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Grace Evangelical Church
Sunday, November 7, 2010
Communion Sunday
"Have You Been Introduced To The Holy Spirit?"
John 14:16; 15:26; 16:13

Different kinds of spirits exist in our world today.

There are the spirits that people drink such as Gin, Vodka, Rum, Whiskey, and Brandy.

Those caught up in the psychic world say that there are many different kinds of creatures in the spirit realm.

Certainly, there is the evil spirit world which has demons who are under their master, the evil one, satan, the devil. It is a very real world.

My wife and I were in a waiting room in a hospital the other day and a lady was telling another lady how she had been communicating with her husband who had passed away. Such gets into the area of the demonic spirit world where people are deceived by the evil one himself.

My sister was telling us of her neighbor across the street who is involved in some kind of new age thinking – which is another kind of spirit that people become a part of.

The various cults, and false world religions also are promoting a certain type of spirit.

Then there is talk about the spirit of adventure. Or did that individual ever show spirit in carrying out that task.

Yes, the word, spirit, is used in different ways in our culture.

When Jesus was on earth, however, He talked about an entirely different kind of Spirit.

Jesus taught in John 14:16, "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, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you."

In John 15:26, Jesus added, "When the HELPER comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness of ME."

In John 16:13, Jesus continued, "But when He the Spirit of Truth comes, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you."

Jesus, then, talked about a HELPER who was going to come from His heavenly Father. The HELPER would have already been existing in heaven but He would be sent by Christ, and would precede from His Father. He is called the SPIRIT OF TRUTH, and He would glorify Christ.

In Acts 1:8, Jesus calls the HELPER, THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH, the HOLY SPIRIT. You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit is come upon you. The Holy Spirit came on the Jews in Acts 2 and upon the Gentiles in Acts 10 at the house of Cornelius and as been active in the world in a direct way ever since.

Such causes me to ask. . . .

I. Who is the Holy Spirit?

1. The Holy Spirit is a real person (John 14:16; 16:13-14).

---Personal masculine pronouns are used to describe the Holy Spirit.

Although the word, Spirit, is neuter in gender, the masculine pronouns are used to replace the neuter noun contradicting the rules of normal grammar, but telling us that the Holy Spirit is a personality, a person.

"I will ask the Father, and **He** will give you another HELPER (Paraclete – encourager, strengthener, comforter), that **HE** may be with you" (John 14:16).

"That is the Spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see **HIM**, but you know **HIM** because **HE** abides with you and will be in you" (John 14:17).

"But when **HE** the Spirit of Truth comes, **HE** will guide you into all truth; for **HE** will not speak on **HIS** own initiative, but whatever **HE** hears, **HE** will speak; and **HE** will disclose to you what is to come. **HE** will glorify Me for **HE** will take of mine and will disclose it to you" (John 16:13-14).

The Holy Spirit, then, is not an it, or a force, or some wind that blows around, or a she. The Holy Spirit is not a feeling that a person may have, or a desire to succeed in life, or some adventure one may become involved in.

In fact, the word, Holy, used to describe the Spirit of God tells us that HE is the pure Spirit of God. He is not like all the other spirits that exist in the world that is opposed to the true and living God revealed in the Bible.

Rather, the Holy Spirit is a person, a personality. In fact the Holy Spirit has personal characteristics that teach HE is a PERSON.

2. The Holy Spirit has personal characteristics.

(1) He is intelligent (I Corinthians 2:10-11).

For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. . . . Even so the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God."

The Holy Spirit has a mind, so HE can think, search, and understand.

(2) He has feelings (Ephesians 4:30).

He can be grieved. "Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed until the day of redemption." I Thessalonians 5:19 tells us that the Holy Spirit can be quenched or not listened to.

The Holy Spirit then has an emotion. His feelings are affected by how individuals respond to Him.

(3) He has a will (I Corinthians 12:11).

"But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills."

That means the Holy Spirit can act and carry out tasks.

In HIS person, the Holy Spirit is also God.

3. The Holy Spirit is deity – He is God.

(1) The classic passage in Acts 5:1-4 that tells us the Holy Spirit is God.

This passage tells us conclusively that the Holy Spirit is God. It's in a sad context because Ananias and Sapphira sell property and they lie to Peter, actually to God, the Holy Spirit, as to how much they received for the sale of the property. They both lose their lives because of their lying to the Holy Spirit.

Peter said to Ananias, "Why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back some of the price of the land? While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not under your control? Why is it that you have conceived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God."

What Peter is saying here is that lying to the Holy Spirit is lying to God. Why? The Holy Spirit is God, is deity. He is of the same essence or substance as God the Father.

(2) The Holy Spirit's characteristics also tell us that He is God.

****He is omnipresent** – can be everywhere at the same time.

Psalms 139:7 – "Where can I go from Your Spirit? O where can I flee from Your presence?" The answer is that one can not hide from the Holy Spirit – Even the darkness is not night to Him.

****He is omniscient** – He knows everything actual and possible.

I Corinthians 2:10-11, which we just referred to tells us that the Holy Spirit knows the deep things of God – meaning He is all knowing.

****He is omnipotent** – He has all power.

The Holy Spirit had a part in creation.

Job 33:4 says “The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty give me life.”

Genesis 1:2 says that the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters.

Jesus taught that a person is born again, born from above, by the Spirit of God – that is given eternal life (John 3:5). The Holy Spirit regenerates the believer in Jesus Christ, giving the believer God’s very life, resurrection life, eternal life.

****He is truth – ultimate reality.**

Jesus called the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth in John 14:17; 15:15 & John 16:13.

There is no doubt that that the Holy Spirit is God, the same nature as God, the Father, as Revelation 16:7 says, “Yes, O Lord God, the Almighty, true and righteous are your judgments.” Jesus Christ also declared that He was the Way, the Truth, and the Life.” (John 14:6).

This means that. . . .

4. The Person of the Holy Spirit is part of the Trinity (popularly called the Trinity).

Looking again at John 15:26 the words of Jesus tell us:

“When the Helper (the Paraclete – the one called along side of us to encourage, to comfort, and cheer the believer on) comes, whom I (Jesus Christ) will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of Truth who proceeds from the Father, He will bear witness of me.”

Jesus Christ, then is involved in sending the Holy Spirit from the Father, as the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father.

So there are three personalities involved in this verse – God, the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

****It is clear from Scripture that God the Father is God.**

Jesus taught in John 6:27, “For on Him (referring to Himself, Jesus Christ) the Father, God, has set His seal.”

****Jesus Christ is God.**

He said that He was the I AM (John 8:58), when Jesus said the before Abraham was born, “I AM.” I am means that Jesus was saying that he was self-existent – He was God. Then in John 10:30 Jesus taught that He and His Father were ONE – that is of the same substance – God. The Jews knew what He said and tried to stone him for His statement.

****The Holy Spirit is God as we showed from Acts 5:3-4.**

They who lied to the Holy Spirit lied to GOD.

In other Scriptures such as Christ’s baptism, Jesus is baptized by John, the Holy Spirit as a dove descends upon Christ after coming out of the water, and the Father in heaven says that this is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased (Matthew 3:13-17).

In Christ’s great commission, Jesus said that we are to go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name (singular- stressing the oneness of the Godhead) of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19).

What we have here in the Trinity is not three Gods, but one God. One God existing in three co-equal persons, as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

This is the historic biblical teaching. The cults today deny the Trinity. World religions deny the Trinity. If people come knocking on your door regarding their beliefs, ask them if they believe in the Trinity. Ask them if they believe that Jesus is God, or the Holy Spirit is God.

By the second century A. D. there was the denial of the Trinity. There came along the idea that the Son and the Holy Spirit were just modes or expressions of the Father. It was formulated by a man called Sabellius. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit were just three forms or modes that God fulfilled. There were no three persons in the Godhead.

Around A. D. 325, Arius came along and said that the Son was distinguished from the Father, and the Son had a beginning. He believed that the Son created the Holy Spirit. The denial of Christ's eternity today has its roots in what is called Arianism.

Although, there have been heretical views about the Trinity down through time since the New Testament era, God raised up various councils, synods, and men to counteract such views.

Regardless of the denial of the Trinity today, the Bible is clear that there is one God existing in three co-equal persons.

I might add if there is not a Trinity, we have no ultimate and perfect existence where three persons who are one God carry out a harmonious relationship, carrying out their different roles perfectly to minister to humanity, while setting a pure example for us to follow.

Who is the HOLY SPIRIT?

He is a person who is GOD and a part of the Trinity relationship of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

II. What does the Holy Spirit do?

Let's first consider what the Holy Spirit did in the Old Testament.

1. The Holy Spirit at work in the Old Testament.

- (1) He was involved in creation (Genesis 1:2; Psalms 33:6; Isaiah 40:73).
- (2) The Holy Spirit came upon individuals to accomplish certain tasks (Exodus 31:1-3). In the building of the tabernacle, the Holy Spirit came upon the workers to accomplish God's task.
- (3) He was involved in helping individuals say what God wanted to say to His people in the Old Testament. II Samuel 23:2; Micah 5:8.
- (4) The Spirit came upon Saul and later left him (I Samuel 10:10; 16:14).
- (4) Peter recognized that the Spirit helped David write Psalm 2 (Acts 4:25).
- (5) The Spirit of God was in Joshua (Numbers 27:18) and in Daniel (4:8).

From these Old Testament Scriptures, and more could be given, it is obvious that the Holy Spirit had all power to create, to be involved in individual lives to help them accomplish God's purposes. He was also involved in helping those who were writing the Old Testament Scriptures, which Peter says that the Holy Spirit moved men to speak from God to record His Word, the inspiration of God's Word.

The conclusion being that the Holy Spirit was active in the Old Testament times, but His living in people was not permanent. I believe that's why David prayed in Psalm 51 in his confession to God of his sin with Bathsheba to no take the Holy Spirit from him.

Jesus gave this teaching to His disciples about the Holy Spirit in John 14:17 that the Holy Spirit did abide with them but He would be in them, that is reside in them.

That meant that a new era was coming for the Holy Spirit to minister.

2. The Holy Spirit at work during the life of Jesus Christ.

- (1) The Holy Spirit came upon Christ at His baptism to empower Him for ministry.
- (2) The Holy Spirit led Christ into the wilderness where He was tempted by the devil – to prove to him and that world that He truly was God and the Savior of the world.
- (3) Jesus taught, as we have seen, that the Holy Spirit is a person, who is God, and part of the Trinity. But in John 16:13-14, which we referred to a moment ago, Jesus said these words:

“But when He the Spirit of truth come, He will guide into all truth, for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you.”

I believe we have here the ultimate action of the Holy Spirit in relationship to Jesus Christ.

****He will guide into all truth – ultimate reality.**

God’s Word is truth (John 17:17).

****He will tell about the future.**

****He will glorify Christ.**

****He will make know who Christ is and what He has done.**

Certainly Jesus is talking here about the word of God that will yet be written by men of God who will be directed and guided by the Spirit of God, which is called the inspiration of Scripture. That word will certainly tell about the future, and we know that it does as the Scripture is now complete.

But the ultimate action of the Holy Spirit when He would come at Pentecost after Christ’s death, burial, bodily resurrection, and ascension was that HE would glorify Christ and point out who He is and what He has done for humanity.

In fact the Holy Spirit takes the Word of God, the Bible and shows how it points to Jesus Christ in His person and His work. That’s why Jesus after his bodily resurrection, in one of His post-resurrection appearances to His disciples gave them a walk through of the Old Testament in Luke 24:44 referring to the LAW, the PROPHETS, and the PSALMS (part of the Writings), which are the three divisions of the OLD TESTAMENT – The LAW, PROPHETS, and WRITINGS. In so doing, Jesus said that all things were written about HIM therein. Then He opened their understanding of the Scriptures and pointed out how the OLD TESTAMENT spoke about His death, burial, and bodily resurrection.

Where the Holy Spirit is active in a person, or a family, or a church, it will be evident that Jesus Christ is known as personal Savior, and He is being given first place. All is done for His glory. What’s happening is not based upon an idea of man, or upon some subjective experience, or upon some ulterior motive to further man’s agenda.

Of course, the old nature from Adam, the sirens of the world culture and philosophy, and devil himself are all opposed to the Holy Spirit of God glorifying Jesus Christ.

That’s the battle going on in our world today. Jesus talks about that in the verses just above this passage we are considering in John 16:8-11. We’ll consider that battle next week as the Holy Spirit verses the world.

You can tell rather quickly whether a person really understands who God the Holy Spirit is when you ask him where he or she is in one’s spiritual journey. Or if someone comes knocking on your door wanting you to listen to their presentation, just ask them if they believe that Jesus Christ is God in the flesh, that is if He is eternal.

And then when we as followers of Christ start pushing our agenda, we can easily slip into making one’s agenda the Holy Spirit’s agenda. Where is God the Holy Spirit to glorify Christ in our midst so that we ascertain God’s will not our own.

3. The Holy Spirit at work for the believer in Christ today?

- (1) He convicts of sin so the person will accept Christ as personal Savior (John 16:8-11)
- (2) He regenerates the believer (Titus 3:4; John 3:3-7).
- (3) He indwells the believer (I Corinthians 6:19).
- (4) He baptizes the believer (I Corinthians 12:13), placing the believer into the body of Christ.
- (5) He seals the believer (Ephesians 1:13; 4:30), meaning we are His forever.
- (6) He teaches the believer (John 14:26).
- (7) He guides or leads the believer (Romans 8:13)
- (8) He intercedes for the believer when the believer prays (Romans 8:26).

(9) He empowers the believer for godly living (Galatians 5:16).

(10) He fills or controls the believer (Ephesians 5:18ff).

(11) He gives spiritual gifts for serving the Lord (I Corinthians 12:13).

(12) He illuminates the mind of the believer so he can understand the truth of God's word and apply that word to his or her life (I Corinthians 2:12).

Let me read that passage again even though we have referred to it before in our message today.

"Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, (which of course is diametrically opposed to the Lord), but The Spirit who is from God (The Holy Spirit), so that we may know the things freely given to us by God (that is God's word).

The Holy Spirit is given to the believer so that he can know, have understanding in the Word of God which the Holy Spirit is really the Author of the inspiration of the Scripture, and then with the Holy Spirit's help apply that truth to his or her life.

Why do you and I who know Jesus Christ as personal Savior have understanding in what the Lord's Table means to us today?

Did I come to understand what the Lord's table means by my own reason? No for in my own reason I cannot understand the things given by God to us in His word. O yes, I can have some understanding of what it means intellectually. But spiritually it will mean very little to me personally, unless I have come to know Christ as personal Savior and the Holy Spirit enlightens my mind, emotion, and will to what it really means. It is the same for each of us here who knows Jesus Christ as personal Savior.

That's why as believers in Christ when we come to this table we don't just know intellectually what this table is about, we know what it means to each of us spiritually and personally. We know and understand that Jesus took our place on the Cross as the perfect substitute for our sin to pay our penalty for breaking God's law which is death. Then Christ was buried and rose again to provide us His forgiveness and eternal life.

We know because of the Holy Spirit's illumination in our lives that we possess Christ's forgiveness and eternal life.

We also know and understand that the bread represents Jesus' body, the perfect sacrifice for our sin, and that the cup represents Jesus' blood which was shed paid the penalty for our breaking God's law which is death. His life blood was given as the eternal payment for our sin.

We also know and understand that as we come to this table that we are to take some time and evaluate how we are doing in our faith walk with the Lord. In so doing, we are letting the Holy Spirit search through our minds, emotions, and wills and see if there is any unconfessed sin, such as thoughts, attitudes, and actions in our lives that are against the Lord and against someone else. If there is we are to confess that to the Lord, thank Him for His forgiveness, so when we partake of these elements we are in fellowship with the Lord.

Coming to this table each month, is the time when we not only thank the Lord for His death, burial, and bodily resurrection for us, but we also let the Holy Spirit search our hearts so that we know for certain that we are in fellowship with Him.

The Holy Spirit desires to keep our lives sensitive to Him for as we let the Holy Spirit carry out God's will in our lives we glorify Christ, show Him off in our thoughts, our attitudes, and actions.

The ultimate work of the Holy Spirit in relationship to Jesus Christ was to lift Him up in the world. That is accomplished by you and me in obeying the Holy Spirit through the Word of God, and doing God's will. Then God is glorified!!

May our prayer be as we come to the Lord's table today.

"Broken bread and poured out wine. Jesus make my heart that kind. Where love has bled and self has died, like broken bread and poured out wine. Not my will but Yours I choose. No matter what I stand to lose. For Lord you said You'd fill a life that's broken bread and poured out wine."