

Mission Moment

Our mission emphasis for the month of October is Medical Ministries in Bangladesh. Our denomination, Churches of God, has had a presence in the country of Bangladesh for many years. That ministry includes a strong Medical Ministry. The medical ministry was begun by Dr. Fidelia Gilbert who was connected with our Church here in Cascade. We have received a special offering every October, in honor of Dr. Gilbert whose birthday was in October. That offering is given to support the medical work that she began and loved. If you would like to contribute to this special offering, you can send your gift to our Church and designate it for the Dr. Gilbert Fund. Our address is 16924 Raven Rock Road, Cascade, MD. Thank you

Scripture

John 14:15-25

Message

His Spirit Within

In last week's message, we talked about Jesus' promise recorded at the end of Matthew 28: "***And surely I am with you always to the end of the age.***" We can be comforted by this promise that Jesus makes, when we are walking through a dark place, when we are afraid, when we are in danger, we can be confident that we are not alone. Even though we cannot see Him, He is with us. His presence is real. Today I want to talk about another level of Intimacy that followers of Jesus experience in their relationship with God. Not only is Jesus with us (along side of us), He now promises that He will be IN us through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

The Promise: ¹⁵ "***If you love me, keep my commands.*** ¹⁶ ***And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever—the Spirit of Truth....you know Him for He lives with you and will be IN you.*** This conversation takes place in the Upper Room as Jesus is gathered with His followers to eat the Passover. This is the night He will be betrayed and arrested by the soldiers. He will be tried and condemned to death. He will be crucified on the following day. Jesus knows that His time on earth with His followers is short. He will rise to life again after being killed, but in a little while He will be leaving them and taken up into heaven. At the beginning of this chapter (14:2), Jesus tells His followers that He is going to prepare a place for them in His Father's house. He is aware that He will be leaving His followers. As we saw last week, Jesus promises that even though they will no longer be able to see Him, He will be with them always. He is not abandoning them. Now, he talks about another who will be sent from the Father to be with them. He calls Him the Spirit of Truth. Through this Spirit, not only will Jesus be with His followers, He will actually dwell within them. In verse 23 he says that He will **make His Home with them.**

There are a couple of things that He tells them about this Spirit. **First of all, He refers to him as "Another".** The word that is translated "Another" in this verse means "***Another of the same kind, not of a different kind***" (Expositors, vol. 9, page 146). That is significant. The Holy Spirit shares the same nature of Deity that Jesus and the Father have. He is the Third person of the Trinity. He is a separate person, but he is ONE with them. He is as much God as Jesus and the Father are.

Secondly, Jesus refers to Him as "Advocate". That word is a translation of the Greek Word, Paracletos, which means literally a person summoned to one's aid. The NIV translation captures that sense "***He (the Father) will give you another advocate to help you***". It may refer to "***an advisor, a legal advocate, a mediator or intercessor***". (BAG).

Thirdly, He will be with you forever. Just as Jesus promises to be with His followers always, He promises that this Advocate will remain with His followers forever.

Fourthly, He is called the Spirit of Truth. This refers to the ministry of the Spirit as a teacher, as one who will bring to mind the things that Jesus taught His followers. I will come back to His specific ministry in a few minutes.

Review: **He is Another, He is an Advocate; He will be with us Forever, and He is called the Spirit of Truth.** It is this Spirit who will now indwell God's people. Again, not only is God with us as Jesus promised, now we know that He is IN us.

Jesus teaches that this "Indwelling" of the Spirit is something that only certain people can experience. He explains that this Holy Spirit will not be known by those who are of the world. This refers to people who have not accepted Him, who are not believers. They are still a part of the world system that has rejected Jesus as the Son of God and Savior. They will have no relationship with this Spirit of Truth. However, "**Jesus' says to His followers (those gathered with Him and who will be followers like them in the future) that they will know Him for He lives with you and will be IN you**" (vs. 17). This now becomes the **new level of intimacy** and relationship that believers will enjoy with God. Christ's followers now will experience the presence of God IN them. They will be **indwelt by the Holy Spirit**. This is a distinction between God's people in the Old Testament and God's people in the New Testament after the promised Holy Spirit would be given. The Holy Spirit is evident in the Old Testament. He is present and active in the creation of the world. In the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit would anoint and equip certain individuals, but not all. His equipping was usually for a specific task or function. But now Jesus promises that all of His followers will be indwelt by the Holy Spirit.

Let me talk about a couple of questions, regarding the Presence of the Holy Spirit.

What is the work of the Holy Spirit? What is the Purpose of this indwelling? This indwelling of the Holy Spirit is crucial to our relationship with God. There are several "works" of the Holy Spirit that He carries out in the lives of Christ's followers.

As we look elsewhere in the New Testament, we learn of some other works of the Holy Spirit. **The Holy Spirit is instrumental in our New Birth.** One time Jesus was talking with a Jewish religious leader about being a part of God's Kingdom. Jesus told Nicodemus that anyone who wanted to be a part of God's Kingdom must be Born Again. Nicodemus did not understand what that meant, so Jesus explained it to him. ⁵ **Jesus answered, "Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. ⁶ Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit⁷ gives birth to spirit.** John 3:5-6. To be born again is our conversion, getting saved. This experience of being born again then, is something that takes place through the power of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit comes into our lives and begins a process of changing us and transforming our lives.

The Holy Spirit is instrumental in our spiritual transformation. Galatians 5:22-24 ²² **But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. ²⁴ Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.** When the Holy Spirit indwells us, He begins a process of changing us into the image of Jesus.

A third work of the Holy Spirit is the work of a teacher. I mentioned earlier that Jesus calls the Holy Spirit the Spirit of truth. "**The Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name will teach you all things and will remind you of everything that I have said to you.**" (vs. 26). The Spirit fulfills this characteristic of being the Spirit of Truth as a teacher who brings to mind all that Jesus has taught them. In 16:12-14, Jesus further explains this characteristic of the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of Truth: ¹² **"I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. ¹³ But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the 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.** The Holy Spirit helps us to remember the teachings of Jesus and helps us to understand His teachings.

When the Holy Spirit dwells within us, **He empowers us for ministry.**

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."** Jesus has left us in the world to make disciples, to influence other people to believe the way we do about Jesus. We cannot fulfill this task in our own power. We must be empowered by the Holy Spirit to be His witnesses.

So we recognize the importance of not only remembering Jesus is with us, we now understand the importance of being indwelt by Him.

A final question that I want to address regarding this Indwelling of the Holy Spirit is this: **When are we indwelt by the Spirit?** I have already pointed out that this indwelling is only experienced by those who are followers. Those who have resisted, rejected the message of salvation through Jesus cannot see or experience the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. But those who have repented, turned from their sin, who believe that Jesus is the Son of God and that He died on the cross to pay the penalty for our sins, experience this new birth and are indwelt by the Holy Spirit. Paul says in **Romans 8⁹ You, however, are not in the realm of the flesh but are in the realm of the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, they do not belong to Christ.** I believe that we are to understand that this indwelling of the Holy Spirit occurs at the moment of our new birth, when we put our faith in Jesus as our Savior.

The relationship that we are intended to experience with God can be described as a relationship of intimacy. We are not left to fend for ourselves through this world that can be evil and dangerous. Jesus promises His presence with us as we go through life. Now we understand that not only is Jesus with us, alongside of us, He indwells us. He comes into our lives and gives us new life, changes us to make our lives more pleasing God and empowers us to serve Him as witnesses to the world. May you experience His presence alongside of you and His presence and power within you.

Prayer

Blessing.