

“START TO FINISH IT’S THE SPIRIT”

(People of the Spirit Sermon Series)

Westgate Chapel 2-9-20

PROPOSITION: The Holy Spirit has always been God’s agent for the accomplishment of the Father’s agenda on the earth.

I. INTRODUCTION

- If it is true that the Holy Spirit is God’s agent accomplishing His work in the earth...then it seems to me to be of vital importance that as Christians **we learn how to live in and through the Spirit.**
- From my own experience it seems to me that living in and through the Spirit **requires four things...**
 - * **...thinking differently about God being in community,** rather than three distinct and somewhat unrelated persons of the Trinity that I might interact with from time to time.
 - * ...understanding that my salvation is not some forensic accounting trick, where I have been declared forgiven, but rather that it is a **supernatural joining of my life with Christ, to the Father, through the Spirit.**
 - * **...changing my approach to my day-to-day existence,** from living to myself, with myself, through my efforts and energy...to living moment by moment in conscious fellowship with Christ, to the Father, through the Spirit.

- * ...asking the Holy Spirit to help me acknowledge Him, invite His guidance and power to be revealed in me, to advance the purposes of God in and through me, every moment of every day.
- That is living in the Spirit.
- And it is NOT available only to those who have been baptized in the Spirit.
- Living in the Spirit is available to all believers.
- And we all will need the Spirit's help to re-orient our daily lives...like Dr. Land says, we are "to consciously, actively invite Him, receive Him and welcome Him into every part of our day and then watch and listen for His voice and influence."
- Dr. Land quotes Karl Barth,
 - "Only where the Spirit is sighed, cried and prayed for does He become present and newly active."**
- Listen, life in the Spirit is not something that happens automatically, just because we are Christians and read the Bible and pray.

II. LIVING IN THE SPIRIT: WE HAVE A ROLE

- Life in the Spirit is going to require that you and I think about our Christian lives on a daily basis and intentionally draw near to God and actively invite the Spirit into each aspect of the day.
- King Asa, in the Old Testament, is a perfect example of a God-follower who was "on again and off again" in his relationship with God...sometimes trusting the Lord, other times relying on his own wisdom. So, the Lord sent one of His prophets to encourage him, saying...

“Hear me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin: The LORD is with you while you are with him. If you seek him, he will be found by you, but if you forsake him, he will forsake you.” (2 Chronicles 15:2 ESV)

- In explaining the Hebrew word for "with" in "The Lord is with you," the *Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament* says, **"Yahweh's companionship means success for His people."**
- Very interesting that, in the Hebrew, a **different word is used for "with"** in King Asa's being with God."
- Here the word "with" means, **"to take your place and occupy a certain position or area, to continue, to dwell, to endure, to remain, to tarry."**
- Living in the Spirit will require intentionality on our part, **making the effort to draw near to God, confident that while we are making the effort, God has promised that He will draw near to us...to make us His successful people.**
- God "with" us means **He plans to advance His kingdom through us** in ways that are far beyond our ability to even imagine.

"Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think." (Ephesians 3:20 NLT)

III. HOLY SPIRIT NEW BIRTH

- From **start to finish** of your Christian life, the work of God in you is the **work accomplished in you by the Holy Spirit**.
- I know this section will be very familiar material for most, but I believe it is so important that we understand the role of the Holy Spirit, **all the way back to our salvation**.

"Jesus replied [to Nicodemus], 'I assure you, no one can enter the Kingdom of God without being born of water and the Spirit.'" (John 3:5 NLT)

"[Jesus continues teaching Nicodemus] Humans can reproduce only human life, but the Holy Spirit gives birth to spiritual life." (John 3:6 NLT)

"The Spirit alone gives eternal life. Human effort accomplishes nothing. And the very words I have spoken to you are spirit and life." (John 6:63 NLT)

IV. HOLY SPIRIT CONFIDENCE

- As we intentionally draw near to God on a regular basis, actively relying on the Holy Spirit, one of the things you will notice right away is **an increasing confidence and boldness** in the security of your relationship with and position in the Lord.

"So you have not received a spirit that makes you fearful slaves. Instead, you received God's Spirit when he adopted

you as his own children. Now we call him, 'Abba, Father.' (Romans 8:15 NLT)

"For his Spirit joins with our spirit to affirm that we are God's children."
(Romans 8:16 NLT)

"...and he [God the Father] has identified us as his own by placing the Holy Spirit in our hearts as the first installment that guarantees everything he has promised us." (2 Corinthians 1:22 NLT)

"God himself has prepared us for this [eternal life in God's presence], and as a guarantee he has given us his Holy Spirit." (2 Corinthians 5:5 NLT)

"The Spirit is God's guarantee that he will give us the inheritance he promised and that he has purchased us to be his own people. He did this so we would praise and glorify him." (Ephesians 1:14 NLT)

"And God has given us his Spirit as proof that we live in him and he in us."
(1 John 4:13 NLT)

V. HOLY SPIRIT GROWING US

- There is a huge connection in Scripture between the **residence of the Spirit in the life of the believer and spiritual growth**, but this growth is not automatic.

- The Holy Spirit is **not a labor-saving device**.
- God invites us into His life as **active participants with Him in His divine nature**...responding to His initiatives of love and grace.
- To show you how important this subject is, there are 32 verses I researched, all connecting the **Spirit to spiritual growth** in our lives.
- Obviously, I cannot include all verses but wanted you to know how important a subject this is to God.

"Humans can reproduce only human life, but the Holy Spirit gives birth to spiritual life." (John 3:6 NLT)

"...true circumcision [cutting away of old sinful nature] is not merely obeying the letter of the law; rather, it is a change of heart produced by the Spirit." (Romans 2:29b NLT)

"For we know how dearly God loves us, because he has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with his love." (Romans 5:5 NLT)

"But now we have been released from the law, for we died to it and are no longer captive to its power. Now we can serve God, not in the old way of obeying the letter of the law, but in the new way of living in the Spirit." (Romans 7:6 NLT)

"Those who are dominated by the sinful nature think about sinful things, but those who are controlled by the Holy Spirit think about things that please the Spirit." (Romans 8:5 NLT)

"So all of us who have had that veil removed can see and reflect the glory of the Lord. And the Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like him as we are changed into his glorious image." (2 Corinthians 3:18 NLT)

"Instead, let the Spirit renew your thoughts and attitudes." (Ephesians 4:23 NLT)

VI. HOLY SPIRIT TEACHING US

- From the very beginning, when Jesus first introduced His disciples to the Holy Spirit, one of the roles Jesus ascribes to the Spirit is **for our instruction.**

"He is the Holy Spirit, who leads into all truth." (John 14:17a NLT)

"But when the Father sends the Advocate as my representative—that is, the Holy Spirit—he will teach you everything and will remind you of everything I have told you." (John 14:26 NLT)

"But I will send you the Advocate—the Spirit of truth. He will come to you from

the Father and will testify all about me.
(John 15:26 NLT)

"When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own but will tell you what he has heard." (John 16:13 NLT)

"All that belongs to the Father is mine; this is why I said, 'The Spirit will tell you whatever he receives from me.'" (John 16:15 NLT)

VII.CONCLUSION

- Living in the Spirit is a **huge subject.**
- We are **nowhere near done** but need to be done for this session.
- I don't want to overwhelm you and you don't need to feel overwhelmed, because the **Holy Spirit will take these truths about what He is in you to accomplish and will bring them to your remembrance and empower** you to live these truths by faith.
- And **He will do it.**
- Just invite Him in every day and watch and listen for His voice.
- Would you pat your chest with your right hand and pray with me? "Thank you, Father, for sending the Holy Spirit to take up residence inside of me when I was born again. Thank You that You sent Him, so that I would not have to live my life out of my own wisdom and strength, but THROUGH the indwelling power of Your Spirit."

