

Holy Spirit Series – Lesson 4

November 2, 2014

I. Review:

Week 1 - Holy Spirit as an indescribably powerful force and Holy Spirit as a person (with a mind, will, and emotions)

Week 2 - Holy Spirit convicts the world and saves Christians from their sin as the initiator and originator of salvation

Week 3 - Holy Spirit indwells us, assures us of our salvation and helps us

II. Introductory Questions:

To this point in the series, what has been the biggest revelation to you about the Holy Spirit and who He is? Have your beliefs or ideals about the Holy Spirit been changed or challenged?

Our desire is to know the Holy Spirit more intimately and have a deeper relationship with Him. We turn our attention today, to how the Holy Spirit teaches and leads those of us who believe in Christ.

III. Discussion and Application: *How Does the Holy Spirit Change Us?*

1. The Holy Spirit Teaches Us:

In the second week of this series, we walked through •John 16:5-11. Within that passage we read Jesus using the setting of the Passover meal to teach His disciples about what would happen after His death. Jesus says to the disciples in verse 7 that **“it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you.”**

John 16:12-15

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. 14 He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you. 15 All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you.”

Jesus is very honest with the disciples. He says to them, “I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.” Jesus knew the disciples were not ready for all the things His Father had in store for them – they could not have possibly understood all that was coming as He was preparing to depart from them. But then Jesus gives them hope.

Notice that Jesus reveals in verse 13 that the Holy Spirit “will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come”.

We must remember that God as three persons – the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit – are not independent of one another nor do they work independently of each another. Rather, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit work together as One and glorify one another in unity and purpose.

We see this principle further in verses 14 and 15 as Jesus reveals the relationship of the three persons of God: **“He (Holy Spirit) will glorify me (Jesus), for he (Holy Spirit) will take what is mine (Jesus’) and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine; therefore I (Jesus) said that he (Holy Spirit) will take what is mine (Jesus’) and declare it to you.”**

What we learn of God only what God teaches us through the Holy Spirit within us. And thankfully our growth, our maturity, and our intimacy with God can never come from our human effort.

Rather, we are grown and we are taught as we are led by the Holy Spirit to meet with God and pursue Him.

2. The Holy Spirit Leads:

In looking at the story of Ezekiel, through the opening three chapters of the book, we read God’s initial call on Ezekiel to be sent “to the people of Israel, to nations of rebels, who have rebelled against me” (2:3).

Within chapter 2 we read of how the Holy Spirit spoke and led Ezekiel in his mission to prophesy to the Israelites in order to restore the glory of the Lord in the hearts of His people being held captive in Babylon because of their rebellion.

Ezekiel 2:1 – 3:3

1 He said to me, "Son of man, stand up on your feet and I will speak to you." 2 As he spoke, the Spirit came into me and raised me to my feet, and I heard him speaking to me. 3 He said: "Son of man, I am sending you to the Israelites, to a rebellious nation that has rebelled against me; they and their ancestors have been in revolt against me to this very day. 4 The people to whom I am sending you are obstinate and stubborn. Say to them, 'This is what the Sovereign Lord says.' 5 And whether they listen or fail to listen—for they are a rebellious people—they will know that a prophet has been among them. 6 And you, son of man, do not be afraid of them or their words. Do not be afraid, though briars and thorns are all around you and you live among scorpions. Do not be afraid of what they say or be terrified by them, though they are a rebellious people. 7 You must speak my words to them, whether they listen or fail to listen, for they are rebellious. 8 But you, son of man, listen to what I say to you. Do not rebel like that rebellious people; open your mouth and eat what I give you." 9 Then I looked, and I saw a hand stretched out to me. In it was a scroll, 10 which he unrolled before me. On both sides of it were written words of lament and mourning and woe.

3:1 And he said to me, "Son of man, eat what is before you, eat this scroll; then go and speak to the people of Israel." 2 So I opened my mouth, and he gave me the scroll to eat. 3 Then he said to me, "Son of man, eat this scroll I am giving you and fill your stomach with it." So I ate it, and it tasted as sweet as honey in my mouth.

In verse 2, we read that "the Spirit entered into me (Ezekiel) and set me on my feet, and I heard him speaking to me." Thus, the Holy Spirit enters Ezekiel and communicates to him about where he will be going and what he will be doing. In the passage, then, we can see how the Holy Spirit leads Ezekiel in 4 ways:

1. The Holy Spirit leads Ezekiel by giving him his mission: Go to the people of Israel (v. 3-4)

2. The Holy Spirit will lead Ezekiel by giving him the courage to be not afraid (v. 5-6)

Notice that in verses 5 and 6, the Holy Spirit is reassuring to Ezekiel, and He understands that this will not be a very easy task. Twice the Holy Spirit says to Ezekiel to "Be not afraid" of the circumstances in which he will find himself.

3. The Holy Spirit will lead Ezekiel by giving him the words to say (v. 4, 7)

In verse 4, the Holy Spirit says that Ezekiel shall say, "Thus says the Lord", and in verse 7, the Holy Spirit says Ezekiel "shall speak my words to them".

4. The Holy Spirit leads Ezekiel into obedience (v. 2:8 – 3:3)

In the part of the passage, we read the strange request of the Holy Spirit that Ezekiel eat a scroll that the Holy Spirit provides for him. This is a test of Ezekiel's obedience to the Holy Spirit, and when he obeys, the scroll tastes like honey.

IV. Small Group Discussion Questions:

1. What is the significance to Christians that Jesus refers to the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of truth?
2. What does this name – and that fact that the Holy Spirit will "guide you into all the truth" – reveal about the role the Holy Spirit plays in our understanding of God's truth and growth as believers?
3. Why should it be encouraging to us that the Holy Spirit is our Guide and Teacher as we pursue God's truth?
4. What do these declarations show us about the authority the Holy Spirit has to teach His people what the Father and the Son desire for them to learn?
5. How can it help us to be more effective for God's Kingdom if we understand that when the Holy Spirit leads us to minister to other people, He also provides the courage we need to fulfill our mission?
6. How might it change our perspective if we truly believed that the Holy Spirit is faithful to give us the words we need as we are called to share truth with others?
7. When the Holy Spirit calls us to be obedient, what does it say about His power within us that we can choose to be obedient?
8. What can we learn and take away from seeing how the Holy Spirit led Ezekiel?