

The Emblems of the Holy Spirit

A Preacher's Workshop

by Charles B. Hodge, Jr.

INTRODUCTION

Being a grandfather, I am interested even in the silly things my grandchildren do. This is life! However, they must grow up and be responsible. The same is true with Christians. God is interested even in our trivia, but He wants us to grow up. Some think of the Holy Spirit as guiding us even in trivia—"What shall I wear?"; "What shall I eat?"; etc. There are some things I can and must do for myself.

This involves risk. Faith involves risk. There are times God wants us "to walk on water." We have made religion "too safe." Simply trust God and live. Yes, we may fail. Children fail many times as they grow up! This is the price of growing up! Besides, Jesus died on the cross for our failures! When we live at the cross Jesus allows God to forgive!

Remember, the Holy Spirit has no first or given name. He has titles, designations, and descriptions. He also is revealed with symbols or emblems. They are numerous and without valid connection.

I. THE EMBLEM OF FIRE (Isaiah 4:4; Matthew 3:11; Acts 2:1-4)

- A. Fire reveals. Nothing reveals as fire. It is the final test of gold and diamonds.
- B. Fire refines, cleanses, and purifies.
- C. Fire illuminates (John 5:35). Disciples preach; the Holy Spirit convicts. Fire causes the factory to operate. The machinery stands dead without fire.
- D. Fire glows and warms. Christianity is far more than mental logic, cold, hard facts. We need fire in pulpits.
- E. Fire generates energy. Every energy is possible with fire.
- F. Fire spreads quickly. The supreme need is not theoretical knowledge but practical power. The most profitable activity is not explaining mysteries but receiving the promise of the Father, the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is to evangelism what light is to a plant, what oil is to a lamp, what sap is to a tree, what breath is

to the body. No wonder Jesus wanted the disciples to receive the power. Cold logic will never win the multitudes. Evangelism cannot happen *through* Christians until it happens *to* them. Christianity is caught as well as taught. The believer cannot give to others what he does not possess himself.

II. THE EMBLEM OF WIND OR BREATH (Ezekiel 37:7-10; John 3:8; Acts 2:1-4; John 20:22, 23)

- A. Perhaps no one emblem best represents the Holy Spirit as the wind, invisible, not to be controlled, and beyond us. Everything else is too visible. The Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead is in us! This is *mindboggling!*
 1. John's leading word is *receive!* In breathing you exhale. You create a vacuum, then fill it.
 2. This is the simple basic of life.
- B. The wind that blows "where it wills" may be invisible, yet, in essence it is no less real.

III. THE EMBLEM OF WATER (Exodus 17:6; 1 Corinthians 10:4; John 3:3-5; 4:14; 7:38, 39)

- A. Water is life. It has always been God's dividing line.
- B. Take away the Spirit and there is death.

IV. THE EMBLEM OF A SEAL (Ephesians 1:11-14). It is a badge, guarantee, signet of ownership.

V. THE EMBLEM OF OIL (Luke 4:8; Acts 4:27; 10:38; 1 John 2:20, 27; 2 Corinthians 1:21). Oil has always held Biblical significance. Especially study Zechariah 4.

- A. Palestine is a land of olive trees. The utility of the tree touched many facets of their lives.
 1. The tabernacle and its furniture were anointed with oil. Pure olive oil kept the lamps burning in the Holy Place (Exodus 27:20, 21).
 2. Anointing oil was poured out on Aaron (Exodus 40:12-15). Aaron was a type of Christ, the High Priest, the Anointed One. Christ was born of the Spirit (Luke 1:35), and empowered by the Spirit to do His divine work (Luke 3:22; 4:1, 14, 18).

B. The anointing with oil had two significations—the power to heal spiritually and its relationship to medicine in healing.

VI. THE EMBLEM OF A DOVE (Luke 2; 4; Matthew 4; John 1:32)

- A. The Bible is a book of similitudes (Hosea 12:10). It is a book of similes, metaphors, allegories, parables, types, symbols, and emblems. Read Psalms 102:6 and Proverbs 25:25.
- B. Isaiah used the suffering servant as a lamb in Isaiah 53. John the Baptist called Jesus “the Lamb of God” (John 1:29, 36).

C. Consider the dove.

1. The dove is an emblem of peace as the eagle is an emblem of war.
2. Remember the flood? (Genesis 8:6-12). The raven did not return. It ate the dead. The dove returned. The corruption of the earth was offensive. The dove refused to eat the pollution. Therefore the raven could not be used for sacrifice (Leviticus 11:15). The dove was morally clean, ceremonially acceptable for sacrifice.
3. The Spirit “dwelled” upon Jesus.

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