

### John 15:26-27

<sup>26</sup> "When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father-the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father-he will testify about me. <sup>27</sup> And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning.

### John 16:4-15

<sup>4</sup> I have told you this, so that when their time comes you will remember that I warned you about them. I did not tell you this from the beginning because I was with you, <sup>5</sup> but now I am going to him who sent me. None of you asks me, 'Where are you going?' <sup>6</sup> Rather, you are filled with grief because I have said these things. <sup>7</sup> But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. <sup>8</sup> When he comes, he will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment: <sup>9</sup> about sin, because people do not believe in me; <sup>10</sup> about righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; <sup>11</sup> and about judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned.

<sup>12</sup> "I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. <sup>13</sup> But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. <sup>14</sup> He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you. <sup>15</sup> All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you."

THE PROPHET ZECHARIAH PROCLAIMED THIS WORD FROM GOD TO THOSE WHO NEEDED ENCOURAGEMENT:

“NOT BY MIGHT, NOR BY POWER, BUT BY MY SPIRIT”, SAYS THE LORD.

AND JESUS, RIGHT BEFORE HE ASCENDED INTO HEAVEN, RENEWED THE PROMISE HIS FOLLOWERS WOULD RECEIVE POWER WHEN THE HOLY SPIRIT CAME TO THEM.

THESE PROMISES WHILE HELPFUL, ARE NOT ALWAYS EASY TO TRANSLATE INTO PRACTICAL IMAGES FOR OUR LIVES.

HERE IS A STORY THAT MAY OFFER SOME FOOD FOR THOUGHT, CONCERNING THE HOLY SPIRIT, THAT MIGHT BE USEFUL

A PASTOR NAMED BRUCE LEE, TELLS A STORY FROM HIS YOUTH ABOUT PLAYING IN THE WOODS WITH HIS FRIENDS.

ONE DAY HE AND ANOTHER BOY WERE WALKING ALONG IN THE WOODS WHEN THEY CAME UPON A ROTTEN TREE THAT HAD FALLEN.

RATHER THAN WALKING AROUND IT, THE YOUNG LEE DECIDED TO MOVE IT OUT OF THEIR WAY.

HE PUSHED AND SHOVED AND PULLED, BUT TO NO AVAIL, HE WAS NOT ABLE TO MOVE IT.

HIS FRIEND COMMENTED THAT IF HE WANTED TO MOVE IT HE HAD TO USE ALL OF HIS STRENGTH.

THE FRUSTRATED LEE REPLIED- THAT WAS WHAT HE WAS DOING, BUT HIS FRIEND DISAGREED. THE OTHER BOY SAID “NO ARE NOT-YOU HAVEN’T ASKED ME TO HELP”.

WORKING TOGETHER THE TWO BOYS MOVED THE TREE TRUNK OUT OF THE WAY.

THIS STORY SERVES AS A GOOD ILLUSTRATION FOR THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.

WE OFTEN EXHAUST AND FRUSTRATE OURSELVES TRYING TO DO THINGS ON OUR OWN, WHEN GOD IS READY AND WILLING TO HELP- BUT WE DO NOT ASK.

THIS IS ESPECIALLY TRUE IN THE AREA OF NEEDING GOD'S DIRECTION OR NEEDING SPIRITUAL STRENGTH.

THE GREEK WORD FOR SPIRIT LITERALLY MEANS: "ONE WHO COMES ALONG SIDE", WHICH IS A BEAUTIFUL WAY TO THINK ABOUT THE PRESENCE OF GOD'S SPIRIT.

BUT THE SAD FACT IS, WE OFTEN FORGET ABOUT THE HOLY SPIRIT, OUR HELPER, THEREFORE, LIKE THE BOY IN THE OPENING STORY, WE DO NOT SEEK AID FROM THE ONE HAS COME ALONG SIDE US.

THE FAMOUS PREACHER OF LONG AGO, REV. CHARLES SPURGEON COMPOSED A REFLECTION ABOUT THE HOLY SPIRIT, WHICH REMINDS US ABOUT OUR NEED FOR THIS DIVINE HELPER AND ADVOCATE:

HE WROTE: "WITHOUT THE SPIRIT OF GOD WE CAN DO NOTHING. WE ARE SAILING SHIPS WITHOUT WIND, AND CHARIOTS WITHOUT STEEDS.

LIKE BRANCHES WITHOUT SAP, WE ARE WITHERED. LIKE COALS WITHOUT FIRE, WE ARE USELESS."

HIS METAPHOR COULD BE UPDATED TO SAY: WITHOUT THE HOLY SPIRIT WE ARE LIKE CARS WITHOUT EITHER GASOLINE OR ELECTRICITY, CELL PHONES WITHOUT RECEPTION, EMAIL, OR FACEBOOK, ETC. WITHOUT THE INTERNET.

TRULY, IT IS THE HOLY SPIRIT OF GOD WHO GIVES US STRENGTH, GUIDANCE, AND MANY OTHER GIFTS, AND FRUIT TO EMPOWER OUR LIVES AS FOLLOWERS OF JESUS CHRIST.

JESUS PROMISED THE POWER AND COMFORT, THE HELP AND GUIDANCE OF THE SPIRIT NOT ONLY TO HIS FIRST DISCIPLES, BUT TO ALL OF HIS FOLLOWERS.

HIS PROMISE WAS FIRST FULFILLED ON THE JEWISH HOLIDAY OF PENTECOST, WHEN THE SPIRIT FELL ON BELIEVERS

LUKE WROTE ABOUT THAT MOMENTOUS EVENTS IN ACTS CHAPTER TWO: "WHEN THE DAY OF PENTECOST HAD COME, THEY WERE ALL GATHERED TOGETHER IN ONE PLACE.

AND SUDDENLY A SOUND CAME FROM HEAVEN LIKE THE RUSH OF A MIGHTY WIND, AND IT FILLED THE HOUSE. DIVIDED TONGUES, AS OF FIRE, APPEARED AMONG THEM, AND A TONGUE RESTED ON EACH OF THEM.

ALL OF THEM WERE FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT AND BEGAN TO SPEAK IN OTHER LANGUAGES AS THE SPIRIT GAVE THEM ABILITY."

AS WE HEARD-THE SPIRIT CAME AS A POWERFUL WIND AND FELL IN TONGUES OF FIRE, THAT DID NOT BURN THE BODY BUT IGNITED THE SOULS OF ALL CHRISTIANS.

JUST LIKE JESUS PROMISED IN THE GOSPEL READING FROM JOHN, THE HOLY SPIRIT GIFTED THEM WITH THE TRUTH ABOUT GOD'S LOVE THROUGH HIS SON, AND THE MEANING OF HIS DEATH AND RESURRECTION.

AFTER THE SPIRIT FELL UPON THE GATHERING OF CHRIST'S FOLLOWERS PETER AND THE OTHERS BEGAN TO BE ABLE TO BE CHRIST'S WITNESSES.

IT WAS THEN THAT THE SPIRIT SPOKE THROUGH THEM TO CONVICT THE WORLD, MEANING PROVE THE WORLD WAS WRONG, ABOUT SIN, RIGHTEOUSNESS, AND JUDGEMENT.

THE SPIRIT, SPEAKING THROUGH THOSE EMPOWERED ON PENTECOST, SAID THAT JESUS WAS GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS REVEALED IN THE FLESH, AND THUS A MODEL FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS FOR ALL PEOPLE.

THE SPIRIT TESTIFIED THROUGH PETER AND THE OTHERS ABOUT THE SIN OF THE WORLD, INCLUDING PEOPLE'S REJECTION OF JESUS WHEN HE LIVED AMONG THEM.

INDEED, THE HOLY SPIRIT ACTS MUCH LIKE A PROSECUTOR WHO PROVED THE CASE IN COURT THAT THE DEFENDANT WAS GUILTY AS CHARGED.

BUT THE SPIRIT ALSO PROCLAIMS THE GRACE OF GOD THAT DEFIES HUMAN JUSTICE AND JUDGES ACCORDING TO GOD'S WILL NOT OUR OWN.

THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH ENABLED JESUS' FOLLOWERS TO PROCLAIM TO OTHERS THE LOVE AND MERCY OF GOD, WHICH WAS MADE POSSIBLE THROUGH HIS SON.

THE SPIRIT ALSO BROUGHT TO THEM ON PENTECOST THE COMFORT OF THE PEACE JESUS PROMISED TO PROVIDE.

HOWEVER, THIS PEACE WAS NOT SO MUCH A CALMNESS IN CIRCUMSTANCE BUT AN INNER PEACE OF THE SPIRIT'S PRESENCE, COMFORT, AND EMPOWERMENT.

BUT IT IS IMPORTANT FOR US TO REMEMBER THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT DOES NOT POSSESS US IN THE SENSE OF TAKING AWAY OUR FREE WILL.

GOD'S SPIRIT DOES NOT FORCE US TO SPEAK OR ACT, OR REFRAIN FROM DOING SO, IF WE CHOOSE NOT TO LISTEN.

THE SPIRIT, IN LESS DRAMATIC AND OBVIOUS WAYS CONTINUES TO FALL UPON AND DWELL WITHIN CHRISTIANS, OFFERING US THE POWER AND PRESENCE OF GOD WITHIN.

THE HOLY SPIRIT IS, AS JESUS PROMISED, WITH US AND WITHIN US, BUT WE NEED TO BE OPEN TO THE SPIRIT'S GUIDANCE AND STRENGTH AND OTHER RESOURCES.

THIS BRINGS US BACK TO JESUS' WORDS SPOKEN TO HIS DISCIPLES PRIOR TO HIS ARREST AND DEATH.

THEY ARE USEFUL FOR CHRISTIANS TODAY IN SEVERAL WAYS:

IT IS THROUGH THE POWER AND INSPIRATION OF THE SPIRIT THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH IS GIVEN ENERGY AND DIRECTION, LIFE AND PURPOSE.

THE SPIRIT APPLIES THE GIFTS SENT FROM GOD TO THE LIVES OF CHRISTIANS AS INDIVIDUALS, AS WELL AS TO FAITH COMMUNITIES.

JESUS SAID, ONE OF THE MAIN TASKS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IS TO GUIDE BELIEVERS INTO DEEPER KNOWLEDGE OF GOD AND HIS LOVE.

THIS IS THE TRUTH THAT IS REVEALED AND MANIFESTED BY JESUS' INCARNATION, LIFE, DEATH, AND RESURRECTION.

THE MINISTRY DONE THROUGH THE POWER AND GUIDANCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IS THAT WHICH GLORIFIES CHRIST, AND PRODUCES THANKFULNESS TO GOD WITHIN US AND OTHERS.

JESUS' WORDS IMPLIED THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT WOULD BECOME A BLESSING TO HIS FOLLOWERS BEYOND THEIR IMAGINATION.

IN THE PERSON OF GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT, WE HAVE GOD'S PRESENCE WITH US INDIVIDUALLY AND COMMUNALLY, IN A WAY NOT POSSIBLE EVER BEFORE.

PENTECOST CONFIRMS THE TRUTH OF THESE WORDS SPOKEN BY JESUS NOT ONLY FOR HIS FIRST FOLLOWERS BUT EVERY CHRISTIANS SINCE.

THAT IS WHY JESUS SAID IT IS TO THE ADVANTAGE OF HIS FOLLOWERS THAT HIS PHYSICAL PRESENCE DEPARTS FROM THE WORLD, SO THAT THE SPIRIT WOULD COME.

WHILE THE SAVIOR'S WORDS MAKE SENSE TO MANY, IT IS ALSO TRUE THAT THE PHYSICAL PRESENCE OF JESUS HERE AMONG US AND IN THE WORLD SEEMS PREFERABLE.

THE PROBLEM IS-- GOD THE FATHER APPARENTLY DOES NOT YET, AGREE IT IS TIME FOR THAT TO HAPPEN.

THAT, FOR MANY OF US MAY BE THE BAD NEWS, BUT THE GOOD NEWS IS, JUST LIKE OUR SAVIOR PROMISED, WE HAVE NOT BEEN ABANDONED, GOD REMAINS WITH US.

THE HOLY SPIRIT IS THE PERSON OF GOD WHO COMMUNES WITH OUR HUMAN SPIRITS, AND IMPLANTS WITHIN US THE ENTERAL LIFE WE RECEIVE THROUGH CHRIST.

IT IS THROUGH HOLY SPIRIT WE ARE JOINED INTO THE DIVINE CIRCLE OF LOVE THAT IS GOD: FATHER, SON, AND HOLY SPIRIT.

ANOTHER WAY TO EXPRESS THIS IS TO THINK OF GOD'S SPIRIT AS THE MUSIC OF GOD'S LOVE AND THE SOURCE OF HIS GUIDANCE IN OUR DANCE OF LIFE.

MAX LUCADO IN HIS BOOK "GENTLE THUNDER", OFFERS WHAT MAY BE A HELPFUL ILLUSTRATION OF THE SPIRIT'S WORK.

HE TELLS A STORY ABOUT A MAN WHO WANTED TO LEARN HOW TO DANCE, SO HE COULD DO SO WITH HIS WIFE WHO ENJOYED DANCING.

THE MAN BOUGHT A BOOK AND STUDIED THE STEPS, AND LEARNED THEM BY FIRST READING HOW, AND THEN FOLLOWING THE ILLUSTRATIONS WITH HIS BODY.

AFTER MANY WEEKS OF PRACTICE HE FELT THAT HE HAD THE MECHANICS OF ONE DANCE DOWN WELL ENOUGH TO SURPRISE HIS WIFE WITH WHAT HE HAD LEARNED.

HOLDING THE BOOK IN ONE HAND TO HELP HIM REMEMBER THE STEPS, HE PROUDLY SHOWED HER WHAT HE LEARNED.

HE PERFORMED THE STEPS OF THE DANCE VERY WELL AND AWAITED HIS WIFE'S RESPONSE.

SHE PRAISED HIS EXECUTION OF THE STEPS AND EXPRESSED THAT SHE WAS PLEASED WITH HIS EFFORTS.

THEN SHE GENTLY INFORMED HIM THAT DOING THE STEPS ALONE, HOWEVER PERFECT, WAS NOT REALLY DANCING.

NEXT, SHE SHOWED HIM WHAT SHE MEANT BY FINDING THE APPROPRIATE MUSIC TO ACCOMPANY THE STEPS.

WHEN THE MUSIC BEGAN TO PLAY THE WOMAN AND HER HUSBAND DANCED.

THE MUSIC, HIS WIFE EXPLAINED, WAS THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF THE DANCE BECAUSE IT GAVE PURPOSE AND DIRECTION TO THE STEPS.

LUCADO RELATED THIS TO OUR NEED FOR THE HOLY SPIRIT BY EXPLAINING THAT:

"WE CHRISTIANS ARE PRONE TO FOLLOW THE BOOK WHILE IGNORING THE MUSIC.

WE MASTER THE DOCTRINE, OUTLINE THE CHAPTERS, MEMORIZE THE DISPENSATIONS, DEBATE THE RULES, AND STIFFLY STEP ON THE DANCE FLOOR OF LIFE WITH NO MUSIC IN OUR HEARTS.

JESUS KNEW THAT. FOR THAT REASON, ON THE NIGHT BEFORE HIS DEATH HE INTRODUCED THE DISCIPLES TO THE SONG-MAKER OF THE TRINITY- THE HOLY SPIRIT."

MAY WE LISTEN TO THE MUSIC OF THE SPIRIT WITHIN US SO WE MAY BE DRAWN INTO THE DANCE OF GOD'S WILL AND FOLLOW MORE CLOSELY JESUS, OUR SAVIOR.

LET US PRAY:

ETERNAL GOD, AS YOU SENT THE PROMISED GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT UPON JESUS' FIRST FOLLOWERS ON PENTECOST, LOOK UPON YOUR CHURCH TODAY AND OPEN OUR HEARTS AND SOULS UP TO THE POWER OF THE SPIRIT.

KINDLE IN US THE FIRE OF YOUR LOVE, AND STRENGTHEN OUR LIVES FOR SERVICE IN YOUR KINGDOM.

INSPIRE US TO WITNESS IN WORD AND DEED TO THE TRUTH OF YOUR LOVE FOR THE WORLD JESUS CAME TO PROCLAIM THROUGH THE WORDS OF HIS MOUTH, THE HEALING TOUCH OF HIS HANDS, AND THE SACRIFICE OF HIS LIFE.

TAKE US, O HEAVENLY FATHER, AND SHAPE US ACCORDING TO YOUR WILL. IN THE NAME OF JESUS OUR SAVIOR, WHO LIVES AND REIGNS WITH YOU AND THE HOLY SPIRIT, ONE GOD FOREVER AND EVER, WE PRAY. AMEN

SERMON SUMMARY: John 15:26-27 & 16:4-15

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