



SPIRIT – INDWELT AND EMPOWERED

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Introduction

We are on our journey in our series Church Alive. **We're trusting that each one of us will** be awakened in our God-given gifts and callings in a fresh way and begin to serve one another and make a difference in our city.

We have examined the topics of Identity and the church as a Body. We have learned that we are God's children, loved and accepted by Him; created on purpose for a purpose ordained before the foundations of the world. We are made for fellowship, with God and one another. We are called to walk together in close loving relationships in unity and have a lifestyle of discipleship. Today we begin our theme of the Spirit.

Indwelt and Empowered by Holy Spirit

Acts 19:1-2 ESV And it happened that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul passed through the inland country and came to Ephesus. There he found some disciples. (2) And he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" And they said, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit."

The Gospel Story

Please note the important role and function of Holy Spirit in the **Gospel story...**

- Life is about God and His mission on earth and how we fit into His mission.
- **God's mission is to bring Heaven's Kingdom to Earth.**
- **God's design for life is that we live in** a covenant partnership and fellowship with Him.
- God blessed man to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and rule over it - manage it as stewards on His behalf - to flourish – experience shalom - nothing broken and nothing lacking.
- That is how God will fill the earth with His glory.
- But man fell into sin - and disconnected from God and distortion, corruption, and evil set in - the opposite of flourish - brokenness and lack.
- **To participate in God's Plan man had to be remade** spiritually because he was dead in his sins.

Ephesians 2:1 ESV And you were dead in the trespasses and sins...

John 3:5-7 ESV Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. (6) That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. (7) Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'

- The covenant partnership with God had to be restored for the mission to bring heaven to earth to be brought back on track.

A Great Shift Took Place...

- This happened through the redemptive work of Jesus on the Cross.
- Man was incapable to save himself because he was spiritually dead.
- The Father motivated by love, gave His Son - born a human, **became a sacrifice in man's** place and died on a cross so that those who believe and receive this grace gift will be forgiven and saved – **declared as righteous and justified in God's sight.**
- Holy Spirit raised Jesus from the dead!
- But before Jesus died, he made sure that his disciples were clear about the mission He was entrusting to them – to make disciple of all nations.
- Jesus also made sure that they would be empowered by the Holy Spirit to do what He has called them to do.
- On the day of Pentecost God poured out His Holy Spirit on 120 people waiting and ready to serve the mission Jesus gave them.
- The gift of the Holy Spirit will now be poured out upon all flesh. Not just a few, Kings, Priests, and Prophets and those who got assignments from God.

It is Important to Know that...

- I cannot become a Christian unless I am born again (made spiritually alive), regenerated - quickened **by God's Holy Spirit.**

Ephesians 2:4-6 ESV But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, (5) even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— (6) and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,

- I cannot live as a Christian unless I am indwelt by the Holy Spirit - **I cannot bear God's image** and bear the fruit that will glorify Him without Holy Spirit living in me.

Galatians 5:22-25 ESV But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, (23) gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. (24) And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. (25) If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit.

- **The indwelling Holy Spirit is not an "it"** or some mysterious force inside of me. He is a person that I should build a relationship with. He is God in me.
 - He guides me
 - He leads me
 - He teaches me
 - He convicts me
 - He purifies me
 - He comforts me
 - He encourages me
 - He strengthens me
 - He opens the Scriptures to me
 - He helps me to pray
 - **He assures me that I am God's child**

- For all this to happen effectively, I need to be able to hear His voice.
- Without Holy Spirit regenerating me and living in me I cannot be a Christian.
- As I walk with Him, I bear the fruit that reveals the character of God.
- Example: Linda and me. I must learn to walk in partnership with God. Holy Spirit is the Senior Partner.
- Holy Spirit can be resisted and grieved.
- Apart from this indwelling, Holy Spirit also empowers us to do what He has called us to do.
- This is referred to as the Baptism or infilling with the Holy Spirit.
- This is over and above the regeneration and indwelling of the Holy Spirit in our lives.
- I want to draw your attention to Jesus's ministry as a human being. He laid His inherent Godly powers aside and relied on Holy Spirit to do all that He did.
- That is why He said we can do what He did and even greater things than He did.
- The principle is this: God does not have us serve His purposes without His anointing or empowerment.
- It was so in the Old Testament and with John the Baptist, with Jesus when the heavens opened, and Holy Spirit descended upon Him in the form of a dove and remember the early disciples had to wait in Jerusalem to be empowered by Holy Spirit after He has given them their assignment.
- **It is important that we are willing and ready to serve God's mission** - God places a hunger inside of us.

Jesus said...

John 16:7 ESV 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.

Be Careful...

Acts 8:18-21 ESV Now when Simon saw that the Spirit was given through the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money, (19) saying, "Give me this power also, so that anyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit." (20) But Peter said to him, "May your silver perish with you, because you thought you could obtain the gift of God with money! (21) You have neither part nor lot in this matter, for your heart is not right before God.

- Self-glorification - Matt 6. For edification, exhortation, and comfort.
- Not equipping- hogging the glory.
- Our own agenda.
- Prioritise power for service not speaking in tongues - even though speaking in tongues is a wonderful gift.

The following story illustrates what our attitude should be:

THE STORY OF BAMBOO

Once upon a time in the heart of the Western Kingdom lay a beautiful garden. And there in the cool of the day the Master of the garden liked to walk. Of all the creatures of the garden, the most beautiful and most beloved was a gracious and noble bamboo tree. Year after year Bamboo grew yet more noble and beautiful, conscious of her Master's love and watchful delight, but always modest and gentle.

And often, when the wind came to revel in the garden, Bamboo would cast aside her grave stateliness to dance and play merrily, tossing and swaying and leaping and bowing in joyous abandon, leading the Great Dance of the Garden, which delighted the Master's heart.

Now one day the Master sat down to contemplate his Bamboo with eyes of curious expectancy, Bamboo, in a passion of adoration, bowed her great head to the ground in loving greeting. The Master spoke: "Bamboo, I would use you."

Bamboo flung her head to the sky in utter delight. The day of days had come, the day for which she had been made, the day to which she had been growing, hour by hour, the day in which she would find her completion and her destiny. Her voice came softly: "Master, I am ready. Use me as you will!"

"Bamboo," – the Master's voice was grave, "I would like take you and cut you down."

"Cut ... me ... down! Me, whom you, Master, have made the most beautiful in all your garden ... cut me down! Not that, not that. Use me for your joy, O Master, but cut me not down!"

"Beloved Bamboo," – the Master's voice grew graver still – "if I do not cut you down, I cannot use you.

The garden grew still ... Wind held his breath. Bamboo slowly bent her proud and glorious head. There came a whisper: "Master, if you cannot use me unless you cut me down ... then ... do your will and cut!"

"Bamboo, beloved Bamboo, I need to cut your leaves and your branches from you also."

"Master, Master, please spare me. Cut me down and lay my beauty in the dust, but would you also take from me my leaves and branches?"

"Bamboo, if I do not cut them away, I cannot use you."

The Sun hid his face. A listening butterfly glided fearfully away. And Bamboo shivered in terrible expectancy, whispering low, "Master, cut away."

"Bamboo, Bamboo, I would also split you in two and cut out your heart, for if I don't I cannot use you."

Then was Bamboo bowed to the ground: "Master, Master ... then cut me and split me."

So did the Master of the garden took Bamboo and cut her down and hacked off her branches and stripped off her leaves and cleaved her in two and cut out her heart. And lifting her gently, he carried her to where there was a spring of fresh, sparkling water in the midst of his dry fields. Then putting one end of broken Bamboo into the spring and the other end into the water channel in his field, the Master laid down gently his beloved Bamboo. The clear sparkling water raced joyously down the channel of Bamboo's torn body into the waiting fields. Then the rice was planted and the days went by, and the shoots grew, and the harvest came. In that day was Bamboo, once so glorious in her stately beauty, yet more glorious in her brokenness and humility. For in her beauty she was life abundant, but in her brokenness she became a channel of abundant life to her Master's world!

Source | Daniel O'Leary, *Year of the Heart: A Spirituality for Lovers*, (Paulist Press 1989), pages 85-87

Benefits of being Filled with the Holy Spirit

- Boldness to proclaim the Gospel.
- Gateway to the gifts of Holy Spirit. Power to do Supernatural things.
- Increase assurance.
- Open Scriptures.
- Helping me pray.

How can I receive the Holy Spirit?

*John 7:37-39 ESV On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. **Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.'**" Now this he said about the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.*

- Thirst
- Come to Jesus
- Drink
- Believe
- Flow – Act - Speak

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Share your personal relationship with Holy Spirit with the group.
 2. Encourage one another to walk in fellowship and partnership with Holy Spirit who indwells you. Pray prayers of repentance and re-dedication to walk in a closer obedient relationship with Him.
 3. Pray for, and lay hands on those who desire to be filled (baptised) with Holy Spirit power.
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