

The Spirit Dwells | John 14.15-17; 25-27; 15.26-27

INTRO | The Spirit Dwells

The essential difference between a believer and a non-believer is the presence of the Holy Spirit.

When God saves us, He sends forth His Spirit and fills our heart with His presence. From the Father, through the Son, and by the Spirit, we enjoy a new adoption and a new assurance—we possess new identity and a new loyalty. More than that, we have a joy-filled hope because we have new eternal trajectory. **It is the Spirit Himself who helps us cry out to God as FATHER and it is the Spirit Himself that helps us declare JESUS as Lord.** The first time this is recorded is in Acts 2, 50 days after Jesus died.

By God's Spirit, God's disciples are made different than the world they live in. Apart from God's Spirit, the world remains in bondage to sin. They are dead. They are blind. They are lost. They are condemned. According to Paul in his letter to the Romans: **21 For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. 22 Claiming to be wise, they became fools, 23 and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things. 24 Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, 25 because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen (Romans 1.21-25).** Man has a worship disorder that is rooted in a rejection of the truth about God. **Led by a spirit of error, believing the Father of lies, the world worships the wrong god or, sometimes, the right God the wrong way.**

Jesus sends forth the Holy Spirit so that we will not make the same mistake. He is not interested in right behavior as much as right worship (which leads to right behavior). In John chapter 4, Jesus spoke to a Samaritan woman beside a well. Historically, the Jews and the Samaritans disagreed about the religious practices concerning where and how worship. Jesus told her that ***“God is Spirit...and the time was coming when true worshippers will worship in Spirit and in Truth...for the Father is seeking such people to worship Him.”*** There are many implications to what Jesus said. Before Jesus died, all of Jewish worship centered on the Temple. Where was God...over there! The presence that once dwelt in the temple now dwells in our hearts and makes our worship continuous. You don't worship God here but not there. The Bible says, in **1Cor 10.31...whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.**

We worship in Spirit, but we also worship in truth. In other words, it is possible to worship in Spirit but do so in error. This is why Jesus repeatedly calls the Holy Spirit the “Spirit of Truth.” **HOW we worship or live life, must always be connected with WHO we worship or live our lives for.** Someone who is much smarter than me once said that, when you become a Christian, your enemy list grows from one to three. Before you believed, God was your only enemy. But when Jesus saved you, the devil, the flesh, and the world declared war. And our enemies attack us spiritually—trying to lead us into error about God, ourselves, or our mission. The spirits of the world never stop talking. This is why God gave us the Spirit of truth to dwell in our hearts—to speak truth to us from within. **First, the Spirit of truth is our counselor. Second, the Spirit of truth is our teacher. Finally, the Spirit of truth is our evangelizer.**

The Spirit of truth is our COUNSELOR | (JOHN14.15-17)

First, the Spirit of truth is our counselor and intimate friend. **John 14.15-17** **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, 17 even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.**

Depending on your translation, the Bible describes the Holy Spirit as counselor, comforter, or advocate. All three words are translations of the same the same Greek *parakletos*, from which we get “Paraclete,” another name for the Spirit. When Jesus went away, His disciples were understandably distressed because they had lost His comforting presence. But He promised to send the Spirit to comfort, console, and guide those who belong to Christ with the truth. Paul wrote in **Romans 8.16** ***16 The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.***

Before the Spirit speaks to the truth to anyone...he speaks it to us. And the Spirit of truth does not counsel us from a distance. Jesus taught that it was to our advantage that He left our presence so that we might be filled with the presence of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit does not come along side us, the Spirit dwells within us—He cannot get any closer. **This is not so much a spatial description as it is a relational one.** Jesus uses relational language throughout chapter 14. In verse 16, he tells us that our helper will be WITH US forever. In verse 17, he tells us we will know the Spirit and he will be IN US. In verse 18 he tells his disciples he will not leave us as orphans, and in verse 20 that “I am in my Father, you in me, and me IN YOU.” Finally in verse 23, Jesus says, “If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our HOME with him.”

As the Spirit dwells in our heart, he is speaking, reminding us WHO WE ARE—he counsels with truth. **Our lives are full of other competing voices, perpetually lying to us.** Some come from the outside, others come from the inside. Deceived by the father of lies, and led by the Spirit of error, the world attempts to tell us who we are or should be. It tells us to define ourselves by what we’ve done, what we’ve not done, what we know, what we make, what we look like, or who we know. It tells us to pursue whatever makes you happy, to affirm what everyone feels is right, to accept all truth as equal, and that our core problem is a lack of self-esteem. But there is another voice that is even more powerful, one that comes from within, our flesh. It is our sinful flesh that deceives us into doubting God and our own salvation. **The spirit that governs our heart is the one that we listen to most.**

The world cannot receive the Spirit of truth. But those who are in Christ have received the Spirit of truth who dwells in our heart and counsels us with His Word. His voice overpowers the noise of the world and gives us assurance that we are His and He is ours. How do I know if I have the Spirit of God? ***Do you have any affection for Jesus? Do you have any affection for His Word? Do you have any affection for your brothers?***

The Spirit of Truth is our TEACHER | (JOHN 14.25-27)

Second, the Spirit of truth dwells in our heart as our teacher. **John 14.25-27** ***25 “These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. 26 But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.*** In Acts 1, Jesus tells his disciples to wait in Jerusalem for the promised Holy Spirit. They do, and Acts chapter 2 records when he comes. It is has been 49 days after the first evening of Passover, 50 days since the death of Jesus which secured the redemption for man—called the day of Pentecost meaning “50”. This is a Jewish holiday connected with the Passover. According to Jewish tradition, **Pentecost** commemorates God's giving of the Ten Commandments at Mount Sinai, 49 days after the Exodus—the day of being the 50th day. The 10 Commandments were the law of God, given to the Israelites to obey and, thereby, have relationship with a Holy God.

As I shared several weeks ago, the Prophet Ezekiel had foretold of this day. ***26 And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give***

you a heart of flesh. ²⁷ And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules. (Ezek. 36:26-27 ESV). Before men are saved and filled with the Spirit of God, they are dead men who walk according to three different powers—the world, Satan, and our sinful spirit. In bondage to these three, men love the darkness and carry out the desires of the mind. But when the Spirit of God makes His home in our heart, he leads us into the truth. He who was once an external prosecutor, the Holy Spirit, becomes our internal teacher. Just as God wrote the law on tablets of stone, God removed our hearts of stone, replaced them with flesh, and wrote the law on hearts by His Spirit. ³³ For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. (Jer. 31:33 ESV). What does that mean or look like? It begins with foolishness becoming wisdom.

First, the Spirit causes us to know the truth 1 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 to us by God. 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. Without the Spirit we cannot understand the truth. The one who authored the Bible, teaches us the Bible, and helps us live out the Bible—which is the living Word of God. **The Spirit not only helps us remember WHO Jesus says we are to BE in Him, He also helps us know WHAT Jesus says we are to DO in Him.**

But God promises more than simply knowledge. The Spirit also helps us desire and obey the truth Galatians 5.16-17 ¹⁶ But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. ¹⁷ For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. Without the Spirit we cannot understand the Truth. Without the Spirit we will desire the truth. But by the Spirit, we not only understand and desire, he empowers us to obey. **How does he do that? It begins and ends with Jesus. The Spirit helps us obey the truth by enabling us to see and believe God's glory in the face of Jesus Christ.** And the deeper the truth about Jesus goes into our hearts, the more we are transformed into his likeness (2Corinthians 3.18). By the Spirit, our hearts are drawn less to sin because we are so utterly satisfied in Jesus.

The Spirit of Truth is our EVANGELIZER | JOHN 15.26-27

The Spirit not only keeps us in the truth, he compels us to share the truth—we desire others to walk, to see, to live! Once the truth sets us free, we have the responsibility to share the truth with the world. **In other words, he bears witness to us before he bears witness through us.** John 15.26-27 ²⁶ “But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me. ²⁷ And you also will bear witness, because you have been with me from the beginning. When He witnesses to us about His Son, He gives us a witness to bear for His Son. **First, the Spirit testifies to the fact that we are children of God—restored to His family. But then, he empowers us to live as instruments of restoration. It is costly for us to do this, but it is even costlier if we do not. The presence of the Spirit truth does more than help us merely acknowledge God's truth, he compels us to act upon it.** It's possible that our unwillingness to speak what has been spoken to us, evidences the absence of great belief in the gospel and/or the presence of great fear in the world.

More than once Paul says that we HAVE NOT been given a Spirit of fear...but one of power, love, and self-control (2Tim 1.7). **We have been given a Spirit that helps us count our life as nothing in comparison to knowing Jesus and making Him known.** In speaking about his own experience in doing

this Paul writes: **2Corinth. 4.7; 13-16** ⁷ But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us....¹³ **Since we have the same spirit of faith according to what has been written, “I believed, and so I spoke,” we also believe, and so we also speak,** ¹⁴ knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us with you into his presence. ¹⁵ For it is all for your sake, so that **as grace extends to more and more people it may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God.** Having a zeal or passion for proclaiming the gospel is not a special gifting; it is supposed to be the common characteristic of every Christian. We also believe and so we also speak. **Believing and proclaiming are inseparable.** What we KNOW by the Spirit of Truth we make KNOWN by how we live and by what we say.

CONCLUSION I

Being filled by the Spirit of Truth is what transformed a group of fearful peasants into faithful preachers. In Acts 2, when the disciples were baptized by the Holy Spirit, the filling of God’s Spirit was evidenced by the proclamation of truth. And though they all spoke in different tongues, they all spoke the same thing, namely, they proclaimed the **MIGHTY WORKS OF GOD.**

Even though there are men gifted with preaching, teaching, and debating, all Christians must be able to proclaim the gospel. We need not spend our time coming up with MIGHTY PRESENTATIONS, rather, let us declare the MIGHTIEST WORK OF GOD—the gospel. ***The Gospel is the good news that God became man in Jesus Christ. He lived the life we should have and died the death we should have...in our place. Three days later, He rose from the dead proving that He is the Son of God offering the gift of salvation to all who will repent and believe in Him.***

We need not fear speaking this truth eloquently, or even remembering it perfectly. By the Spirit of truth, we speak this simply and boldly with our lives AND with our mouths. This is why we have the Spirit of truth, as Jesus said in Matthew 10.19 ¹⁹ **When they deliver you over, do not be anxious how you are to speak or what you are to say, for what you are to say will be given to you in that hour.** ²⁰ **For it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you. Let him speak. First, ask him counsel you with truth. Then, ask him teach you more truth. Finally ask him for the opportunity and courage to speak the truth.**