

Topic	The Work of the Holy Spirit
Reference	John 16;1-15
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The topic of Holy Spirit is a very sensitive topic. Different denominations have different beliefs regarding it. J Lee Grady is an editor of the Charisma Magazine which is a charismatic magazine and he actually looked at this whole issue and there are couple of points which he pointed out recently.

5 ways in which we quench the Holy Spirit

- Ignore the Holy Spirit. We act as if it is not there. We intellectualize Him.
- We limit the gifts of the Holy Spirit and say that there are no more gifts. They don't continue.
- We misuse or abuse the gifts of the Holy Spirit. We pretend to be prophets while we are not.
- We misrepresent the Holy Spirit.
- Wrong focus on second baptism.

There are three points that I want to highlight today.

- A. He brings the presence and power of Jesus into our lives
- B. He convinces us of the truth about ourselves
- C. He opens our hearts to the transforming glory of Jesus

A. HE BRINGS THE PRESENCE AND POWER OF JESUS INTO OUR LIVES

John 16:4-7 (ESV) I did not say these things to you from the beginning, because I was with you. 5 But now I am going to him who sent me, and none of you asks me, 'Where are you going?' 6 But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. 7 Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: 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**.

First thing to notice is that the Holy Spirit is a person. Some people have this idea that being filled with the Holy Spirit is like a filling a Coca Cola can, having some sort of fluid that comes into you, it is like a power and there are actually some denominations that think that. If you look at the Jehovah's Witnesses. They believe the Holy Spirit is the force of God, a controlled force emanating

from Jehovah like electricity. Unitarian church and the Oneness Pentecostal church, they believe God exist in three modes, like water; solid, liquid and gas. God morphs into different kinds, but he is a force. A force which you can manipulate perhaps at the right time. So, you can achieve healing or maybe find parking. So that's an abuse. Let's look at verses 13-15, very clearly you can see the pronoun,

John 16:13-15 (ESV) When the Spirit of truth comes, **he** will guide you into all the truth, **for he** 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. 14 **He** will glorify me, for **he** will take what is mine and declare it to you.

The Holy Spirit is a person. The second thing we look down here is that Jesus is telling them,

John 16:7 ...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.

Looking at this context three of the greatest works of God are basically:

- creation,
- the incarnation
- and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Then Jesus says these words, if I go away. It gives that kind of impression as if Jesus and the Holy Spirit can't be at the same place at the same time. When Jesus says, if I go away, it actually means three things are going to happen. If I go away He is going to the cross, he is going to be resurrected and he is going to be exalted. And when those three things are completed then the Holy Spirit will be dispensed and he starts the new covenant.

The Holy Spirit therefore creates new people from spiritual death. Before men were divided by sin and language, now they are united by one spirit, one message (the gospel). And the power unleashed by the Holy Spirit multiplies the power of Jesus Christ.

John 14:12-14 (ESV) Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; **and greater works** than these will he do, **because I am going to the Father**. 13 **Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do**, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. 14 **If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it**.

So here we have the Holy Spirit coming in and Jesus is going to the father and he would be at the right hand of the father, interceding on our behalf and the spirit

comes and emanates his presence with us. When Jesus pushes us off into the Great Commission, he says

Matthew 28:18-20 (ESV) And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, **I am with you always**, to the end of the age."

How is Jesus with us?

He is with us through this power and presence of the spirit.

Acts 2:37 (ESV) Now when they heard this they were **cut to the heart**, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?"

Acts 2:41 (ESV) So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day **about three thousand souls**.

Compare this to the miracle of feeding of 5000 men plus the spouses, maybe 20,000 people had a free meal. At the end of it,

John 6:66-67 (ESV) After this **many of his disciples turned back** and no longer walked with him. 67 So Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you want to go away as well?"

It was a difficult time. When Jesus went to the cross, resurrected, exalted, the power is unleashed and power is the power that resides with the church and you can see the spread of Christianity. Within 350 years and it almost captured the whole of the Roman Empire and is spreading today even in Asia. In China where they try to kick out missionaries since late 1950s, cultural revolution and yet they are set to the country with the most number of Christians in 15 years' time. That's not very far away, by the power of the Holy Spirit.

B. HE CONVINCES US OF THE TRUTH ABOUT OURSELVES

We are a stubborn people.

2 Corinthians 4:4 In their case the god of this world has **blinded the minds of the unbelievers**,

Romans 1:21-22 ...**futile in their thinking**, and their foolish hearts were **darkened**.
22 Claiming to be wise, they became **fools**,

You can see this in many of the Christiana or non-Christians spouses that we have perhaps, they are not wanting to listen to the Word of God. Khairy Jamaluddin belong to the last government which have ruled this country for 61 years and he said these words

"What happened was we became delusional; we got drunk on our own Kool-Aid and we got carried away," "Was there a signal? Yes, there were clear signals but we became oblivious to the signals."

The whole problem is that they can't see the truth. We live in a world of illusion and often illusion resides within ourselves. That's why we have all sorts of controversies. The Holy Spirit comes and brings truth to us. He convicts us of truth. The spirit is called the spirit of truth. In John 14, 15 and 16, always the spirit is associated with the declaration of truth.

John 16:8-11 (ESV) And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: 9 concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; 10 concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer; 11 concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.

Let's take these three points aside and then we can see there are three key convictions or exposures:

- Concerning sin,
- Concerning righteousness
- Concerning judgement

So it is concerning guilt, helplessness and their destiny. The reason is down here:

Concerning sin, because they don't believe in me.

Here the real essence of sin is unbelief, a refusal to accept Jesus as sent by God. We all deal with guilt and Susan Whitbourn is a professor from University of Massachusetts. She talks about five kinds of guilt that we actually have. We always struggle with:

- Something you did
- Something you didn't do
- Something you think you did.
- Something that that you didn't do enough of to help someone
- Something that you're doing better at than someone else

So in essence you are guilty about everything. William Brietbart works in Memorial Sloan-Kettering with dying patients and dying patients deal a lot with guilt and he writes

Existential guilt refers specifically to the concept that each of us has the (challenging, if not impossible) task of creating a life, a life that is unique to ourselves—a life that only we could have lived. And we need to and aspire to live this unique life to its fullest potential. Clinically, I see existential guilt manifest as either depression, shame, anger, or intense death anxiety

All of us struggle with the kind of guilt. For example, Albert Einstein's last words on his death bed were "if only I knew more mathematics". Two time Oscar winner, Jodie Foster was asked the question, do you think you are a failure? She said

"Oh yeah," she said. "Oh my God, yeah. If Mother Teresa is propelled to do good works because she believes in God, I am propelled to do good works because of how bad I feel about myself. It's the first place I go. 'Oh, what did I do wrong?'"

We are plagued by this.

"the world's deepest misery and lostness [do] not consist in its moral imperfection but in its estrangement from God and its refusal to allow itself to be called out of that condition by the one whom God has sent for that purpose."

So therefore in the first actual sermon by Peter. It says,

Acts 2:36-37 (ESV) 36 Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus **whom you crucified.**" 37 Now when they heard this they **were cut to the heart**, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?"

The guilt, the sin, the Holy Spirit does that.

John 16:10 (ESV) concerning **righteousness**, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer;

It is a little bit harder to understand. He is not talking about the usual righteousness which is conformity to God's standard or behavior but he is talking about righteousness in inverted commas, because what is righteousness got to do with Jesus going to the father. When Jesus was on earth, his main contention were with the pharisees. They have a kind of religious righteousness

and Jesus has always been calling them out on it and you can see that. It is religious righteousness. Jesus healed the lame man, 38 years lying down there and all the pharisees had to say, he can't carry the mat. They missed the fact that the poor man was saved from a life of paralysis for the last 38 years and then you have Jesus healed the blind man and all they were interested is proving that the man was never blind. Jesus healed a man with withered hand and right after that they started a plot to kill Jesus Christ.

Religious righteousness that man-made righteousness is terrible. Now that when Jesus is out of the situation, we have the Holy Spirit coming and doing the exact same thing. It happens all over the place. Mariam Mokhtar writes,

Religion is a vital component of any decent society, but when religion and politics are allowed to mix, sparks will fly. Religious leaders can help to act as the nation's conscience, by condemning violence and racism, but they should not be allowed to represent us in Parliament and pretend they are acting on behalf of God.

What about secular righteousness?

I am okay, I don't belong to any religion but I am a good family man, I don't drink, I don't smoke, I don't sleep with women, I care about the poor, I give my money away, I am hardworking and yet sometimes when you don't live up to your own set of laws, you will turn to alternative facts, fake news, truthful hyperbole or you blame others. We are never consistent. If you ask the psychologist, their idea is to eliminate guilt. For example,

- Don't be afraid to be yourself.
- "Be honest about yourself. If this is the kind of person you are, just accept yourself
- "This can be a growthful experience, a learning experience."
- "You need to improve your self-image."

They are treating the symptoms and not the underlying problem. That's what psychologist do. In fact, they give you a gratitude diary. You write down all the things you should be thankful for, because of how clever you are during the day and that really boost your self-esteem.

Apostle Peter in Luke chapter 5, Jesus actually got them to, they were fishing all night and couldn't catch anything and suddenly Jesus came and told them to through the net over the other side and suddenly they have a huge miracle of a bunch of fish, all caught and he realized that Jesus was a holy person

Luke 5:8 (ESV) But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord

Why he did that?

Because all of us like Peter like to pretend or perform, we lower God's standards and believe that we are actually complying to a standard of righteousness. So we actually have someone who is really God standing in front of you, you don't want to be near him, you run away, because you can't measure up and so therefore with your own resources and you run away.

Genesis 3:7 (ESV) Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they **sewed fig leaves** together and made themselves loincloths.

We have been sowing fig leaves from then until now. In fact Isaiah calls it even worse. He says,

Isaiah 64:6 We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like **a polluted garment**.

How do we deal with guilt?

We deal with guilt by turning back into ourselves. The same selves that committed the sin anyway to do more good works as it were. So therefore, we hang onto our polluted garment. We do good works, or we self-inflict suffering, or we become defensive or we retaliate, or we just deny it because we are hanging onto our menstrual cloth, because that is our righteousness. That's the problem with human righteousness. We can't apologize because if we apologize then our righteousness is dropped. Loss of self-esteem, people will criticize us, people will judge us, we don't want to join life groups because in life groups you share about your struggles, you share about your sin and you are naked as it were, and people don't like that.

For guilt and remorse we have two ways of sorting that problem. When the Holy Spirit comes in, it shows you your sin, you deal with it in two ways. One,

2 Corinthians 7:9-10 (ESV) As it is, I rejoice, not because you were grieved, but because you were **grieved into repenting**. For you felt a godly grief, so that you suffered no loss through us. 10 For **godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death**

There are two kinds of response to the fact that we have guilt and we have the fact that we cannot live up to our expectations. Judas turns inwards. When he realized that he betrayed Jesus Christ, he gives the 30 pieces of silver back. Not only that he felt so bad about it that he hangs himself, because he can't forgive himself, because he is always turning back inwards and reaching for that polluted garment which is basically his righteousness and there is none. The correct response is Peter's response. After Jesus was resurrected, he meets Peter, the Lord is like cooking some fish by the seaside. Peter runs towards Jesus. He realizes, look I have betrayed you three times and he runs towards Jesus. The very person whom he had betrayed. You wouldn't run towards a person whom you betrayed three times, you wouldn't want to show your face but he runs and that's what repentance is about.

The devil is always there to accuse you of your sin. And all you can see is your sin. So therefore you shrink back and ultimately you hang yourself as it were, but the Holy Spirit does two things, it shows you sin but it shows you Jesus. It is a binocular vision. So you are not hanging onto your polluted garment, because you are embarrassed by your sin and your lack of ability to live up to the very standards in which you hold, you actually have a solution. The Holy Spirit strips you bare on the other part of the binocular you see the beauty of Jesus Christ and so therefore you run to Jesus because you are not hanging onto your polluted garment anymore.

11 concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged

The ruler of this world is dying, he has been judged and he is finished.

C. HE OPENS OUR HEARTS TO THE TRANSFORMING GLORY OF JESUS

The people who have experienced the glory of Jesus in the Book of John; Samaritan woman. Nobody will speak to her, but he did and the life was transformed. The man who was invalid for 38 years, Jesus told him to go and sin no more. His life was transformed. Man who was born blind, worshipped Jesus. His life was transformed. Why? Because they experienced the glory of Jesus.

John 16:12-1 (ESV) 12 "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. 13 When the Spirit of truth comes, **he will guide you into all the truth**, for he 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**. He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. 15 All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

So the whole issue is that the spirit brings glory by revelation. There is a consistency of message. In fact if you look back into chapter 5

John 5:19 (ESV) So Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise.

So Jesus doesn't come with a different message from the father, the spirit doesn't come with a different message from Jesus. They all come, if you have Jesus, you have seen God. If you have seen the work of the Holy Spirit in your life, you have seen Jesus.

John 1:18 (ESV) 18 No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.

So therefore, what does Jesus do?

The spirit's revelation is about Jesus and it glorifies Jesus Christ. The spirit doesn't highlight himself. If you are going to a church where they are always highlighting the Holy Spirit and there is hardly anything about Jesus that is wrong. The spirit's job is to highlight Jesus, to make Jesus look good as it were. Why does he do that? Because Jesus died for you and rose for you and is exalted for you.

2 Corinthians 3:15-18 (ESV) Yes, to this day whenever Moses is read a veil lies over their hearts. 16 But when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed. 17 Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. 18 And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

Paul is taking the metaphor of Moses. When Moses went into the tabernacle, it was the glory of God. When he came out, his face was shining, and he had to actually wear a veil and when Paul preach in the synagogues many of the people's faces were veiled. Whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their hearts. They refuse to accept God but when one turns to the Lord the veil is removed. We are not like Moses, we actually can see the glory of God when God opens his glory to us by looking at the glory of the Lord, we are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. So therefore, Christian growth, Christian change comes about by looking at the beauty and the glory of

God. It doesn't come by trying harder. It comes by sitting and wondering and being engulfed by the beauty of God.

Ephesians talks about being filled with the spirit. Being filled with the spirit is like being drunk. The similarities are that you are bold and you are happy.

The Holy Spirit actually lets you see more of reality and this is a story told out of 2 Kings of Elisha,

2 Kings 6:15-16 (ESV) When the servant of the man of God rose early in the morning and went out, behold, an army with horses and chariots was all around the city. And the servant said, "**Alas, my master! What shall we do?**" 16 He said, "**Do not be afraid, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them**

This is the servant of Elisha, he wakes up in the morning and he sees a whole bunch of army, he thought they are finished, we don't even have an army, but Elisha says, it is okay those who are with us are greater than those who are out there. Elisha prayed

2 Kings 6:17 (ESV) Then Elisha prayed and said, "**O Lord, please open his eyes that he may see.**" So the Lord opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw, and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

So, did the horses appear at that moment, they didn't. They were there up all the time. He couldn't see and what being filled with the spirit is being more aware of spiritual reality which we otherwise cannot see. So, when the Holy Spirit comes in, it opens your eyes to the truth and when he sees my guys are more than their guys, wow! He gets excited. That's where you get boldness and that's where you get happiness. When you can see spiritual reality. So, the Holy Spirit comes in and opens up spiritual realities in your life, perhaps you are struggling with ethical problems with work or with family. If you actually have the Holy Spirit open your eyes, you will see that behind is the power of the Lord and all you have to do is to trust. This is Galatian which tells us that we see by hearing with faith. A lot of people believe the Holy Spirit comes in, it is like you stand up here and I am going to put my hand on you and you are going to feel electricity and you grow 2 feet taller. The Holy Spirit doesn't work that way. This is what Galatians says,

Galatians 3:5-6 (ESV) Does he who supplies the Spirit to you and **works miracles among you** do so by works of the law, or by **hearing with faith**— 6 just as Abraham "**believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness**"?

So therefore, we actually see the glory of God by hearing the word of God being preached in red. That's how we actually see. So, the spirit works through the word of God. So, when we actually have the love of Jesus, it will overcome rejection, poverty and difficulty. When we see the glory of God, we will overcome our temptations to materialism and greed and selfishness because God has so filled us that we don't have to cheat anymore. We don't have to lie anymore. We don't have to manipulate anymore because we actually see spiritual reality. It is a fact that we actually lie and cheat simply because we can't see it. We are like Elisha's servant, all the bunch of enemies out there and I got nothing. We got no resources. The Holy Spirit opens up the resources when we read the word of God and when we read it, it gives us the faith. Holy Spirit opens up to the power of God. It overwhelms us, so that the fear, the anxiety, the weakness goes away or if we are down the Holy Spirit shows us the grace of God and it basically overwhelms the condemnation, low self-esteem or feeling useless. What it does is that the Holy Spirit takes all the concepts which you read in the Bible. The love of God, the grace of God, the wisdom of God and it becomes heartfelt realities but without the word of God you have nothing for you to hear and feed on.

So, when you take God's word and read it the spirit pounds it from here into here, it becomes reality.

In the early 1970s in Sarawak, Malaysia, there is a book written and it is about the Kelabit people and they have been praying for years for these tribes over there. In early 1970s they actually had this gentleman from Indonesia come and preach. His name was Dr Peterus Octaviannus and he preached the Word of God really powerfully through a crusade and then this happened. Let me read it you from the book,

That evening we gathered for our regular service in the school but by this time there was a bigger number of students present. The spontaneous singing session led on to prayer time. It was then when we felt presence of the Holy Spirit moving like a mighty flood sweeping over everyone present. Many were on the cold wooden floor praying and wailing. Some cried to God for forgiveness and mercy for their sins. Others pleaded for more of God in their lives. Still others beseeched God for His sovereign visitation upon their relatives and loved ones. The sight was of a mass of people struck down by some mighty force...

Everyone seemed completely immersed in the presence of God, oblivious to any other soul. There were no dry eyes. Indeed, God's love had filled the hearts of every person present that evening.

Here you have the love of God, the word of God coming in and then when it is read and it is preached the Holy Spirit comes. It is a dramatic way. God moves in waves but God also moves in church every single day and two things he will do. He will actually expose us to our sin and show us his glory that we may grasp his glory and be saved.