

~Other Speakers G-L: Denis Lyle:

Reading: John 14:1-17

1. A FRIEND... INSIDE YOU!

A preacher was about to deliver a carefully prepared message when there came to him the conviction that it was not appropriate to the group of people before him. He reluctantly abandoned his notes, and seeking the Holy Spirit's guidance, decided to read John chapter fourteen. As he read, he was alert to discern the message for the occasion. Nor was he disappointed. On reaching verse seven, three words gripped his attention

"Ye know Him", referring to God the Father. He read two more verses, and a second clause stood out, "Hast thou not known Me", referring to God the Son. When he reached verse seventeen, a third sentence arrested him, "But ye know Him", referring to God the Holy Spirit. These words struck him with tremendous force. Did he really know Him "I know God the Father", he mused, "and have experienced much of His paternal love and care. I know God the Son, for is He not my Saviour with whom I daily commune But I cannot say that I know the Holy Spirit in any comparable and personal way."

This experience of this preacher led him to a more comprehensive study of the Scriptures relating to the ministry of the Holy Spirit, and resulted in the personal knowledge of Him which had been previously lacking. Our subject for this autumn session is "THE HOLY SPIRIT AND YOU."

1. WHY SHOULD WE LOOK AT THIS SUBJECT

For a number of reasons. The first we have hinted at already.

a. IT IS FREQUENTLY NEGLECTED:

For too long this doctrine has been the Cinderella of theology. In the history of the church long controversies have raged around the Deity of Christ, the Trinity but shorter around the Holy Spirit. In 1660 Thomas Goodwin commenced his work on the Holy Spirit with these words, "There is a general omission in the saints of God in their not giving the Holy Spirit that glory that is due to His person and for His great work of salvation in us, insomuch that we have in our hearts almost forgotten this third person". The Holy Spirit has been called, "The neglected member of the Godhead". He has been described as "The displaced person of the Godhead," for the simple reason that in much of our teaching so little reference is made to Him. Consequently we are ignorant of His person and work.

Perhaps many of us are in the same position as the twelve men at Ephesus who said "We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost". Acts 19:2

No wonder there so little power and authority in our churches today for as G. Smeaton has said, "The doctrine of the Spirit is almost entirely ignored". 1.

2. IT IS SCRIPTURALLY BASED:

Right now we are living in the day of the Holy Spirit. To some extent, the Old Testament was the age of the Father. The New Testament was the age of the Son, and from the days of the apostles until now we are in the age of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is referred to some 90 times in the Old Testament, some 260 times in the New Testament. In our day prominence is given to "church work, social work, mission work, our work", but the apostles knew only one kind of work, "The Spirit's work", that's why the Acts of the Apostles is saturated with the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. Indeed it has often been referred to as "The Acts of the Holy Spirit". So this subject is (a) (b)

3. IT IS CURRENTLY EMPHASISED:

In our day we are witnessing a current revival of Pentecostalism. In such an emotionally starved atmosphere, experience-oriented religion has become very popular. Vinson Synan, dean of divinity at Regent University in the USA says, "Pentecostalism matches most people's genuine belief in the supernatural. It fills a hunger for the miraculous that transcends anything intellectual. One Charismatic leader said, "Personal experience is what Pentecostalism is all about". Now traditional Pentecostals have always been a strong force inside Protestantism. Traditional Pentecostals have always had a great zeal for evangelism, they exalt Christ, preach the blood, love the Bible, and we've had fellowship with many of these dear saints down through the years, but many within this grouping have shunned the Charismatic Movement because of that movement's involvement with the Roman Catholic system. Now our study is going to show where we differ doctrinally from traditional

Pentecostals, and its going to bring the Charismatic Movement under the scrutiny of God's Word.

Charismatics are all love, that is until you tramp on their toes. Some years ago I did a series entitled, "Charismatic Confusion", shortly after the series had finished I was attacked by a House Church in Belfast. Charismatics feel they have the freedom to propound fantastic views while imposing a code of silence of those who differ. Those who do speak out are branded as divisive, strident and unloving. This is ironic when you listen to these comments by Charismatic Benny Hinn, "Somebody's attacking me, because of something I'm teaching. Let me tell you something, brother: You watch it You know, I've looked for one verse in the Bible. I just can't seem to find it. One verse that said, "If you don't like them kill them". I really wish I could find it... You stink, frankly,... thats the way I think about it! ... Sometimes I wish God will give me a Holy Ghost machine gun, I'll blow your head off."

My, it is not unkind to examine doctrinal differences in the light of Scripture! It is not unkind to expose false teaching and unbiblical behaviour.

Indeed in these "last days", we should earnestly contend for the faith which once was delivered to the saints." (Jude 3 1 Tim 1:20 2 Tim 2:17) Our criteria as always is not to be someone's experience, but the unchanging Word of God. (a) (b) (c)

(d) IT IS PRACTICALLY NEEDED:

Some years ago in Cowes harbour in the south coast of England there was a magnificent flying machine called a Princess Flyingboat. It was a picture of aeronautical engineering achievement. Unfortunately, it had one deficiency, the engines were not powerful enough to life the plane off the water for a sustained flight. The Princess Flyingboat for all its promise, never went into service. How like so many of our churches My, we have all the outward paraphernalia, business efficiency, orthodox theology, pious platitudes, but we are grounded due to lack of spiritual power. My, I need to hear afresh what the Word of God has to say about the Holy Spirit and His ministries and I want to help other believers to escape from the shifting sands of subjectivism onto the solid rock of God's Word. (1)

(2) HOW SHOULD WE STUDY THIS SUBJECT

What is to be our attitude Well, we are to seek:

a. GUIDANCE Through the Holy Scriptures:

We live in an age which has largely abandoned intelligence for sensation, sense for nonsense. Glowing experienced centred testimonies are one thing, but what we really need to hear is the authentic Word of the Spirit through Scripture. Do you recall what was said of the Bereans, "they searched the Scriptures daily whether those things were so". Acts 17:11 My, what I feel may be as passing as the morning dew, but what I read and know to be the Word of God is as secure and stable as the Eternal Lord Himself. (a)

(b) DEPENDENCE on the Holy Spirit:

May we be saved from studying this truth without the aid of the Spirit of God Himself. 1 Cor 2:9

Do you know that hymn that is very popular Its called

" My forever Friend", I detest it. I think its sentimental nonsense! This ... however I want to talk to you about A FRIEND... INSIDE YOU! Wouldn't it be helpful in the Christian life if you had someone who could guide you What if that someone who guides you could also be your friend Even better The Lord Jesus walked with his disciples in the land of Israel for about three and a half years. He was constantly with them, if you had asked any of those disciples, who is your best friend, I think they would have said, " the Lord Jesus is my best friend". But now Christ is leaving them! In a few hours He would die on the cross! In a few days He would return to His Father! Have you ever had the experience of a good friend moving away We can only imagine how it must have been for these disciples who had been with the Lord for so long! But into that uncertain atmosphere, Christ made a promise to his disciples. Look at (Jn 14:16)

Now in three chapters of John's gospel (14,15, and 16) the Lord Jesus made 4 references to " the Comforter". Four times in three chapters, He promised them He would send another Comforter after He left. Now the Greek word for "Comforter", is paracletos, which is really two Greek words put together. It is the word kaleo which means "to call", and para which means

" alongside of". Put the two together and you get our English word paraclete. A paraclete is one who is called alongside to help. You see, the Holy Spirit within the disciples would take the place of the Saviour beside the disciples! The Holy Spirit is the Paraclete, the Comforter, the Helper! The word "comforter", is found only one time in the entire Greek version of the Old Testament. Do you recall Job's agonies and afflictions His friends came to him, but instead of comforting him they only increased his despair. Job said to them, "Miserable comforters are you all".

(Job 16:2) They were supposed to be friends to him... they were to be comforters to him ... and yet they became "miserable comforters."

What is a friend A friend is someone who does not go on a diet when you're fat. A friend is someone who comes in when all the world walks out! A friend is someone who knows all there is to know about you... but loves you just the same. My ... we have a Comforter, a Helper, a Friend and this friend who lives inside us is the Holy Spirit!

(1) THE HOLY SPIRIT IS A DEFINITE PERSON

You are a person. I am a person. The Lord Jesus is a person. The Comforter, the Holy Spirit is a definite person. Sometimes people refer to the Holy Spirit as " it", but that is inaccurate and unbiblical. The Holy Spirit is not some kind of influence as the Unitarians and the Jehovah's Witness's proclaim. The Bible teaches that the Holy Spirit is a definite person. He is not an " it". Look at:

(a) The Personal Pronouns that Enunciate Personality:

Look at (Jn 14:16-17) All these words are definite personal pronouns. Christ was referring to a real person. (16:7-15) My ... it is an insult to refer to any person as an "it". Suppose you are at the shopping centre with your little boy. Someone comes up and says, " Is that your son" "Yes, that's my boy", you reply! "Well, what a pretty little it you have there." Would you not be offended My, the Holy Spirit is not an " it". The Holy Spirit is a person. Do you see how Christ refers to the Spirit of God "Another Comforter". (16:16) In Greek there are two words for "other", the first means

allos... another of the same kind, the second is heteros, which means another of a different kind. When Christ speaks of "Another Comforter", He uses the word allos another of the same kind. In other words, the Holy Spirit is to be thought of as another like Christ. As Jesus Christ is a person so the Holy Spirit is a person. Do you grieve the Holy Spirit by referring to Him as " it", (a)

(b) The Essential Elements that Authenticate Personality:

You see, the Holy Spirit possesses all the essential, elements of personality. What are the elements of personality Well, we as persons can think, feel and act. In other words a person has intellect, emotion and will. Now in the Scriptures all of these attributes of personality are ascribed to the Spirit of God. The Holy Spirit has

1. INTELLIGENCE: An Ability to THINK:

The early church sought the mental ability of the Holy Spirit in making decisions. In the book of Acts the church was deliberating, praying, debating about a decision and then James said, "it seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us." (Acts 15:28) In other words, they sought the mind of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit has a mind, the Holy Spirit can make decisions, He can teach. He can think. He's a person. (1 Cor 2:10)

2. FEELING: An Ability to FEEL:

Paul talks about the love of the Spirit. (Rom 15:30) We are familiar with the Fathers love and Christ's love, but do you ever stop to think about the "love of the Spirit" Paul says, " And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God... "(Eph 4:30) My, can you grieve an influence Surely, you can only grieve a person, someone with whom you are intimate, someone who loves you! (1) (2)

3. WILL: An Ability to CHOOSE:

The Holy Spirit gives gifts to individual believers. There is quite a variety of gifts. Paul speaking of these gifts says, "But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will". (1 Cor 12:11) On his second missionary journey Paul wanted to go into Bithynia "but the Spirit suffered them not". (Acts 16:7)

So we have a friend the Holy Spirit who is a definite person, someone who is a friend to us just like Jesus Christ was to his disciples two thousand years ago.

Does this make any difference to us It makes a great difference. The Holy Spirit is a person, so that means when you receive Christ as your Saviour, the Holy Spirit as a person comes into your life! My, possessing the Spirit is not like buying a car through hire purchase. Now many think this! They tell us that you get a little of the Holy Spirit when you are saved. Then on down the road, you receive a little more of the Holy Spirit. Do you know what that is That's a violation of the teaching of the personality of the Holy Spirit! When you came into the building this... how did you come in

Did you stand at the door and say, "I think I'll put a leg in first". Then after a little while did you say, "I think I'll bring my head in next". No! When you enter a building, you enter in your totality. You are a person, and when you receive Christ as your Saviour, the Bible says the Holy Spirit of God enters your life in His totality. (Rom 8:9) He is a person ... a real definite person.

You see, if the Holy Spirit is just an IT, then the question becomes, "how can I get IT How can I use IT to do what I want to do" That appeals to pride. But if the Holy Spirit is a person, then the question is not how can I get IT, but how can He possess and control me. That causes humility! (1)

(2) THE HOLY SPIRIT IS A DIVINE PERSON

The Holy Spirit is God. Now most understand that the Father is God and that Jesus Christ is God, but many fail to understand the truth that the Holy Spirit is God.

Yet when you read the Bible, you find that:

(a) His DIFFERENT TASKS prove that He is God:

For the Holy Spirit executes tasks that are only possible to Deity! Think of the Holy Spirits role:

1. In the NATURAL CREATION:

At the beginning of our Bible's we read these words,

" And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters". (Gen 1:2) The Holy Spirit moved. It was He who made possible the beautiful world in which we live.

Job says, " By His (God's) Spirit He hath garnished the heavens". (Job 26:13) The beauty of the earth, the glory of the sky, the wonder of the oceans came into being as the result of the Spirit's activity!

2. In the NEW CREATION:

For Paul says, " If any man be in Christ he is a new creation". (2 Cor 5:17) The new birth is that act of God in which He bestows life on sinners who trust Christ! In physical birth there are two parents, in spiritual birth there are two parents... the Word of God and the Spirit of God. My, who can impart spiritual life but God alone (Jn 3:7)

(a)

(b) His Divine Attributes prove that He is God:

Now by attributes we mean those qualities and perfection's that are so conspicuous to Deity. Now let me give you three big words:

1. OMNIPRESENCE: Presence Everywhere:

You and I as humans can only be in one place at one given time, but the Holy Spirit has the power to be present everywhere at the same time. The psalmist says

" Whither shall I go from Thy spirit or whether shall I flee from Thy presence If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold Thou art there". (139:7-8) Here we are in Lurgan sensing His presence but in every city throughout the globe where saints are gathering, they also are experiencing His presence!

2. OMNISCIENCE: Knowing All Things:

Do you recall Pauls words (1 Cor 2:10-11) My, nothing is hid from the Holy Spirit. He discerns our intents: judges our motives: see's our hearts!

3. OMNIPOTENCE: Infinite Power:

Think of His role in Creation... is He not omnipotent Think of His role in the Supernatural Conception of Christ (Lk 1:35) Is He not omnipotent Think of His role in regeneration. Is He not omnipotent (Zech 4:6) My, (a) (b) and:

(c) His Definite Position proves that He is God:

Now let me ask you a question. Do you understand the doctrine of the Trinity Do you understand how there is only one God yet three distinct persons in the Godhead What a mystery! Yet this shouldn't prevent us from accepting this Bible truth. I don't understand how a brown cow can eat green grass and produce white milk and yellow butter. But I drink milk and I eat butter. Have you noticed how the Holy Spirit is put on the same level as the other two persons in the Godhead and therefore considered to be Divine Look at (Matt 28:19-20) Notice, not in the names but in the name (singular) One God existing in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit! So (1) (2)

(3) THE HOLY SPIRIT IS A DYNAMIC PERSON

Do you recall the Risen Lord's words in (Acts 1:8)

" But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you". The Greek word is dunamis from which we get the words dynamite and dynamic. You, see the Holy Spirit is a dynamic person. There is power available in the Holy Spirit! My ... we need the Holy Spirits dynamite in our lives. Our own strength is insufficient to cope with temptations, and to grapple with problems. Now let me show you how this power works. The Spirit of God has come:

(a) TO DWELL IN YOU:

Look at (Jn 14:17) Now add to that Paul's statement.

" What Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you ... " (1 Cor 6:19) The word "dwell", means He makes His home in you! My, if you are saved, your heart is not a hotel where the Holy Spirit comes, stays, a few nights, and moves on. Your heart is His permanent residence. The Holy Spirit has come to make His abode in your heart and to live with you for ever. Do you see what the Lord Jesus says in (14:16) He will never leave us. Oh, we may ignore, grieve, quench, or neglect our Friend but He is there... ready to bless, encourage, help, and strengthen is!

Are you lonely Here is your cure. You have a Friend, a Helper in your heart! Do you feel you are worth very little Do you feel unimportant and insignificant Then remember that the Holy Spirit lives in you heart. You are so important that God Himself has come to live in your heart. Thats dynamite! (a)

(b) TO SPEAK TO YOU:

For Christ says, " He shall teach you all things".

(14:26) My ... the Holy Spirit has come to be your teacher. Do I hear a student say, " He's going to teach me all things. Great! I have a maths test in the morning". No, He does not mean maths: English: or chemistry.

The Lord Jesus means the Holy Spirit will teach you all spiritual things. He'll teach how to live the Christian life. He'll teach you how to have victory over temptation. A little boy in school grew frustrated with a maths problem. "It won't come out right", he complained. His teacher came to his aid and showed him how to find the right answer! My, the Holy Spirit and His teaching is a cure for our ignorance. (a) (b)

(c) TO WORK THROUGH YOU:

Look at (15:26) in closing! As the Holy Spirit comes into your life, changing your language and lifestyle, you become more and more like the Lord Jesus. People begin to see Christ in you. Then the answer dawns, "Its Christ. He has given His life to Christ". For a changed life calls attention to the Saviour. (16:14)

A FRIEND ... INSIDE YOU! (1) (2) (3) Imagine a little girl standing on a street corner in London. She has a bundle under her arm and cars are whizzing back and forth on the street in front of her. In a moment a tall gentleman in a uniform comes up to he and says", Little girl, whats the matter" She's almost crying, "I can't get across. Its too busy and crowded". The policeman says, "We'll fix that". He reaches down and takes her by the hand and

A friend inside you!

leads her safely across the busy intersection.

Your Friend, the Comforter, the Holy Spirit wants to take you by the hand and lead you into victory on your Christian journey. Will you yield to Him?