

“The Spirit at Work” - John 14:15-27
Pastor Burt Garwood – September 24, 2017

Once the Holy Spirit has created faith in your heart, the Holy Spirit moves in to continue to work on you. Your life as a follower of Jesus, one who desires to know, love and follow Jesus, is also a life of becoming a man or woman of the Spirit. What does this mean?

- By nature, we are selfish. We do what self wants. Becoming a man or woman of the Spirit means that you surrender to the leading of the Holy Spirit in your life.
- Our love can be selfish, no matter how hard we try on our own. The love that God wants us to give others is an unconditional love that can only flow from us through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus told his disciples that they would receive someone after him: the Holy Spirit. Jesus called him the “parakletos” in Greek, which translated means, “counselor, helper, advocate.” READ: John 14:16-17 & Romans 8:26-27

- The Holy Spirit is so in tune with you as he dwells in you, that he speaks for you. He is your Advocate, your Counselor.

John 14:17 “*the Spirit of Truth.*”

- Jesus said this about himself: “*I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.*” [John 14:6]
- Jesus is saying we will receive the Spirit of Truth. What does this mean?
- The Holy Spirit guides you to Truth. The Spirit testifies to the Truth.
- Jesus is the Truth. Because he is God and he is truth, what Jesus says is true. We follow the truths of the Truth, Jesus Christ. The Spirit points you to Jesus...the Truth.

The Spirit guides your conscience to be in line with the truth of God’s word, and God’s will and plan for your life.

- If you want to discern on your own, you might not choose the truth of Jesus. Because there are many truth claims in the world today from other sources, worldviews, philosophies and religions.
- But if you ask the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth...we will guide you in truth...to know, love and follow Jesus.

John 14:17 “*The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.*” What does this mean?

- Whether you believe in Jesus or not, the Holy Spirit is already at work in your life, causing you to ask questions, wrestle with moral issues and have a general sense that there is more to life than this.
- You receive the Holy Spirit when you believe in Jesus. The Holy Spirit takes up his dwelling in you.
- Before you believe in Jesus, the Spirit is impressing on your heart and mind, wooing you. The Holy Spirit works to prepare your heart and mind to believe in Jesus. The Holy Spirit leverages difficult situations to soften you up to the need for Jesus. He puts people across your path who point you toward Jesus.

- In the process of preparation, the Holy Spirit creates within you a sense of your need. That you can’t do life alone. That there has to be a better reason behind all the suffering and evil. A reason that goes beyond what humans can make up their own.

John 16:8-9 “*When he comes, he will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment: ⁹about sin, because people do not believe in me...*”

- Before this work of the Holy Spirit, you will justify any action as something you chose to do...because you wanted to do it...because it felt good or whatever.
- The Spirit prepares your heart for Jesus by helping you to see your sin as sin, and to feel a sense of remorse and guilt and shame for your sin.

The final work of the Holy Spirit in preparation is giving you a sense of clarity.

- Suddenly it all becomes clear. You see clearly that God really does love you, but that your sin has separated you from him.
- You see clearly that Jesus is the answer to your situation. You realize that you want to believe in Jesus as your Lord and Savior. This is the work of the Spirit ahead of time in your life. And he does this through people and events that lead up to this moment of clarity.

After you believe in Jesus, the Holy Spirit moves in and he takes the driver’s seat in your head and your heart.

- Some of you believe in Jesus, but you’re fighting the Holy Spirit. Give up your desire to be first. Surrender to what the Spirit is doing in your life.
- You begin what we refer to in the Lutheran church as a process of sanctification, in other words, renewal and change in your life by the Spirit’s power.
- When you first believe in Jesus, you’re coming to him damaged emotionally, confused mentally, distorted ethically, and twisted morally.
- When you first believe in Jesus, you have a moral system and values and worldview that isn’t fully in line with Jesus. And you have wounds that need the Healer’s touch.

John 14:26 “*But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.*”

- The Holy Spirit becomes your guide and your teacher. When you sit down to study the Bible or make a decision in life, you should pray something like this: “Spirit of Truth, guide me into Truth.”
- The Holy Spirit also reminds you, according to Jesus what the Bible teaches us.
- When you’re in a tough situation and you’re suffering, the Spirit reminds you of God’s power and presence and protection.
- When you’re tempted to sin, the Spirit reminds you that you have the power of God literally living inside of you and that you have God’s power to resist sin.