

Introduction (read Is. 9:6-7) popular passage for Xmas time

“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. 7 Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David’s throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever.”

- Beautiful passage, one of my preferred, at the heart of messianic prophecies, the Handel messiah...
- This is what Xmas is all about & looking forward; the establishment of a kingdom...
 - but not any kind of kingdom...(P, J, Pros.)
 - man tried, but failed...
- Redemption is so much more than just personal salvation
 - it looks forwards to cosmic redemption & political redemption
 - This is what we are looking forward; this is what God is working on
 - one thing to note is that w/ Christ 1st coming, the K is already but not yet fully established
- So, Yes, Xmas is about the incarnation,
 - but The incarnation is only one step towards this goal
 - Other phases included the sinless life of Christ, his death & Resurrection, then the outpouring of the HS.
- And this is the era in which we live; the time of the gentiles (Lk. 21:24), the era of the Spirit (Act 2:16), this era is characterize by the work of the HS
 - So that the presence of Christ be multiplied upon the earth through his followers and accomplish God work on this planet until Christ return.
 - So that we are not left orphans but having God walking w/ us, guiding us, empowering u
- But we often treat the HS as a “silent partner” sitting on the back seat of our life.
 - We forget the place and role of the HS in the life of the believer.
 - we forget that the HS is a person
 - intimately involved in our life and
 - in relationship w/us, helping us becoming more like Christ,
 - and helping us to become more like Christ; through sanctification
 - Empower us to his work, guide us through big decisions of life but also daily life.
 - We forget that the way we treat him & relate to him may/will affect the effectiveness of his role in our life, our growth, transformation.
- There is so much more to say on the HS but today, I want to focus on 5 commands given to Christmas on how to live in in relationship to the HS.

1) Be filled with the Holy Spirit (Eph. 5:18)

*“15 Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, 16 making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. 17 Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is. 18 Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, **be filled with the Spirit**, 19 speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit.”*

Being filled w. the HS

- An interesting concept speaking about being filled w/ the presence of God in our lives

- Acts 2:4; Was the first experience of the believers when Pentecost came (act 2:4ff) & resulted in powerful achievement & bold proclamation
- is the initial condition of the believer when they come to Christ, resulting from regeneration & baptism by the HS along w/ other spiritual operations
- v.15-17 here it is at the heart of wise/careful living & of God's will v.15-17
- v.18 don't get drunk w/ wine, but be filled w/... → contrast w/ being filled vs being drunk
 - Speaks of influence; be under the influence of...
 - speaks of being filled w/ God's presence as opposed to the things of the world OR self
 - speak of a way to find pleasure & satisfaction
- Speak to the fact that we are by nature vessel & recipient to be filled. The Q is to be filled w/ what? Under what influence are we going to be?
- V.18 The command's tense & mood
 - in the present imperative tense
 - Not a once for all experience but a continual/repetitive exp; "be continuously..."
 - In the passive mood
 - Be filled; to be performed on you, to be requested
- V.19 Being filled will has moral & spiritual implication
 - Wine → debauchery
 - HS → spiritual life; edification & consideration for OAO, praise & gratitude towards God
- Lk 11:1-13 how can we be filled? By simply requesting it and receiving it by faith
- Conclusion; what Paul is saying here is get back to your initial & normal condition as a believer
 - a. What does it mean?
 - i. Be filled w/ the presence of God
 - b. How to be filled?
 - c. Why to be filled

2) Live by the Spirit (Ga. 5:16)

"13 You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh[a]; rather, serve one another humbly in love. 14 For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself."[b] 15 If you bite and devour each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other.

*16 So I say, **walk by the Spirit**, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. 17 For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever[c] you want. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. 19 The acts of the flesh are obvious..."*

- In order to maintain filling, we need to live by the HS → next logical step...
 - We are called to be free & love OAO, but we are constantly challenged/facing temptation
 - So, don't indulge but serve in love
- How do we do that? → By adopting a certain way of life
 - V. 16 "live by the HS/be led by the S" & you won't gratify. HOW?
 - Every time we face the temptation coming from the desire of the flesh, we have a choice
 - Follow the desire of the HS → sanctification
 - Or follow the desire of the flesh, self-indulge, whether it is about buying, eating, etc....
 - Both the Spirit & flesh

- have contrary desire; incompatible, conflictual, mutually exclusive
 - Are going into opposite direction; of character, pleasure & outcome/fruit; holiness vs immorality, pride vs humility, conflicts vs love/peace/joy.
- How do we live by the Spirit? → By saying no to temptation.
 - Starving the sinful nature, mortifying the sinful nature. Saying no to self-indulgence
 - Gen. 4: 6 “sin is crouching at your door, it desires to have you, but you must master it”
 - Titus 2; “11 for the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. 12 It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, 13 while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ,”
- Conclusion; this is how we maintain being filled w/ the HS
 - And if we fall, we go by the way of confession, repentance.
- a. What does it mean...?
 - i. We can follow the Spirit or the flesh desire
 - ii. Follow his lead So that we don’t indulge in sin, be able to say no
- b. How can we be led

3) Do not grieve the HS (Eph. 4:30)

- a. What does that mean to grieve the HS
- b. How can we grieve
- c. Why not grieve the HS

25 Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor, for we are all members of one body. 26 “In your anger do not sin”[d]: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, 27 and do not give the devil a foothold. 28 Anyone who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with their own hands, that they may have something to share with those in need.

29 Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. **30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.** 31 Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. 32 Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

- V. 30 what Paul is saying?
 - Is that we can grieve the HS like a child grieve a parent. (If a parent, you K what I am talking about). → We can cause some pain to God, trouble his heart, upset God...sadness, unhappiness, even distress really?
- How can we grieve the HS
 - Ge. 6:6 the first time the concept appear is at the time of the flood

“5 The Lord saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time. 6 The Lord “was grieved” (regretted) that he had made human beings on the earth, and his heart was deeply troubled. 7 So the Lord said...” → the practice of wickedness in general
 - Is. 63;10 “they rebelled and grieved his HS”
 - In our context is helpful in helping determining...;
 - Our context before & after refers to words (the way we speak) & feelings. So we can infer that these references are what can cause grief to the HS → get rid of...

- Words; falsehood, unwholesome talks, slander,
- Feelings; anger, unresolved feeling against others; bitterness, rage, brawling, unforgiveness
- Nursing a grudge against someone, or snubbing others
- Could we also add the way we spend money (indulge...), we eat, use our time; could this also be things that can grieve the HS?
- The result of immoral life style;
 - Break the fellowship & affect the relation, creates a cold, not losing salv.

4) Do not put out/quench the Spirit's fire (1Thess. 5:19)

*"15 Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always strive to do what is good for each other and for everyone else. 16 Rejoice always, 17 pray continually, 18 give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. 19 **Do not quench the Spirit.** 20 Do not treat prophecies with contempt 21 but test them all; hold on to what is good, 22 reject every kind of evil."*

- What is Paul saying exactly?
 - Uses the imagery of fire as a metaphor for the HS;
 - camp fire; throwing water over the fire to end it
 - means there are things we can do that will quench the HS role & activities in our life
 - the result would be to put out the HS fire, i.e. not presence but activities/manifestations
 - How can we quench the HS?
 - Again Paul is not clear but the context can help us determine a little bit what he means
 - Context; v16-18; how to relate to other/God, v.19-22 how to react to God
 - V.19 In this context Paul refers to our attitude towards prophecy in particular "treating prophecies w/ contempt" for a reason or another (theological, past abuse, etc.) but also be discerning/ don't be gullible
 - but can also apply to the manifestation of the HS in general;
 - v 16-18. Can the preceding context also help clarify? Our attitude toward others & God and what he commands; rejoice, pray, give thanks in all circ. for it is the will of God
 - not rejoicing, ignoring/neglecting prayer, or giving thanks
 - But instead having a negative attitude; a grumbling/neg. att.
 - Can that also quench the HS of God?
- a. What does it mean to put out...?
- b. How can we do it?
- c. Why not doing it?

5) Seek & Obey the HS (He.3: 7-9, 13, 15, 4:7)

"3 Therefore, holy brothers and sisters, who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on Jesus, whom we acknowledge as our apostle and high priest. 2 He was faithful to the one who appointed him, just as Moses was faithful in all God's house. 3 Jesus has been found worthy of greater honor than Moses, just as the builder of a house has greater honor than the house itself. 4 For every house is built by someone, but God is the builder of everything. 5 "Moses was faithful as a servant in all God's house,"[a] bearing witness to what would be spoken by God in the future. 6 But Christ is faithful as the Son over

God's house. And we are his house, if indeed we hold firmly to our confidence and the hope in which we glory.

Warning Against Unbelief

7 So, as the Holy Spirit says: "Today, if you hear his voice, 8 do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion, during the time of testing in the wilderness, 9 where your ancestors tested and tried me, though for forty years they saw what I did. 10 That is why I was angry with that generation; I said, 'Their hearts are always going astray, and they have not known my ways.' 11 So I declared on oath in my anger, 'They shall never enter my rest.'" [b]

12 See to it, brothers and sisters, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. 13 But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called "Today," so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness. 14 We have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original conviction firmly to the very end. 15 As has just been said: "Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion." [c]

- What voice? The HS through Moses? The psalmist? Or the HS directly? But if the HS spoke through Moses and David, is it possible he can speak to/through us again today? As the book of Act tends to show?
- Has to do w/ their/our attitude towards HS instruction;
 - In this context; Hardening, unbelief, disobedience, rebellion, turning away (apostasy?)
 - In view of a call to salvation by believing in Christ
 - In view of abandoning the faith after they made a decision
 - For us, it can be any of the 2 above and also
 - Any situation involving instruction from God the HS
 - In general... anytime we K the HS is speaking to us.
- So, do not harden your heart, resist but obey, submit to the HS

6) Seek & Obey the HS (He.3: 7-9)

a. introduction

The question is, did this apply only to the time of the NT and the time the verse referred to in the OT

Does the HS speak to us today like he did in the past or not?

Is there only the Word to guide us or can the HS also speak to us today in a personal way/ manner, in through and beside the Scriptures

Precisely & clearly guide us in diff. area of life?

We recognize and acknowledge that the HS indwell us, empower us, seals us, gifts us but is that all. But we often treat him as a "silent partner" on the back seat of the car of our life.

We seek him but do not always expect clear guidance from him, we go w/ trial and error

We picture him as an obscure person/force

What about clear instructions & direction?

Our Theo focus on the person of JC, but often ignore the HS and what he has to tell us

And this is key to know what we are call to do and not to do, what we need to get involved in and what not, what are the tasks he calling us to carry and not (1Co3:5, and other verse about "task") for prayer direction (eph. 6:18, Ro. 8:26-27)

The missing part of our Theo & practice; the HS speaking, involved in speaking rather than just a "silent partner"

If the HS does not speak to us, then Christianity is more or less just an intellectual enterprise without intimacy and lacking the personal relationship we are so often talking about.

I would like to contend we should revisit our understanding of the HS, especially the way he relates to us.

b. Scriptural example

There is a number of clear instances in the Scripture where God/The HS speak & communicate to his people. Is it possible it is still the case today?

It can take different forms; a voice in your heart, a clear conviction, Scriptures also speak about dreams and visions

OT: (a) the whole concept of the voice of God (b) Samuel, God calling Samuel and instructed by Eli (c) 2 OT reference pointed to by He.3:7-8 in reference to the time of exodus, the psalmist. (d) Act 28:25 speaking via the prophet Isaiah

NT; (a) Ac. 10:13 "then a voice told him....Get up Peter..." v.15... (b) Ac.13:2 "then the HS said; Set apart for me..." (c) Ac. 8:29 "the Spirit told Philip..." (See other cross reference attached to this verse; 10:19, 11:12, 13:2, 20:23, 21:11) ¹

Was it only for the apostles or the time of the apostles? Is there any biblical reasons why it would be the case or are the arguments mainly theological?

c. Personal example

d. Words of caution; need for great discernment, test the spirits against scriptures, circumstances, godly counsel. must be in line w/ Script, if not sure, ask again, seek the counsel of the godly people if an important decision

¹ See also Ananias' vision about Paul: Ac.9:10