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PERSON OF POWER

“For all who are led by the Spirit of God, are sons of God.” (Romans 8:14)

Power is a word associated in everyday English with impersonal forces, but the power of the Holy Spirit is the effective agency of a person, who personally relates himself to those in whose lives he works. “Even when the New Testament speaks of the Spirit in impersonal images, the chief of which are wind, fire, and water,” writes Tom Smail, “the images are used dynamically to show that they are pointing to one who has the will and the power to control us rather than to something we ourselves can control.” The Holy Spirit is not an impersonal force at our disposal or harnessed to our wills; rather, the Spirit is a sovereign person with his own will, which is also the will of the Father and the Son.

The Spirit operates in and through our thinking (he convinces us of God’s truth), our decision-making (he leads us to will the will of God), and our affections (he draws forth from us love and hate, hope and fear, joy and sorrow, and other feeling-laden dispositions, all responding to the realities of the Gospel).

His blessing on the Bible we read and on the Christian instruction we receive persuades us of the truth of Christianity. He shows us how God’s promises and demands bear on our lives. His new creative action at the center of our personal being so changes and energizes us that we do in fact obey the truth. The persuasion at conscious level is powerful. The heart-changing action that produces Christian commitment is almighty. First to last, however, the power exercised is personal. The Holy Spirit is a living person, not a mere force. AMEN.

~Dr. J.I. Packer

“And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.” Matthew 28:18 – 20

