

Sermon Notes





Reflections

REFLECTIONS

If a person desires an interesting conversation among evangelical Christians, one need go no further than to begin a discussion about the Holy Spirit. In talking about His work in the Church, His gifting of believers, and how we should relate to His ministry in our lives, there always seems to be a sense of confusion and argument ranging from disagreement to major conflict in some circles. In spite of our seeming inability to reach common ground, the Word still calls us to be filled with the Spirit. ***So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.***¹⁸ ***And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit,***¹⁹ ***speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord.*** (Ephesians 5:117-19 NAS)

Perhaps we need to set aside some of these contentions and turn to the Word of God to discover why Jesus would tell His disciples that they would be filled with the Holy Spirit and would be His witnesses and why it is important that they, and we, expect Him to come to minister in the lives of His children.

Paul reminds us that only by the Spirit can one even claim to be in Christ and to declare Him to be Lord. ***Therefore I make known to you, that no one speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus is accursed"; and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit.*** (1Corinthians 12:3 NAS) As Peter preached, on the day that the Holy Spirit arrived to bring the Church into existence, one must repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins and then they will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. These two messages together clearly establish that to deny the Holy Spirit's role in our lives is to deny God's power to lead, guide, correct, and even affirm us in our relationship to Him.

Moving to John's Gospel we read what Jesus declared regarding the Holy Spirit's role in the lives of those who have accepted Christ as their Savior and Lord. Jesus first promises that to those who love Him and keep His commandments, He will ask the Father to send the Spirit into the believer's life. ***"If you love Me, keep My commandments.***¹⁶ ***And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever--***¹⁷ ***the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him;***

but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. (John 14:15-17 NKJ) and in the same Gospel, ***"However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.***¹⁴ ***"He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you.*** (John 16:13-14 NKJ)

Jesus makes it quite evident that His provision for us is to have the Holy Spirit present in our lives to not only preserve, embolden, empower, and lead us into the Truth, but to also glorify God through our lives. The Holy Spirit came to the Church on that day of Pentecost and has remained throughout the history of the Church to give us the power to live in obedience to the Word, to glorify Jesus in our lives and to be witnesses of His saving grace. Paul declares that the Holy Spirit intercedes on our behalf (Romans 8:26-28) and that He also confirms our position as God's children. (Romans 8:15-17) In order to be effective servants of Christ it is imperative that we are filled with the Holy Spirit.

We know from the Word of God that the Holy Spirit gives gifts to the body of Christ for ministry and for the benefit of all who are part of His body. Jesus knew that without the Holy Spirit's indwelling presence in the believer we would be very limited because of the weakness of our flesh. He knew that we have a tendency to be selfish, carnally focused, and often fail to be obedient to His commandments. The presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives allows us to receive His righteousness and to then glorify Jesus with our lives and ministries to others and to realize when we fall short of His glory. (John 16:7-12)

Paul tells the Galatians that a life lived in the Spirit enjoys a wonderful relationship with Jesus and is able to not only live an obedient life, but a life that exhibits the characteristics of one who is filled with the Spirit. ***...I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.*** (Galatians 5:16 NKJ) ***...the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,***²³ ***gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.*** (Galatians 5:22-23 NKJ)

Now let's face the main question regarding the Holy Spirit and our Christian walk. Are you being daily filled with the Holy Spirit? What evidence is there that this is true? What are the fruits of your life that can be used to validate a claim of being filled with the Spirit? If Galatians 5:22-23 doesn't describe how your life is reflecting your walk in the Spirit, let's repent and re-establish our desire to walk filled with the Holy Spirit. **Pastor Doug**