

Sunday Service Sermons

14 March 2021

Why Study the Holy Spirit?

Text: "But the comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said to you." *John 14:26*

What purpose would it serve to study the Holy Spirit today, in this day and age?

Christ asked us to look to the fields that are white for harvest, so how can we justify spending time in such a study?

When there are so many who need the truth of the gospel, so many people to bring to God, and so much work to be done, why should we take the time to study the Holy Spirit?

The power to get good work accomplished for the Lord is found in the Holy Spirit.

We have the sails, but we lack the wind to move us forward.

We have the desire, but we lack the drive.

When we take an honest look at ourselves, our church, and our world, we will see why we should take the time to study the Holy Spirit.

Reason one: We are totally dependent on the Holy Spirit.

Some people see it this way.

When there are so many miles to be traveled, when there is so much to be done when we get there, and when we have gotten such a late start, why should we take time to stop for gas?

Yet the answer is quite obvious, isn't it?

We are totally dependent on the gas.

Without fuel, the miles will not be traveled, the work will not be done, and the destination will not be reached!

That is exactly the meaning of *Zechariah 4:6* in regard to the Holy Spirit, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."

We are dependent on the Holy Spirit for the salvation of ourselves and others.

Jesus said, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." *John 3:6*

Then he said that we should not be shocked by the fact that we must be born again.

Our need for forgiveness and God's power to forgive are brought together by faith.

This concept can be illustrated like this: A light bulb may have all the ability to burn, but it cannot burn, though electricity runs to the switch, until that switch has been thrown.

In this analogy, faith is symbolized by the switch.

When the faith switch is thrown, our need for forgiveness, and God's power to forgive are brought together.

And the power that brings them together is the Holy Spirit.

When Jesus said, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh," he was simply saying that we are flesh and that our power is limited to what flesh can do.

By ourselves we cannot be other than defeated and frustrated.

This we know all too well.

But when the Holy Spirit is allowed entrance into our lives the moment we accept Jesus, the Holy Spirit can do for a defeated life what we could never do.

To be born again is to be changed in a way that can only be described as rebirth.

The change comes when we allow Jesus into our hearts.

Then we are forgiven of our past and armed by the Spirit for the future.

We become citizens of the kingdom and children of God, and we enter into eternal life because we have been "born of the Spirit."

We are dependent on the Holy Spirit for our growth as Christians.

Paul encourages us to be confident that the Holy Spirit who started the good work of salvation in us will keep on performing it until the day Jesus returns. *Phil. 1:6*

In other words, our growth, or sanctification, is simply the continuation of what the Holy Spirit did for us at the moment of salvation.

It is the result of allowing the Holy Spirit freedom to appropriate salvation in all areas of our lives. Such sanctification becomes both an act and a process.

It is an act in that at the moment of salvation we enter the kingdom of God.

It is a process in that as we grow spiritually, areas of our lives become increasingly committed to God's will.

We are dependent on the Holy Spirit for our understanding of the Bible's message.

In *John 16:13* Christ assures us that the Holy Spirit will guide us into all truth.

The Bible is not just another book and therefore cannot be approached or understood as any other book.

It is more than words printed on a page.

It is the Word of God; therefore, to be understood, it requires the Spirit of God.

That is why each time we read the Bible we should pray, "Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things of your law" *Psalms 119:18*.

Paul reminds us in *1 Corinthians 2:14*, "But the natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

An airplane that is lost in a storm may be seeking to find its direction.

It has a good receiver, and the control tower is transmitting a strong signal.

But only when the pilot tunes to the right frequency will he pick up the signal and get back on course.

We are lost and cannot find our way.

We have a good mind and a keen ability to decipher God's truths, and God is transmitting his truths day after day.

The Holy Spirit tunes us to the right frequency so that we can hear the message and stay on course.

Without the work of the Holy Spirit, we become like those whom Jesus described as having ears yet they do not hear.

We are dependent on the Holy Spirit for the ability to lead others to Christ.

Perhaps nowhere is this truth spelled out more clearly than in *Acts 1:8*, where Jesus said that we receive power only after the Holy Spirit comes upon us.

Then and only then, he said, will we be witnesses to him wherever we go.

Nothing will ever happen apart from the Holy Spirit's working in us as he witnesses and in those with whom we share our witness.

We will be nothing more than "religion salespeople".

But as we allow the Holy Spirit to lead us to the right person and give us the right words to say, we will return as did the Spirit-empowered disciples, with joy saying, "Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through your name." *Luke 10:17*

We are dependent on the Holy Spirit for effective prayer.

Romans 8:26 informs us that the Holy Spirit will help us with our inability to know how to pray.

When we really don't know what to pray for, or even how we should pray, the Holy Spirit intercedes on our behalf.

Often our desires are not what they ought to be.

Or it may be that we don't express them in the right way or they are misdirected.

As we wait on the Lord, the Holy Spirit can come and take our desires that are too deep or too intense for us to express.

He can express them in the language of God.

Because God has said so much about the Holy Spirit we need to know Him better.

The second verse in the Bible speaks of the Holy Spirit as the one who "moved upon the face of

the waters" *Gen. 1:2*.

The closing section of the Bible (*Rev. 22:17*) speaks of the Holy Spirit as the one who invites us to come and drink the water of life freely.

Everything that falls between *Genesis 1:2* and *Revelation 22:17*, whether it be the creation story; God's working through Israel; the birth of Christ; the establishment of the church; or the glorious revelation of Christ at the end of time; all is the work of the Holy Spirit.

God has much to say about the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament.

In fact, the Holy Spirit is mentioned 378 times in the Old Testament.

In the New Testament he is mentioned 335 times.

Certainly a total of 713 references to the Holy Spirit in God's Word will convince us of the worthiness of our study.

2. Because today's problems cannot be solved without the Holy Spirit we should know Him better.

It is humanly impossible to convict people of sin so that they will turn to Christ.

Jesus recognized this and told us in *John 16:8* that the Holy Spirit would convict the world of sin.

When God's Holy Spirit convicts a person of sin, that sin may be hidden to the eyes of others, but the Holy Spirit is sounding an alarm within that person.

If the Holy Spirit were taken out of the world, there would be no sense of right and wrong, no conscience, no sorrow for evil done, and no force to hold back Satan's power.

Without the Holy Spirit, you could not say to a Christian, "He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world."

We must never forget that we do not wrestle against mere human beings, flesh and blood, but rather against supernatural powers of darkness and all kinds of wicked forces in high places *Eph. 6:12*.

Apart from the presence of the Holy Spirit, these forces could not be restrained.

There would be no hope for the world.

So let us say and pray:

Come, Holy Spirit, heavenly Dove.

With all thy quickening powers;

Kindle a flame of sacred love

In these cold hearts of ours

O raise our thoughts from things below,

From vanities and toys;

Then shall we with fresh courage go

To reach eternal joys.

Isaac watts