

Armagh Baptist Church – Sunday 16th May 2010

'The Holy Spirit (Part 2)'

John 15:26-16:33

Introduction

We live in a day when to mention the Holy Spirit among a group of Christians immediately causes them to think of speaking in tongues, or healing, or all sorts of other spectacular gifts of the Spirit. And for many today those things are seen as the major work of the Holy Spirit.

However on the other extreme, the Holy Spirit is hardly spoken about at all in more conservative Christian circles. Many Christians fit into one or other of those two extreme positions.

In recent weeks we have read from two lengthy passages of John's Gospel (chs. 14 & 16). These were part of Jesus' Upper Room Discourse, where he spoke to His Disciples at length about several important subjects.

In these chapters, He deals with the Holy Spirit at length, and yet he never mentions speaking in tongues, or healing, or anything else like that. So if Jesus didn't even mention these things in two whole chapters all about the Holy Spirit, then we need to ask, what is the work of the Holy Spirit then? What is His job?

Well in Ch.14 we saw that Jesus referred to the Holy Spirit as "*Another Comforter*":-

- * Someone who will be with us. (John 14:15)
(In Jesus' bodily absence).
- * Someone who will come to live within us. (John 14:17)
(to give us inner spiritual strength) (& to give assurance to believers).
- * He will teach us all things. (John 14:26)
(as we read God's Word for ourselves, He will help us understand it).
- * He will remind us of the words of Christ. (John 14:26)
(to comfort us in times of trouble) (& to help us witness / evangelise).

But as we move on into ch.16 we see that the Holy Spirit has other work to do as well:-

1. He will convict the world... (16:8-11)

(i) ...Of Sin (v.9) cf. Romans 3:23

Why? '*Because men do not believe in me.*'

cf. John 3:36 (Unbelief is the ultimate sin as far as Jesus is concerned.)

(ii) ...Of Righteousness (v.10)

Why? Because Jesus is the perfect standard of righteousness.

But he is no longer physically present for us to see his righteousness, so the Holy Spirit must convict us of our lack of righteousness instead.

(iii) ...Of Judgment (v.11)

cf. John 12:30-32

The judgment to come for each of us,
and the judgment of the devil at the cross.

But what of this word conviction?

What does it mean to come under conviction?

(Acts 2:37) "Cut to the heart."

(Acts 16:29) "Fell trembling"

(Acts 24:25) "Felix was afraid" or "Felix trembled!"

That is the Holy Spirit's work: to convict the world (unbelievers) of sin, of righteousness, of the judgement that still faces each one who continues in sin.

But what happens next? What will the Holy Spirit do then?

2. He will point to Christ:

(i) He will testify about me (John 15:26)

The Holy Spirit's job is to bear witness to Jesus Christ - to point men and women to Jesus Christ, because once he has convicted them of their sin, Jesus is the only answer. Once we have been convicted of our sin, once we realise that all our righteous acts are just like filthy rags in God's sight, once we realise that judgement awaits us, then we know that we need Christ. It is the Holy Spirit's role to point us to Christ, and show us that he is the only answer to our deepest need. '*He will testify about me*'. But read on...

"And you also must testify." (v.26) – Jesus said to his disciples. This was the reason why the Holy Spirit was given in Acts 1:8 - because we cannot evangelize without Him. We cannot cause even an anxious thought in somebody's heart unless the Holy Spirit applies what we have said. Remember what Jesus said in John 15:5? '*Apart from me you can do nothing.*

So we must witness for Jesus, and the Holy Spirit must point men and women to Jesus, and when He does, then...

(ii) He will lead us into all truth (John 16:13)

Jesus said *"I am the way, the Truth and the life."* (John 14:6)

If the Holy Spirit is going to lead us into all truth, then He will first of all have to lead us to Christ for salvation. He must lead us to the One who is the Way, the Truth and the Life. The only One, through whom we can come to the Father.

But in a secondary sense, to lead us into all truth, the Holy Spirit would inspire the writing of the New Testament in the same way as he inspired the OT. See:

John 14:26 He would inspire the Four Gospels to be written about Jesus.
John 16:13a He would inspire the Letters to be written by the Apostles.
John 16:13b He would inspire Revelation and prophecy to be written as he revealed what was yet to come.

And so He would inspire the whole of the New Testament to be written.

So He leads us to Christ who is the Truth, and then He leads us on with Christ as we read the Truth of God's inspired Word, The Bible.

(iii) "He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you." (John 16:14)

The important point to notice here is that The Holy Spirit wants to glorify Christ, not himself. He is not out to draw attention to himself, but to Christ. His work is to reveal Christ to you, and in so doing to glorify Christ as you trust in Him for salvation. Because Christ is your only answer once the Holy Spirit has convicted you of sin.

N.B. The Holy Spirit will never conflict with the Will of God, or with the written Word of God. He is the Spirit of Truth (15:26). Truth cannot conflict with Truth. The 3 persons of the Godhead always work in harmony. So the Holy Spirit can never lead you to do anything that is contrary to the Word of God or the Will of God.

3. He will change your life.

(i) The Holy Spirit will help you through difficulties (16:2,32,33) – e.g.

- * Excommunication - (v.2)
- * Scattering - (v.32)
- * Tribulation / Persecution - (v.33)

(ii) Yet Through all of this they would experience Joy! (v.20-22)

- * *"Your grief will turn to Joy."* (v.20)

But especially at Christ's Return their Joy would be full / complete.

* *"I will see you again and you will rejoice!"*
"And no-one will take away your Joy!" (v.22)

Joy is one of the Fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-23. The Holy Spirit can and does give us a deep-seated joy in our hearts as Christians, even when we are facing all kinds of outward trials and difficulties. But that joy will not be full until we see Jesus face to face, the one The Holy Spirit has been pointing us to all along.

(iii) He will assure you of the Father's Love. (v.27)

Compare that with Romans 8:14-17. It's only when we trust in Christ as our Saviour, and the Holy Spirit comes to live within us, that He testifies (or witnesses) with our spirit that we are indeed a Child of God.

It's the Holy Spirit living within us who gives us the assurance that we are saved, and gives us the confidence to call God, *"Abba, Father!"* You cannot be a Christian without the Holy Spirit in your heart (v.9). And you cannot be sure of Salvation without the Holy Spirit witnessing in your heart.

(iv) And he will give you His peace in your heart. (v.33)

In the midst of the troubles of this world, Jesus says,
"Take heart! I have overcome the world."
And he says, *"In me you [will] have peace."*
Isn't that what Jesus said back in ch.14:27.
Do you have that peace in your heart?

Conclusion:

Are you saved? Are you a Christian? Are you sure of your salvation?
Do you have Joy? Do you know The Father's Love?
Do you have the Peace of Christ in your heart?

The Holy Spirit gives you all these things - that is His job - and it's all yours as you trust in Christ for salvation. All these things are added unto you as well!

Q. Do you know the Spirit of God at work in your life?

If you're saved; you should - If you're not; you can't!
Until you come to trust in Jesus as your Saviour and Lord!

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