

“THE OUTPOURING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT”
Galatians 5:16-26, I Corinthians 12:1-11, John 6:63-66
August 17 & 18, 2019

Let me begin today with the reading of the Gospel lesson of John 6:63-66. Jesus has just told the people that He was the Bread of Life and that by eating His flesh and drinking His blood would bring eternal life. At this hearing, some of His disciples decided they could no longer follow Jesus. Here’s what Jesus tells them. (READ John 6:63-66)

Over the last 5 weeks, I’ve talked about the Holy Spirit. We know of God the Father; we know of Jesus, God the Son; but we know little about God the Holy Spirit. To begin our study, I shared with you that the Holy Spirit is the **THIRD PERSON** of the Trinity and that He is God, in Spirit form here IN US as we claim Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. He is here to encourage us and challenge us and transform us into the image of God once more as we seek to follow Jesus’ teachings.

Next, I taught that we **RECEIVE** the Holy Spirit by first claiming Jesus as our Savior, and then inviting Him into our lives. The Holy Spirit will not force His way upon us, for we can resist His influence in our lives. Our free will provides us the choice to either receive Him into our lives or to limit His influence on us as we seek to live our own way. Only in obeying His call can we find the benefits of letting the Holy Spirit touch our lives with the power of God.

Then, I shared with you how the Holy Spirit **MEETS OUR NEEDS** as we let Him work in us. He saves us time, He guides our actions, He protects us, He is always with us, He helps us remember the teachings of Jesus, He helps us develop new desires, and He enables us to change the destructive habit patterns of our lives. All good things for each one of us as we **ALLOW** the Holy Spirit to work in us. But it is **ONLY** as we let Him be in us, that we gain these things.

And last week I shared how the Holy Spirit **MINISTERS TO US** as we grow in our relationship with Jesus Christ. Everything the Holy Spirit does is for the purpose of glorifying Jesus, so He works within us to prepare us to go much deeper with Jesus, convicting us of sin, teaching us about tears and about prayer, and convincing us that our faith in Jesus leads us to eternal life.

Today, I want to continue to build up your understanding of the Holy Spirit by explaining how the **OUTPOURING** of the Holy Spirit is to bless us all. Whether or not we recognize it, we are all in a spiritual battle, and we are the battle ground. The enemy desires to enslave us in order to destroy us. Since we were made in the image of God, Satan hates us, so he will give us things that look pretty good on the outside, but on the inside devour and destroy us because they are contrary to the will of God.

When you look at Galatians 5 you begin to see that there are two different, contrasting natures – two sides of the battle. There is first the sinful nature, that which is of the world and comes directly from Satan himself. Look at the list of the ways that the sinful nature manifests itself among us; “*sexual immorality, impurity, and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like...*” (Gal. 5:19-21). Everything that was once beautiful and holy is now made ugly and unholy. And Paul tells us very clearly, “...*those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God*” (5:21). They are all contrary to the things of God, and as we participate in the sinful nature of this world, we become enemies of God and fight against the things of God. Our lives become all about us, selfish and self-seeking, to the hurt and destruction of another and to the disobedience of God.

The second nature before us, and contrary to the sinful nature, is the spiritual nature guided by the Holy Spirit of God. Listen to the attributes to this nature – “*love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control*” (Gal. 5:22-23). These are the **FRUITS** of the Holy Spirit and they are given to all those who have Him in their lives. These things are self-giving in nature, and since they come from God, are pleasing to the Lord our God. They are beautiful and wholesome.

But the battle within us rages as to which side we will allow to be guiding our lives. When we choose to be on the Lord’s side, when we choose Jesus to be our Savior and Lord, the fruits of the Spirit are given to us to empower us to keep our focus on the Lord in order to keep us from allowing the worldly nature to invade us and conquer us again. Paul says it clearly, “*Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature, its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in*

step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.” (Gal. 5:24-26).

So the Holy Spirit gives us weapons to use that combat the things of the world, and helps us keep our focus on following Jesus.

But There are also a variety of **GIFTS** of the Holy Spirit – abilities given to us to use. We see some of them in I Corinthians 12:4-11. These are given by the Holy Spirit to enable us to work for the Lord: wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miraculous powers, prophecy, distinguishing between spirits, different tongues, and interpretation of tongues. These are given to the followers of Jesus, **AS THE SPIRIT DETERMINES**, to enrich and encourage the body of Christ. These are not given to work against the Lord, but for the benefit of the Lord’s kingdom and to all who follow Jesus.

You see, The Holy Spirit **GIVES LIFE** - human power is of no use because our strength and wisdom and authority is so limited (John 6:63-66). The Holy Spirit is the One who brings life to us as we seek Jesus and follow His ways. But because we are in this spiritual battle, the world will be against us, not strictly with flesh and blood, but through the spiritual forces surrounding us, and there will be times when we, as followers of Jesus, are asked to do difficult things in opposition to what the world tells us to do.

Look at Jesus’ disciples, who struggled to understand what Jesus was saying - that His body should be food for us and His blood should be drink for us. They were turning away from Jesus because this teaching was difficult. Are we talking about cannibalism? No, what Jesus is saying is that when we receive Him as our Lord and Savior, we begin to give up on the things of this world, and we begin to be nourished on His teachings, and are empowered by following His commands. They will be way different than what the world tells us are right, so if we continue to let Him feed us with all that He is, the Holy Spirit gives us the ability to remain strong **FOR THE LORD**. With Jesus’ body and blood moving through us, we become strong to accomplish the work God has given to us, and we fight to defeat Satan in all of his schemes and ploys.

The life we receive from the Holy Spirit then is enriched by the fruits He supplies and the gifts

He gives to us so that we might not give up and turn away from following Jesus. Faced with such animosity from the world, it can be easy for us to just give in and begin following the things of this world rather than standing strong in the teachings and commands of Jesus. So the Holy Spirit builds into us so that we have the tools to fight against the world and remain faithful to the Lord.

The Holy Spirit gives us more than we are today in order to **GLORIFY GOD** through us.

That's His goal for us, to glorify God in all that we do and say. So let's question the giving of some of these fruits and gifts. What is the reason that the Holy Spirit gives them to us?

First off, What does the Holy Spirit mean by giving us **JOY**? The Joy of the Spirit is much deeper than mere happiness when things are going smoothly. It is much deeper than emotional highs that we can get in worship and praise to the Lord. Joy is the promise of the Holy Spirit delighting our hearts no matter what circumstance we find ourselves in. In good times and bad moments, the Holy Spirit provides joy in our hearts as we seek to follow Jesus through everyday life.

It's the disciples rejoicing in Jesus even in the midst of persecution and arrest and being rounded up and put into the colosseum for entertainment, being brutalized and eaten by wild animals. It's the joy of Paul and Silas in the Philippian jail, having been flogged and imprisoned in the stocks, singing and praising God in the midst of it. It's the future that the faithful looked forward to in Hebrews 11 as they endured their trials and difficulties knowing that they were going to see the Lord again when this life was finished. Joy is Jesus looking beyond the horrors of the cross to see the Salvation of humans upon His resurrection. It is the assurance that comes after a terrible accident takes a loved one from us that they are in the arms of Jesus awaiting our own arrival. The Holy Spirit provides us joy most often when we are faced with adversity or problems. Jesus gives us HIS perspective on the situation and encourages us even as the fiery darts of Satan are thrown our way. "*In this world we will have tribulation...*" (John 16:33) but Jesus promises us His joy even in the middle of it.

And What is the purpose of **FAITH**? Hebrews 11:1 tells us "...*faith is to be sure of the things we hope for, to be certain of the things we cannot see.*" Faith is hanging in there when everything turns

up-side-down, when what we hope for hasn't happened yet, when it could be so easy to give up on the promise of God to supply all our needs. We hold on to our trust in Jesus despite the worst that can happen to us at any moment, at any time, no matter what we face. We are certain that Jesus knows where we are, what we are facing, and He is there with us guiding us and encouraging us through it all. The Holy Spirit enables us to have faith as we trust in God's Word that He will never leave us or forsake us (Deut. 31:6, 8, Josh. 1:5). Jesus promised us, *"Have faith in God...when you pray and ask for something, believe that you have received it, and you will be given whatever you ask for"* (Mark 11:22, 24).

Faith is that certainty that what we have asked for in Jesus' name, He not only hears us but will answer us, providing us with whatever we ask for in accordance to God's will. It is thanking God ahead of time for the requests we have made to Him, allowing the Holy Spirit to guide and instruct us in how He wants us to pray. Then we wait expectantly.

And What is the reason for LOVE? God first loved us so that we might, in turn, love Him. The Bible certainly tells us of God's great love for all of humanity, love enough that would send His own Son to the world, so that those who believe in Him might be saved from the penalty of sin and find eternal life. Yet, knowing God's love is more than just something in our heads, but allowing that truth to penetrate 12 inches to reach our hearts. Feeling God's love is the experience of His tender compassion toward us and desiring us to be with Him, even after we have rejected and rebelled against Him. The deep love of the Holy Spirit brings such praise to our souls as we focus on showing the love of Jesus to others as He shows love to us.

As Jesus' love grows in each of us, we begin to share that love with those around us as we let the Holy Spirit work in us. On our own we cannot show this kind of love, but as the Holy Spirit transforms our hearts, we are able to show love, even to the enemy, or the outcast, or the hurting. He kindles a fire in us to see others as God sees them, and we love them as God loves them.

Then, How do we really experience LIFE? Vitality is the quickening of our being, giving

physical restoration to us that enables us to really live here on the earth. It's not about wealth, or possessions, or power, or fame. "For us to experience this quickening, there must be a reliance on the Holy Spirit's strength rather than our own natural vitality." As we allow the Holy Spirit to work in us and guide us, we are able to find the ability to do much more than we could ever do on our own.

The Holy Spirit gives us such strength and power in our life that we can accomplish much more work for the Lord than we normally could. He gives us youthfulness in our bodies so that we can accomplish all that the Lord has called us to do. He provides us the endurance and the stamina to continue when others in their own strength fall down weary and spent. The Holy Spirit enables us real life in order to overcome the struggles and trials of this world and to begin working mightily for the Lord so that many others might hear of Him and claim Jesus as their Savior. The Langteaus and Bells experience the power and life of the Holy Spirit so that they might complete the task the Lord has put before them. Life is given to us so that we might praise the Lord our God in every day of our life.

The Holy Spirit's life given to us energizes the cells and tissues in our bodies to enable us to demonstrate the power of the Lord in us.

Why, then, do we resist the Holy Spirit's **HEALING**? Jesus promised that we would be able to do much more than what He did here on the earth as we trust in Him and follow His ways. He tells us in Mark 16:17-18, "*Believers will be given the power to perform miracles...they will place their hands on sick people, and these will get well.*" That's the promise, but why do we resist the work of the Holy Spirit through us to heal one another? It is a matter of faith!

Many times it is because we do not believe it can happen. We limit the Holy Spirit and we doubt that He can renew and restore us, forgetting that He is God who created us in the first place. When we give ourselves to the work of the Holy Spirit, He provides the power to bring healing to those who are sick, those who are broken, those who are inflicted with diseases.

Prayer is often one of the components of healing that we rarely take advantage of. I am reminded of Naomi Schnell, who went on a mission trip to Kenya. While there, her team was

ministering with children in a very poor city, and a young girl came to one of their Bible school programs. This girl was demonstrating obvious signs of HIV/AIDS. She had open sores on her head and her hair was falling out. Her skin was loaded with scabs and sores. She so desperately wanted to be a part of the group and that first day she came, she believed in and gave her life to Jesus, claiming Him as her Savior. At the end of the day, the team gathered around her and they laid hands on her and prayed for her. They thanked God for what He was about to do in her life as an example to the others, and they ended the prayer in Jesus' name. So the girl went home for the evening.

The very next day, not 12 even hours later, this young girl came back to the Bible school, and the change was remarkable. Her sores on her body had already healed. The scabs were already falling off of the healed skin. And her hair was already growing back. She had become completely healed overnight. The work of the Holy Spirit through the team's prayers completely transformed the life of this young girl, and there were many who came to know Jesus because of this wonderful event.

When we pray in faith for the healing of others, the Holy Spirit steps up and begins His work to bring honor and glory to God in it. Let us also have the faith to lay our hands upon one another asking the help of the Holy Spirit to bring healing.

Another important question for us today, Where do we really find **PEACE**? Our world is in chaos and there are threats of wars and conflicts and uprisings all around us. Where can we go to find real peace? The peace that Jesus gives to us through the Holy Spirit is not found in any outside circumstance. It is given to us right in the middle of the stress and strife and trouble and grief even as the storms around us rage.

Peace begins in us as we open our hearts to the Holy Spirit's work in us. Jesus promised us the peace that passes all understanding, and Paul tells us that it comes through prayer. He says, "*Don't worry about anything, but in all your prayers ask God for what you need, always asking Him with a thankful heart. And God's peace, which is far beyond human understanding, will keep your hearts and minds safe in union with Christ Jesus*" (Philippians 4:6-7). Peace comes through the Holy Spirit working

in our hearts to keep our attention on the Lord Jesus regardless of what is going on around us. As children of King Jesus, we can claim the peace that comes with our inheritance into the Kingdom of God. It is essential to our very lives.

Why does the Holy Spirit give us other **TONGUES**? On the Christian day of Pentecost when the disciples received the ability of speaking in different languages, it was the Holy Spirit enabling them to address the people who had gathered in Jerusalem. Since Jesus had given the command to “*go into all the world and make them My disciples...*” (Matthew 28:19), they needed the ability to address all the people to help them know the great things that God has done for us. So the Holy Spirit enabled the 120 disciples of Jesus to speak in 14 different languages to share the Gospel with them.

The common misconception today is that this gift of tongues is ecstatic, unarticulated babbling. But it is meant to be understood, and interpreted to bring honor to the Lord God. This gift always reaches out to another to encourage new faith and bring them closer to the Lord Jesus, but it is not to be misused in public to become a spectacle, bring recognition to the speaker. This gift is to be used to bring honor to the Lord God. Yes it is a real gift, but we are to be careful to let the Holy Spirit use us to touch the life of another so that God may be glorified in the use of it.

Finally, When will we begin to believe in the Holy Spirit's **MIRACLES**? The Bible is loaded with examples of God's miraculous work for the benefit of His people. Yet, we often refuse to believe it. Unless we begin to trust that God can do marvelous and wonderful things beyond our imagination, we have a religion that has no power. Power belongs to God, and He delights to allow us to use it to complete His work here on earth out of great love for us. As He answers our prayers in marvelous ways, God continues to demonstrate His power, even power over death. Our faith in God enables the Holy Spirit to work in us to do the miraculous in order to accomplish the work of the Lord. The miraculous work of God is the essence of our faith as Christians, and without it, we have no power to transform the world in which we live. When we dare to believe in the awesome power of God, He continues to work His miracles in us, to His glory, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.