

More...Where our hunger meets His Promises

Galatians 5:22-23 NIV

“Empowered by the Holy Spirit to Overcome Darkness”

As we have learned over the past months, the *Holy Spirit* is not weird - *people* are weird - and the people who were weird *with* the Holy Spirit were weird *before* the Holy Spirit came. We understand that to be true, yet the enemy of our souls, over time and in a real sense, has tried to inoculate us, so that we have these bad associations in regards to the Person and the Presence of the Holy Spirit. If he can get us to be afraid of the Person of the Holy Spirit, then we won't go near him, because we don't want to be associated with those weird people down the street who claim to know him.

The result is that we will never be empowered and equipped to do what God has called us to do. It's like sending a warrior off into battle and saying, “*But you don't have any weapons, so figure it out! Good luck with that!*” Or, it's like sending a student off to college and not giving them a computer or a phone to navigate their lives with.

We've learned so much about the Person and the Presence of the Holy Spirit. We've learned about the *Fruit* of the Spirit, which are no less powerful than the *Gifts* of the Spirit. They are *not passive* - they're powerful: *Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, and the ability to lead one's self well - Self-control* (to be able to self-govern as a Fruit of the Spirit - Galatians 5:22 ESV)

We also learned about the *Gifts* of the Spirit: *the Word of wisdom, the Word of knowledge, the Working of miracles, Prophecy, Discerning of spirits, Tongues, Interpretation of tongues* (1 Corinthians 12:8-10 NKJV). But, one thing we haven't talked a whole lot about is the Power of the Holy Spirit.

Many of us were a little short in our church backgrounds on teaching about the Person and work of the Holy Spirit - and even more so on the *Power* of the Holy Spirit. In spite of the many good things imparted into us, we still may have come up short in these areas, and felt that we were *power-less* sometimes.

We should be thankful for our heritage - but *not* be limited by it. As God moves in our lives, and we respond by saying, “*Yes, Lord!*”, then he begins to come in and reveal himself. That may not be all neat and tidy and slick as he moves by his Spirit - but it could be wild and disruptive, and even confusing at times. As we learn in real time, we might make mistakes, but *still* be imprinted by God’s genuine revival - a sovereign move of God that can mark our lives forever - and *can’t* be erased - and we experience a *hunger* for God and revival in our lives.

As we learn about the Power of God - the Presence of God - the Holy Spirit, we also need to understand that with any *real* move of God comes a *counter*-move of the enemy. For the intensity of the move of God in the positive, there is an equal and opposite reaction in the negative (like Newton’s third law of motion). As much as there’s a Great God, an awesome work, and a beautiful amazing walk we have - there’s a *very real enemy*.

As we’ve talked about the Holy Spirit - we’re growing and learning - getting to know him (not *it*, but *Him*), and we’re saying, “*Good morning, Holy Spirit!*”, and we’ve become very *aware* of this Person - Helper - Counselor - Comforter - Friend - Intercessor - that he’s *with us every day*. - *walking* with us - he is now the very *Presence of Jesus* in our lives on an ongoing basis.

So, we’re learning that, but we also need to be aware that there’s a *counter*-move and a *counterfeit*. The Bible is very clear (especially in the New Testament) - we see that much of the work that Jesus did was him “*doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil...*” (Acts 10:38 NKJV) - which proves there is a *real devil*.

We seek and desire biblical integrity (letting the Bible say what the Bible says, and *believing what* the Bible says). Now, even as we’ve learned about the *Person* of the Holy Spirit and the *Presence* of the Holy Spirit, we also need to understand the *Power* of the Holy Spirit. We’ve been *empowered* to overcome darkness.

Even though we don’t talk much about spiritual warfare, we also can’t just *ignore* the enemy either. Pastor Rice Broocks said, “*I don’t look for demons or spirits around every corner - I don’t walk afraid - but I also never ignore the obvious. There’s a very real enemy out there who’s after you - and he’s dark - but we’ve been given authority.*”

As we understand our identity in Christ - as we get to know the Person of the Holy Spirit, and who we are *in him* - we will know *what to do*, and strangely enough, we'll know *how to do it* - when we know *who we are in Christ*.

We started this series with a simple prayer, *"Father, I want everything you have for me - nothing more - nothing less. In Jesus' name. Amen."* We don't want to run out ahead of him, but we also don't want to fall behind. We want everything he has, and we want to be right "in the pocket" with him - right "in the road" with him.

John 14:15-18 NKJV

"If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray [ask] the Father, and He will give you another Helper [Greek: Paraklētos - Counselor, Advocate, Comforter, Friend, Helper] , that He may abide [dwell, live, habitate] with you forever - 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. I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you."

Who is the Holy Spirit?

He is our Friend - He comes alongside to help us.

He is our Companion - He will never leave us alone.

He is our Teacher - He reminds us of all that Jesus taught.

He is our Intercessor - He prays for us before the Father.

He is God - He is not an *add-on* to the Trinity.

He is a Person - He has a mind (He's omniscient - all-knowing). He has a will (a desire, choice, and determination). He has emotions.

Why? - because he's a *Person* - he's the fulfillment of God's Promise - the Gift of his Presence. He empowers us to live, by filling and pouring himself upon us - he whelms us over with his Presence, Purpose, and Power. He reminds us of everything Jesus said, did, and taught. He shows us things to come - the prophetic giftings. He anoints us - sets us apart by his Grace, to do what we cannot in and of ourselves do. He gives us what to say in the moment, when we don't know what to say.

We begin to recognize the Holy Spirit moving and operating in our lives in all these ways - that he has been speaking to us for years, but we just never connected the dots - that it was *him* speaking. It has been beautiful, as we have focused on the Third and "lesser known" Person of the Trinity - how that now he's "on our radar" - we're now beginning to hear and relate to him.

Acts 1:5-8 NIV

“For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.” Then they gathered around him and asked him, ‘Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?’” He said to them: ‘It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.’ ”

The interpretation of that has caused great confusion in the Church. Isn't it just like the enemy to try to get us confused so that we will run away from the very thing we need? The word *baptize* (Greek: *baptisma, baptizō, baptismos* - to be immersed in, or to suddenly sink - as a ship sinks, whelmed over by, or overwhelmed). *“...in a few days you will be baptized [overwhelmed] with the Holy Spirit.”*

We know that when we are born again the Holy Spirit comes in us to take up residence to live *in us* - to dwell *in us* - *“Christ in you, the hope of glory”* (Colossians 1:27 NIV). That's a beautiful thing, but there are subsequent moments when he comes upon us - when we exhibit *super-natural* strength, power, wisdom, understanding, and abilities, so that being “whelmed over by” happens multiple times - it's not just a one-time-deal. We need continual empowerment to do what God has called us to do. He gives us assignments, but he doesn't give us an assignment without equipping us to fulfill it.

But, we have to be *open* and ready to *receive*. Remember, *“the Holy Spirit is not weird - people are weird”* - keep that in front of you. *“...You will receive power [dunamis - dynamite, explosive in nature, powerful, forceful]”* Why do we need this? - so we can be weird, strange, and chase “glory clouds”? No. It's not to freak out our friends. We leak out - we don't freak out anyone. We're here to leak out the Life of Christ in us and through us.

Why? *“...you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”* From the ESV Study Bible: *“We are receiving the empowerment - “Power” (Greek: dunamis - power for working miracles; explosive force; ability, might, strength, virtue) via the Baptism in the Holy Spirit (Greek: baptizō - immersion into, whelmed over, controlled by).”* Who would not want to be whelmed over by the Person of the Holy Spirit?

We say we want Jesus to be our “*Everything*” - to fill us and be the “*Lord of our lives*” - but we are reluctant to say we want the Holy Spirit to be Lord of our lives, mainly because of *fear*. The Holy Spirit is the Person - the Presence - the Nature and Character of Jesus. Jesus said, “...*It is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you [My Spirit will not be released until I go away - till I’m crucified and my Spirit is released into all]*” (John 16:7 ESV).

...*That’s* the Person of the Holy Spirit.

This powerful new work of the Holy Spirit after Pentecost brought several beneficial results:

[1] More effectiveness in witness and ministry (Acts 1:8)

[2] Effective proclamation of the Gospel - the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19)

[3] Power for victory over sin (Acts 2:42-46; Romans 6:11-14; Romans 8:13-14; Galatians 2:20).

[We’ve now been given Power by the Person and Presence of the Holy Spirit to overcome sin - to not allow sin to be our master. We all need help to say “No!” to sin and temptation.

We need the Helper - the Counselor - the One Who Empowers.]

[4] A wide distribution of Gifts for ministry (Acts 2:16-18; 1Corinthians 12:7-11)

[5] Power for victory over Satan and demonic forces

Make no mistake - if you’ve ever gone outside of America on missions trips, you’ll find dark forces at work. There is so much going on in the atmosphere - even around here. Some of us right now are being barraged with thoughts that are not our own: “*Don’t listen to him...Why are we even talking about this?...You should just leave...Get up and go...You don’t need this.*”

Acts 16:16-18 NIV

“Once when we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a female slave who had a spirit by which she predicted the future. She earned a great deal of money for her owners by fortune-telling. She followed Paul and the rest of us, shouting, ‘These men are servants of the Most High God, who are telling you the way to be saved.’ She kept this up for many days. Finally Paul became so annoyed that he turned around and said to the spirit, ‘In the name of Jesus Christ I command you to come out of her!’ At that moment the spirit left her.”

Spiritual warfare is not complicated. If we understand who we are in Christ, we never have to be afraid of the enemy. “*There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear...*” (1 John 4:18 NKJV). We don’t fear the enemy’s “parlor tricks” that he uses to distract us and call attention to his presence - but we are justified to be annoyed and can refuse to take it. We have a choice what we fill our buckets with, and whatever that is - we will spill it out - whether it’s clean or corrosive.

Our prayer to the Lord is, *“Father, would You fill us and empower us with the Person and the Presence of Your Holy Spirit?”* It’s just not complicated. You don’t have to hold your tongue just right, or “have it all figured out”, or be a Bible scholar or a theologian. All you have to be is hungry - just *want* him. Jesus said, referring to the Holy Spirit, *“If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!”* (Luke 11:13 NKJV)

That’s how simple this is. It’s *so simple*. We need to do what the Bible says to do - to *ask* and *receive*, and say to the Lord, *“I want to be whelmed over by Your Spirit. I want my buckets filled with the right things. I don’t want my buckets filled with that which is corrosive. I want to be filled with that which is clean, clear, and pure - and I need help.”*

...We do that by simply asking.

Prayer

Holy Spirit, Your Word promises that all I need to do is ask - and because You are a Good Father, You want to give the Holy Spirit to those of us who ask. So, right now, I ask - would You fill me with the Holy Spirit, and would You pour Your Holy Spirit upon me - within and without - inside and upon? Would You fill me right now? We expect You to do it, and we receive it by faith. Father, I receive, both the filling and the outpouring of Your Holy Spirit. Thank You for filling me - for covering me - for whelming me over with Your Presence. My buckets are filled. They’re overflowing, and wherever I go, I want to make beautiful messes, for Your honor, and for Your Glory. In Jesus’ name. Amen