

God Within

Number six in a nine-part series on what we believe

October 24 & 25, 2009

Intro:

Have you ever been puzzled why some electrical appliance wouldn't work? Maybe it was a computer monitor or power tool. You flipped the switch and nothing happened. *I can't believe it! This must be broken!* Just as you launched into complaining about what a new one was going to cost, someone nearby noticed what you missed: *Maybe you should try plugging this one in before you get far in your plans to buy another one.*

It sure is silly to wonder what's wrong when you are simply unplugged from the power source. This applies to our spiritual lives as well. I think many of us are trying to make Christianity work but we're disconnected from the Holy Spirit.

We don't want to flounder and fail. We want to soar! We want to experience peace and joy, even in tough times. We want to set an example for our kids and co-workers. Well, today we'll learn that we need a source of strength from outside to fill and empower us to live the Christian life successfully. T - Let's talk about...

1. Our Need For The Holy Spirit:

You can grow *intellectually sharp* through diligent effort. And you can grow *physically strong* by trying harder. But you can't grow *spiritually* without supernatural strength.

• **Progress requires supernatural power.**

I last taught on the Holy Spirit at a Children's Ministry training retreat. It was my assigned topic. *Why would people with the responsibility to lead kids to follow Christ want to hear what the Bible has to say about the Holy Spirit?* Because they are commissioned to do something that requires supernatural power! So are we all.

What if we tried to live the Christian life without the power of the Spirit? To get a picture of what that would look like, all you have to do is read the New Testament.

The men who became the foundation of the Christian Church were initially bumbling around. They *argued* about who was greatest when Jesus was talking about humility. They *scattered* when he was arrested and *hid* when he was crucified. When they heard about his resurrection they *doubted*. Even after they saw Jesus alive, the disciples *cowered* behind locked doors. When we try to live the Christian life without the power of the Spirit, we follow in these same sad footsteps. But the disciples were *transformed* when the Spirit was poured out upon them. Only then did they gain boldness and obey. ([Acts 1:8 - You will receive power...](#) *And that is exactly what the rest of Acts documents.*)

We can't fulfill our mission just by reading leadership books, going to seminars or copying the techniques of some bigger church. Life-change requires supernatural power.

The Spirit's indwelling is what separates *trying to act* like a Christian from really following Christ. The Holy Spirit is presented in the Bible as the secret to success. [Gal 4:6 God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts...](#) *He's in us like a hand in a glove.* [5:16 - So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature.](#) His supernatural power is manifested in very tangible, practical ways.

Consider the list in [Gal. 5:22,23](#). When Christians study this list they usually focus on each individual item and end up feeling like *they simply need to try harder and manufacture more fruit*. That approach goes against the whole message of Galatians, which is: *We can't do it on our own*. It is **the fruit of what?** Of our efforts? No. **Of the Spirit!**

The Spirit generates these qualities in the believer. They are a God-thing: the products of a supernatural power. We

can't pop them out on our own. [John 15:5 I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.](#)

The power of production is not in the branch itself but in its connection to the source of life. Fruitfulness is a product of continual dependence upon God's supernatural strength. We need his power.

2. The Identity Of The Holy Spirit: The word *spirit* can mean *wind* or *breath* in both Heb & Gk. Yet...

• *He's not just a mysterious force, but personal and divine.*

Personal: a *who* not a *what*. [Eph. 4:30](#) - he can be grieved. You can't hurt the feelings of an impersonal force. Consider how Jesus referred to the Spirit: [Jn. 14:16 I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever 17 the Spirit of truth.](#) Jesus said, *He's like me. He'll play my role. He takes my place.* [16:7 - But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.](#) Notice the masculine personal pronoun. The Spirit is not an *it*, but a *he*. He's not just a force; in fact, he's distinguished from his own power ([Lk. 4:14; Acts 10:38; 1 Cor. 2:4](#)).

Divine: I showed earlier in this series that he is called God in [Acts 5:3,4](#). He is also said to possess attributes that belong only to God, like omniscience ([1 Cor. 2:10](#)), omnipresence ([6:19](#)), and eternity ([Heb. 9:14](#)). (*Those references are on your outline.*)

He also regenerates people ([Jn. 3:5-8](#)), something that only God can do. Equally associated with the Father and the Son in baptismal formula ([Mt 28:19 - in the name...](#))

So what? Here's the key implication of the Spirit's identity as both personal and divine: If we think of the Holy Spirit as only a mysterious force we will ask, "*How can I get more of the Spirit?*" But if we think of him as personal God, we will ask, "*How can the HS get more of me?*" Think about that. Do you have an answer for that question?

3. The Role Of The Holy Spirit:

He created, speaks, fills, seals, gifts, empowers, guides, reveals, baptizes, teaches, convicts, regenerates, anoints, intercedes, calls, searches, comforts, assures, and reminds. To unpack these would require a series of messages (planned one for next year).

Sum: *The Spirit manifests God's presence in our lives.*

Jn 14:17 the Spirit of truth... lives with you and will be in you. He takes up residence: **1 Cor 6:19** - body is temple of the Holy Spirit... This means you never need to feel alone. When you're tempted to think you're going solo in this bitter game of life, remember the Spirit's *indwelling* presence.

In him? Him in us? Picture squeezing a sponge and immersing it in water. We are in him as the sponge is in the water. Then as you open your hand, the water is in the sponge, as he is in us. That's going to be uncomfortable - it's going to cramp my style. I don't want to feel squished. It does involve change, but all it costs you is to be emptied of the hollowness and filled to capacity. Fulfill your function!

So: Empty yourself! Come in! Open up! Be filled!

Eph 5:18 - be filled! *Ethereal?* Produces practical results: Bezalel - being filled manifested itself in a skill (*metalwork*).

The Spirit gifts: gives various abilities for service.

1 Cor 12:11-27 He gives them out according to his will and no one has them all. Our job is to recognize our gifts and to utilize them. **1 Pet 4:10,11** - As each....

By the way, if you're a Christian, then you don't have to worry about getting the Spirit in some second encounter.

Rom 8:9 ...if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ. When you belong to Christ, you have the Spirit! Again the question is: *Does he have you!*

4. What The Holy Spirit Doesn't Want:

• **To be resisted.** **Acts 7:51:** context emphasizes rejecting the authority of God's Word. Equated with *blaspheming* in **Mt. 12:31,32** and *insulting* in **Heb. 10:29** (both referring to an ultimate rejection of the Spirit's work in revealing Jesus). **R.**

• **To be grieved.** **Eph. 4:29-32** - context has to do with how we speak. Verbally tearing others down makes the Holy Spirit sad. That brings him sorrow. **R.**

• **To be quenched.** **1 Thess. 5:19** - do not quench the Spirit. We use this word to describe *getting rid of* our thirst. Both other biblical uses of this word mean *to snuff out* a fire. *Don't throw water on him; don't inhibit what he's trying to do in you,* which is to *set you ablaze.* **NIV: don't put out the Spirit's fire.** Also translated: don't extinguish, suppress. Let him do his thing in your life! You can catch fire and burn with zeal, and spread the warmth. That's not something to miss! **R.**

5. What The Holy Spirit Does Want:

• **He wants the focus on Jesus.**

The Spirit's passion is to glorify Jesus, who said of the Spirit: **Jn 16:14** - He will bring glory to me. The Spirit points people to Jesus. **Jn 15:26** - He will testify about me. Everything else the Spirit does is included within this one underlying purpose. And anything which distracts the focus off of Christ is not the Spirit's doing. *Think about it.*
A: *Am I following his lead? Is this my passion, my sole pursuit?*

• **He wants us to be holy.** Think of his name. He could've been called: the *loving* Spirit, or the *strong* Spirit, or the *cool* Spirit, but he is the *Holy* Spirit. That's his first name! He is the Holy Spirit and wants us to be holy as well. *Holy* means removed from evil, separated from sin. It also means set apart for a purpose. He exerts his influence in our lives to lead us to holiness. He draws us away from evil and toward righteousness.
A: *Am I following his lead? Am I committed to holy living? Or am I resisting, grieving and quenching the Spirit in my life?*

Band come up. Concl: You don't want to try to live the Christian life disconnected from the Holy Spirit. To follow Christ successfully, we need God's power. The words of our closing song form a prayer for us all to pray right now. *Come Holy Spirit, fill me.*

Note to web users:

I was wining it more than usual this week so a lot of what I said is not reflected in my notes. You've really got to hear the audio to get the extra stuff.