

SERMON NOTES
John 14-16
“The Indwelling and Empowering Spirit”

Intro:

- As followers of Jesus, we talk a lot about a personal relationship with Jesus – about knowing Jesus personally as a Real Living Person – not only believing in him as God’s Son and our Savior, but also experiencing him as our Friend in our daily living
--but how do we come to know Someone personally Whom we cannot see?
- *One of the best ways to get to know Jesus is to read and study the Gospels*
- However, although knowing and believing the Bible is necessary for knowing Jesus personally – it is not sufficient
- *There is more to knowing the Son than studying the Scriptures – essential as that is*
- *We come to know Jesus personally not only by means of the witness of the written Word – but also by means of the witness of the indwelling Spirit*
- That is what Jesus said to his disciples the night before his death in John 14-16
- *Jesus was preparing his disciples for his departure – never again would they walk with him day after day on this earth*
- He was about to leave them and return to His Father in heaven following his death and resurrection – and yet he promised to come to them:

John 14:16-18 ¹⁶**And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever—**¹⁷**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.** ¹⁸**I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.**

I will not leave you as orphans – I will come to you

--How?

--The Father will send The Paraclete – the Comforter – the Counselor – Who will be with you forever – in fact, He will live in you

--“I am going away – and I will one day come back and take you to be with me forever – but even while I am away – I will be with you in the Person of my alter ego – the Paraclete”

- The word Jesus used to describe the Holy Spirit is *Paraclete* – which is virtually impossible to translate fully by any single English word
- *The word means literally “one who comes to our side when called upon” and is related to the word for encouragement or exhortation*
- The word **Paraclete** in Greek signified a legal Advocate in the sense of Defense Attorney
- *But the word could also have the meaning of Comforter and Intercessor and Helper and Encourager and Counselor*
- **The Holy Spirit is Another Paraclete of the same kind as Jesus – of the same essence and character and purpose as Jesus**
- Just as Jesus was always perfectly aligned with the will and purpose of the Father, so the Spirit is always perfectly aligned with the will and purpose of the Son
- *Just as it was impossible to know and honor the Father without knowing and honoring the Son – because the Father and Son were One – so also it is impossible today to know and experience the Son without knowing and experiencing the Spirit – for it is by means of the Spirit that the Son lives in the hearts of his followers*
- *And just as it pleases the Father for us to love and trust and obey the Son, so also it pleases the Son for us to love and trust and obey the Spirit*
- **Robert Heidler (“Experiencing the Spirit”): “No matter how much you know about the Bible, no matter how much you discipline yourself, no matter how hard you try to serve and please God, if you are not properly related to the Spirit of God, the Christian life will not work for you. That’s because the Christian life is not a ritual or a set of teachings, but a relationship – a relationship with God through His Holy Spirit.**
- **“The Holy Spirit was given to make the Christian life experiential – to make Jesus real, not only in your understanding, but also in your life.”**

I. THE INDWELLING MINISTRY OF THE SPIRIT

(1) ***The Spirit Mediates or Conveys the Ongoing Presence of Jesus***

- **A personal relationship with the Son and a personal relationship with the Spirit belong together**
- *To fully know and experience Jesus – we must experience the Holy Spirit*
- ***And the purpose of experiencing the Spirit is to know and experience Jesus***
- *Trying to pursue a relationship with Jesus apart from the Holy Spirit can lead to frustration, disappointment, spiritual impotence, barrenness and defeat*

- It is the Holy Spirit who makes our relationship with Jesus personal and intimate and vibrant and fruitful
--just as a personal relationship with the Jesus the Son and God the Father go together – *and we enter into a right relationship with God through faith in Jesus Christ -- so also our relationship with the Son and the Spirit belong together* – *we experience the ongoing Presence of Jesus by means of the indwelling Spirit*
- *Do you believe that the Son and the Spirit are One just as the Father and the Son are One?*
- Do you believe that Father, Son and Spirit all have the same character and the same purposes – *that the Spirit would never lead believers contrary to the will of the Father and the Son?*
- Some believers who claim to be fully surrendered to Jesus are hesitant and reluctant and even fearful of surrendering themselves fully to the Spirit
- *This reveals that they do not fully believe in the Oneness of the Son and the Spirit – they trust Jesus more than they trust the Spirit*
- This distrust grieves and quenches the Spirit
- **Father, Son and Spirit are One – they never work at cross-purposes to one another**
- *We are to welcome the Spirit into our lives just as we welcome Jesus Himself*
- *It is the Holy Spirit who mediates the Presence of the risen and ascended Christ to us as members of Christ's body so that we are able to extend that presence and love and power to the world around us*
- **By giving us the Holy Spirit – Jesus is giving us His Own Presence to abide within us**

John 14:16-18 ¹⁶**And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever—**¹⁷**the Spirit of truth. You know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.** ¹⁸**I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.**

- *Jesus lived with his disciples for 3 years*
- ***But the Paraclete – the Holy Spirit – lives within us forever***
- This is why Jesus could say in John 16 that it was to our advantage that he leave us and return to the Father in heaven
- *For it is actually better for us to have His spiritual presence within us than to have his physical presence beside us*

John 16:7 ⁷ **But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.**

- *Do you question that statement?*
- Do you think you would be better off if you could see and hear the physical presence of Jesus in a physical body than to have his spiritual presence living in you by his Spirit?
- *Consider the 12 disciples – were they more dynamic and fruitful followers of Jesus while Jesus was still on earth – or after he returned to the Father and sent the Spirit?*
- **By far they were all more dynamic Christians after Pentecost than before**

- Our calling as Christians is not to observe and admire the life of Jesus and then try hard to imitate him
- *Rather our calling as Christians is to allow the Presence of the living Christ to transform us into his likeness – and we do that as we yield to the control and direction of the indwelling Holy Spirit*

- It is to our advantage that Jesus ascended into heaven and sent His Spirit
- *When Jesus walked the earth in his flesh – He was the Source of Living Water – of Spiritual Life & Vitality & Passion -- but that Source was external to the disciples*
- And Jesus could only be at one place at one time

- But now that Jesus has returned to heaven and sent His Spirit to live within us – **that Source of Living Water is now Internal! – within each of us**
- *It's the difference between going to an outdoor community well to draw water and having indoor plumbing and running water inside your house*

- *All we need to do is to tap into that Source of Life – **Come – Drink – Believe***
- *The rest of the Christian life is simply the outworking and overflow of that inner spiritual life and passion and energy and power – all our obedience // our service // our giving // our loving // our spiritual commitment // our church involvement // our witness in the world – all of that is the overflow of the streams of living water flowing from within us by the Spirit of Christ*

- How about you? Are you experiencing the inner spiritual fullness and reality of the Presence of the living Christ abiding within you?
- *This experience begins when you invite Jesus Christ into your life as your personal Savior and Lord -- **will you open the door of your heart to Jesus today?***

(2) The Spirit forms within us the Character of Christ

John 14:18-23 ¹⁸ “No, I will not abandon you as orphans—I will come to you. ¹⁹In just a little while the world will not see me again, but you will. For I will live again, and you will, too. ²⁰When I am raised to life again, you will know that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. ²¹Those who obey my commandments are the ones who love me. And because they love me, my Father will love them, and I will love them. And I will reveal myself to each one of them... All those who love me will do what I say. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and live with them.”

- *And what happens when Jesus comes to live within us by His Spirit?*

2 Corinthians 3:17-18 ¹⁷Now, the Lord is the Spirit, and wherever the Spirit of the Lord is, he gives freedom. ¹⁸And all of us have had that veil removed so that we can be mirrors that brightly reflect the glory of the Lord. And as the Spirit of the Lord works within us, we become more and more like him and reflect his glory even more.

- *As the Spirit of the Lord works within us – He forms within us the character of Christ – and we become more and more like Jesus in our passions and desires and attitudes and speech and actions*
- *As the Spirit of the Lord works within us – He gives us an increasing love for Jesus that translates into increased obedience to His commandments – resulting in growth in Christ-likeness*
- *The Spirit indwells us to give us victory over sin – making us holy and mature in Christ*
- *When the Spirit of the Lord comes to live within you – He changes you from the inside out*
- *He convicts us of sin and produces more and more of the righteousness of Jesus in our lives as we repent of our sins and live in obedience to Jesus*
- *The moment a person accepts Jesus Christ into his or her life as Savior and Lord – that person is forgiven of all their sins and given the righteousness of Christ by faith so that they have right standing with God*
- *That is called justification – the death of Christ on the Cross for our sins secures that for us – we are declared righteous before God by trusting in Christ’s finished work on the Cross*
- *But that doesn’t change all our sinful thoughts and actions and habits*

- *God's purpose in saving us is not only to forgive our sins but also to set us free from our sins so that we can grow in Christ-like righteousness and become all that He created us to be*
- We grow in our experience of the righteousness of Christ in our daily lives as we yield control of our lives to the indwelling Spirit so that He can produce the character of Jesus in our lives
- *The Bible calls this the Fruit of the Spirit*
- *If you yield to the Spirit and are growing in your relationship with Jesus and your obedience to His teachings – then the Holy Spirit will produce in increasing measure the fruit of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness and self-control in your life*

II. THE ILLUMINATING MINISTRY OF THE SPIRIT

(1) The Spirit enabled the Apostles to recall, understand and record the teachings of Jesus accurately in the Gospels

- Our primary source for the life and ministry and teachings of Jesus is the New Testament – especially the Gospels
- *The Gospels were written from 30 to 60 years after Jesus lived and taught*
- How do we know the Gospels contain an accurate record of Jesus' words and deeds?

John 14:25-26 ²⁵**“All this I have spoken while still with you.** ²⁶ **But the Counselor, 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.**

This promise refers specifically to the apostles who heard the teachings of Jesus – but didn't always understand at first what they were hearing

--though these words would not be written in the Gospels for another 30-60 years, the Apostles began teaching the words of Jesus right away – as enabled by the Spirit -- and these teachings were circulated orally among followers of Jesus – and then they were written down

--we can have confidence that we have the true words of Jesus in the Gospels because of this promise of Jesus that the Holy Spirit would enable the disciples to remember and understand the words of Jesus

(2) The Spirit Guides us into all Truth

John 16:12-15 ¹²“I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. ¹³But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all 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. ¹⁴He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you. ¹⁵All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you.

The first application of this pertains to the writing of the NT:

- not only would the Spirit of truth enable the apostles to recall and understand the words Jesus spoke while on earth – *but the Spirit would also guide them into further truth beyond what Jesus spoke on earth*
- there is much truth in the NT that goes beyond the words Jesus spoke on earth
- for example, much of the NT was written by Paul and Luke – and as far as we know, they did not hear Jesus teach while he was on earth*
- their writings are true and are the Word of God – but that truth did not come from recalling the words Jesus spoke on earth***
- rather, the Spirit of truth made known to them truths beyond the historic words of Jesus*
- yet the ultimate source of that truth is still the living Christ**
- “The Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you.”***

And even apostles such as Peter and John who did hear Jesus teach – they also received new revelation and further truth from the Spirit of truth in their ministry, preaching and writings

Now, that kind of authoritative and infallible revelation ceased with the completion of the NT

- The Holy Spirit does not reveal new truth today that is on a par with the revealed truth of the NT
- the authority of the NT Scriptures is unique and supreme*

But as Acts 2 and other NT Scriptures make clear, the whole church age from Pentecost to the Second Coming is referred to as ***the last days*** – *which are the days of the Messiah’s reign at the right hand of God – and the age of the outpoured Spirit and of prophetic speech by all of God’s people as prophesied by Joel*

- prophetic speech can refer to all Spirit-filled proclamation of the Gospel
- and although the preaching and teaching and prophesying and testifying of Christian believers today is not infallible or of the same authority as the NT – there is still a sense in which the Spirit guides us into truth and empowers us to speak the words of God*

I Peter 4:10-11 ¹⁰Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. ¹¹If anyone speaks, he should do it **as one speaking the very words of God**. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ.

And this promise is not just for pastors preaching sermons – but for all who speak in Jesus' name – *that the Spirit of truth will guide us into truth in our study and preparation and teaching and witnessing*

--and indeed, this should be the prayer of all who listen as well – that the Spirit of truth would guide you into truth as you listen to the Word of God being preached and taught

--*that the Spirit of truth would illumine your heart and mind and increase your spiritual understanding and give you new insights and applications into the Word of God*

- **It is the indwelling Holy Spirit who opens our minds to understand the Bible and how to apply the teachings of Jesus to our lives**
- *Whenever you read the Bible – or any kind of book dealing with theology or spiritual truth or the Christian life – you should ask the Spirit of Truth to enlighten you and give you spiritual understanding of spiritual truths*

III. THE EMPOWERING MINISTRY OF THE SPIRIT

(1) The Spirit empowers us to continue the Works and Ministry of Jesus

John 14:12 ¹²**I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.**

- *Notice, first of all, the word “anyone” – “anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing”*
- This promise is not restricted to the 12 apostles or to the 1st century church
- *Jesus said “anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing”*

- *What had Jesus been doing?*
- Preaching, teaching, healing, casting out demons – these were the primary works of Jesus' ministry
- *And Jesus said “anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing”*

- Notice, secondly: *“He will do even greater things than these”*
- Jesus walked on water / calmed the storm / fed the 5000 / even raised the dead
- *I dare say none of us has ever done any of those things – let alone greater miracles*
- What did Jesus mean?

- Well, consider this: at the end of 3 years of Jesus’ preaching and teaching and performing miraculous signs – there were about 120 believers gathered together at the beginning of the Day of Pentecost
--by the end of that Day – as a result of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit -- there were 3000 who accepted Peter’s Gospel message and were baptized and added to the church -- could that be part of what Jesus meant by “greater things”?

- Notice at the end of 14:12 Jesus says: *“He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.”*
- What is the connection between Jesus going to the Father and his followers doing greater things than what Jesus had been doing?

- Remember that Jesus said in John 7:37-39 that He had to be glorified – *that is, ascended into heaven and exalted to the right hand of God* – before the Holy Spirit could be given to his followers
- *In John 14:12-18, He is making this same connection between going to the Father and sending the Holy Spirit to empower His followers for ministry*
- ***The works of Jesus are done in the strength and power of the Holy Spirit – whom Jesus would send from the right hand of the Father***

- *The same Holy Spirit who empowered the works of Jesus 2000 years ago also empowers believers to do the works and ministry of Jesus today*
- **Wherever Christians are willing to embrace the empowering ministry of the Spirit – there is always a dramatic increase in effectiveness and fruitfulness**

- *The empowering ministry of the Spirit equips us with supernatural resources to carry on the supernatural ministry of Jesus Christ in the world today*
- **We need the power of God if we are to be effective in doing the Lord’s work**

- This empowering ministry of the Spirit is available to all believers – even to young Christians and new Christians
- *The indwelling ministry of the Spirit will produce spiritual maturity over time – but the empowering ministry of the Spirit can equip us for serving Christ even before we have grown in maturity*

- **It is the empowering ministry of the Spirit that will enable us to become a spiritually dynamic body making a significant impact in vulnerable families**
- **The empowering ministry of the Spirit takes many forms:**
 - *Finding people who are separated from God and reconciling them to God*
 - Finding people who are enslaved to sin and leading them into a holy life where they can walk in God's forgiveness and victory
 - *Finding people oppressed by the devil and setting them free*
 - Finding people with broken relationships and helping those relationships be restored
 - *Finding people with physical sickness and pain and bringing them healing*
 - Finding people who are hungry and in need and meeting those needs with practical expressions of God's love and generosity
 - *Finding people who are sorrowful and in distress and filling them with peace and joy in the Holy Spirit*
 - Finding people who are brokenhearted and in despair and giving them hope and hearts of praise to God
- *Ministry is the process of rescuing men and women out of the kingdom of darkness and bringing them into the kingdom of light // setting men and women free from captivity to Satan and bringing their lives into line with the will of God // delivering men and women from sin and its effects so they can experience the fullness of God's blessing*
- **The Holy Spirit gives spiritual gifts and spiritual power to every Christian to enable them to be fruitful in some of these forms of Christ's ministry**

(2) The Spirit empowers us to Testify about Jesus effectively

John 15:26-27 ²⁶“When the Counselor 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. ²⁷And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning.

- *Of course, the testimony of the apostles carries a unique authority because they were eyewitnesses of Jesus from the beginning of his ministry through his resurrection and ascension*
- But we know from Acts 1:8 and many other Scriptures that all of us are called to testify about Jesus – *all of us are called to bear witness to the truth of the Gospel and to share our personal testimony of our personal experience with Jesus Christ*
- **It is the Holy Spirit who empowers us to testify about Jesus**

Acts 1:8 ⁸ 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.”

- If all we needed to do was to sit in church and sing songs and listen to sermons – we wouldn’t need supernatural empowering
- **But God has given us a job to do – we have a world to win for Christ – we have territory to take back from the enemy – there are lives to be set free from Satan’s bondage**
- *And for that we need the power of the Holy Spirit*
- *It is the Holy Spirit who gives us the courage to open our mouths and tell others about Jesus // it is the Holy Spirit who gives us the right words for the occasion // it is the Holy Spirit who convicts unbelievers of sin, righteousness and judgment and backs up our words with His own witness to the truth of Jesus*
- The single most important and decisive factor in becoming an effective witness of Jesus Christ is not your personality type or your religious background or how long you’ve been a Christian or church member or how well you know the Bible
- **The single most important and decisive factor in becoming an effective witness of Jesus Christ is being filled and controlled and directed and empowered by the Holy Spirit, because the passion of the Holy Spirit is to testify about Jesus – you become an effective witness by allowing the Holy Spirit to testify about Jesus through you**
- **Henrietta Mears: I believe it is impossible for any Christian to be effective either in his life or in his service unless he is filled with the Holy Spirit who is God’s only provision of power**

If you are trying hard to live for Christ but are failing to bear fruit and witness for Christ effectively, then you need to learn to rely upon the power of the Holy Spirit instead of working hard in your own strength

Darrel Giesbrecht: *“Aloft in the Spirit”*

“My first year in college was a difficult one. Having been in the work force for several years, I was out of tune with academics. The bustle of dorm life added to the pressure. -Unable to cope, I soon began to go for long walks, pouring out my heart to God along the way. I expressed my concerns about making it in school, about why I was there and about where he was leading me.

-One afternoon I decided to walk to the railway tracks that bridged the highway.

Show picture of hawk in flight

-Suddenly a hawk appeared. It glided over the highway and then banked and began to climb. Its wings were fully stretched and yet it continued to ascend. I realized it had caught a hot-air thermal rising from the highway.

-As I watched, I noticed the minute movements of its wingtips that kept the bird within the thermal. The hawk had not simply caught a free ride; there was a trick to staying with the thermal. Continuing to feel out the edge of the warm air, the large bird spiraled upward.

My heart pounded as I sat there spellbound. God was teaching me a simple lesson through that hawk. It was as though God were saying: "Darrel, you are the hawk and My Spirit is the hot-air thermal. I will raise you up and take you where I want you to go. Route and direction are my responsibility, not yours. All I demand of you is that you stay with the thermal of My Spirit, and I will do the rest.

-As I walked back to the campus, I had a lightness I hadn't felt for some time. I thought of the words of Jesus found in the Gospel of John: "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in me, and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing."

Stop showing picture

To walk in the Spirit is to remain in the thermal of God's Spirit

-the thermal is where we experience the resurrection power and life of Jesus Christ

-we experience that power and life not by working hard to flap our wings in our own strength - but rather by abiding in the thermal and allowing the Holy Spirit to control and guide and empower us

- ***Whoever believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him***
- ***Remain in the thermal of the Spirit – it's the same teaching***

It's not about how hard you flap your wings trying to serve the Lord in your own strength

--All we need do is move our wingtips to stay within the thermal

-the thermal of the Spirit provides the power to raise us up and give us new life

-the thermal of the Spirit provides the power to bear the fruit of Christ-like character

-the thermal of the Spirit empowers us to serve Christ and witness boldly for him

Prayer: Dear Father, I need You. I acknowledge that I have been directing my own life and that, as a result, I have sinned against You. I thank You that You have forgiven my sins through Christ's death on the cross for me. I now invite Jesus Christ to take His place on the throne of my life. Fill me with the Holy Spirit. Fill me with spiritual passion, with compassion for the lost and hurting, and with boldness to tell others about Jesus. Empower my life and service and witness for Jesus Christ. I pray this in the name of Jesus. Amen.

“Spirit of the Living God” and “Holy Spirit, Thou Art Welcome”