in adoration’.” *Isaiah: The First Twelve Chapters*, p. 119.

**Fear of the Lord**<sup>31</sup>: The Holy Spirit establishes in Christ proper fear of the Lord, i.e. respecting the Lord to keep and fulfill His promises to bless righteousness and punish sin. In the Garden of Eden Adam failed to fear the Lord, but took the Lord for a joke and disobeyed His Word, figuring God would not carry out His promise that Adam would die. The Holy Spirit, however, working through and in the Redeemer properly fashions human righteousness that does what man was originally supposed to do: Fear the Lord, i.e. take seriously God and His Word.

Plainly, Adam forfeited the Holy Spirit when he sinned in the Garden of Eden and perished. But we see in Christ the blessed Truth that now the Holy Spirit in Christ once again rests upon men and, thereby, sanctifies the human race, establishes men in the perfect righteousness of God, and grants unto sinners, unto us, eternal life. *The Holy Spirit, then, who was forfeited by sin in the Garden of Eden, is restored to men by absolution of that sin through Christ Our Savior.* St. John the Apostle writes:

And when he had said this, he breathed on *them*, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; *and* whose soever *sins* ye retain, they are retained.<sup>32</sup>

The Rev. Dr. George Stoeckhardt writes of the Holy Spirit's work in Christ throughout His life to effect man's redemption:

To the Spirit, who rests upon him, are given seven names that designate the Spirit's various gifts and powers. On the basis of this passage the church speaks of a Spiritus septiformis [Sevenfold Spirit]. Accordingly, the prophecy of Zechariah, 4,6.10, and Rev 1,4; 3,1; 4,5; 5,6 speak of the seven eyes of the seven Spirits of God, that is, of the Spirit of God in the diversity of his gifts, powers, and activities. ... What we read here in V. 2 points to the work which the Messiah performs in the power of God's Spirit during his visible, lowly appearing on earth. The kingly rule of the Exalted One is first discussed from V. 3 on. And so the New Testament then testifies that David's Son Jesus Christ, who was conceived and born by the power of the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary was anointed beyond measure with the Spirit of God, that the Spirit of God was already with the boy Jesus, that then at the baptism, when he was to be revealed to Israel, the Spirit of God descended upon him in visible form, and that he, anointed with the Holy Spirit and with power, went about doing good. Acts 10, 38. In all his life and activity on earth Christ displayed the Spirit's gifts and powers. His

---

<sup>31</sup>The Rev. Dr. George Stoeckhardt writes: "The last-named pair refers to the direct relationship of the Son of David to God and his conduct toward God. ... [The knowledge of the LORD] ... is 'knowledge grounded in love-fellowship', and [fear of the LORD] is 'fear of the Lord given in adoration'." *Isaiah: The First Twelve Chapters*, p. 119.

<sup>32</sup>St. John 20:22-23.

entire life was submission to God, fear, love, and obedience. He preached with power and not as the scribes, he revealed to the immature the mysteries of God and showed them the right way of God. He counseled and helped his people in all their needs and delivered them from their direst afflictions, Through suffering and death he redeemed Israel from all its sins.<sup>33</sup>

## **II. The Holy Spirit Builds Christ's Church through Giving to Men the Saving Righteousness of Christ by the Gospel.**

### **A. The Holy Spirit builds Christ's Church with the Sevenfold Gifts and Christ's Atoning Blood.**

And one would think the Spirit has done enough in Christ, but He is not yet finished. The Holy Spirit is active to this day in building Christ's Church through the distribution of the benefits of the Work of Christ through the Gospel. Solomon writes that the Holy Spirit builds Christ's Church through the Sevenfold Gifts of the Spirit. Solomon writes:

Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars.<sup>34</sup>

The Holy Spirit builds the His House, the Church, upon the Foundation of Christ and His Righteousness for us, i.e. the Seven Pillars, namely the Sevenfold Gifts of the Spirit. For this reason, in **Proverbs 9:1** *Wisdom is spoken of in the plural, namely, Wisdoms, because of the Sevenfold Gifts of the Spirit active in Christ to atone for the sins of the world and to create human righteousness upon the earth pleasing to God.* The Sevenfold Gifts of the Spirit is the Seven Pillars or Foundation of Christ's Church.

*The Holy Spirit, therefore, is called in Proverbs 9 Wisdoms, plural, reflecting the Sevenfold gifts of the Spirit active in God's Wisdom, Christ the Crucified for sinful men, to effect the salvation of men.* Solomon writes:

[Wisdoms]<sup>35</sup> hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars.<sup>36</sup>

---

<sup>33</sup>*Isaiah: The First Twelve Chapters*, pp. 119, 120, amplification added.

<sup>34</sup>**Proverbs 9:1.** Luther: "The apostles and martyrs were like this when they were drunk with the Holy Spirit. For a vine is very choice, and concerning it Wisdom says in Prov. 9:5: 'Come, eat of my bread and drink of the wine I have mixed. Then you will drink and become drunk, but with spiritual drunkenness.' ... Thus I understand this passage to mean that in Christ and in the time of Christ we must become drunk on the abundance of His house (cf. Ps. 36:8); that is, we are to receive the Holy Spirit from the Word and hearing." *Luther's Works*, Vol. 8, p. 249.

<sup>35</sup>The Hebrew has the plural for wisdom, "chakhemoth".

<sup>36</sup>**Proverbs 9:1.**

And because there is only One Person here being spoken about, namely, the Holy Spirit, the Hebrew connects the Hebrew plural noun for wisdom with the Hebrew singular verb and pronoun, “hath builded her house”, not “have builded their house”. The Holy Spirit, then, is called Wisdom because He possesses the Sevenfold Gifts, which is the Righteousness of Christ, upon which He builds Christ’s Church. St. Paul writes:

Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner *stone*; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.<sup>37</sup>

And this righteous and holy foundation remains unsullied because the gift of the Spirit brings with it absolution of all sin and unholiness. St. John the Apostle writes:

And when he had said this, he breathed on *them*, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted not them; *and* whose soever *sins* ye retain, they are retained.<sup>38</sup>

### **B. The Holy Spirit and His gifts give eternal life through the Gospel.**

And, as we have seen, the Holy Ghost and His gifts are given through the Gospel. And where Holy Ghost and His gifts are given, there is the forgiveness of sins, the righteousness of Christ, and life eternal. St. Paul writes of the Gospel:

But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.<sup>39</sup>

## **Conclusion**

---

<sup>37</sup>**Ephesians 2:19-22.**

<sup>38</sup>**St. John 20:22-23.**

<sup>39</sup>**Titus 3:4-7.**

The Holy Spirit, then, builds Christ's Church on the Sevenfold Gifts of the Spirit, namely, the atoning blood of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins and the righteousness of God. On this sound foundation, the Holy Spirit builds His House and Christ's Eternal Church.

Through the Sevenfold Gifts of the Spirit come the forgiveness of sins, saving faith, the righteousness of Christ, the life everlasting, and the resurrection of the body.

*Amen.*