

SPIRIT FILLED AND GOOD TO GO
JOHN 14:15-26; JOHN 16:5-15; 1 CORINTHIAN 2:10-16
2025-01-19

Last week some of you gasped (OK, I'm overstating it) when I skipped past the line in the Apostles' Creed about believing in the Holy Spirit. I mentioned to Carolyn Christian that I'd give that line its own time this week. She said, "At least", and she was right. We'll consider the Holy Spirit today and beyond! It's funny, isn't it? No one ever needs a reminder that it's Christmas. No one ever misses Good Friday or Easter, or even Palm Sunday for that matter. **But Pentecost, though it's a critical day in the life of the church**, could come and go—certainly in the world outside the church with scarcely anyone noticing. It barely makes a ripple on the Richter scale.

But that certainly wasn't the case on the first Pentecost. The coming of the Holy Spirit was accompanied by the sound like a violent wind storm originating from heaven that filled the whole house where the disciples were sitting and they saw what seemed to be like tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues/languages as the Holy Spirit enabled them. If you had the rush of wind coming around you in a house like that and saw tongues of fire separating and descending on you like that and you started to speak involuntarily in a way you never had before, you would remember this day like no other!

So, let's reinforce our memory of the Creed by repeating it together, before we start:

1. I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of the heavens & earth.
2. and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord;
3. who was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary;
4. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried; He descended into hell
5. on the third day He rose from the dead;
6. He ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of God the Father almighty;
7. from where He will come to judge the living (quick) and the dead.
8. I believe in the Holy Spirit (Ghost);
9. in the holy catholic church; the communion of saints;
10. the forgiveness of sins;
11. the resurrection of the body
12. and the life everlasting.

Our Pentecostal brothers and sisters focus their denomination on the Holy Spirit. Some say that you're not truly born again unless you speak in tongues—that is the one sure sign that you are walking with the Lord. That's not a biblical truth. It may happen but **it's not a requisite for being born again**. And some considerable misguidance exists around that kind of argument.

But we could surely be much more focused on the Holy Spirit and be more enlivened in our spirits as we proclaim Jesus as our Saviour and Lord. It may be helpful to look at the Holy Spirit from three aspects:

- 1) **The Holy Spirit is God with Us.**
- 2) **The Holy Spirit Enables People to Believe**
- 3) **The Holy Spirit Forms and Equips the Church.**

Today I just want to **focus on the first: The Holy Spirit is God with us.**

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of the triune God and is One with the Father and the Son. The Holy Spirit is the Lord and the Giver of Life, the Renewer and Helper of God's people. By the Spirit, God is present in the world, the source of all goodness and justice. By the Spirit, God convinces the world of sin and testifies to the truth of Christ. By the Spirit, Christ is with His Church.

As the third Person of the Trinity the Holy Spirit's presence is woven throughout the entire Bible; sometimes we miss that, attributing His Person and work to the Father and/or Jesus. But **He's there right from the beginning.** **Gen. 1:2** says, "Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters." **You might be familiar with Zech. 4:6:** "Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit says the Lord Almighty." That's a powerful statement! In God's economy, might is not right. You may have, or at least think you have all the power in the world, but it isn't worth a hill of beans—if God sees things differently. His Spirit will always prevail.

The lengthiest mention of the Holy Spirit is found in John's Gospel. In chapter 14:16 Jesus promises the Holy Spirit. "I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Counsellor to be with you forever—the Spirit of Truth. The world cannot accept Him, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him. But you know Him for He lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me... If anyone loves Me, he will obey My teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him...All this I have spoken while still with you. But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you...When the Counsellor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, He will testify about Me. And you also must testify, for you have been with Me from the beginning."

There's a lot packed into that passage. The Holy Spirit comes (proceeds) from both the Father and Jesus. **He's *paraklete*, Comforter, Helper, Counsellor— and not just any counsellor, but God, giving counsel to us directly—called in to take away our inadequacies and enable us to cope with life, helping in any time of trouble or need.** And because He is God, He is the Spirit of Truth. There is nothing false in Him. That's a beautiful thing. Imagine having God living in you. **Think about that. When you ask God to lead you, He leads you from within. Your job is to invite Him to lead and to continue to let Him lead** rather than grabbing the reins back into your own hands! We're guilty of that, aren't we?

Here's something else that both Christians and non-believers don't understand. God's Holy Spirit is within us, but He is not within non-believers—by that I mean people who do not believe in or accept and receive Jesus. **Because of that, non-believers don't know Jesus and they don't, in fact cannot, see nor can they know the Holy Spirit.** I served as a counsellor at the Billy Graham crusade when he was at the Sky Dome as the Rogers Centre was called then. I was sitting up in the nose bleed section. People heard the same message. At its conclusion, some people popped up like jack-in-the-boxes at the invitation to go down to receive Jesus; I saw others turn to each other, shrug and say that didn't seem to be much of a message and walked out. Same message, but the Spirit at work in some.

The world cannot accept Him because it neither sees Him nor knows Him. So don't be mystified that your efforts to share the Good News often fall on deaf ears. That's exactly what is happening. **Until the Spirit of God moves in on a person,** that person cannot know God. But there is a time when the Spirit readies a person to receive Jesus as Saviour and Lord.

The other side of that same coin, though, is equally remarkable. We know of **Jesus as Emmanuel—God with us. But the Holy Spirit is God within us.** How remarkable is that! God, in the person of **the Holy Spirit, moves right in and makes Himself at home within us.** In the Greek it's that God settles right in and gets comfortable right in your being. Reflect on that!

You may say, "Well, how is it that I don't sense that or feel 'Godly' or act in a Godly way sometimes?" It's a great question that we all wrestle with. The answer lies in our resisting the Holy Spirit's leading. **Who are you putting on the throne—you or God?** God wants to be on the throne and can certainly claim the throne of your life but **He awaits** your cooperating with Him. **That's also a staggering thought, to think that we can thoughtlessly repress God's desire for us. The Holy Spirit will also remind you** of what Jesus said. And words will come out of you that you didn't really know you were even thinking, let alone going to say. It's amazing. **The Spirit will also guide your conduct,** keeping us from wrongdoing when we are tempted.

But when you cooperate with the Holy Spirit, remarkable things happen. He teaches you. When you read the Scriptures He gives you insight that non-believers don't have. It's also remarkable that two people can read the Scriptures and one is moved to repentance and to God and the other's completely untouched by it as if he/she is reading nothing more than a fiction novel.

The last thought from that passage is this: **as you cooperate with the Holy Spirit you will come to understand that you MUST testify about Jesus.** The Spirit will simply compel you to do that. Think about how you feel compelled to tell someone about a person who randomly goes out of their way to do something kind to you that you never expected. It's like that with the Holy Spirit. He compels you to speak of Jesus, who had done so much for you.

Jesus talks right through John 14, 15 and 16. In ch. 16 He says that **unless He leaves, the Counsellor will not come to you.** Jesus, in His physical body, was limited by time and space. When He left the Spirit was free to be among all people at the same time, regardless of physical place. He brings us an uninterrupted fellowship forever. **And the Spirit has some very remarkable work to do! He will convict the world of guilt—He will expose the guilt of the world in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment.** That's powerful! The Spirit makes us conscious of sin. He also makes us conscious of Jesus' righteousness. It's amazing that people should put their faith for all eternity in a crucified Jewish criminal. And the Spirit convinces people of judgment because evil stands condemned and defeated on the cross. The Spirit makes us certain that judgment lies ahead, that we shall all stand before the judgment seat of God.

The Spirit also assures us of our salvation. Ephesians 1:13, 14:

“You also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in Him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who's a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of His glory.”

The Spirit guides you into all truth. The bringing of God's truth to us is called revelation.

Revelation isn't restricted to just what's in the Bible or to theological matters. God reveals Himself over all life—in medicine, technology, agriculture, business. Whenever life's truly improved, it's because of God's further revelation. God can heal without medicine for example, but He can and does use it as an extension of Himself to heal. This revelation is the work of the Holy Spirit. Revelation is not human in origin; it is God's gift. It's staggering, that because of the Holy Spirit, we have the mind of Christ! Live that way this week! You are Spirit-filled and good to go!