

## **Study 6            *We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, ... we look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come***

***O ignis Spiritus Paracliti / Sequence for the Holy Spirit***  
by **Hildegard von Bingen** (English version by Barbara Newma)

(<https://www.poetry-chaikhana.com/blog/2013/03/22/hildegard-von-bingen-sequence-for-the-holy-spirit/>)

*Fiery Spirit,  
fount of courage,  
life within life  
of all that has being!*

*Holy are you, transmuting the perfect  
into the real.  
Holy are you, healing  
the mortally stricken.  
Holy are you, cleansing  
the stench of wounds.*

*O sacred breath O blazing  
love O savour in the breast and balm  
flooding the heart with  
the fragrance of good,*

*O limpid mirror of God  
who leads wanderers  
home and hunts out the lost,*

*Armour of the heart and hope  
of the integral body,  
sword-belt of honour:  
save those who know bliss!*

*Guard those the fiend holds  
imprisoned,  
free those in fetters  
whom divine force wishes to save.*

*O current of power permeating all  
in the heights upon the earth and  
in all deeps:  
you bind and gather  
all people together.*

*Out of you clouds  
come streaming, winds  
take wing from you, dashing  
rain against stone;  
and ever-fresh springs  
well from you, washing  
the evergreen globe.*

*O teacher of those who know,  
a joy to the wise  
is the breath of Sophia.*

*Praise then be yours!  
you are the song of praise,  
the delight of life,  
a hope and a potent honour  
granting garlands of light.*

### **Podcasts:**

Although it is not necessary to watch the short video it gives a short introduction to the context of the study. It is available at: <https://ourcommonlife.org.au/27-july-2020/>. The message on Sunday the 19 July was also specifically about Romans 8 and the groaning of creation, believers and the Holy Spirit. It is also available on this link.

### **Opening Reflections:**

- What do you think happens when we die?
- What is your understanding of the resurrection of the dead?

### **Introduction:**

It is good to re-read the whole of the part on the Holy Spirit in the Nicene Creed to orientate ourselves and give us the whole picture (hazy though that may be!):

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father (and the Son).  
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.  
He has spoken through the Prophets.  
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.  
We confess one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.  
*We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.***

We have been looking at a common question: *how* do we experience the Holy Spirit and where can we see evidence of her?

- *How, where* does the Holy Spirit touch my life?
- *What* does the Holy Spirit do, how does the Holy Spirit work in the world?
- *Where* can we witness, see evidence of the Holy Spirit's work?
- *Where* does the Holy Spirit create, bring life, as we confess?

We considered in the previous study how the Holy Spirit is experienced in the **church** – that the Holy Spirit creates, grows, shapes, and protects a church; how the Holy Spirit creates, grows, forms *koinonia* amongst church members. How the Holy Spirit creates life in a church and its members.

However, there is more: The Holy Spirit also creates life more personally, more practically, more specifically – the Holy Spirit creates life in ***you and me, in person***. This is through our baptism.

The Nicene Creed confesses that the Holy Spirit operates through our baptism – through our baptism we are touched, renewed, transformed by the Holy Spirit. In short, the Christian faith-life is to rise daily and to live in this new life in the Holy Spirit.

The new life in the Holy Spirit is described in various ways in the Bible for example:

- Life in the fruits of the Holy Spirit (**Galatians 5:22**).
- Life fulfilled through the Holy Spirit to the praise and glory of God (**Ephesians 5:18**).
- A diversity of talents and gifts of the Holy Spirit gifted to believers to serve and care for others (**Romans 12:1-8; 1 Corinthians 11-14**).
- Sanctification through the Holy Spirit (**2 Thessalonians 2:13**)
- Holiness, for we are the temple of the Holy Spirit (**1 Corinthians 3:16-17; 6:19-20**).
- A life in which are not to grieve the Holy Spirit through lies, bitterness, unforgiving spirit, destructive talk (**Ephesians 4:25-5:7**)

In summary, the Bible speaks of a life in step with the Holy Spirit, walking under the guidance of the Holy Spirit; of a life lived according to our calling; of being a blessing to others; of a life of discernment through the Holy Spirit.

A new life in the power and under the rule of the Holy Spirit.

**Scripture: Romans 8:1-39; 1 Corinthians 15 (especially verses 35 - 58).**

**Romans 8** is a rich and complex chapter, with several threads running through it, including:

- Redemption and justification – no condemnation for those in Christ (vs 1, 31-34)
- Living under the control of the Holy Spirit (vs 1-11)
- Our new identity as children of God and heirs of the divine glory (vs 12-17);
- Of the suffering of all creation (including mankind) (vs 18ff)
- Of the groaning of creation, believers, and the Holy Spirit (vs 22, 23 & 26);
- Of the solidarity of the Holy Spirit and Christ with our suffering (vs 27-6-27, 32);
- The intercession of the Holy Spirit and Christ (vs 27, 34);
- The inseparable love of God (35-39);

Focus will be on the Holy Spirit, and specifically the ***Spirit of Hope***:

Verse 2 Spirit of life sets us free;

Verse 4/13 Those who are free, live according to the Spirit; and

Verse 5-7, 11 have their minds set on what the Spirit desires – life & peace (not sin and death); and

Verse 9-10- living in the Spirit / having the Spirit is a condition of belonging to Christ;

Verses 14-16; the Spirit of sonship who

Verse 17 makes us heirs of God with Christ; and

Verse 23 gives us the first fruits of the Spirit; and

Verse 26-27 The Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness and groans with us for us – in solidarity.

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of **faith**, of **love** and **hope**.

As the **Spirit of faith**, the Holy Spirit is the one who sets us free, through whom we confess Christ and are accepted as children and heirs of God.

As the **Spirit of love**, we gain the first fruits of the Spirit, the faces of love, to serve and change ourselves and the world.

And the **Spirit of Hope**. Through the **Spirit of Hope** we groan, and the Spirit groans with us for the suffering of the world to end. For the broken world to be renewed, for the time we live in, the period of “the already and the not yet”, to pass. The **Spirit of Hope** teaches us to long for a better life, a transformed life, the life of the world to come – the new Jerusalem.

“May the **God of hope** fill you with all the joy and peace as you trust in Him,  
**So that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit**”.  
(Romans 15:13)

**Closing reflections:** To return to the opening questions: What happens when we die? What is the resurrection of the dead?

**1 Corinthians 15 (especially verses 35 - 58).**

Life after death is not the focus of this study, but as the question was asked at the beginning, a few simple comments:

**We simply do not know:** The mystery of death and the mystery of life after death was acknowledged by the early church and the church throughout the ages. That is why nothing detailed, no concrete description of it has been given. This is true of the Nicene Creed who speaks of “the resurrection” of “death” of “life to come”. Presumably it refers to the final slaying of death and the final victory of Christ. But the confession is vague, intentionally so, one may argue, because we simply do not know. And we need not know.

This is what Paul was saying in **1 Corinthians 15** when answering questions about the resurrection. The questions are foolish, unnecessary and unanswerable (vs 35-35). We simply do not know, we cannot imagine it. We will be “spiritual beings” Paul thinks; “spiritual beings that will be imperishable, glorious, complete” (vs 40-44). But what that actually means we mortals do not know, neither does Paul.

To speculate about the resurrection is as foolish as looking at a wheat kernel and trying to see the wheat plant; one cannot compare humans with birds, or birds with fish, or the sun or moon or stars (vs 40-41).

We do not know *what* it will be like, neither *when* it will come (**2 peter 3:10ff**).

**BUT we hope for it.** Through the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Hope, we hope for it, we expect it, we long for it: *we look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come*. The final redemption.

We look for it with hope. We groan for it with hope. We plead for it, together with church across the ages: *Veni, Creator Spiritus*. Come, Creator Spirit. Renew your creation. Finally. Gloriously.

Because though the *Spirit of Hope*, we look forward to, we see “a new heaven and a new earth, ... .

- **Closing prayer:**