

Spiritually Enabled

John 16:13

Last week Jim talked about foundations and the importance of having the right foundation in our lives. Without the right foundations, buildings become unstable. Without the right foundations in our spiritual life, we will find it difficult when storms and tribulation occur in our lives.

Today we are going to look a little at the role of the Holy Spirit. And a little at what having the Spirit dwelling in us means.

He is often the one part of the Trinity who seems to be overlooked or ignored as an inconvenience. There is a certain amount of suspicion, I think, regarding the works of the Holy Spirit because of some of the excesses from the 1990s that have coloured our judgement.

There is a real danger that when people talk about being baptised in the Spirit, our minds may stray to some of the stranger things that we have read about, of people barking like dogs or jumping around like chickens. And to us reserved people of Britain, that would seem to mean that maybe we should be keeping the Holy Spirit at arms length.

But look at John 16:13: *But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.*

The Spirit of Truth means that the Holy Spirit is the source of all truth. Jesus promised that he would leave a helper to guide us. In John 14:16-17, Jesus says this;

And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.

Jesus is telling his disciples that all those who believe in Him and trust Him will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. That the Holy Spirit is not an "add-on" but he is a fundamental part of our relationship with God, that together Father, Son and Holy Spirit make up the triune God, the Holy Trinity.

John 15:26 When the Counsellor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father—the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father—he will testify about me.

The Holy Spirit's declared purpose is to point people towards Jesus. The Holy Spirit will guide us into all truth. He will help illuminate, interpret, and reveal things about Christ to us. One of the ways that we can recognise whether what we are seeing is the work of the Holy Spirit is by looking to see if what is happening is pointing us towards Jesus. The strange things that were reported to be happening in the nineties may or may not have been the work of God and because a lot of what was going on was reported by the popular press, it's difficult to know exactly what was happening. But if you experienced something first hand that seemed a little odd to us reserved British, but was clearly pointing the way to Jesus, then we cannot say it wasn't the work of the Holy Spirit.

However, if something that was going on was preventing people knowing about Jesus, then we can almost certainly say it was not the work of the Holy Spirit. If we see someone barking like a dog, for instance, we can ask how that brings glory to God. If there is no satisfactory answer, which there almost certainly won't be, then it is something of man, not of God and certainly not the work of the Holy Spirit.

There is much in the Bible that teaches us about the work of the Holy Spirit and His relationship with Jesus and with the Father.

John 14:26 But the Counsellor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

Here again in this verse, Jesus shows us that the Holy Spirit's role is to teach us all things and to remind us of the truth. The Spirit seeks to instruct, reinforce, review, and help us transfer truth to practice.

Jesus says this to his disciples in John 16:7-8 It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counsellor (that is, the Holy Spirit) will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. When he comes, he will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment.

Although Jesus taught about sin and how people should confess and repent, it is the Holy Spirit who convicts people in regard to their sin. God is of course perfect and sin, that is anything that is done that is contrary to the nature of

God's character or His word, is what separates us from God. The Spirit also convicts people of their need to be righteous and the consequential judgment awaiting them for unbelief, sin, and disobedience to God.

God wants us all to have a close relationship with him. Because of that, he sent Jesus as the eternal sacrifice to take the punishment for us all. And he sends the Holy Spirit to convict us and to show us the way to God through Jesus.

Before Jesus ascended to heaven as described in the book of Acts, he promised his disciples that they would receive power when the Holy Spirit came to them.

[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.](#)

Specifically for those disciples, they would be witnesses to what they had seen and that the Spirit would empower them to take that message out into the world. That is still true today for us, that when the Spirit comes upon us, we are empowered and emboldened to speak the truth about Jesus.

[1 Corinthians 2:10-13 10 These are the things God has revealed to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. For who knows a person's thoughts except their own spirit within them? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. What we have received is not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may understand what God has freely given us. This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, explaining spiritual realities with Spirit-taught words.](#)

God chooses to reveal things to us through His Spirit and having the Holy Spirit dwelling within us is something that is freely given to us. You don't have to have a baptism of water to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

[Acts 2:38 Peter replied, "Repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.](#)

But how do we know whether someone has the Spirit dwelling in them?

Well the Bible gives some very clear teaching on this.

[Galatians 5:22-25 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such](#)

things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.

When we examine our own lives, do we see the fruit of the Spirit? This is different to spiritual gifts. The fruit, love, joy, peace, etc, should be exhibited by all Christians, bearing in mind that none of us are perfect and that we do all sin at times. But we should be looking to make sure that our lives reflect the fruit of the spirit.

Gifts of the spirit are different. These are given to individuals so that together, the people of God might be strengthened and build each other up.

1 Corinthians 12:4-11 There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work. Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines

God has given each of us gifts for us to use to glorify Him. He wants us to use our gifts within his service, whether in this church or outside the church in the world outside. Not all gifts are given to everyone and in fact it would be very rare for a single person to receive every spiritual gift that is mentioned in the Bible.

1 Corinthians 12:27-30 Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. And God has placed in the church first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, of helping, of guidance, and of different kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret?

As Christians, God has given us each other so that we can build each other up. Our church motto this year, 1 Thessalonians 5:11 is [Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.](#)

God has given us the Holy Spirit to enable us to do that and as we listen to what God says to us individually and as a church, the Holy Spirit will work more and more within our lives and within our church and help us as we seek to reach those who don't know Jesus.

And even if we don't know what we should be praying for, we know that the Holy Spirit helps us.

Romans 8:26 [In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans.](#)

The Holy Spirit is our helper, pointing the way towards Jesus, showing us the things we should be doing. He convicts us, guides us, comforts us and blesses us. Through the Holy Spirit we are given gifts to use in God's service.

We need to invite the Holy Spirit into our lives to continue to change us, to make us more Christ like, to give us gifts to use but most of all we need to invite Him to help us exhibit all the fruit of the Spirit.