

Spirit In Me – 06.14.09

Intro - Today we complete our Connections series. For the last two weeks we've been learning what Jesus had to say about the connection of the Holy Spirit. Two weeks ago we talked about the Spirit in Us. We learned that the Holy Spirit
(a) BEARS WITNESS about Jesus
(b) CONVICTS the world, and
(c) GUIDES us into all truth.

Last week we talked about the Spirit in God, about the Trinity, that
(a) the Holy Spirit is our CONNECTION to the Godhead, this connection
(b) is THE PRIMARY DIFFERENCE between us and the world as well as
(c) THE PRIMARY SIMILARITY between us and the Godhead.

Now I want to bring this together with one of Paul's primary teachings on life in the Spirit. What does this mean for me and for you as an individual Christ follower. Today I want to talk about the Spirit in Me.

READ Romans 8:1-17

Three Effects of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Christ-follower:

"You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you." Romans 8:9a

Paul affirms the teaching of Jesus that this is the PRIMARY DIFFERENCE between us and the world. **"The world cannot receive (the Spirit of Truth) because it neither sees Him nor knows Him."** Jn 14:17
When Paul talks about "in the flesh" it really means the opposite of "in the Spirit." Without the power, without the connection, without the relationship of the Godhead as we talked about last week. **But, Paul, affirms that if in fact (not pretense of Christianity, but the real thing), you will experience 3 effects in your life:**

Effect #1 - A New **RELATIONSHIP**

The life of God in man brings about a new relationship to God and his Son. In the last part of verse 9 Paul says, **"Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him."** In other words the fundamental effect of having the Spirit is that he makes you belong to Christ. You are not your own. You were bought with a price. And the Spirit of God and of Christ (which are one) has sealed this new relationship forever. You are Christ's this morning because you are indwelt by the Spirit and life of God.

But the indwelling of the life of God brings about a new relationship not only with God the Son, but also with God the Father.

"You have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, 'Abba! Father!' The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God."
Romans 8:15b-16

The Spirit of God is the Spirit of adoption. **While we may understand adoption in our minds, theoretically, we have only to look in our own midst to see the special love of Rich and Tami Workman for Seth and Olivia. Rich and Tami sacrificed greatly to have Seth and Olivia be a part of their lives. Years of waiting. Legal expenses. Travel arrangements. Broken hearts along the way. No parent could love their children more than do Rich and Tami.**

This is the kind of love God the Father and God the Son have for you and me. We experience that love through the Spirit. Or to put it another way, the life of God in the soul of man creates a living union between Father and child. The nature of the Father is imparted to the child, and the old relationship of slave to slaveholder is utterly changed. A new, free, overpowering impulse now governs our lives: not cowering slavery, but glad-hearted sonship.

Think of it this way. I don't know yet who Seth and Olivia will become. But who they will be has been irrevocably changed forever because of what Rich and Tami have done. And not just of what happened on adoption day, but what happens every day in their lives. Seth and Olivia are unique to themselves, but they will take on the nature of their parents.

You also are changed irrevocably because of this new relationship. While each of you are unique, you are taking on the nature of your heavenly Father. To go back to your old nature and your old lives in slavery would be unthinkable!

Effect #2 - A New LEADERSHIP
"All who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God." Romans 8:14

When the Spirit of God invades the soul of man, a new leader emerges, namely, God. But the leadership is not the dominating external constraint of a slaveholder. It is the leadership of a new inner principle of life. The Spirit loves the things of God and so he leads by imparting that love of divine and holy things to us. And so the commandments of God are not burdensome because we have the nature of God within us.

The Spirit leads by implanting a kind of homing instinct for heaven. Or, to change the image, the leadership of the Spirit is so powerful and yet our response is so free that Paul calls it fruit—the fruit of the Spirit—and not works, in Galatians 5.

"If you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law... But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law." Galatians 5:18, 22-23

Do you begin to see the picture that Paul paints for us of what this new leadership is like? It's so different than some think, the exact opposite of some people's view of Christianity. Being a good Christian is not a matter of keeping rules, of doing certain things and not doing other things. It's a willingness to be led by the Spirit of God. The Spirit's leadership is like nothing else you have ever experienced. The Spirit leads forth... brings about... makes happen... the fruit of righteousness by making the whole tree good! Eugene Peterson translates it this way:

But what happens when we live God's way? He brings gifts into our lives, much the same way that fruit appears in an orchard—things like affection for others, exuberance about life, serenity. We develop a willingness to stick with things, a sense of compassion in the heart, and a conviction that a basic holiness permeates things and people. We find ourselves involved in loyal commitments, not needing to force our way in life, able to marshal and direct our energies wisely. Galatians 5:22-23a (The Message)

Can you see the evidence of the Spirit's leading in your life?

Effect #3 - A New **FREEDOM**

“For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.” Romans 8:2

Christ-followers are not lawless. There is a law in Christ Jesus. But it is something very different than the mere written code engraved in stone. This law is written on the heart. It doesn't just tell us not to sin; it comes with its own power to break our bondage to sin. And therefore it frees us from death which is the penalty of sin. And is called in this verse the “**law of the Spirit of life,**” because it is nothing less than the Spirit of God himself writing the will of God on our heart so that, as verse 4 says,

“In order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.” Rom. 8:4

So the life of God in you and in me frees us from the control of sin, not by stamping our toes when we take a wrong step, but by stamping itself, with its own nature, on our heart and making its own will the thing we love to do. The greatest freedom in the world is becoming the kind of person who loves to do those things against which there is no law (Galatians 5:23!!!). Loving to do those same things God loves to do!

Is God Contradictory?

But here Paul has to face up to the problem of schizophrenia in God. On the one hand, he has taught us very clearly in this book that

- all of us have sinned and fallen short of God's glory (3:23),
- that the wages of sin is death (6:23),
- and that the holy wrath of God is revealed against all ungodliness (1:18).

But here in Romans 8:2 God, the just and holy Judge of all the earth, sends his Holy Spirit not to punish sinners but to free them from the power of sin and the sentence of death. So how is God not contradictory? Does he hate sin and pour out his wrath on sinners or does he send his Spirit to free condemned sinners from the control of sin and the curse of death?

The Solution as Paul Sees It

“For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh.” Romans 8:3

(Now you'll see WHY we had to talk about the Trinity before this!) **Before God made an agreement with his Spirit that the Spirit should go and free sinners from the power of sin and from the sentence of death, he first made an agreement with his Son that the Son should go and bear the condemnation for sin.**

So when the Spirit of God goes forth to free his people from the slavery of sin and the sentence of death, it is not because God has ceased to hate sin, or that he has ceased to be a just judge. It's because the just and awesome Judge of the world who hates sin with infinite hatred is also so rich in love that he put his Son in our place and secured for us an eternal acquittal.

Complete Harmony and Unity in the Trinity

So there is not the slightest whiff of contradiction in the Godhead. There is complete harmony and unity as the Trinity conspires to redeem a people for the praise of God's glory.

1. Out of the riches of his love, *God the Father* plots the salvation of his sinful people.
2. He covenants with *the Son*, who lived his entire life WITHOUT SIN yet came IN THE LIKENESS OF SINFUL FLESH to stand in the place of sinful people under his holy wrath on the cross.
3. And then God turns, as it were, *to his Spirit* and says, "Fear not that we are working at cross purposes. By the death of my Son I have acquitted my people of all their sin and taken away their guilt. And now I commission you with all my heart and with all my soul: apply this great purchase to their hearts and strip the chains off their souls."

Conclusion

O, how I hope you see, and love, and accept this interweaving of the work of the Trinity in your salvation!

- The Father planned it,
- the Son purchased it,
- and now the Spirit—the very life of God in your soul—is applying it, freeing you from the chains of sin that have no place on the souls of the redeemed!

STORY: Today is Flag Day. On June 14, 1777, the Continental Congress approved the Stars and Stripes. (*Trivia - 1st 40 years added stripe for every new state as well as a star.*) And on this day in 1954, President Eisenhower signed into law the addition of the words "under God" to the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag. Clearly, not every person who calls themselves an American submits this country to be "under God." Sadly in the same way, not every person who calls himself a Christ-follower submits himself to be "under God."

Do not resist him! Do not quench his fire or grieve his heart! His work on your behalf is very glorious and very precious. Do you know why the Holy Spirit is grieved when we resist him? It's because he loves the Son of God. For every time we resist the work of the Spirit in our lives we belittle the blood of Christ, because Christ shed his blood to purchase for us the gift of the Holy Spirit.

If we neglect the new relationship he provides with God as Father, if we oppose the new leadership he brings, if we grab the chains of our sin and resist his deliverance, then we treat the blood of Christ as a cheap thing, because the very aim of shedding his blood was to secure for us the presence and power and cleansing of the Spirit of God—life of God—in our souls.

Yield to the ongoing work of God's Spirit in your life today! Trust in the finished work of God's Son today! And praise the greatness of God the Father's love and the glory of his grace that planned it all.

PRAY AND COMMUNION