351 Spirit (*Spiritus*)

According to Augustine,[[1]](#endnote-1) the Holy Spirit is the best gift. For great is the mercy of God that gives a gift equal to himself. For just as the human spirit gives to the body sense, word, motion, and standing, so the divine Christ gives man whom he loves the sense of charity not carnality, the word of truth not of vanity, the motion of sanctity not of foulness, the standing of firmness not of sharpness. For he makes us love fervently, to speak wisely, to work innocently, and continue perseveringly.

First therefore, he poured in charity for good loving, just as one working naturally without the artificial intends to print his likeness in that which he does, as a fire gives heat in a body in which it acts, a father gives his likeness in his child, an artist gives the form of his mind in his work. So, the Holy Spirit since it is the divine fire intends to pour into us love and transform us into the likeness of God according to that, [2] Cor. 3[:18]: “But we all are beholding the glory of the Lord with open face.” Because however, the Holy Spirit takes away the spiritual defilement, Act. 1[:5]: “John baptized you with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost, not many days hence.” And just as the fervor prevails against the preceding cold that it drives out, against the present which it resists, against the future following which it pushes against. So, the ardor of the Holy Spirit gives the medicine of health against the preceding sins, Rom. 8[:2]: “For the law of the spirit of life, in Christ Jesus.”

Second, it gives the protection of liberty against the present. For “where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty,” and without that Spirit is depression of judgment and debility, 2 Cor. 3[:17].

¶ Third, it gives the portion of astuteness against the future, just as one seeking rottenness at night it is apparent clearly as rottenness by day, so the soul illuminated by the Holy Spirit sees what is truly rotten, Gal. 5[:16]: “Walk in the spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh.”

¶ Second, because it confers the habit of love, for just as an unwashed body by its radiation confers heat, because light is the vehicle of heat, so the Holy Spirit for a reason radiates and confers the heat of charity, Rom. 5[:5]: “The charity of God is poured forth in our hearts.”

¶ Third, because it conveys its own reward of love, that one who gives in exchange a pledge of the flesh which is the debt itself. It is a sign that he wants to pay the debt itself, but God gives the Holy Spirit in a pledge to promise glory which is the pledge of the flesh than the promise itself. Therefore, the Holy Spirit witnesses concerning the reward of glory, 2 Cor. 1[:21-22]: “He who has anointed us, is God: Who also has sealed us, and given the pledge of the Spirit in our hearts.” Rom. 8[:16]: “For the Spirit himself gives testimony to our spirit, that we are the sons of God.” Just as instinct in the eagle tests concerning the chicks in the nest that they are his sons. If they look upon the sun shining in its sphere with undazzled eyes, so the Holy Spirit by works pleasing to God which are signs of divine filiation is tested because thus operating they are sons of God by adoption.

¶ Second, the Holy Spirit imprints the truth for right speaking. For just as the spirit according to eternal procession is the link and love of the Father and the Son, so according to temporal procession it is the link of God and man. But for this because man becomes the connection to God by love, it is necessary that they are assimilated to the divine goodness by purity of life, that they be subjected to divine majesty by the humility of obedience and conformed to the first truth by the preaching of wisdom. Therefore, the Holy Spirit teaches us to speak in a threefold manner according to three precepts.

First, in confession so that we may be purified and assimilated to the good, just as the wind blowing throws out the straw and purges the grain, Isai. 41[:16]. Christ purged the sins of that one, namely, David confessing his sins, Ezech. 37[:9]: “Come, spirit, from the four winds, and blow upon these slain, and let them live again.” The four winds are the four affections of the soul: sorrow for the fault, joy for the mercy, fear for the justice, and hope for forgiveness, Job 7[:7, 11]: “Remember, my Lord, that my life is but wind,” and it follows, “I will not spare my mouth, I will speak in the affliction of my spirit: I will talk with the bitterness of my soul.”

¶ Second, in prayer so that we may be humiliated and obey majesty, for the Holy Spirit imprints in us the memory of divine benefits. Wherefore we give thanks, Luke 1[:67]: “Zachary was filled with the Holy Ghost; and he prophesied,” He even made us recollect penalties owed and made us groan, Rom. 8[:26]: “The Spirit also helps our infirmity. For we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit himself asks for us,” that is, he makes us ask. John 4[:23]: “The true adorers shall adore the Father in spirit and in truth.” And Gal. 4[:4}: “God sent his Son, made of a woman.”

¶ Third, in preaching so that we may conform to him and build up our neighbors, for just as a pipe sings to the blowing and touch of the singer, so the preacher at the prompting of the Holy Spirit, Act. 2[:4]: “They were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they began to speak with divers tongues.”

Third, the Holy Spirit confers movement for good working, just as the wind agitates the sparks which otherwise would remain quiet. So, the Holy Spirit moves the souls which without him would do nothing, Rom. 8[:14]: “Whosoever are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.”

¶ Note here that the sons of the nobility are more done for than they do, because they continuously have a tutor over them. So, because they are not free to act unless what pleases their master, so those who are sons of God are acted upon by the incitement of the Holy Spirit. And therefore, just as the Apostle says to the Rom. [8:5]: “They that are according to the spirit, mind the things that are of the spirit.” Therefore, when man commits a mortal sin and does not feel it, it is a sign that they are helping. It is not the spirit of life, but then it is necessary that the spirit enters, just as it is said in Ezech. 37[:5]: “Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I will send spirit into you, and you shall live.” Note therefore that the works show life. Therefore, Chrysostom says, *Homilia* 5,[[2]](#endnote-2) in whatever is the Holy Spirit, that one works some great work to which the devil is opposed.

For the work, however, three things are required: experience of the matter, knowledge of the one working, and to wish to be able. But these three the Holy Spirit confers in the living soul, namely, a directing knowledge, just as the rays of the sun direct the traveler, so the spirit directs the one working, John 14[:26]: “But the Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things,” namely, the things that are necessary for salvation.

¶ Second, the power for carrying out, like the superior bodies influence the vigor for germination of the lower fruits, Isai. 44[:3-4]: “I will pour out my spirit upon your seed, and my blessing upon thy stock, and they shall spring up among the herbs,” etc. [Psal. 32.6]: “By the word of the Lord the heavens were established; and by the spirit of his mouth.”

¶ Third, the will in carrying out the work, just as John says,[[3]](#endnote-3) the evil is to be fled, the good is to be chosen and incline the will for working. So, the Holy Spirit censures sin, and inclines one to the good.

Concerning the first, John 16[:8}: “When he is come, he will convict the world of sin.” What he combines, and concerning justice which he sent forth, and concerning the judgment which he did not fear.

¶ Concerning the second, Eph. 5[:18]: “Be filled with the Holy Spirit,” etc.

In a sign of this afterwards it was said to the blessed virgin, [Luc. 1:35, 38]: “The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee.” This one prompted by her will said, “Behold the handmaid of the Lord.”

¶ Fourth, the Holy Spirit confers the state of following up, just as the spirit created while it existed in man preserves the body from decay and corruption, when separated it does not stay, but is burned up. So, the Holy Spirit while it is in the soul preserves it lest it fall into fault, lest it decay. If it fell, but it would rise again, Ezech. 2[:2]: “The spirit of the Lord entered into me after that he spoke to me, and he set me upon my feet,” that is, he made me stable in good works, which life is preserved by the unclean spirit, just as the virtuous life is preserved by our dying through the attendance of the mouth. The spirit can enter the mother for the giving of life to the fetus in the womb. The body of man has in himself a fetus, that is, the soul, but it is necessary that the body should die. Therefore, we must open the mouth through holy desire and draw the spirit for the comfort of the soul, Psal. [118:131]: “I opened my mouth and panted.” And note according to Aristotle,[[4]](#endnote-4) that there are two paths in the throat of man, one for nourishment being received by stomach, the other for drawing in breath for the lungs and for life. But if the food goes through the path of the breath, the animal dies. So it is that when by something worldly the path of the Holy Spirit is impeded, the man dies, Rom. 8[:13]: “If you live according to the flesh, you shall die: but if by the Spirit you mortify the deeds of the flesh, you shall live.”

¶ Note here that it is said in the authority above [Ezech. 2:2], because they stand upon their feet, they accept the spirit. The melancholic are not bold for standing in peril because they have little of the spirit of heat, but the choleric through conflict stand strongly because in them is the merit of the warm spirit, [1] Thess. 5[:19]: “Extinguish not the spirit.” So, a candle turned over quickly is extinguished, so when the flesh which ought to be subdued is over the spirit by order of nature turned over, the Holy Spirit is extinguished in it. So, the spirit in man was destroyed for eternity because it was flesh.

1. Augustine, *Sermo* 128.2.4 (PL 38:714): Magna est enim misericordia Dei: donum dat aequale sibi; quia donum ejus Spiritus sanctus est, et unus Deus tota Trinitas, Pater, et Filius, et Spiritus sanctus. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. (Pseudo-)Chrysostom, *Opus imperfectum in Mattheum* Hom. 5 cap. (PG 56:662): Qui enim habent spiritum Dei, hi non sunt contenti sedere otiosi: sed ipse spiritus, qui est in eis urget eos ad aliquod opus apprehendendum magnum, cui diabolus adversatur, qui est in deserto. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. John Duns Scotus, *Quaestiones Lib. II. Sentententiarum* 2, Dist. 39, quest. 1 & 2 (Lyon: Laurentii Durand, 1639; 6:1022b-1023a): qui dicit quod eadem virtus, quae inclinat ad bonum prosequendum, inclinat etiam ad malum oppositum illi bono fugiendum; quia ergo talis notitia principiorum, vel actualis, vel habituralis semper dictat ad bonum iustitiae eligendum, et malum oppositum esse fugiendum, et hoc dictare, scilicet de malo fugiendo, est murmurare ostensiue, et in hoc est occasio voluntati, vt remurmuret contra malum. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Aristotle, *History of Animals* 1.16 495b15 (Barnes 1:789): When the windpipe is charged with air, the entrance of the air into the heart, though imperceptible in some animals, is perceptible enough in the larger ones. Such are the properties of the windpipe, and it takes in and throws out air only, and takes in nothing else either dry or liquid, or else it causes you pain until you shall have coughed up whatever may have gone down. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)