

Place: Lurgan Baptist 7:5:2017

THE HOLY SPIRIT OF GOD

Reading: John 16:1-14

2. THE HOLY SPIRIT & THE BELIEVER

Physical examinations are no fun. Bill was certainly not looking forward to his annual check-up. But it helped a little that Dr. Carter was a personal friend. Dr. Carter had often given Bill words of encouragement when minor problems had become major in Bill's mind. But on this occasion, Bill's doctor friend was not his comforter. He was his convincer. After the examinations were all done, and the test results were back, Bill learned that he had cancer. It was serious but operable. Surgery was scheduled immediately. Bill readily complied. After successful surgery, Bill thanked Dr. Carter for not only being a friend who comforted him in his fears, but also a competent physician who convinced him of serious danger. Now the Holy Spirit not only has a relationship to a Christian as *the Comforter*, but He also confronts the world of all mankind as *the Convicter*. In this role, the Holy Spirit plays a crucial part in bringing a person to know God in what the Bible presents as being '*born of the Spirit*.' (3:8)

You see, you might think that the Holy Spirit of God is present only in the lives of believers. But the Holy Spirit is present and active in our world in general. The Holy is

In believers, therefore He is also present wherever believers go. This ever present Spirit is busy and active.

Do you recall what Isaiah says, '*When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him.*' (Is 59:19) The Holy Spirit restrains evil in the world. You're probably thinking, '*If that is true what is the Holy Spirit doing, because I see evil everywhere every day.*' My the Bible predicts a time when the restraining work of the Holy Spirit will be withdrawn from this world. Paul makes a fascinating prediction about this in (2 Thes 2:6) He says, '*And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work, only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed.*'

There is a day future when the Restrainer, the Holy Spirit, will be taken out of the way, then the Man of Sin shall be revealed. Just as the Holy Spirit was injected into human history in a special way on the day of Pentecost, so there will come a time in the future when God's Holy Spirit, so far as His current activity is concerned, will be drawn out of the world. My do you think there is evil in the world right now ? You have not seen nothing yet. Wait until the Restrainer, the Holy Spirit is taken out of the way. It is the Holy Spirit who dominates this age. He it is who imparts divine life to a dead soul. He it is who holds back the floodtides of human wickedness, and who from time to time brings in tremendous revivals. It is the restraining work of the Spirit of God that keeps the world from plunging into total depravity, but what will it be when the Restrainer, the Holy Spirit is taken out of the way ?

Now here in John's gospel there are over eighteen references to the Holy Spirit. We could say there are glimpses of the Holy Spirit in John, and I want to give you a few of those glimpses this morning as we think about '**The Holy Spirit and the Believer.**' You see, John presents the Holy Spirit as,

(1) THE CONVICTOR

Here In (Jn 16) the Lord Jesus introduces the work of the Holy Spirit in relation to an individual. Here, the Spirit of God functions much like Dr. Carter did with Bill. He is called the Comforter, but He is also the Convictor, the one who tells us the truth about our condition. Do you see what the Saviour says in (16:8) ? The first work of the Holy Spirit in an individual's soul is that of conviction. The word for '*reprove*,' (*elegxei*) is a legal word that means, "*to bring to the light, to expose, to refute, to convict and convince.*" The Spirit of God is much like the crown prosecutor. He brings an unsaved person face to face with Jesus Christ. My no person will ever receive Christ as Saviour unless he or she has first been convicted by the Holy Spirit.

No other power, no other person in the universe can do this. I can't convict anyone of their need for Christ. It is the Holy Spirit who is the Agent of Conviction. Do you recall that after the Resurrection, the disciples sought to convince Thomas that Christ was alive. Thomas was not present when Christ appeared to them the first time. They failed to convince Thomas. He insisted, '*I will not believe.*' (Jn 20:25) Ten disciples could not convince

one. Just a few days later, Peter preached on the day of Pentecost. The people were '*cut to the heart*,' (Acts 2:37) and three thousand were saved. What made the difference ? The Convictor had come, and on that day, one disciple convinced thousands. You see, the Holy Spirit convicts,

(a) OF THE NATURE OF SIN:

Do you see (16:8) ? The Holy Spirit makes the human heart aware, "*You are a sinner.*" There is not much consciousness of sin in contemporary society. The existence of sin is often denied. Multitudes are unconscious of the reality of sin. However, the tragedy of sin's consequences continue. These results are apparent in broken homes, scarred lives, and shattered relationships everywhere we look. Christians are aware that sin is a reality. Sin is it to blame for it all. But only the Holy Spirit can convict people of their sin. Now do you see here that the *singular* (sin) indicates that a particular sin is in view, that of not believing in Christ as Messiah and Son of God. You see a man could '*clean up his life*,' and quit his bad habits and still be lost and go to hell because of his unwillingness to believe in the Lord Jesus as Saviour. Praise God for the convicting work of the Holy Spirit. Have you known it ? Are you experiencing it ?

Has that convicting work made you feel terribly uncomfortable ? Does your conscience bother you ? Have you become restless ? Does everything seem to be against you ? Do your sins loom before you ? Through that

conviction have you been driven to Christ ? Have you repented and believed. Are you saved ? (a)

(b) OF THE NEED OF RIGHTEOUSNESS:

“ *Of righteousness*,” (16:8) Whose righteousness ? The righteousness of Jesus Christ, the perfect Lamb of God. When the Holy Spirit makes the Lord Jesus real to the heart, showing the Lord’s perfect righteousness and beauty, it is then, and only then, that a person is aware of the fact that Christ is righteous, while he is unrighteous. Christ is holy, I am unholy, Christ is pure I am filthy. My when the Holy Spirit shows us ourselves compared to the Lord Jesus, there is no comparison. (a) (b)

(c) OF THE NEARNESS OF JUDGMENT:

Do you see it in (16:11) “ *Of judgment because the prince of this world is judged.*” Adolph Hitler almost brought the world to its knees. It seemed Hitler’s diabolical scheme would succeed. He decided to conquer the world. By his mesmerizing words, he actually inflamed the prejudices and pride of a nation. Millions of people were deceived by an insane man. The masses followed him into the Second World War. But Hitler did not succeed. As the end of war approached, Hitler retreated like a mole into a bunker, where he committed suicide. Before he ended it all on 30th April, 1945 Hitler sent a wire instructing that Marshal Goring, his second in command, was to be replaced by General Admiral Doenitz. Doenitz wired back these words, ‘ *My Fuhrer*

my loyalty to you will be unconditional.’ The fool didn’t even know that Hitler was already dead and defeated. Doenitz had chosen to follow a loser, and he didn’t even know it. My the prince of this world is judged. The battle is over. It’s only a matter of time, before Satan is cast into the lake of fire, along with those who reject Christ (Rev 20:11-15) Thankfully, the Holy Spirit convicts an unsaved person, that he is on the wrong side and that he needs to choose the victory side. Now how does the Holy Spirit do this ? How does he convict ? Do you recall what the word “ *reprove,*” means ? It means “ *to convince, to convict, or bring to the light.*” How does the Holy Spirit convict ? He turns on the light. You see, the Holy Spirit does not minister in a vacuum.

Just as the Son of God had to have a body in order to do His work on earth, so the Spirit of God needs a body to accomplish His ministries, and that body is the church. Our bodies are His tools and temples, and He wants to use us to glorify Christ and to witness to a lost world. Do you realize that witnessing is not only a great privilege, but a serious responsibility ? It is a matter of life or death. How we need to depend on the Holy Spirit to guide us to the right persons, give us the right words and enable us to glorify the Lord Jesus. (1) But notice John presents the Holy Spirit as,

(2) THE REGENERATOR

You see, only the Spirit of God can radically change men. John tells us that this is nothing less than a totally new birth. This is the Holy Spirit’s first gracious and Divine act, the breathing of spiritual life into the soul. For ‘ *it is*

the Spirit that quickeneth.' (6:63) Now the new birth is that act of God by which new life is imparted to the person who trusts Christ as his Saviour. This is the term the Lord Jesus used in one of the greatest sermons ever preached. Do you recall what Christ said to Nicodemus ?
“ *Ye must be born again,*” (3:7)

(a) THE NEW BIRTH IS A MUST:

“ *Ye must*,” (3:7) It's an imperative. The only answer to spiritual death is spiritual life, and the only way to have spiritual life is through a spiritual birth. ‘ *O ye who would enter this glorious rest, and sing with the ransomed the song of the blessed, the life everlasting if ye would obtain ye must be born again.*’

(b) THE NEW BIRTH IS A MIRACLE:

For Christ says, ‘ *That which is born of the flesh, is flesh and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.*’ (3:6) He is simply say that like produces like. (Gen 1) That which is born of man is human, that which is born of God is divine. That which is born of man is sinful, that which is born of God is spiritual. When I was born the first time I received from my parents their sinful nature, when I was born again I received from God His nature. (2 Pet 1:4) The Lord Jesus said, ‘ *Except a man be born of the water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.*’ (3:3) Just as there are two parents for physical birth, so there are two parents for spiritual birth, the Spirit of God and the Word of God. (James 1:18 1 Pet 1:23-25) The Spirit of God takes the Word of God and reveals the Son

of God and when you trust Christ as your Saviour a miracle takes places in your heart, you are born again.

***As soon my all I venture,
On the atoning blood,
The Holy Spirit enters,
And I am born of God***

(c) THE NEW BIRTH IS A MYSTERY:

You see, when Christ told Nicodemus that he had to be born again it messed with his mind. Nicodemus could not grasp how that could be. The Lord Jesus compared the new birth to a birth (3:3) and then to a breeze (3:8) He says ‘ *Nicodemus, do you hear that wind ? Do you feel that wind ? Being born again is just like that wind.*’ You see, you cannot see the wind, you cannot control the wind but you can see the results and effects of the wind. Is that not the way it is when you are born again ? You cannot see God do His work in a heart, but you can see the effects of the wind of the Spirit in a life. When you see a drunkard leave his booze you know that God has been working. When you hear clean language come from a moth that used to be a sewer you know that God has been at work. For Nicodemus the wind of the Spirit was blowing in his soul.

What about you ? Is the wind of God's Spirit blowing in your soul ? Is God striving with you ? Is God coming especially close to you ? An old man got up one morning and read his name in the obituary column. He

immediately called the newspaper office. He chewed up the editor for several minutes. Finally the editor said, ' *Cheer up Mister. I'll out your name in the birth column in the morning and give you a brand new life.*' A new life, that's what the Spirit of God can give you. David Livingstone in one of his darker moments wrote home, ' *we have a difficult, difficult field to cultivate here but for the belief that the Holy Spirit works and will work for us, I should give up in despair.*' Do we see no results ? Do we wonder if it is worth while ? Are you discouraged ? My do we not need to pray much more for the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit ? For without Him no-one shall be saved. (1) (2)

(3) THE INDWELLER

Do you recall the words of the Lord Jesus ? ' *And I will pray the Father and He shall give you another Comforter that He may abide with you forever for He dwelleth with you and shall be in you.*' (Jn 14:17) Not only ' *with you,*' but ' *in you.*' The promise of our Lord was that from Pentecost onward the Holy Spirit should permanently dwell in believing hearts. You see, the Holy Spirit is presented in the New Testament,

(a) AS THE SEAL:

Let's look at (Eph 1:13) ' *After that ye believed ye were sealed,*' so reads the A.V. but that could imply that the sealing was something following later, upon believing, which is not the case. Another translation puts it like this, " *Having believed ye were sealed.*" We are sealed when,

not after we believe. We are sealed at the moment of our salvation. Now what is a seal ? Well, in the New Testament the word ' *seal,*' includes the idea of " *ownership.*" To put a seal on something means that it is yours. Some ranchers or farmers put a brand on their cattle. Each has his distinctive brand, his seal on the animal indicating that it belongs to that ranch owner. You see, when we are ' *born again,*' the Holy Spirit comes into our hearts, and the Spirit's presence is God's seal which says, ' *That one belongs to me, I own that one. He is valuable to me.*' Do you recall the children's hymn

*Jesus is our Shepherd
For the sheep He bled
Every lamb is sprinkled
With the blood He shed
Then on each He settled
His own secret sign
They that have My Spirit,
These saith He are mine*

How long are we sealed ? ' *Ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.*' (Eph 4:30) We are sealed " *with a view to redemption.*" Paul is saying that our being sealed with the Spirit is the guarantee that we shall enjoy the redemption at the coming of the Saviour. Do you think that you're going to be lost again now ? How could you be lost ? God has sealed you with His Spirit, ' *and while God and I shall be, I am His and He is mine.*' (a)

(b) THE EARNEST:

Look at (Eph 1:13-14) again. Our old English word earnest goes back to an old Scottish word ‘*arles*.’ Now earnest and arles mean exactly the same thing. It meant an instalment or a small part of something given in sure pledge of future full possession. I am told that years ago, when a farmer was selling his land, he would bring the buyer to his farm, where they dug up a spadeful of the best soil, and that was given to the purchaser, or maybe they plucked a few heads of the best corn. Whatever the buyer would never come away without something home with him and that was regarded as ‘*the earnest of the inheritance*.’ Have you ever shopped for a car ? Maybe you’ve gone to the salesman and you really want the car so you say, ‘*I’m going to give you £500-00 as a deposit*.’ Do you what that means ? That you’re serious enough, to put down partial payment to guarantee full payment later. That’s what a deposit is, a down-payment. The earnest money is a promise that the full amount is on the way.

Do you know something ? When you by faith receive the Saviour, God slips on the ring, the Holy Spirit in your heart. This is His promise and pledge that He will care for us until He comes again for us. A man heard a knock on his door one day. He opened his door, and a man, said, ‘*Sir, I’m here to tell you that you have received an unbelievable inheritance, a large sum of money. It will be a while before you receive it all. I have been instructed to present you with a check*.’ He gave the man a check for fifty million dollars. As the man left he said, ‘*I want you to know there’s far more than this*.’ My every blessing you and I receive, every sweet touch of God in our lives, every evidence of the Holy Spirit in our lives as believers

right now is just a drop in the bucket compared to what God has waiting for us in the future. Are you not glad this that you are born of the Spirit,’ ? Are you not glad that you can sing,

**Blessed assurance Jesus is mine
Oh what a foretaste of glory mine
Heir of salvation, purchase of God
Born of His Spirit, washed in His blood**

Now do you see how John presents the Spirit of God ? As the Convictor: as the Regenerator: as the Indweller, and as

(4) THE OPERATOR

For here in John’s gospel we see a threefold operation of the Spirit of God in relation to the believer. Notice,

(a) HIS INCOMING:

“*Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit,*’ (Jn 3:5) Contrary to some teaching today, the Scriptures indicate clearly that the Holy Spirit is given to all believers, immediately and unconditionally. Paul says, “*Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by hearing of faith ?*” (Gal 3:2) “*Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His*.” (Rom 8:9) Could language be more explicit ? You see faith in the Saviour brings the Spirit of God into a life as the beginning of the work of grace. My there can be no such thing as a Christian devoid of the Spirit, there are no empty temples in this age of grace. Once the gate of the human Spirit is

open, the Holy Spirit enters once and for all. What did the Lord Jesus say ? ‘ *That He may abide with you for ever.*’ (14:16) Is it necessary to stress that ? Yes. For there are some hymns on the ‘ Holy Spirit,’ not true to Scripture. Never take your theology from hymns especially this one.

*Return O Holy Dove return,
Sweet messenger of rest
I hate the sins that made thee mourn
And drove Thee from my breast*

Now that is impossible. I may grieve Him, as I do, but I can never grieve Him out of my heart. When He enters, He enters to remain. So Augustine was right when he said, “ *the Holy Spirit is our perpetual Comforter, and our eternal Inhabitant.*”

(b) HIS UPRISING:

Do you recall the Saviours words to the woman at the well ? ‘ *But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst, but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up*’ (4:14 7:39) Here we have the Holy Spirit related to our sanctification. This is the daily, constant increase of spirituality, as the Holy Spirit is allowed to rise, and permeate the entire life of the one regenerated by His power. Perhaps we are now ready to understand what Paul had in mind when he wrote, ‘ *Be ye filled with the Spirit.*’ (Eph 5:18) I have the Holy Spirit but does He have me ? I possess the Spirit, does He possess me ? Does He permeate and control the totality of my life ?

His Incoming related to our Salvation: His Uprising related to our Sanctification. But notice,

(c) HIS OUTFLOWING:

Related to our Service. For Christ says ‘ *He that believeth on me as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water but this spake He of the Spirit.*’ (7:38) This great classic passage indicates the further and fuller progress of the Spirit’s ministry as He is allowed to have His way in the life of the believer. Entering the life the Holy Spirit strives to fill it with His fullness and then like Ezekiel’s river (47:5) He flows on and on and out and out and everything lives where the river flows. So in (Jn Ch 3) the Spirit is related to our **Salvation:** in (Jn Ch 4) He is related to our **Sanctification:** in (Jn Ch 7) He is related to our **Service.** In (Jn Ch 3) the Spirit of God **Regenerates:** in (Jn Ch 4) He **Permeates:** in (Jn Ch 7) He **Irrigates:** In (Jn Ch 3) the Holy Spirit Flows **IN:** in (Ch 4) He Flows **THROUGH:** in (Ch 7) He Flows **OUT:**

So here’s the question, are you a receptacle Christian or are you a channel Christian ? A jug is a receptacle. It retains what it receives. You just there and listen and drink in the truth but that’s as far as it goes. Is that you ? Or are you like a channel ? A pipe is a channel, and as long as it’s clean, life-giving water can be pumped through it. Are you a channel Christian ? ‘ ***Channels only, blessed Master***’

