

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus the Christ. Amen.

On Tuesday mornings, I sit with a group of people who are firm believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. All of them have an unshakable staunch belief that God is real, and that God's word is truth. Their faith in Jesus Christ is unquestionable. Each of them has a story to tell, a brief testimony of their experiences with God. We learn and grow as we study the word of God together and listen to each other's God-given wisdom. It is thrilling indeed to hear of God's work in their lives, yes the work of the Person whom the Bible calls the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is a Person. Every week in this church we have a Gospel reading. If it were not for the Holy Spirit, there would be no Gospel. The work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of the Gospel writers brought to mind the truth preserved in the Gospel. **John 14:26(NLT)** *"<sup>26</sup>But when the Father sends the Advocate as my representative—that is, the Holy Spirit—he will teach you everything and will remind you of everything I have told you."* Jesus also said this to the disciples, **John 16:12-14(NLT)** *<sup>12</sup>"There is so much more I want to tell you, but you can't bear it now. <sup>13</sup>When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own but will tell you what he has heard. He will tell you about the future. <sup>14</sup>He will bring me glory by telling you whatever he receives from me."* One of the surest ways to experience the Person of the Holy Spirit in your life is to hear the Gospel through the Gospel writers for it was the Holy Spirit who inspired every word of it. The Gospel was birthed by the Holy Spirit so you and I can be born of God, born anew, saved by God's grace through faith. The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation for all who believe (Rom 1:16). It is because of the Person we know as the Holy Spirit that there is the Gospel. 1. *The Holy Spirit empowers the Gospel message to make you alive in Christ and keep you alive in Christ.*

Without the work of the Holy Spirit there would be no faith. It is the Holy Spirit working inside of you that births faith, that regenerates your soul, causing you to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, accepting the Gospel as truth. This is all a work of the Holy Spirit personalizing

inside of you the work that Jesus did for you on the cross. The Holy Spirit brings to you the grace of God that saves you. If it were not for the work of the Holy Spirit, you would not believe in Christ and you would be lost for all eternity. Faith to believe and trust in Christ to save you is all a work of the Holy Spirit inside of you.

If it were not for the work of the Holy Spirit, there would be no Christianity. As sinful human beings on our own the only choice we would ever make is to reject the claims of Christ. Our old human nature that we are born with has no desire for God, hates God, and is at enmity with God. The Holy Spirit changes all of that inside of us causing us to accept the truth that Jesus is the only way, truth and life, the only way to the Father, and that there is salvation in no one else. Spiritual truths as such can only be revealed by the Holy Spirit. Our natural minds without the help of the Holy Spirit will only reject those spiritual truths found in the Scripture. *“Those without the Holy Spirit do not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to them, and cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned”* (NIV 1 Cor 12:14). The New Living Translation states it this way,

**1 Corinthians 2:14(NLT)** *“<sup>14</sup>But people who aren’t Christians can’t understand these truths from God’s Spirit. It all sounds foolish to them and they can’t understand it, for only those who have the [Holy] Spirit can understand what the Spirit means.”*

2. *Without the Person and work of the Holy Spirit there would be no Gospel, no Christian faith, no Christianity, and no church.* Yes, today we celebrate the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, sent by Jesus, birthing the church. The church will be here until the day of Jesus Christ and the gates of hell will not prevail against it (Matthew 16:18). (Taken from J.I. Packer, Knowing God, pg. 61).

We are first introduced to the person the Bible calls the Holy Spirit in the 2<sup>nd</sup> verse of Genesis. **Genesis 1:2(NLT)** *<sup>2</sup>The earth was formless and empty, and darkness covered the deep waters. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters.* Yes, the very

creation at this early point was in utter chaos, formless, empty, and dark. 3. *The transforming power of the Holy Spirit brought order out of chaos and brought light into darkness at the creation.*

There is a person who sneaks into my office and puts order to my desk. I leave it in utter chaos. After this nameless person enters my office everything is placed neatly and in order. I honestly do not know how the person does it, bringing order out of chaos. As believers in Christ, it can seem as if our entire lives are in chaos. And then the Holy Spirit broods over us, hovers over us, and works inside our messy lives bringing order out of chaos. Anxiety is turned into peace. Turmoil is turned into calmness, hatred into love, grudges are forgiven, and relationships are restored. The transforming power of the Holy Spirit is very real my friends and has been so since the very creation itself.

So, who exactly is the Holy Spirit? I am glad you asked. 4. *The Holy Spirit is God,* coequal with the Father and the Son. **2 Corinthians 3:17(NLT)** <sup>17</sup>For the Lord is the Spirit, and wherever the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. Jesus giving to us the baptismal formula “*baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit*” (Matthew 28:19). At the baptism of Jesus, you have the entire Godhead. The Father spoke from heaven, Jesus was in the river and the Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus. We may hear more about this next week on Trinity Sunday.

The Holy Spirit and the Spirit of Jesus are used interchangeably in the Bible and are one in the same. **Romans 8:9(NLT)** <sup>9</sup>*But you are not controlled by your sinful nature. You are controlled by the Spirit if you have the Spirit of God living in you. (And remember that those who do not have the Spirit of Christ living in them do not belong to him at all.)*

4. The Holy Spirit is called by Jesus the Comforter or Counselor or Helper. The New American Standard states “*I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever, that is the Spirit of truth*” (John 14:16-17a). Dr. J.I. Packer expands on

this explaining that the Holy Spirit provides, encouragement, support, assistance, care, and shoulders responsibility for another's welfare (Knowing God pg. 58). Those of you who are responsible for the care of others are never alone for the Holy Spirit is right there as your Helper to assist you in the care of others.

The Holy Spirit is God's down payment, God's earnest payment for your gift of salvation.

**Ephesians 1:13b-14(NLT)** *"And when you believed in Christ, He identified you as His own by giving you the Holy Spirit, whom He promised long ago. <sup>14</sup>The Spirit is God's guarantee [down payment, earnest payment] that He will give us the inheritance He promised and that He has purchased us to be his own people. He did this so we would praise and glorify Him "*

Now that we know who the Holy Spirit is, what does the Holy Spirit do? **John**

**16:14(NLT)** <sup>14</sup>He will bring me glory by telling you whatever he receives from me. The primary work of the Holy Spirit is to glorify Jesus. Jesus came to reveal the Father and the Holy Spirit reveals Jesus to us.

The Holy Spirit empowers us. In Acts chapter 2 the Holy Spirit empowers Peter to preach, and 3000 persons were saved. The Holy Spirit empower us.

The Holy Spirit helps us to pray. **Romans 8:26-27(NLT)** <sup>26</sup>*And the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness. For example, we don't know what God wants us to pray for. But the Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words. <sup>27</sup>And the Father who knows all hearts knows what the Spirit is saying, for the Spirit pleads for us believers in harmony with God's own will.*

Several weeks ago, I felt led to pray for a person who has not been here in church for quite some time. For three weeks the Spirit placed this person on my heart to lift in prayer. Do you know what. On Thursday I texted this person and told him I was praying for him. Within seconds he invited me into his home. He just had open heart surgery and desires personal

prayer. I had no idea, but the Holy Spirit knew it. The Holy Spirit gives us inner promptings to pray for people and yes, please obey those promptings. The Holy Spirit helps us to pray.

The Holy Spirit convicts us of our sin. **John 16:8(NLT)** <sup>8</sup>And when [the Holy Spirit] He comes, He will convict the world of its sin, and of God's righteousness, and of the coming judgment. The Holy Spirit takes the Word of God and shows us where we fall short. The Holy Spirit will bring the right people into our lives at the right time to call us on the carpet, to name our sin so that we will repent and experience a time of renewal and refreshment in God. The Holy Spirit convicts us of our sin.

The Holy Spirit gives to us the abundant life. Yes, Jesus came that we might have life and life in abundance (John 10:10). In Ephesians we read as Christians we have been blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places. The Holy Spirit instructs us, teaches us, reveals to us the riches we have in Christ. We are abundantly blessed, and it takes the work of the Holy Spirit inside of us to see and know the blessings. It is the constant work of the Holy Spirit that moves us to be thankful to God that we are blessed abundantly.

The Holy Spirit motivates us and helps us share our faith. **Acts 1:8(NLT)** <sup>8</sup>But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” Those of you who do prison ministry do so because you have been motivated by the Holy Spirit to do so. You can no longer remain silent about your Christian faith. The Good News has to come out of you for the Holy Spirit is helping you, encouraging you, prompting you to do so. I would also ask all of us that if we know of a person or family that you have not seen for quite some time in church, to reach out to them out of a heart filled with God's love. It is called caring for others and it is the Holy Spirit that gives to us a heart of compassion and love to show that heartfelt concern for the welfare of others. Invite them back.

The Holy Spirit produces within each believer the character qualities of Jesus Christ called the fruit of the Spirit. **Galatians 5:22(NIV)** <sup>22</sup>But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness, and self-control. These are qualities the Holy Spirit will never stop working on within you until Jesus comes again or the Lord takes you home, whichever comes first.

The Holy Spirit is the giver of gifts and gives to every Christian at least one and often more than one spiritual gift. The Bible mentions at least 27 spiritual gifts. Many of you took a spiritual gifts test during Lent. They are special qualities, talents, abilities, given by the Holy Spirit to build up and edify the church. Churches thrive when the believers put their spiritual gifts to use and no longer just sit on them. One day we will give an account to God for how we put these gifts to use to the glory of God.

I am asking all of us to pray daily to be filled with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit personalizes and gives meaning to every work that Jesus has done for us. Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross, rose the from dead, and ascended into heaven. The Holy Spirit glories in bringing glory to Christ. The Holy Spirit personalizes in your life every word that God has given to us. The Holy Spirit brings to life the Gospel, the good news of Jesus that saves us and sustains us. The Holy Spirit is God with us and in us forever. The Holy Spirit lives inside of every Christian, bringing order out of chaos, blessing us so much that He even gives us a taste of heaven from time to time. Amen and Amen.