

Series: **1=3 - The truth about God and His nature – week 8**

CDOBC – beginning on 4/30/17

Today's Title: **“The Holy Spirit's Work in the World”**

Father's Day - June 18, 2017 - John 14-16 and Selected Passages

OBJECTIVE: To help people know the Holy Spirit's work in the world is accomplished through our obedience to the Spirit in us.

Here are some ‘Dad-isms’ to help us appreciate the ever-present wisdom of fatherhood. Maybe you’ve heard these from your father...and maybe you’ve uttered them as a father.

“No, we’re not there yet.”

“Were you raised in a barn? Close the door.”

“Don’t ask me...ask your mother.”

“Don’t tell your mother.”

“You didn’t beat me...I let you win.”

“You’re gonna like it...whether you like it or not!”

“I’m not sleeping...I’m watching that.”

“Don’t make me stop the car.”

“I gave my father \$100 and said, buy yourself something that will make your life easier. So, he went out and bought a present for my mother.” - *Rita Rudner (comedian)*

“You can tell what was the best year of your father’s life, because they seem to freeze that clothing style and ride it out.” - *Jerry Seinfeld*

You’re never really prepared to become a father - or a mother.

Parenthood is one of those jobs where you can prepare - you should prepare - you should learn as much as you can about parenting before the baby arrives...but most of your learning and wisdom about fatherhood will be ‘OJT’: *On the Job Training*. Being a Christian...Learning about the Christian life...Living the Christian life is something we should read about and study - we should gain as much knowledge as possible - but the only way to truly learn is to live it...to do it...OJT.

Learning about the Holy Spirit is not simply a pursuit of knowledge - it’s a combination of our knowledge of the truth + application in life.

Last Sunday we talked about the divinity and personhood of the Holy Spirit.

Today I’m talking about: “*The Holy Spirit’s Work in the World.*”

Opening Prayer

There is a great deal of confusion in the Church as to what the Holy Spirit does, and my desire over the next 2 weeks is to bring some clarity to this topic - not just for your knowledge, but for you to apply these truths each day.

Turn / tap in your Bible to **John 14**.

For context, this section in John records Jesus and His disciples gathered together in the upper room for the Last Supper, fellowship and teaching. In **chapter 13**, Jesus washes their feet and teaches them about serving and humility.

He talks about His betrayal and His impending departure from their presence.

In John 14, we find His impending departure is causing the disciples a great deal of anxiety and heartache - they don't know what to do without Jesus in their midst. They are followers...He is their leader.

In vs. 1 Jesus addresses their concerns and troubled hearts - and beginning in vs. 15, He tells them about the Holy Spirit.

(vs. 15) “If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.

16 And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, to be with you forever...”

The Holy Spirit is just like Jesus 14:15-16

Notice in vs. 15 Jesus begins talking about obedience to His “commandments”. This is important...as we'll see in a few minutes.

There are 3 things I want to draw your attention to in vs. 16. The first is:

God gives the Holy Spirit to Christians.

The Holy Spirit is not given to the world.

The Holy Spirit indwells believers...Christians. It's personal. The Spirit's presence is not vague, impersonal or some mystical presence throughout the world.

He is God...so He is *omnipresent* - but in a primary sense, the Spirit of God indwells believers.

His presence in our life is a direct result of God's gift of His Spirit - **to us** - at the moment we believe in Christ.

We see this mentioned again in 16:7:

"Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to **you**. But if I go, I will send Him to **you**."

The Holy Spirit is sent by God to believers in Christ.

The Holy Spirit is not sent by God into the world in a general sense - but specifically to Christians.

The second thing I want you to notice is:

The Holy Spirit is another Helper.

There are 2 words in Greek which mean "another".

The first is *heteros*, which means: Another of a different kind.

Illus. - I have 2 gloves...but they are *heteros* - both gloves, but very different from each other. 1 is a baseball glove - 1 is a winter/ski glove. Both are gloves...but they are different from each other.

The other Greek word for "another" is the word *allos*.

This word means: Another of the same kind.

Illus. - Once again - I have 2 gloves - but this time I have 2 of the same kind - 2 ski gloves.

This word, *allos*, is the word Jesus uses in **John 14:16**.

He tells us the Holy Spirit is "another" - the same kind of "Helper" as Jesus.

The Holy Spirit is "Christ in us" (2 Corinthians 13:5; Galatians 2:20) - the very presence of Jesus in our lives.

The third thing to notice is:

The Holy Spirit is with us *forever*.

The Spirit's presence in the life of a believer in the O.T. was selective - and temporary.

In the N.T. (the Church Age) the Holy Spirit indwells every believer at the moment of their conversion to Christ - and His presence in your life is "forever".

God will never take His Spirit from you!

OK...but what does this have to do with the Holy Spirit's work in the world? Hold on...we're getting there.

Turn / tap to **John 16:7-11**:

"Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send Him to you."

The Spirit's presence is better than Jesus' presence. 16:7

This seems heretical, but this is exactly what Jesus is saying. It's better for the disciples if Jesus leaves, so He can send the "Helper" to them.

For some reason (Which I don't clearly understand), the Spirit would not come if Jesus was still there.

But when Jesus leaves them, He will then send the Holy Spirit to them - and it will be to their "advantage" to have the Spirit instead of Him. "Advantage" in our English Bible is translated from a Greek word which means: *profitable, a gain, expedient*.

Why is the Spirit better? 2 quick reasons:

- Because in the flesh, Jesus can only speak to those who can physically hear His voice - whereas the Spirit can speak to any believer throughout the world.
- In the flesh, Jesus can only be with those physically with Him - the Spirit indwells believers everywhere.

8 “And when He comes, He will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment...”

The Holy Spirit convicts the world of their guilt. 16:8

The Spirit will work to secure a guilty verdict against the world for their rebellion against God and their rejection of Christ as their Savior.

As we work through these 3 areas of conviction, keep in mind this work of conviction will result in the salvation of some, and the eternal judgment of others.

The evidence the Spirit uses to convict the world will soften the hearts of some people, and in others, it will embolden their rejection and denial of Christ.

The world is guilty because of their sin and their rejection of Christ. vs. 9

The Holy Spirit will convict the world:

“concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me...”

The world is sinful - and they do not believe in Jesus. They reject Jesus as the Savior.

They reject the truth about Jesus - because to them, it is foolishness and moronic stuff.

2 Corinthians 2:12-14

“Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God.

13 And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual.

14 The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.”

Of course, the convicting work of the Holy Spirit results in some unbelievers putting their faith in Christ.

When some people realize their guilt because of their sin, they fall to their knees, **A**dmit their sins - and **B**elieve in Jesus as their Savior.

Christians have been given the Holy Spirit at conversion - and we are called to bring the Gospel to the world (Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 1:8).

We have been commissioned by God to tell the world about Christ - and His sacrifice for their sin.

We have been sent by God - to preach the good news of the Gospel (Romans 10:14-17).

The world is guilty due to their wickedness. vs. 10

The Holy Spirit will convict the world:

“concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see Me no longer...”

Lost people do not believe they are wicked and unrighteous in the eyes of God. According to their count, their ‘*good*’ outweighs their ‘*bad*’.

They don’t compare themselves with God’s righteousness, but with their neighbor’s or co-worker’s righteousness - a much lower standard! Jesus was without sin - He was righteous, but the world accused Him of being a sinner, and saw themselves as holy (John 9:24).

The world is ignorant of the righteousness which God requires.

Jesus says when He goes to the Father and can no longer be seen by human eyes, the Holy Spirit will reveal His righteousness to men and women.

How does this happen?

Primarily through the obedience of the Church!

The absence of Christ doesn’t mean Christ cannot be seen by the world.

The world should see the righteousness of Christ in you - in the Church.

They will see Jesus’ righteousness as we live in obedience to His commands.

Remember, earlier in the sermon, when we read 14:15, “If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.”

Why did Jesus connect the obedience of His “commandments” with His teaching of the Holy Spirit’s eternal presence and help?

Because we can only obey the commands of Christ through the Holy Spirit’s presence and work in our life, and the only way the world will know about the righteousness of Christ is when believers obey the commands of Christ and display the righteousness of Christ.

The Holy Spirit convicts the world of sin and righteousness by our sharing of the Gospel and the obedience / righteousness in our lives.

The Spirit doesn’t normally work outside and separate from the Church - from you and your work and example.

Are you starting to see how this works?

Do you see why your life in the world is so important and vital to the mission of the Church?

When I share the ‘ABC’ prayer of salvation - the ‘C’, which stands for “**C**ommit each day to Christ” is not part of the salvation prayer - it’s the result of your salvation. It’s not part of Justification, it’s the beginning of your sanctification in Christ.

Because you have “**A**dmitted your sins” and “**B**elieved in Jesus as your Savior”, now begin to live

your new life in Christ by “**C**ommitting each day to Christ”.

When you believe, the Holy Spirit’s indwelling presence happens right away. Paul says in **Ephesians 1**: “In Him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in Him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, **14** who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of His glory.”

Notice the past tense: “were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit” (vs. 13)

This happens at the moment of our belief.

Why?

So we would have the ability to live for Christ - to obey His commands - to be empowered by the Spirit to be the righteousness of Christ for the world to see, and have confidence of Heaven!

The world is guilty because they deny God’s judgment.
vs. 11

The Holy Spirit will convict the world:

“concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.”

People don’t like to think about God’s judgment.

This is part of the reason nobody likes to attend funerals. The reality of our mortality causes any reasonable person to consider what lies beyond the

grave - and if they are ready for that unavoidable event in their own life.

When Jesus died on the cross, it was not a defeat, it was a victory.

The Devil and sin were judged and defeated - “crushed” (Genesis 3:15; 1 Cor. 15:55-57).

Most people think they are in good standing with God and therefore they don't worry - or think about God's judgment of their sin.

They think their sin is minimal, and God is so loving, how could He judge them in a negative way?

But the Holy Spirit will compile the evidence of their guilt, and for many, they will face the undeniable pile of evidence when they are standing before God at the Great Judgment.

For others, the Spirit's work of conviction about God's impending judgment will result in their faith in Christ.

Consider the thief on the cross. At first, he was in harmony with the other thief (Matt. 27:44) as they insulted Jesus and taunted Him as they hung on either side of Jesus.

Then, suddenly, he has a change of heart - and he begins to tell the other thief to pipe down...to stop saying these things.

Luke 23:39-43

One of the criminals who were hanged railed at Him, saying, “Are You not the Christ? Save Yourself and us!”

40 But the other rebuked him, saying, “Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation?”

41 And we indeed justly, for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this Man has done nothing wrong.”

42 And he said, “Jesus, remember me when You come into Your kingdom.”

43 And He said to him, “Truly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise.”

What changed his mind about Jesus?

The Holy Spirit’s work in his heart and mind - *and* the testimony and example of watching and listening to Jesus on the cross.

Fast forward to today...

The Holy Spirit will use our testimony and our example of holiness and joy - to convict lost men and women of their sin, unbelief, wickedness and the future judgment of God.

The normal means the Holy Spirit uses in His work in the world is you...me...His Church!

Chuck Swindoll says, “*The Spirit...uses the faithful, loving Christian as a visual aid.*”

(Insight for Living Bible Study Guide, Exalting Christ...the Lamb of God, A Study of John 15-21, p. 31)

He works through us, to convict the world of sin, righteousness and judgment.

Last Sunday I mentioned the unpardonable sin of “blasphemy against the Spirit” in **Mark 3:29**:

Allow me to visit that passage again.

“...whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin”

The main question is: *‘Why is blasphemy against the Holy Spirit a sin without forgiveness?’*

Answer: *Because a denial of the Spirit’s work in your life - a disbelief in His work of convicting you of your sin, your lack of perfect righteousness and the warning of God’s future judgment of your life, will result in you never putting your faith in Christ.*

Result: *You will never repent and confess your sins, so you will never experience God’s forgiveness.*

John Piper says it better than I can:

“What then is it? The unforgivable sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is an act of resistance which belittles the Holy Spirit so grievously that He withdraws forever with His convicting power so that we are never able to repent and be forgiven.”

(Source: <http://www.desiringgod.org/messages/beyond-forgiveness-blasphemy-against-the-spirit>)

The Spirit’s work in the world is directly connected to your daily life as you “walk in the Spirit” and “keep the commandments” of Jesus.

The Spirit can work apart from us - He’s not limited by us. He can work in hearts and minds across the world without us. Don’t forget...He is God and is not dependent on men or women for His glory.

But He has chosen to use believers as His normal conduit for His work.

Apply it...

Love Christ...love people - Not our job to convict people of their sin, wickedness and future judgment.

This is the what the Holy Spirit does!

Nowhere are we told to try and convict people of their sin.

If the topic comes up, discuss it - answer questions - ask questions - share the Gospel and how Jesus died for our sins on the cross.

Pointing fingers and accusing is not our job.

Allow the light of Christ to shine from your life.

Those in darkness - unbelievers without Christ in their life, should see Christians living in ways which are foreign to them. Our values...our priorities...our love will point to our Savior - and the Holy Spirit will use our life to soften the heart of the unsaved.

At the same time, the Holy Spirit will use our life as evidence to bring a guilty verdict for those who don't believe.

Our love and our lifestyle will convict the world of their sin and rejection of Christ.

Our job: don't hide the light...allow the light of Christ to shine brightly!

Be confident in your faith - you have been sealed by the Holy Spirit.

Christian...you are eternally secure in your faith.

God has sealed you with the Holy Spirit:

“who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it...”

Don't live in fear and uncertainty...live in confidence that when you placed your faith in Christ - you became a child of the King...forever!

(Unbeliever...) Don't reject the Holy Spirit's work of conviction in your life.

Ignoring or rejecting the Spirit of God will leave you separated from God...forever.

Admit your sins...

Believe in Jesus as your Savior...

Commit each day to Christ!

Close in prayer