

**Berkhof, Hendrikus. *The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit*. M. E. Bratcher, 1964;
Atlanta, GA: John Knox Press, 1976.**

This small book on the Holy Spirit is often overlooked. Some of the reasons for this may be that he assumes the reader has a thorough knowledge of the main creeds and confessions of the Reformed church, he uses Latin and Greek phrases from theology that go untranslated, and his interaction with the theological issues of the mid-60's. But, if the reader can make it through all of this (which really isn't that bad), then he is sure to pick up gems here and there about the Holy Spirit. Refreshingly, Berkhof does his study by noting biblical theological themes instead of a traditional, systematic theological survey. In essence, he studies the Holy Spirit in relation to Messiah, Mission, Church, Individual, the World's Consummation, and the Trinity. He does the Trinity chapter last because he sees that the church in the past has rarely gotten past the tougher intellectual issues of the Spirit's role within the Trinity. I particularly enjoyed his breadth of knowledge on the church's historical swings in relation to the Holy Spirit. Noting these trends, he attempts to find the balance so as not to swing with the pendulum. As I was reading, I wondered which way would he swing and it was refreshing to see him let the Scriptures speak for themselves.

Level: Semi-Technical/Slower Read

Theological Stance: State Church of the Netherlands (i.e., Dutch Reformed Church)

Rating: 6 ½

Recommend? Yes