

Open your bibles to Acts 8.

While you are turning let me say a special “thank you “to your pastor for inviting me to be with you this weekend. I know that he is praying for a special time together as we grow through God’s Word. I have looked forward to this time for the last few months. It is my deep desire to be a usable vessel so that the Holy Spirit might work in our lives.

LET’S TAKE A MOMENT TO PRAY TOGETHER AS WE BEGIN.

“BREAKING THROUGH” is our theme for the weekend so I began to think of some areas of my life where I would like to see God work in a fresh way. I came to the conclusion that one of our greatest needs is to learn how to cooperate with the Holy Spirit that dwells within us. I long to be obedient to the Spirit. As a believer, and as a church community, we must appreciate and keep active the Spirit’s leadership in order to bring the most glory to our Father. We must learn to listen to the spirit of God as He works in our lives!

Listen to the reading of Acts 8:1-8

WHO WAS PHILLIP? We are told a few things in scripture.

- He was one of the first deacons — He is preaching in Samaria
- He is known as “Phillip the evangelist” in Biblical History and literature- (Acts 21)
- He lived in Caesarea as a pastor in his later life, boldly sharing and caring for people.
- He is used as an instrument of the spirit to share the gospel with a needy Ethiopian.

- a) 8:26-27- he went
- b) 8:29-30- he joined
- c) 8:35- he preached
- d) 8:39- he departed

Phillip was not tied to anyone, any place, or anything! It was his desire to be led and used by the Holy Spirit. That should be our intense desire and ambition. (I often fail there in my walk and have to be reminded constantly.)

How do I cooperate with the Holy Spirit?

Tonight: we look at listening
Tomorrow: we look at obeying

I. WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT? (Acts 1:8)

The Holy Spirit is our power for daily living as God’s children in this world.

A. The coming of the spirit-

In Acts 2 the initial coming of the spirit took place. He came to bring boldness to the disciples and the good news of the gospel to Everyone. It was a one-time activity promised and supplied by our Lord for all believers today. If you are a believer the Holy Spirit lives within your spirit.

B. The filling of the Holy Spirit- in Ephesians 5 we are told to, continually be filled with the Holy Spirit. This is a continual happening for every believer that we will listen to and follow the Spirit.

C. The fruit of the Spirit- in Galatians 5 the Bible speaks to what should be growing and showing in the believer's life. Love, joy peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. To live out our lives with this goal will lead others to want what we have in Christ.

Jesus promised daily help for living out our Christian faith. The Holy Spirit is the fulfillment of that promise.

SO WE ARE ABLE TO SEE HIS PRESENCE WITHIN OUR LIVES.

WHAT DOES THE HOLY SPIRIT DO?

(See John 14-16 as we see the work of God's spirit in our lives daily)

THE HOLY SPIRIT (HE) IS OUR:

A. John 14:16-18- our companion

1. Comforter- The "one who comes alongside" Suppose you are driving down a road and come to a tree that has fallen across it. The tree is large enough that even though you try you cannot move it. You're stuck! Then another car comes along and the driver helps you move the tree so you can continue on your way. That driver would be the one who came alongside and helped you. That is just what the Holy Spirit does! As we encounter "unmovable objects" in our spiritual lives we have a helper in the Holy Spirit that helps us in many different ways.

2. Another- the Greek Word means "one just like ". Jesus told his disciples that the Holy Spirit being sent to them was just like Him!!!

B. John 16:7-8- our conviction

1. Sin- the Word means that "we miss the mark of God." It's like an archer who shoots at a target, but the arrow falls short. (ROM.3:23)

2. Righteousness- this refers to rightness or holiness. Doing what is the right thing is always a choice.

3. Judgement- At the end of time all will be judged, either for refusing Christ in salvation, or for the rewards of the believer.

C. John 14:26- our teacher

1. Teach- basically, the Holy Spirit will do everything spiritually that an educational teacher would do for us intellectually.
2. Bring to remembrance- to cause you to bring to mind.

For example: Suppose you are trying to minister to a friend who may be going through grief. You know the sufficient grace of God that situation because you went through it yourself. The Spirit of God will bring to mind what you need at the time you need it. You can pass on truth for your friend because the Spirit has made that truth real to you in practice.

3. All- every part of the whole thing! Would you want to order a pizza and only get 3/4 of it? Of course not! The Holy Spirit shares it all as you need it.

D. John 15:26-27- our witness

1. Truth- a verified accuracy. It refers to an accountant term, a balancing to the penny the very words, works, and activity of Christ through our lives.
2. Testify- it means to be a witness, to give evidence of! When someone is a witness in a courtroom they are told to “tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.” You will never be led away from truth and you can count on the Spirit’s leading in that particular matter.
3. Bear witness- same word as testify. It ‘means to bring evidence forward. Any one of us has the opportunity to bear witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ. Have you ever felt you needed to share but we’re afraid? Or you did not feel you knew enough? Or you were embarrassed by what someone else might think? The Holy Spirit will show you and teach you what, when, where, and how you should witness. This is the joy of Christ in our lives.

E. John 16:13-14- our guide

1. To guide- it means “to lead the way, or show the path.” Have you ever felt prompted by the Spirit to do something for someone else? One cold November morning I was hurrying to an appointment that I had to counsel someone. As I drove to my destination, I passed a young man holding a sign. The sign said “we buy gold.” He was working by holding this sign. It was cold and it looked like he was freezing. A voice in my heart said to stop and get him a cup of coffee and take it back to him. I argued that I did not have time, that he spoke another language, or that he might not like coffee. I finally stopped anyway. I took him the coffee and told him that Jesus loved him. I have not seen him since then but I knew that at least one time I had observed the guidance of the spirit.
2. Glorify- to bring honor to Jesus and to the Kingdom of God.

LET ME MAKE THIS STATEMENT PERFECTLY CLEAR FOR ALL OF US!!!

“If Jesus is not being glorified, then the activity or attitude is not from God, no matter how good it looks or sounds!

SINCE THE Scripture teaches us these truths about the Spirit, then I am faced with another question:

III. HOW IS IT POSSIBLE FOR ME TO LISTEN TO THE HOLY SPIRIT?

Listen to this verse of Scripture. (I Thess. 5:23) “Now May the God of peace sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I have an imaginary drawing for you to see tonight. You may want to actually draw this on your notes somewhere. It is a rectangle divided into three equal parts. The first box is labeled “Spirit.”

The middle section is labeled “soul.” The final part is labeled “body.” Every time you make a decision you face this scene in your life. Let’s say you are needing a new vehicle.

(Now you may think that God is not really interested in that sort of thing. BUT HE IS!)

- you are a child of the king
- You are fearfully and wonderfully made
- You are worth something to God Because Jesus paid the price of His blood for your salvation

As you shop for this vehicle, you notice the vehicles of some of your friends. They are new. They look good! You begin to want something like they have. Your “body” which is your physical senses tells you how good you would look with that car, how many people would be your friends, etc.

I THINK I WILL GET THAT CAR!!!!

BUT, something else is happening within. That car is way above your price range. The “spirit” is telling you something different about this decision. Vehicles are not eternal. The biblical principles concerning finances come to your mind and heart. HOW WILL YOU RESPOND? That middle triangle is your “soul” that contains your will your soul must decide. If you are learning to listen to the Spirit of God, then your will chooses to follow the Spirit’s leadership. You choose a lesser priced, more practical vehicle and you have a peace within.

It takes choices.

It takes practice.

It takes a spiritual commitment.

Five principles of listening to the spirit

1. Your life testifies of your faith!

2. Your testimony becomes stronger as you learn to listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit. (Phillip was chosen as a deacon because his life was filled with the spirit)
3. Your circumstances do not defeat you. You will have learned that what the Spirit says can be trusted. (Phillip was among the persecuted of the church but still preached Jesus)
4. Surrender is more important than success. Success can keep you from listening to the Spirit as He speaks and directs. You stop depending on the Spirit and look at your own ability instead. (Phillip could have argued with the Spirit based on his effectiveness where he currently served.)
5. Availability is beyond ability. Staying available means that you may quickly obey the Spirit's voice. (Nothing hindered Phillip)
6. Keep an attitude of gratitude for the joy of being a usable vessel. (Did Phillip know this man would be the catalyst for the gospel in an entire nation? We do not know but he was readily usable)

CONCLUSION:

Tonight we have shared about all the Holy Spirit wants to do in our lives!

-would you consider Breaking through to a fresh walk in the spirit (not just emotions, but life change)

-would you examine your own heart and see if your desire is to please the Master?

-maybe tonight you are being touched by the Spirit and convicted of sin- **YOU NEED TO REPENT AND BECOME A BELIEVER**

You are being touched and convicted of righteousness- YOU NEED TO BE FORGIVEN FOR A BESETTING SIN THAT YOU CANNOT BREAK, OR HABIT THAT IS DISPLEASING TO GOD.

You may need to publicly follow the Lord in baptism, or become a part of this faith family.