

Empire Church of the Brethren
Sunday Service Sermons

18 August 2024

Cooperating with the Holy Spirit

Text: "When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment: in regard to sin, because men do not believe in me; in righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; and in regard to judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned". *John 16:8-11*

Satan does whatever he can to get distance between us and God.

He did this in the garden and he does it every chance he has to every person he can get to listen to him.

One of his ways of doing this is to tell people that the awesome God of the universe will not get personally involved in the lives of people and especially a person like YOU.

Satan does not argue that God is great.

He knows that much better than we do.

He does like he did to Eve.

God is great and he wants you to be nothing in comparison to himself.

Satan wants to convince people that God is not personally involved with them, that people are the masters of their own fate and the captains of their own souls, and that ultimately people will be able to manipulate and control their destiny based on their own standard of what is right and wrong.

Satan knows that when people cooperate with the Holy Spirit, there is established between them and God, a permanent relationship that transcends all other human relationships and experiences.

As we continue our theme of "Growing Quality Christians," we will examine what happens when a person cooperates with the Holy Spirit and his varied ministries in the world.

The ministry of the Holy Spirit to unbelievers.

It is the startling revelation of Holy Scripture that God, in the person of the Holy Spirit, has determined to approach human beings as individuals.

The purpose being to reveal to humankind his love and mercy and his desire to save us from our sins.

Jesus said three things about the Holy Spirit's ministry to unbelievers.

He convinces them of their sin.

Sin not sins for there is only one sin in the life of an unbeliever that concerns God. That is the sin of unbelief.

What does it mean to believe in the Lord Jesus?

It means not only to agree intellectually with the Scripture that Jesus lived, died, and rose again; it means to accept the "cure."

Jesus provided for our sin in his death on the cross.

The Holy Spirit reveals to unbelievers what true righteousness is.

It is natural for people to believe they can make themselves good by doing good deeds, by being lawful, by being kind to others, and so forth.

But as commendable as these acts are, they are not good enough for God.

God wants to give his own righteousness to humankind, the righteousness of his Son, Jesus The Christ.

Next the Holy Spirit declares to unbelievers the truth about judgment.

Remember that Jesus said, "The prince of this world now stands condemned."

He meant that the forces of evil, personified in Satan, have been defeated because of Christ's

death on the cross.

It is not necessary for unbelievers to “beg” God to forgive them, but rather to accept the fact that God has already forgiven them by accepting the death of his Son on the cross as full payment for their sin debt.

Every claim that Satan may have had on unbelieving men and women because of their sin has been dissolved.

The ministry of the Holy Spirit to believers.

When one responds to the ministry of the Holy Spirit that we have just discussed, the experience of salvation takes place.

Up to this point the Holy Spirit has been on the outside, but upon the response of the sinner, the Holy Spirit presides at a birth experience.

The most miraculous transformation in the universe takes place as one is born into the divine family of God.

A new nature is implanted within the believer.

Because the believer has “cooperated” with the Holy Spirit in his initial ministry of convicting of sin and bringing to pass the new birth, three other ministries take place simultaneously upon one’s conversion.

The Holy Spirit baptizes.

“For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body . . . And we were all given the one Spirit to drink.”

What is the baptism of the Holy Spirit?

It is not a second work of grace but the act whereby, at the moment of conversion, the Holy Spirit places believers into the body of Christ.

There is no other part of the salvation experience that is so far-reaching in its effect.

It is by the baptism of the Holy Spirit that believers are fused into the family of God at the moment of their conversion.

The Holy Spirit seals.

Paul said, “Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.”

This is another way in which God protects his property.

Not only does he “fuse” us into his family immediately upon our salvation, but he also “seals” us with his Holy Spirit.

That is, his presence within us is the divine mark of ownership.

It is the “heavenly brand” stamped indelibly in every Christian.

And this seal is to hold safe and secure until the “day of redemption.”

The Holy Spirit fills.

Paul also says, “Do not get drunk on wine . . . Instead be filled with the Spirit.”

This filling is not a one time experience; it is continual.

Literally, Paul is saying, “Keep being filled” with the Spirit.

It should be a daily experience for believers.

Are you cooperating with the Holy Spirit in your life?

If you have not believed with your whole heart that Jesus is God’s Son and your Savior, the Holy Spirit is on the outside waiting for your cooperation.

If you have believed, then he wants you to be aware of the joys and privileges that are yours today and for all time.

Being God’s person, being one who is on “The Way” is being one who is filled and lead by the precious Holy Spirit of God.

Now and for evermore!