

# The work of the Spirit

ODCC 00/00/09 (x.pages)

**Text:** John 16:5-15

## Introduction

1. Last week I preached on the work of the Devil especially as it relates to the Christian's life. This week I want to preach on the exact opposite and look at the work of the Spirit as His work relates to the Christian.
  - a. Just as we only touched on the Devil's work, so today we are only giving a brief overview of the Spirit's work
  - b. I am not going to be dealing with what Pentecostal theology calls "the baptism in the Holy Spirit".
  - c. And I am not going to be dealing with gifts of the Holy Spirit though I believe that the gifts are for the church today and have witnessed dozens of incredible supernatural uses of the gifts.
2. I am not going to deal with the relationship and the union of the Holy Spirit and the Son and the Father because of time.
  - a. As our statement of belief on our website says, "*We believe in one eternal God who is the Creator of all things. He exists in three Persons: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.*"
  - b. The three persons of the Godhead work together as one – **The Father** send His Son, His Son lives the life of a human, the Spirit empowers the Son. **The Father** sends His Son, His Son lives a life of obedience, listening to the Father, saying and doing what the Father tells Him, and is taken and crucified on a cross; the Spirit raises the Son from the dead and the Father glorifies the Son, etc.

## The containers of God

1. Our text says that the Holy Spirit *will not speak on his own* (initiative) but will *take from what is mine and make it known to you*.
  - a. That's a hard scripture to interpret. I used to think that what it meant was that the HS takes "things" that belong to Jesus and gives them to us;
  - b. The the "things" that He gives us are things that essentially make up Christ's being
  - c. If you need joy, Christ is our joy; if you need peace, Christ is our peace; if you need healing, Christ is our healer; if you need direction, Christ is the way, etc.
2. The HS primary function in the believer is to form Christ in us – that's what Paul writes to the Galatians (4:19) and says, "*My dear children, for whom I am again in the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed in you.*"
  - a. Imagine a baby developing in the womb, that is the idea, that Christ is, in a sense, developing and growing in us as Christians;
  - b. As He is formed in us and grows in us, so He takes us over and that's what Paul meant when he said, "*It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me*" (Gal 2:20).
  - c. How does this happen? It happens when I die to self. It the text just quoted Paul says, "*I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I that lives...*"
3. What does Jesus call Paul? After Paul's Damascus Road experience, he is blind and sitting in a house on Straight Street in Damascus and the Lord tells a disciple named Ananias to go and pray for him. When Ananias balks at the Lord's instructions, Jesus says that Paul is a chosen vessel.
  - a. What is a vessel? It is only a container and you and I are to be containers for the Lord.
  - b. "*You are the temple of the Holy Spirit.*" What is a temple? It is the building where God lives. Another word for temple is "house". We are to be houses where the Lord lives.
  - c. The work of the HS is to form Christ in us.

## The Lordship of Christ

1. Unfortunately much of our evangelism tells about the penalty of sin and how Jesus died as a sacrifice for our sin so that whoever believes in Him and calls on Him shall receive cleansing and forgiveness of sin.
  - a. That is only the beginning of the gospel story. Christ is to be to us both Redeemer and Lord. Too many preachers do not explain that having saved us from our sin, Christ wants to rule our lives.
  - b. Many Christians then readily accept Christ as redeemer but His Lordship as optional.

- c. As we study the Bible we do not find the Lordship of Christ over our lives as an option but rather as a package.
- 2. Human beings never live without being slaves. We are slaves! If we know that it will help us as we serve
  - a. Romans 6:16 says, *“Don’t you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey – whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness?”*
  - b. Unbelievers (and some Christians) will laugh at that and say that they are not slaves. They are free and live freely. Everything they do is by choice and no-one forces them.
  - c. But as we saw last week, God created the angels in heaven and man on earth sinless and to live by His law. (God’s law is only one; it is the law of love).
  - d. The devil sinned. His sin was the breaking of God’s law and is the opposite of God’s law – self love.
  - e. The devil is the author of sin and influenced mankind to sin. When we sin. When we live in the freedom of self-gratification and self-will and self-love, we serve the author of sin.
- 3. I want to emphasise that the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin and God forgives us all sin when we call on him even if we do not allow Jesus to be Lord in our lives.
  - a. But I equally want to emphasise that the Spirit is given so that He may take what belongs to Christ and make it ours.
  - b. In that same conversation with the disciples Jesus told them that He was the vine and they were the branches.
  - c. By abiding in Him they received life-giving sap – His life, through the indwelling Spirit.
  - d. His life producing fruit.

## The tree of life

- 1. In the Garden of Eden there were the two specific trees – the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.
  - a. I don’t believe that either tree contained ingredients which could produce life or death. I think it was the act of partaking that resulted in life or death.
  - b. By eating from the forbidden tree Adam & Eve broke the one and only law: DO NOT EAT OF IT! and by the act of disobedience they sinned and opened the door to the dominion of sin.
  - c. God said to Cain, *“Sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must master it.”*
  - d. Sin is too powerful and none of us can master it. This is the work of the Holy Spirit.
- 2. I don’t know about you but I have often wondered how it is that there is a command not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil but there is no specific instruction to eat of the tree of life.
  - a. They grew together, side by side in the middle of the garden. I think the tree of life was there so that if they ever felt inclined to eat the forbidden fruit, they could instead eat from the tree of life.
  - b. The tree of life represents all that is opposite of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.
  - c. What is the tree of life? We saw a few weeks ago that it represents none other than Jesus Christ.
  - d. Jesus said, *“If anyone is thirsty let him come to me and drink and out of his innermost being will flow rivers of living water. By this he meant the Spirit”* (Jn 7:37-39).
- 3. It was possible to live in the garden and not eat from either tree but it’s doubtful that Adam and Eve would ever have escaped the temptation.
  - a. Is it possible to be a Christian and never be thirsty for the Saviour? I suppose it is but it isn’t spiritually natural.
  - b. Remember, sin is a ruler and it’s not possible to live without its influence in our lives.
  - c. Christ is the only one who can who can not only cleanse and forgive us from sin, but also deal with the power of sin – the self-love of life.

THE HOLY SPIRIT IS GIVEN TO US TO ENABLE CHRIST TO BE LORD IN US.