The Holy Spirit is prominent in Luke’s writings [i.e. The Gospel and The Acts]. The word for Spirit occurs throughout the New Testament. A quick glance shows it occurring in Matthew 10 times, Mark sixteen times, John fifteen times, and Luke twenty-one times with twenty-four occurrences in Acts. Paul does use the word extensively in Romans (22) and 1 Corinthians (28). For the size of books, Galatians and Ephesians use the word fifteen times each.

The intent of this short read/study is to consider Luke’s use of the Spirit as He occurs in the Gospel of Luke. Luke describes the Spirit as holy and as God (Luke 12:10), but it is His activity highlighted. In fact, if one assigns His work to the devil, it is an unpardonable offense. (Luke 12:10).

- Lu 12:10 "And everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but he who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him.


I. The births of John and Jesus flow from the activity of the Holy Spirit.

A. The Holy Spirit fills the prenatal John (Luke 1:15, 41).

- Lu 1:15 "For he will be great in the sight of the Lord; and he will drink no wine or liquor, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit while yet in his mother's womb.


- Lu 1:41 When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.

C. The Spirit causes Mary to be with child (Luke 1:35).

- Lu 1:35 The angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy Child shall be called the Son of God.

D. At John’s birth, the Spirit fills his father Zacharias and as a result, his father prophesies (Luke 1:67).

- Lu 1:67 ¶ And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying:
E. When Jesus was brought to the Temple at eight days of age for the rite of circumcision, Simeon came under the direction of the Holy Spirit to speak words over the child (Luke 2:25, 26). The Holy Spirit actively directs Simeon is his activity.

- Lu 2:25 ¶ And there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; and this man was righteous and devout, looking for the consolation of Israel; and the Holy Spirit was upon him. 26 And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. 27 And he came in the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to carry out for Him the custom of the Law,

Thus, in the natal narrative, His work of filling and directing is prominent.

II. The Holy Spirit’s activity colors the ministries of John and Jesus.

John references the work of Jesus as one of “baptizing with the Holy Spirit and fire” (Luke 3:16). Either John is referencing the overall tone of His ministry as one done in the power of the Holy Spirit or John reaches past the death, burial, and resurrection to the Day of Pentecost and beyond.

- Lu 3:16 John answered and said to them all, "As for me, I baptize you with water; but One is coming who is mightier than I, and I am not fit to untie the thong of His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

A. At the baptism of Jesus, the Spirit’s descent anoints Jesus as King (Luke 3:22).

- Lu 3:22 and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in bodily form like a dove, and a voice came out of heaven, "You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased."

B. The interplay between the Holy Spirit and Jesus communicates the utter interconnectedness between the two.

The language is such that the Son’s work, in the flesh, is entirely activated by the Holy Spirit. The writer does not desire to draw any separation between the work of Jesus and the work of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the power of God (Luke 1:35). I am not sure the language of dependent on is appropriate. I do not think that Jesus was incapable of doing anything apart from the Holy Spirit as much as to show that the two working together are inseparable. What Jesus did the Holy Spirit was doing. Jesus is the “hands and feet” of the Holy Spirit.

- Lu 4:1 ¶ Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led around by the Spirit in the wilderness
• Lu 4:14 ¶ And Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about Him spread through all the surrounding district.

• Lu 4:18 "THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME, BECAUSE HE ANOINTED ME TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THE POOR. HE HAS SENT ME TO PROCLAIM RELEASE TO THE CAPTIVES, AND RECOVERY OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND, TO SET FREE THOSE WHO ARE OPPRESSED,

• Lu 10:21 At that very time He rejoiced greatly in the Holy Spirit, and said, "I praise You, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and have revealed them to infants. Yes, Father, for this way was well-pleasing in Your sight.

The persons within the Godhead are distinct, but their work is not. The Scripture does not separate the work of each. The Scripture describes them as intertwined.

C. The power of Jesus is the power of the Holy Spirit.

• Lu 4:36 And amazement came upon them all, and they began talking with one another saying, "What is this message? For with authority and power He commands the unclean spirits and they come out."
• Lu 5:17 ¶ One day He was teaching; and there were some Pharisees and teachers of the law sitting there, who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem; and the power of the Lord was present for Him to perform healing.
• Lu 6:19 And all the people were trying to touch Him, for power was coming from Him and healing them all.
• Lu 8:46 But Jesus said, "Someone did touch Me, for I was aware that power had gone out of Me."

When Jesus gives power to His disciples, we can conclude they are receiving the Holy Spirit.

• Lu 9:1 ¶ And He called the twelve together, and gave them power and authority over all the demons and to heal diseases.
• Lu 10:19 "Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing will injure you.

This is probably the point in Luke 24:49 and Acts 1:8.

• Lu 24:49 "And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high."
• Ac 1:8 but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."

Finally, in Luke’s Gospel we can note two passages that speak of the Holy Spirit’s work in the People of God.

III. The Holy Spirit works in the People of God.

• Lu 11:13 "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?"

• Lu 12:12 for the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say."

Other occurrences of the word “spirit” reference unclean spirits (Luke 4:33, 36; 6:18; 8:39; 9:42; 11:24) or one’s immaterial component (Luke 1:47; 23:46).

We will not take time to note the use of Spirit in the Book of Acts, but it is enough to say His presence permeates the whole.