

Article 6¹

The Holy Spirit

6. We believe that the Holy Spirit, in all that He does, glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ. He convicts the world of its guilt. He regenerates sinners, and in Him they are baptized into union with Christ and adopted as heirs in the family of God. He also indwells, illuminates, guides, equips and empowers believers for Christ-like living and service.
4. We believe that the ministry of the Holy Spirit is to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ, and during this age to convict men, regenerate the believing sinner, indwell, guide, instruct, and empower the believer for godly living and service.

I. Introduction

II. Change of order in Articles 4 and 6

- A. This follows the biblical narrative, the unfolding plan of God's redemption.
- B. It follows theologically and logically in that the truth about the person and work of Christ is now applied by the Holy Spirit. Thus, a closer connection is made between Christ's work that has been accomplished, and that work that is now applied.
- C. It combines the various statements regarding the Holy Spirit's work that were included in articles 4, 5, and 6 into one article.

III. Article 6 – The Holy Spirit

Introductory Biblical/Theological Statements

- The Holy Spirit is the Third Person of the Trinity—God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit.
- The Holy Spirit's ministry is primarily a floodlight ministry. Though he is fully God, his primary ministry is to bring glory to the Lord Jesus Christ.

¹ Adapted from "EFCA Statement of Faith: Article 6," by Greg Strand, Director of Biblical Theology and Credentialing. <http://www.efca.org/files/document/office-of-the-president/sof-proposed-revision-article-6.pdf>.

- The Holy Spirit was the One promised who would usher in the new covenant, the “new age.”
- This new age was begun in the person and work of Jesus Christ and confirmed and established in the new covenant, the death and resurrection of Jesus. The Holy Spirit is the One who continues the work of God the Son—it is Christocentric.
- The Holy Spirit is the fulfillment of a promise; He is also the promise of fulfillment.

Introductory EFCA Statements

- We are attempting to focus on the biblical teaching of the work of the Holy Spirit, the essentials of his ministry.
- This means that while being rooted biblically, we are also sensitive to various positions within acceptable biblical/theological parameters.
- Within those parameters, we live with the commitment to “silence,” Arminianism or Calvinism, perseverance of the saints or the possibility of apostasy, etc. Being outside those parameters is not acceptable within the Free Church, e.g. open theism, which denies God’s absolute foreknowledge or hyper-Calvinist, which denies that we can genuinely offer the gospel of salvation to all.
- Because this is an essentialist statement on the person and work of the Holy Spirit, there is not much about the fruit or the gifts of the Spirit.

Questions for discussion

- What is the chief ministry of the Holy Spirit?

The opening sentence is meant to be the summary statement, making the work of glorifying the Lord Jesus Christ the central work of the Spirit, with the two remaining sentences explaining how the Spirit glorifies Christ in the convicting, converting and sanctifying work of the Spirit.

- The Holy Spirit’s work is seen in three key areas: conviction of unbelievers, regenerating sinners and indwelling believers. How does the Holy Spirit’s ministry of conviction occur in the lives of unbelievers?
- What does it mean that the Holy Spirit “regenerates sinners”? Why is it important to equate Spirit-baptism with regeneration, and what is the significance?

- In the Holy Spirit believers are “baptized into union with Christ.” What does “union with Christ” mean? How does this relate to the fact that Jesus is “our representative and substitute” (article 5) and that he lives a “sinless life” (article 4)?

The regenerating work of the Holy Spirit in conversion is the same work that unites us to Christ. The act is often referred to as “the baptism of the Holy Spirit.” This can be a controversial concept, and here we affirm that this Spirit-baptism refers to that work of God in conversion by which we are joined to Christ and so partake of his benefits.

The inclusion of the term “baptizes” here in the context of conversion is important in that it denies the Classic Pentecostal teaching which insists upon a post-conversion baptism in the Spirit which is accompanied and evidenced by speaking in tongues.

- One of the results of our union with Christ is that we are “adopted as heirs in the family of God.” Adoption has two important meanings: heirship (legal) and familial (relationship). Why are both of these truths important?

Adoption emphasizes that it is a consequence of our being in union with Christ through the work of the Holy Spirit. In union with Jesus Christ the Son of God, we become sons—sons and daughters of God, and as adopted children we assume the rights of heirs. This reflects both the familial or relational (God is our Father and we are sons and daughters) and the legal aspects (we are heirs) of our adoption as expressed in Romans 8:14-17; Galatians 3:23-29; 4:4-7, and Titus 3:4-7.

- In the life of the believer, the Holy Spirit is at the heart of Christian growth, sanctification. He “indwells . . . guides, equips, and empowers believers for Christ-like living and service.” So much of Christian growth today is considered in individual terms. Why is it important to combine “Christ-like living and service”?
- The Holy Spirit who inspired the Scriptures also “illuminates” them. What important truth does this state when considering reading, interpreting, and understanding the Bible?

The Spirit who inspires the authors is also the Spirit who illumines the readers.

- What are the ways the doctrine of the Holy Spirit is being undermined today? What truths are important to emphasize?

- A. We believe the Holy Spirit, in all that He does, glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ (John 16:14).

John 16:14 (ESV)

¹⁴ He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you.²

- B. We believe the Holy Spirit convicts the world of its guilt (John 16:8; 1 Corinthians 2:14).

1 Corinthians 2:14 (ESV)

¹⁴ The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.

- C. We believe the Holy Spirit regenerates sinners (Ezekiel 36:25-27; John 3:3, 5; 1 Corinthians 12:3; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 2:5; Colossians 2:13; 1 Thessalonians 1:4-5; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; Titus 3:5; James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:3), and in Him they are baptized (Mark 1:8; Acts 1:5; 1 Corinthians 12:13) into union with Christ (Romans 3:24; 5:15-21; 12:5; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 15:22b; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 1:22; 2:17; 3:28; Ephesians 1:4; 2:12; 3:6; 4:32; 2 Timothy 2:10; 1 Thessalonians 4:16) and adopted as heirs (Romans 8:15, 23; 9:4; Galatians 4:5; Ephesians 1:5; Titus 3:7) in the family of God (Matthew 12:49-50; 2 Corinthians 6:18; Ephesians 1:5; 1 John 3:14-18).

Ezekiel 36:25-27 (ESV)

²⁵ I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. ²⁶ And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷ And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.

John 3:3, 5 (ESV)

³ Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." . . . ⁵ Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

1 Corinthians 12:3 (ESV)

³ Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says "Jesus is accursed!" and no one can say "Jesus is Lord" except in the Holy Spirit.

² All Scripture taken from *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*. Wheaton : Standard Bible Society, 2001

2 Corinthians 5:17 (ESV)

¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

Ephesians 2:5 (ESV)

⁵ even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—

Colossians 2:13 (ESV)

¹³ And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses,

1 Thessalonians 1:4-5 (ESV)

⁴ For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you, ⁵ because our gospel came to you not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction. You know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake.

2 Thessalonians 2:13 (ESV)

¹³ But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth.

Titus 3:5 (ESV)

⁵ he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit,

James 1:18 (ESV)

¹⁸ Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

1 Peter 1:3 (ESV)

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

Mark 1:8 (ESV)

⁸ I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

Acts 1:5 (ESV)

⁵ for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”

1 Corinthians 12:13 (ESV)

¹³ For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.

Romans 3:24 (ESV)

²⁴ and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,

Romans 5:15-21 (ESV)

¹⁵ But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man's trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many. ¹⁶ And the free gift is not like the result of that one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brought justification. ¹⁷ For if, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. ¹⁹ For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous. ²⁰ Now the law came in to increase the trespass, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, ²¹ so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 12:5 (ESV)

⁵ so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.

1 Corinthians 1:2 (ESV)

² To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours:

1 Corinthians 15:22 (ESV)

²² For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.

2 Corinthians 5:17 (ESV)

¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

Galatians 1:22 (ESV)

²² And I was still unknown in person to the churches of Judea that are in Christ.

Galatians 2:17 (ESV)

¹⁷ But if, in our endeavor to be justified in Christ, we too were found to be sinners, is Christ then a servant of sin? Certainly not!

Galatians 3:28 (ESV)

²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Ephesians 1:4 (ESV)

⁴ even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love

Ephesians 2:12 (ESV)

¹² remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

Ephesians 3:6 (ESV)

⁶ This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

Ephesians 4:32 (ESV)

³² Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

2 Timothy 2:10 (ESV)

¹⁰ Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

1 Thessalonians 4:16 (ESV)

¹⁶ For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

Romans 8:15 (ESV)

¹⁵ For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!"

Romans 8:23 (ESV)

²³ And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

Romans 9:4 (ESV)

⁴ They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises.

Galatians 4:5 (ESV)

⁵ to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.

Ephesians 1:5 (ESV)

⁵ he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will,

Titus 3:7 (ESV)

⁷ so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Matthew 12:49-50 (ESV)

⁴⁹ And stretching out his hand toward his disciples, he said, “Here are my mother and my brothers! ⁵⁰ For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother.”

2 Corinthians 6:18 (ESV)

¹⁸ and I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to me, says the Lord Almighty.”

Ephesians 3:14 (ESV)

¹⁴ For this reason I bow my knees before the Father,

1 John 3:14-18 (ESV)

¹⁴ We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. Whoever does not love abides in death. ¹⁵ Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him. ¹⁶ By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers. ¹⁷ But if anyone has the world’s goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God’s love abide in him? ¹⁸ Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.

D. We believe the Holy Spirit also indwells (John 14:17; Romans 8:11; 1 Corinthians 3:16), illuminates (1 Corinthians 2:2; 2 Corinthians 4:4-15; Ephesians 1:17-19; Philippians 1:9-11), guides (John 16:13; Acts 15:28; Romans 8:4, 14; Galatians 5:16, 18), equips (Romans 12:4-8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-10; Ephesians 4:7-11; 1 Peter 4:10-11) and empowers (Acts 1:8; 10:38; Romans 15:13; 1 Corinthians 12:11; Ephesians 3:16; 2 Timothy 1:7) believers for Christ-like living and service (Acts 6:8; Romans 8:4-6, 12-16; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Galatians 3:3, 5; 5:22-23; Ephesians 2:22; 4:3; Philippians 2:1-2).

John 14:17 (ESV)

¹⁷ even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.

Romans 8:11 (ESV)

¹¹ If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.

1 Corinthians 3:16 (ESV)

¹⁶ Do you not know that you are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in you?

1 Corinthians 2:2 (ESV)

² For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.

2 Corinthians 4:14-15 (ESV)

¹⁴ knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us with you into his presence. ¹⁵ For it is all for your sake, so that as grace extends to more and more people it may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God.

Ephesians 1:17-19 (ESV)

¹⁷ that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, ¹⁸ having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹ and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might

Philippians 1:9-11 (ESV)

⁹ And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, ¹⁰ so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, ¹¹ filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

John 16:13 (ESV)

¹³ When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.

Acts 15:28 (ESV)

²⁸ For it has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay on you no greater burden than these requirements:

Romans 8:4, 14 (ESV)

⁴ in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. . . . ¹⁴ For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.

Galatians 5:16, 18 (ESV)

¹⁶ But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. . . . ¹⁸ But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

Romans 12:4-8 (ESV)

⁴ For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, ⁵ so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. ⁶ Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; ⁷ if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; ⁸ the one who exhorts,

in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.

1 Corinthians 12:4-10 (ESV)

⁴Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; ⁵and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; ⁶and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. ⁷To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. ⁸For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, ⁹to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, ¹⁰to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.

Ephesians 4:7-11 (ESV)

⁷But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. ⁸Therefore it says, "When he ascended on high he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men." ⁹(In saying, "He ascended," what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower regions, the earth? ¹⁰He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.) ¹¹And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers,

1 Peter 4:10-11 (ESV)

¹⁰As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: ¹¹whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Acts 1:8 (ESV)

⁸But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

Acts 10:38 (ESV)

³⁸how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.

Romans 15:13 (ESV)

¹³May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.

1 Corinthians 12:11 (ESV)

¹¹All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.

Ephesians 3:16 (ESV)

¹⁶that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being,

2 Timothy 1:7 (ESV)

⁷for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.

Acts 6:8 (ESV)

⁸And Stephen, full of grace and power, was doing great wonders and signs among the people.

Romans 8:4-6 (ESV)

⁴in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. ⁵For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. ⁶For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace.

Romans 8:12-16 (ESV)

¹²So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. ¹³For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. ¹⁴For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. ¹⁵For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!” ¹⁶The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,

2 Corinthians 13:14 (ESV)

¹⁴The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Galatians 3:3, 5 (ESV)

³Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh? . . . ⁵Does he who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you do so by works of the law, or by hearing with faith—

Galatians 5:22-23 (ESV)

²²But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

Ephesians 2:22 (ESV)

²²In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

Ephesians 4:3 (ESV)

³eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Philippians 2:1-2 (ESV)

¹ So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, ² complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.

Summarizing connection to the gospel: *“God’s gospel is applied by the power of the Holy Spirit.”*

- IV. Specific ways the Article on the doctrine of Jesus Christ has been strengthened, or new issues addressed.
- Convicts the world of its guilt
 - Regenerates sinners
 - Baptized into union with Christ
 - Adopted as heirs in the family of God
 - Illuminates
- V. Importance of reaffirming the biblical/doctrinal truths of the Holy Spirit today (which also carries with it denials)
- Glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ – when he ministers, Jesus is always exalted
 - Convicts the world of its guilt – the world does not believe it is guilty before an almighty God
 - Regenerates sinners – salvation is a work of God the Holy Spirit, not a work of man
 - Baptized into union with Christ – conversion and Spirit-baptism are simultaneous
 - Adopted as heirs in the family of God – he addresses the problem of alienation, cosmic orphans. It emphasizes familial and legal aspects of our union with Christ.
 - Illuminates – the Holy Spirit who inspires the Word of God also illuminates that Word in interpretation so we can understand it
 - Empowers believers for Christ-like living and service – belief and behavior are connected, and this has individual and corporate implications