

Sermon notes: 1 October 2017 Work of the Indwelling Holy Spirit

Today I want to develop thoughts from my last sermon and building on the word we heard last week from Eric Kyte where he encouraged us to remember we are a child of God. Last time I talked about that when we accept Jesus, his Holy Spirit comes to live inside us and we have God within us living within to help us in our relationship with God. Remember from John 15 we have that message which called us to Remain in Him. That is our role in the relationship but we have the Holy Spirit to help with the rest.

Watchman Nee says that there are two main manifestations of the Holy Spirit

1. Indwelling Spirit – who helps us with our daily living to bear fruit
2. Outpoured Spirit – for power to be witnesses and to use the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Today we will be concentrating on the first of these. We mentioned that the Holy Spirit helps us to produce the fruit of the Holy Spirit. In Galatians 5 v 22-23 Paul talked about the fruit of the Holy Spirit. There is a list but this is not actually a list of different fruits. The word for fruit in the Greek is a singular one, that is the whole package not just bits of fruit at random. If you like in cooking terms we have all the ingredients to make us more like Christ. We just need to allow the Holy Spirit to bring them out in us. Fruit is a result of the Holy Spirit at work in our lives to make us more like Jesus. It is not something we can work at improving in our lives, but it is evidence of our surrender to the work of the Holy Spirit in us. To use the metaphor from John 15 which we looked at last time this is the work of pruning and trimming of the vine dresser.

For example: *When the Spirit convicts us of a sin in our lives it is part of making us right with God and more like Jesus so that is the indwelling manifestation at work. When we do something which causes others to be touched by God that is the outpoured spirit at work.*

The move of the Holy Spirit in revivals is tied to a revelation of Holy God. Over the last century when Christians have prayed for revival, a characteristic of the coming of the Holy Spirit has been marked by conviction of sin, deep repentance and an awareness of God's holiness. Indeed, we should not be that surprised at that as when the Holy Spirit comes when we became Christians we were aware of our sin and our need to turn away and accept God's salvation for us through the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross.

In the passages we looked at in John we see that one of the roles of the Holy Spirit is to convict the world in regard to sin, righteousness and judgement. This is in terms of how God see it and not how we view it.

God is the same yesterday, today and forever (**Hebrews 13 v 8**). It is this knowledge which makes our faith solid and secure – He doesn't change but neither do His standards change or His assessment of sin.

In Hebrews passage where this statement comes from it lies in a passage looking at righteous living as children of God. As it is important to read things in context we need to understand that God is the same, but not just about love, but about righteousness and judgement as well.

So, this brings me to the passage that the Lord laid on my heart for today.

Romans 8 v 5 – 11

It comes in a long section which begins with one of those favourite memory verses; “There is therefore no condemnation...” and at the end of the chapter is also commonly read looking at our future hope and about conquering in life. I wonder if any of you have been guilty like me of reading the beginning of the chapter and then skipping to the more exhilarating words at the end? So today I am redressing the balance for myself as much as for you.

Sin in our lives in my view can be seen to be a perspective thing. (v6) If I look with my own eyes and my own mind I will inevitably have selfish motives. I don't want to condemn myself or others. But if indeed we have been born again, accepted the redeeming sacrifice of Jesus on the cross for us, then we have the Holy Spirit indwelling us and He gives us God's perspective. That sometimes means being confronted with things which we don't like to see as sin.

For example: *In my own life this week I was convicted through Eric's words last week about the reliance on cell phones so although I might like my phone and see its use at times I also recognise it can be a barrier to talking to someone and I have tried to call rather than text.*

Floyd McClung in his book, Holiness and the Spirit of the Age, says that because some of us might have the view of God as standing over us with a big stick ...” Many believers seem content to live a life of semi-holiness. We know we aren't perfect, so some of us tolerate imperfection and failure, But the Bible was written so that we would be Holy. God gave us his law so that we would live without sin. If we are content to be 'mostly holy' and sin 'only a little bit' we have been seduced by the Spirit of the age. Because God is holy, every sin is an affront to God's authority, a disregard for his law, a spurning of his love'

We could think that having the Holy Spirit within us can cause discord within us, but instead it brings us peace. When I stop doing what I now know I shouldn't I feel full of life and peace. (v6 – 8)

For example: *As I said above about the phone, when I stopped looking at it all the time I found myself more at peace and relaxed! It didn't slow down my social life or cause a widespread disaster! And I benefitted from it.*

(v 9) As Christians we have the Spirit of God remaining in us and so are governed by the Spirit. The same Spirit that Paul talks about here. We are arrogant if we think we are more advanced than people in Bible times. We need to take a hard look at ourselves and the world around us to see that is not true. We need to listen to what God is saying to us about how we live out our lives not what the media or other tell us is okay or not. Why believe fallible humans when we have God's view on in here in His word?

As I said last time:

We need to interpret our world through the Bible **not** interpret the Bible through the world.

We need to draw near to God – this is a miracle in itself. In the Old Testament we see a Holy, Awesome, Righteous God and as I said earlier He hasn't changed **BUT** through the miracle of Jesus atoning sacrifice for our sins God is now accessible to us and in fact dwells in us via the Holy Spirit.

(v 11) We do not need to get caught up with our own 'fleshly' thoughts and desires because the Holy Spirit lives in us. He gives us life here and now, not a future thing as Eric reminded us last week.

I should just add a caveat here. I don't want you to think that having the Holy Spirit means that you do not sin anymore. We still have our human wills which might cause us to choose to sin and choosing to ignore the Holy Spirit and His prompting. But if this happens and we repent He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins (1 John 1 v 9) but if we don't repent we can quench the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives. This means we reject His saving work and the salvation Jesus offers us. In our daily walk with the Lord it is important that we confess our sins and seek his forgiveness. Let none of us think that we don't need that.

For example: Even though I was convicted about the use of my phone this week, there were still times when I was sucked into the habit again. I just have to confess it and repent and ask God to help me resist the temptation next time. I have a good motivator because I know I will feel better if I do. Sometimes it is not a simple thing.... Unforgiveness example from my past.

I would like to read you the passage again this time from the Message. This is a paraphrase but has a lovely form of expression here which can help our understanding:

So practically how does this work in our lives: -

1. Set your minds on God's perspective: 'Remain in me' as I talked about two weeks ago
2. Then you will know what God's will is and what is right
3. Then do it. Obedience is key. We read about that in John 14 v 23 – 24

In my experience knowing what is right before God is not difficult. It is written down! But the challenge to all of us is to be obedient. That is where the rubber hits the road and we have to put our lives where our mouths are. We have to live out this life – not just for ourselves and our relationship with God but as a witness to others of God's work in our lives.

We could easily think of the list I have just given you and think it is as easy as 123 but in reality, it is not that simple. God elsewhere calls us to be persistent, and as I said last time remaining in him, that is giving him the opportunity to continue this work of the indwelling Spirit. But as we do this...

Others will notice this outworking in our lives and then the Holy Spirit can use us in the second manifestation I mentioned earlier which is the power of the Holy Spirit using us to minister to others... but that is a whole other sermon.

For now, let us consider putting into practice allowing the Holy Spirit of God to move in our lives. Let us not tie Him down or ignore Him when He brings things to our attention. Attending to the Holy Spirit does not bring us down but it brings us life and abundant life at that as Jesus promised in John 10 v 10.

This was a very thought-provoking week for me as I have been considering the sermon. But I was somewhat helped by this week in the Prayerworx letter. It was based around a song. As we look around us in this world we see a broken world, pain, disappointment, desperation, sadness etc. The only solution comes through Jesus Christ and a relationship with Him. It doesn't remove the difficulties but He gives us a new perspective and a new hope for the future. Hope is one of the most treasured things we have as humans. If we are without hope we are lost.

As we focus on God more we see the need for Christ in others so we need to pray and ask God to help us.

This week spend some time praying each of these statements as your prayers, pausing and considering what God might be saying to you:

**'Lord turn your footsteps towards these ruins,
We need you here, we need you here
Our homes are broken, our children are stolen
We need you here, we need you here,
Send your deliverance Lord we pray'**

- Sunday: Revive us your people Lord to be the ones who bring hope to others and share you Jesus.
- Monday: Fill my life with your powerful presence and help me to be willing to work with you and show me where I resist you; forgive me Lord.
- Tuesday: Cleanse me Lord of my sin, lethargy and complacency; show me where I lack and fill that gap in me.
- Wednesday: Give me a heart to love the unlovely in actions, as words without actions are dead.
- Thursday: Show me the things we need to let go of that get in the way of you working in my life.
- Friday: Help me to come alongside others in our Church who are in need, may need encouragement and help. Show me how to care and help me notice others.
- Saturday: I place my life in your hands, show me where I need you to change me.

I challenge you to take away these reprinted sheets and use them, not just for one week but every week. See the change that God can bring not just in your life but in the lives of those around you. This is a blessing I pray for you that will work through you to others.

Ephesians 3 v 14 – 19

The power of the Spirit does not just give victory over sins but

- in Christ dwelling in our hearts
- In our being rooted and grounded in love
- in our being made strong to comprehend the immense love of God
- in our being filled with the fullness of God

then we will be able to bring glory to Christ Jesus through our lives and our witness.

What does that mean? It means causing ourselves and others to praise and worship God. Anytime we cause someone to thank God for us, for something we have done for God is bringing glory to God. Worship is a time we express our hearts full of thankfulness and praise for our wonderful glorious Almighty God.

To conclude:

There are two manifestations of the Holy Spirit
Indwelling and outpouring

Work of the indwelling Holy Spirit convicts of sin
Our role is to **Remain in Him (John 15)**
Know what is His will and what is right
Be obedient and do it

As we remain in God and are committed to his work in our lives, God does a work in our lives, others will see the transformations and God can use us as part of His outpouring Holy Spirit to be a witness for Him.

Let us ask God to send His Holy Spirit to work here more and more. We so need Him here. Let us commit to praying those prayers for the prayer letter, not just for the week that is just gone, but every week.

Finish with the prayer of blessing from Ephesians 3 v 14 – 19

Ask for people to stand to commit to asking God to move in their lives

References used

Bible

Watchman Nee (1994) The Communion of the Holy Spirit. Christian Fellowship publishers Inc. New York

Floyd McClung (1990) Holiness and the Spirit of the Age, Word Publishing

Torrey R.A. (1996) The Presence and work of the Holy Spirit Whitaker House