

The Spirit: Spoke by the Prophets

- Does he speak? How?
- How can we know the Spirit is present?
- Violent?
- Is there a conflict between Mind and Spirit?

Key Passages	The Holy Spirit is...	His work is...	In partnership with the Word & Jesus	So what?
Isaiah 63:10-13; Jer 23:29; Matt 3:11; Acts 2:3; 5:1-11; 7:51; Eph 6:17; Heb 3:7; 4:12; 1 Pet. 10-12; 2 Pet 1:19-21	The holy God A fire The Spirit of Prophecy	Speaking Purifying SANCTIFICATION	Word is the sword of the Spirit Sent by Jesus Points to and conforms to Christ	Fear Read/hear Keep in step

- Which do we (and our churches) usually think is more spiritual? A prepared exposition or a spontaneous 'rhema' word? Which is more powerful and exciting? What the Bible says or what a new prophet says now?
- What does Spirit-filled preaching look like / sound like?

Group Study: 1 Peter 1:10-12

- What is the content of Old Testament prophecy?
- Who is Old Testament prophecy for?
- What is the content of apostolic preaching?
- What is the role of the Spirit in these things?

1. The Spirit's Word – 2 Peter 1:19-21

- a) The Spirit of Christ was present in OT times
- b) He was in the prophets, carrying them along, ensuring that everything that was written in the Scriptures was exactly what God wanted written (superintending/supervising¹ not necessarily dictating) – the Bible is the Spirit's book
- c) The light in the dark place is the Scriptures – everything else (our ideas and feelings and 'revelations') is darkness²

¹ E.g. "The divine superintendence, which we call inspiration, extended to the verbal expression of the thoughts of the sacred writers, as well as to the thoughts themselves, and... hence the Bible, considered as a record, an utterance in words of a divine revelation, is the word of God to us" (Warfield and Hodge, *Inspiration*). Similarly: "Supervision in the strong sense of 'exercising control over'. This theory asserts that in the process of inspiration God sovereignly supervised and ordered the background, heredity, and circumstances of the individual writers; as a result, when they recorded events, meditations or sermons in writing, the words used were consciously the free composition of the authors and at the same time the very Word of God." (Bruce Milne, *Know the Truth*, 51).

² Objection: "But we have the Spirit of Christ in us so our words are also authoritative revelations like the prophets of old." Answer: 1) The promise of John 14:26 was to the Apostles not to us – they were given the task of writing down what the Spirit reminded and revealed to them; 2) The canon was considered closed at the end of the apostolic era and even the letters of the generations immediately after the apostles were never

Implications:

- Not receiving their words of the OT prophets = resisting the Holy Spirit (Acts 7:51-52)
- Spirit-led preaching = preaching through the Bible
- The Bible is not a dark book which the Spirit illuminates to give me special secret meanings. Rather the Spirit got the Bible written; the Bible is a shining lamp of clear meaning in human language; the problem is in me; the Spirit works in me to remove the veil from my eyes to see the truth he put in the Bible



2. The Spirit is speaking today... by his Word – Hebrews 3:7

3. The *Logos* and the *Rhema* Word

- a) Matthew 13:23 – the life giving seed is the *logos*
- b) Acts 10:44 – the Spirit falls as Peter *rhemas* the *logos*
- c) Hebrews 4:12 – the *logos* is living and active
- d) 1 Peter 1:23-2:3 – *logos* and *rhema* are the same content

4. There is no conflict between Spirit and Mind

- a) 1 Corinthians 14:13-19, 26-33 – it is not the case that if I prepare a sermon and stick to my notes that I do not 'leave room for the Spirit'
- b) 2 Timothy 2:7 – knees on the floor, nose in the text

5. The violent Spirit

- a) The holiness of God is often manifest as fire – Ex. 3; 19; Lev. 10 – jealous, passionate, refining fire (Mal. 3:2) – so the Holy Spirit is the Fire Spirit – Matt. 3:11; Acts 2:3 – purifying his people
- b) There is a conjunction in Scripture of Spirit-Power-Sword-Hammer-Fire (Isaiah 63:10; Jer. 20:9; 23:29; Eph. 6:17; Heb. 4:12)

Key point: The Spirit speaks today as the Word he authored is read and faithfully preached

Further reading:

- [Andrew Wilson, Wasn't the Canon of Scripture Decided Really Late? \(mp3\)](#)
- iServe Africa, *Let the Bible Speak*, chp. 5
- [Spirit-led preaching \(revisited\)](#)

considered for inclusion in the NT; 3) Even with the prophets and apostles who wrote Scripture, not all of their writings were inspired or their utterances infallible (e.g Matt. 16:22-23; Gal. 2:12-14). The prophets and apostles were only inspired at particular times when they were being carried along by the Spirit to write particular books and letters.