The Holy Spirit - Week 5
The Spirit & Christ's church



[slide-1] And with that we arrive at our fifth and final week on his Spirit. Today we are going to be speaking on that the Spirit and Christ's church… and our fellowship in the Holy Spirit. Now I got to say on my hit list of things that I thought the scriptures spoke about the Holy Spirit… I didn't think fellowship of the Holy Spirit, was not one them. But I've come to see this is crucial for the NT and for us

So let's pray as we listen to the Spirits word,

Thank you for all the rich encouragements we have received from your Word throughout this series. And we thank you today that we share your Holy Spirit.
And so, Father, please now by your Spirit unity bring us together.
Help us work to be of the same mind and the same love.
And stir us now that we would be eager to maintain our unity in the Spirit.
And we ask it in Jesus' name, Amen.

[slide-2] **Intro: What does it mean to be spiritual?**

Some of you might remember Layne Beachley
She was on of Australia's great surfing champion.
Around the time Australia won everything. Remember /know her?
You couldn't get a better name for a surfer, than Beachley!

Well after her surfing life Beachley launched a new business with a spiritual flavour

Called "The awaken collective"
And has leadership program called *"Your Own Truth"*
It's a course aimed at awakening your spirit with daily rituals
And it's a course about understanding you feelings/ being kind to your mind
And some of its focus areas caught my attention
That to awaken your spirit… you must find discover your love and love yourself

In many ways self-truth and self-love are not unique to Beachley,

They are catch cries of our ages
Where many are told to go on a spiritual truth discovering what is true in you
And many are told real life is found withdrawing to self-care, self-kindness

[slide-3] Which of these two columns best captures true spirituality

I am an individual	I am part of community
I have obligations to love myself	I have obligations to love others
I have desires to be expressed	I have desires to be trained
I discover what is true for me	I discover what true for all

Modern Australian spirituality seems to suggest the left column

But it's not just Australia out there

We Christians can easily get swept up column one as well right?

Where the Chrisitan life becomes the Spirit and me
Where we find our own personalised Christianity to suit our lifestyle
Or where the Spirits say things to individual..
That can't be challenged by gospel truth that has come to us all

[slide-4] Today we come to the Spirit and Christ church...
We get to see that true spirituality ***does have truth and love...***
But it is not a truth and love focused on self.
First and foremost it's a truth and love focused on the Lord Jesus Christ
And it is a truth and love expressed communally as part of Christ's church.
That the way unity comes is as truth and love is lived out in fellowship

And I've got say personally speaking
I've experienced a number of times over this series
Where I'm seeing us working hard to see scriptures together
And what I've experienced from you... is your love and grace...
Which I've come to see more deeply, is the work of the Spirit among us.
So let's let the Spirit take us to Christ one more time... Christ's church

[slide-5] The plan today our time learning from an unspiritual church...
The Corinthians
This church sadly modelling to us what spirituality doesn't look like...
But turn the same they will teach us what spirituality does look like...

So right at the end of the talk I'm going see a glimpse of the Ephesian church
I'm going to ask what similar truths do we see across
Corinthians and Ephesians...

1. [slide-6] **An unspiritual church (Corinthians)**
   a. **Unspiritual divisions**

[turn-there]Turn with me to the first reading 1 Corinthians 3, where he says
[1] But I, brothers and sisters, could not address you as spiritual people,
but as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ
[2] I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for it.
And even now you are not yet ready, [3] for you are still of the flesh....
Ah why are they unspiritual? V3
For while there is jealousy and strife among you,
are you not of the flesh and behaving only in a human way?
[4] For when one says, "I follow Paul," and another,
"I follow Apollos," are you not being merely human

An unspiritual church is a divided one. And the Corinthians were divided.
Where some liked church planter Paul, others liked church waterer.. Apollos
And that sentiment is hardly far from us, some mights say
Ah I'm a sacramentalist christian oh I'm a worship-focused Christian....
Ah I'm conservative christian... oh I'm a progressive christians...
Ah I follow Jensens, Keller, Piper... Oh grow up says Paul.

Our online world is only making this harder among us.
It's so easy to meet as Christ's people and think

Oh well that's good for you but I have my podcasts, my position
And I'm not moving and church and truth/love don't get worked out

What's the antidote?
We all come together and work hard to build on Christ and his word
The foundation that both Paul and Apollos built on is… Christ the cornerstone.
So then all members of church must to be careful how they build….
Let's not be a church that build with hay and straw…fluff n bubble
Let's build on Christ.

Notice btw the Spirit is not the foundation/centre of church life
Rather Spirit builds us together on Christ… into a spiritual holy temple V16
Speaking of the church, Paul says
16 Do you not know that you are God's temple
and that God's Spirit dwells in you?
17 If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him.
For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple…. Down to v21

21 So let no one boast in men. For all things are yours,
22 whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas
or the world or life or death or the present or the future—all are yours,
23 and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's.
See there is no spiritual business class and spiritual economy at church… v21
V21 "For all things are yours"… So we seen
If Christ is mine, I need no more… He is the greatest gift of all

Now the Corinthians didn't sing that one! .
They needed reminding that the Spirit was building them together
So we come across to 1 Corinthians 12-14[turn-there]
And though in recent years many questions have arisen from this text
Thankfully the big picture argument is clear
The Spirit works to build the church by love
And by speaking the truth to one another

Let's follow it together

b. [slide-7] The Spirit work is us for the common good (1 Corinthians 12-14)

1 Corinthians 12-14 is bookended talk about spiritual people or spiritual things
12:1 Now concerning spiritual things/persons, brothers and sisters
I do not want you to be uninformed.

14:37 If anyone thinks that he is a prophet,
or spiritual, he should acknowledge that
the things I am writing to you are a command of the Lord.
See 1 Corinthians 12-14
Paul wants the Corinthians to be informed true spiritual things & people
For true unspiritual people divide…
But spiritual people unite by working for the common good[1]
It's worth noting the words "spiritual gifts" don't come up in this passage.

[1] Notice the comparisons between chapter 3 and chapter 12 in "Let the word dwell richly" Tony Payne page 84-85

I recognise that might sound disorientating…
But the fact is the whole NT words spiritual gifts only come once
It feels like this ship in christendom has sailed… but we can play out part
The only time "spiritual gifts" are mentioned is Romans 1:11
There the spiritual gift is the gospel.
For the gospel is the gift of the Spirit to us allllll the gospel
Paul argued similar in 1 Corinthians 2:6-16
The Holy Spirit gifts us all with truly knowing God our Father/Christ

[slide-8] So the talk of gifts is not an exclusive role of the Spirit. It's trinitarian
Count all three persons we me in v4-6
[4] Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same **Spirit;**
[5] and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord **(Jesus);**
[6] and there are varieties of activities,
but it is the same **God** (Father) who empowers them all in everyone.
So all three person give gifts
The gift list in Romans come from God the Father
The gift list in Ephesians come from Christ

But. But the Spirit is the one who equips us to use the gifts for the common good
The key verses comes in v7
[7] To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.
The idea is not to look in a gift bag and see what you go
"Oh well I don't… administration" "no gift of faith for me"
Rather the Spirit help allllllll of us love and serve Christs church
The Spirit helps allllllll of us love and serve
The Spirit helps us all speak God's truth.
That's why so many are speaking gifts..
Wisdom, knowledge, prophesy, tongues, interpretation

Although the Corinthians were aware of other gifts from God too.
For a big part of the apostle's ministry was the work of miracles and healing
In fact the true sign of the apostles was miracles and healing
[slide-9] So in 2 Corinthians 12:11-12 Paul writes…
"for I was not at all inferior to these super apostles,
Even though I am nothing. The signs of a true apostle
were performed among you with the upmost patience
with signs and wonders and mighty works"
So Peter raises the lame
And condemns Ananias and Sapphira to death for lying to the Spirit
And Paul strikes Elymas the magician blind
And Paul raises Eutychus from the dead

And in Acts many of these moments establish the authority of the apostles…
As truly of Christ…
[slide-10] The authority to bring dead and raise bac to life
Seems to be me to be salvation historical moments…
Even modern healing ministries haven't claimed to kill and rise
That is significant. Which is why the gifts are presented in an order

[28] And God has appointed in the church first apostles,
second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, administrating, and various kinds of tongues. [29] Are all apostles? (no) Are all prophets? (no) Are all teachers? (no) Do all work miracles? (no) [30] Do all possess gifts of healing? (no) Do all speak with tongues? (no) Do all interpret? (no) [31] But earnestly desire the higher gifts. And a more excellent way

It seems to me calling yourself an apostle is a very dangerous thing to do
They are Jesus' first gift to the church…
Even from the beginning of Acts… 2:42
The early begin devoted themselves to the apostles teaching, not their own
They find themselves awe struck because the apostles did signs and wonders
Not their own. And Paul is very concerned about those calling
themselves apostles leading ppl astray in 2 Corinthians 11

Now that doesn't that mean God never heal or works miracles today.
And if God uses you to prayerfully heal someone… Praise God
But it doesn't appear to be a sustained ministry.
Where we can clear out the nursing homes or North Canberra hospital
We will not abuse the gospel like the powerful apostles prosperity ministries
Throughout Africa, India and America… is awful and usually devoid love/truth.

Rather remember the Spirit equips us allllllllll for the "common good"
Why did you come to church today? The Spirit says not for you. For them.
Why visit one other? Why put on lunch? Why sing? For them?
Why practice speak truth/love? I'm an MYERS BRIGGS ISTJ… I don't talk to ppl.
The Spirit leads us to give/love/serve.
Introverts do incredible people ministry. And I see you do it all the time.

That's where Paul goes next
Because even after listing all those seemingly impressive gifts
He says 12v31 I want you to a more excellent way… That is…

c. [slide-11] **The Spirit helps us pursue love (1 Cor 13-14)**

See 1 Corinthians 12-14 has a centre piece and it's LOVE!
Chapter 14 begins with "Pursue love and earnestly desire the spiritual things
See an unspiritual church lacks communal love.
You can be spiritual most impressive church in the world
But if you lack the Spirits love… you lack any substance at all

And that's the context of 1 Corinthians 13:1
Where Paul begins talking in hyperbole. He is exaggerative

[1] If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels,
but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.
[2] And if I have prophetic powers,
and understand all mysteries and all knowledge,
and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains,
but have not love, I am nothing.
[3] If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned,
but have not love, I gain nothing.

I don't think this is Paul prescribing angelic languages

He is saying you could be a “spiritual wonder women”
But you got no love… you got nothing.

That is the Spirit cares more about your godliness than you gifts.
The Spirit wants to make us full of the love of Christ…
Who came and gave up everything to die for us on a cross.
That’s love. That’s power. That’s wisdom.

Now notice too as Paul speaks about love he bind it to…
Notice he says love…13v6 rejoices with the truth
So in chapter 14 he shows us a key way to love one another…
Is by prophesying

d. [slide-12] **The Spirit helps us pursue prophesy**

In more recent decades churches have thought that…
Prophesy is a spontaneous word from God given personally by the Holy Spirit

But it seems that definition is more a a modern take
See Prophesy for the Puritans or before for the Reformers
Was a more common way to speak about preaching/teaching
For example Puritan William Perkins wrote a book in 1592 called
“The art of prophesying” It’s basically a modern book on how to preach
And you could go to prophesy classes on how to teach the bible

So who’s right? Well what does the Bible say
In the Old Testament prophecy was moreso the giving divine scripture
Not a category for us
The New Testament sometimes the apostles and prophets speaks of the OT prophets. And on a few occasions there appears NT prophets.
Though we get their teaching listed for us. I take it cos we don’t need it.
Really the closest to a definition of prophesy appears in Revelation 19:10
For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophesy”

So what does prophesy mean in 1 Corinthians 12-14?
Paul’s overall logic is…
Prophesy is better than tongues because it’s encouraging! v5
So learn to prophesy so you can love people with the truth
So do highlight verses…

12:3 Therefore I want you to understand that
no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says “Jesus is accursed!”
and no one can say “Jesus is Lord” except in the Holy Spirit.

14:5 Now I want you all to speak in tongues, but even more to prophesy.
The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues,
unless someone interprets, so that the church may be built up.

14:12 So with yourselves, since you are eager for manifestations of the Spirit,
strive to excel in building up the church.

So whilst Paul doesn’t specifically defined… he does give us a fence/guildines

It's speech related to the Christ the Lord
It's speech that is intelligible, relevant and rational
It's speech done with real knowledge of God.
It's speech that can be learnt from (so it's teaching like)
It encourages, edifies, builds up.
It's something all have potential to grow in
It's something all believers to pursue, men and women

As for the limit on the participation of women in prophesy in 14v34-35
It appears Paul limits her from the authoritative task
Of addressing the whole congregation
But it doesn't stop Paul from the expansiv close in
14:39 So, my brothers and sisters, earnestly desire to prophesy,
and do not forbid speaking in tongues.
40 But all things should be done decently and in order.

So friends... brothers ans sisters lets get better at prophesy in our life togrther
We're going to need to know our bibles deeper...
We need to practice speak gospel words into each others lives...
But we need to speak truth into one anothers lives
And actually we do this all the time...
In homes, café, playdates, campus, work. So this week. Monday...
Graham Fletcher got asked about as chinas former ambassador how to let people know you're a christian
Wednesday.. I got this card *"I've made the sweeping assumption that you like Tobberbone in the hope you might feel a bit better.*
Even more effective than Toblerlone is God's word
I've been finding Isaiah 41:20 precious
For I am with you, for I am your God, I will strength you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous hand...
At the wedding, ppl encouraging other to get back to church or our godliness is driving... I'm hearing stories about us no regard for the law. We are those who honour authorities

e. [slide-13] **The Spirit wants prophesy more than tongues**

Paul wants more prophesy because it builds the church, unlike tongues v19
v19 Nevertheless, in church I would rather speak five words
with my mind in order to instruct others,
than ten thousand words in a tongue.

Now in my opinion,
Tongues in 1 Corinthians 14 are speaking about human languages.
Just like they were in Acts 2 when people heard in other languages.
So here I think they are human languages, potentially supernaturally given
But not necessarily. Now I could be wrong. I'm sorry if I am!
I want to give the truth have to answer before God what I teach okay.

As far as I can tell, the reading of ecstatic tongues arose from Azuza Street in 1906
And resurfaced Toronto Blessing in 1994...

I have found it difficult to find commentaries across church history…
Of people who interpret 1 Corinthians in the sense of ecstatic languages

So what does Paul saying?
Paul says the problem with proudly speaking foreign languages at church…
Is that no one else understands what you're saying.
The only way to make them fruitful is to translate/interpret.
Corinth has all kinds of dialects, tongues, coming through town, no sunflowerAI
So pray that God bring someone else to church who knows your language

So 14v2For one who speaks in a tongue speaks not to men but to God;
for no one understands him, but he utters mysteries in the spirit.
When you speak a foreign language only God understands it, not the rest
4 The one who speaks in a tongue builds up himself,
but the one who prophesies builds up the church.
Over the year there's has been many a few times in bible studies where
An friends has asked to pray in their own native tongue.
Cos English is too much work. And I used to say sure…
But then I realised a problem… I had no idea what my friends prayed
"Father God… this man is so wrong… please help him." I say Amen!" See v9

9 So with yourselves, if with your tongue you utter speech that is not intelligible,
how will anyone know what is said? For you will be speaking into the air.
10 There are doubtless many different languages in the world,
and none is without meaning,[1]
11 but if I do not know the meaning of the language,
I will be a foreigner to the speaker and the speaker a foreigner to me.

See Paul wants us to come to church with spirit and mind engagedv14
13 therefore one who speaks in a tongue should pray that he may interpret
14 For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays but my mind is unfruitful.
15 What am I to do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will pray with my mind also;
I will sing praise with my spirit, but I will sing with my mind also.
When the mind is not engaged, or a language not translated…
No one can be encouraged in Christ. Resolve to pray with mind and spirit

So Paul finishes the argument in v21[21] In the Law it is written,
"By people of strange tongues and by the lips of foreigners will I speak
to this people, and even then they will not listen to me, says the Lord."
22 Thus tongues are a sign not for believers but for unbelievers,
while prophecy is a sign not for unbelievers but for believers.
23 If, therefore, the whole church comes together
and all speak in tongues, and outsiders or unbelievers enter,
will they not say that you are out of your minds?
So across the story of the Bible from the tower of babel
Foreign languages were a sign of judgement
To not understand God's word is to be judged… cos you don't understand
It was the same idea with the parables, to not understand was judgement
So if an unbeliever comes in here's different languages…

There is no way to be know God….

But v24 [24] But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or outsider enters,
he is convicted by all, he is called to account by all,
[25] the secrets of his heart are disclosed, and so, falling on his face,
he will worship God and declare that God is really among you.
See the way in which an unbeliever comes and see truth and love in action
They will say ah you people know the true and living God

So whilst many claim across the world
That in order to have a true spiritual experience you need tongues
It seems clear to me that tongues are not the truly spiritual thing…
Tongues can be used without love and truth
Whilst prophesy can have both truth and love

So let's see what we've learnt together…

2. [slide-14] **The spiritually united church**

I'm going to read two passages in Ephesians. Turm with ,e
I want us to have a go speaking out…
In what ways are Corinthians & Ephesians similar? Stick to the big picture.

Ephesians 2:18:22
[18] For through him (Christ) we both have access in **one Spirit** to the Father.
[19] So then you are no longer strangers and aliens,
but you are fellow citizens with the saints
and members of the household of God,
[20] **built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets,**
Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone,
[21] in whom the whole structure, being joined together,
grows into **a holy temple in the Lord.**
[22] In him you also are being built together
into a dwelling place **for God by the Spirit.**

Come across to chapter 4
[1] I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord,
urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling
to which you have been called,
[2] with all humility and gentleness, with patience,
bearing with one another in love,
[3] eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.
[4] There is one body and one Spirit –
just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call
[5] one Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 one God and Father of all,
who is over all and through all and in all.
[7] But grace was given **to each one of us**
according to the measure of Christ's gift. 8 Therefore it says,
"When he ascended on high he led a host of captives,
and he gave gifts to men."
[9] (In saying, "He ascended," what does it mean but that

he had also descended into the lower regions, the earth?
10 He who descended is the one who also ascended far above
all the heavens, that he might fill all things.

11 And **he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds**
and teachers, **12 to equip the saints for the work of ministry,**
for building up the body of Christ,
13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith
and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood,
to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,
14 so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves
and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning,
by craftiness in deceitful schemes. **15 Rather, speaking the truth in love,**
we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, **into Christ,**
16 from whom the whole body, joined and held together
by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly,
makes the body grow so that it **builds itself up in love.**

What's similar?

- We have one spirit. The Spirit is at work building us into a temple
- The Spirit builds us on Christ the cornerstone the apostles & profits
- Paul is eager they maintain the unity of the Spirit (not divided). Love!
- Gifts are given for the building up of the body// maturity in Christ
- There is one Spirit and we are to be one church
- We all learn to speak the truth in love. The body grows in love.

Close

Friends the thing about Christian unity… for all churches & ours
It's one of those **now** and not yet things in our Christian life

Our unity has already been achieved!
Because the cross of Christ by the spirit has already united us as one together
One died for allllllllll of Christ church/
Our sins are forgiveness our sins together.
We are bound to Christ together.
The Spirit has united us by the work of the cross

And it because we unified already…. That unity is something we *fight* for!?
We are unitifed so we are eagar to maintain our unity
We have unity in Christ, so we pursue truth and love together

And in world is just losing ground and unsure how to do this…
Church should be something special
Cos we know real spirituality looks like…
Christ has made us one, together.
And his Holy Spirit is on pursuit in allllll of us… to build us together.
To build us up truth and deep in love
So let's you unified bunch!.. Be eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit
Discussion Questions

Lords Supper

The night before Jesus died for all our sins.
He prays for us. He thought of you, of us together.

He just prayers for the apostles and those in the upper room
Now he turns to us
20 “I do not ask for these only,
but also for those who will believe in me through their word,
21 that they may all be one, just as you,
Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us,
so that the world may believe that you have sent me.

This meal the Lords Supper sometimes gets called communion…
Because it is a community meal…
For Jesus did not just die for the sins of one of us.
His body was broken and his blood was shed for all who believed the gospel word.
This is a meal that says we believe the gospel truth. We share in Christ’s love.

So friends if you believe that Jesus died for our sins
If you want to share in Christ’s forgiveness
You can use this meal to say I want to become a christian. Come and eat with us.

Take and eat… remembering Christ died for us sins we would be one with him
Take and drink… remembering that Christ shed his blood for our sins
Father God… we thank you for your love. Lord Jesus we thank you for your grace.
Holy Spirit we thank you for the fellowship we share in you. In Jesus name we pray.
Amen