

MINISTRY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN A DISCIPLE'S LIFE

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Scripture: John 14:15-26

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¹⁵ "If you love me, you will obey what I command. ¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever— ¹⁷ the Spirit of truth. 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. ¹⁸ I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. ¹⁹ Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. ²⁰ On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. ²¹ Whoever has my commands and obeys them he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to him."

²² Then Judas (not Judas Iscariot) said, "But, Lord, why do you intend to show yourself to us and not to the world?"

²³ Jesus replied, "If anyone loves me he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. ²⁴ He who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me.

²⁵ "All this I have spoken while still with you. ²⁶ But the Counsellor, 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.

Last Sunday was Pentecost Sunday, when the church all over the world remembers God's Holy Spirit and the gifts of the Holy Spirit especially; the day the Holy Spirit came to the church and strengthened them. Today is celebrated as Trinity Sunday all over the world, where the church considers the Triune God. Our God is a God in three persons. In this portion of scripture that we read, we see the mention of the Triune God. In v. 16 "I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Counselor." In the very same verse – God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

Just to give you context, I go back to my student days and the days when I received Jesus as my Lord and Savior, and some of the interactions I had with my own Christian friends in our fellowship. I want to quote two comments which our student friendship had.

- Many Christians are living a life of guilt, trying to live a righteous life but not being able to. Therefore, you feel very guilty.
- Christian life being very hard or too harsh.

In those days, I didn't know how to deal with these comments, but today, by God's grace, we have answers to these questions. Sometimes maybe, we also go through this kind of experience, thinking that living a life of guilt, trying to live a righteous life but failing, thinking that it is too hard. Being a disciple is too hard.

1. We are fighting a constant battle.

It's true that we are in a battlefield; we need to realize that. the day you received Jesus as your Lord and Savior, you have declared war against both sin and Satan. Therefore, you are in trouble, a constant battlefield. If you look at the temptations of Jesus in Luke's gospel, at the end of the last temptation it says: Satan left Him till an opportune time. if that could happen to Jesus, then what about us?

You can be sure that some of the problems that we face are because of Satan. We are his enemy. But the mistake we make, and I want to emphasize this, is that unfortunately, we try to live our Christian life in our strength. We think it's all about us. That's the biggest blunder you can make in your life. Some of the guilt that those Christian friends had, has to do with this, because they thought it was all about them. Trying to defeat this enemy by reading the bible, praying. It's impossible. Your enemy is a formidable enemy and there's no way you can beat him. But the mistake we make is that we forget that greater is the One with us than he that is in the world.

2. Too much self-confidence.

Sometimes I believe we think we are too self-confident because we think about ourselves too much. This was the problem with the Pharisees. We may have the 'Pharisee attitude' in us – I am superior, I can do, i..., i... If that is the case, you're done. That's exactly what Satan is waiting for.

Romans 7:18 "For I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature."

These are the words of the apostle Paul. Be sure that there is nothing good in any of us in our basic sinful nature. That's something that we should remember. That is something that we should remember. Then, what is the solution to living a righteous life, to live as a follower of Christ, to live as a disciple? How do I live. The answer is we need to depend heavily on divine resources.

Divine Resources:

- 1) God's Word. That is why every Sunday God's word is preached, essentially to give the importance of God's Word. A big divine resource.
- 2) We can pray. Some of today's worship songs spoke most of my message, and that's God's plan. It is all about God. Jesus paid it all. Just come to me. It's all about inviting us to pray. Come to me and I will take care. The song "Just as I am" – come as you are, that's all God is asking. We have the freedom anywhere, everywhere; we can come to God. Compare this with some of our Hindu or Muslim friends. No special place is required. Anywhere! What a privilege! Use it fully. That's another divine resource we have. Ask for God's strength, anytime.
- 3) God's Holy Spirit. And that's what I want to focus on today.

THE HOLY SPIRIT

Let me again quote what Jesus said about Christian life being a hard life. Jesus said to enter through the narrow gate.

Matthew 11:28-30

²⁸ "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

If we ever feel burdened, there is something wrong. I was very happy when the worship team asked us to say: 'Rejoice in the Lord!' That is the opposite of having guilt. Our privilege is to rejoice in the Lord at all times. That should characterize our life, not that we will not have problems. We will have our share of problems till the end of our life, but we need to rejoice because of all the privileges.

The Role of the Holy Spirit

Let's look at some of the teachings from what Jesus taught about the ministry of the Holy Spirit in our life, and I have taken about five portions from the scripture that we read today.

1. To be with us forever.

John 14:15-17 ¹⁵ "If you love me, you will obey what I command. ¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another counsellor to be with you forever— ¹⁷ the Spirit of truth."

God's Spirit is to be with us forever. The Holy Spirit is a permanent resident in our hearts. In the later portion of that verse, it says: "He lives with you and will be in you." I don't know whether we are aware of this. I'm very sure the mistake which I did and some of my Christian friends did in the initial days of our Christian lives was forgetting this part – that God's Spirit is with me.

The problem? God's Spirit is the gentlest person you can ever find. God's Spirit will never ever force Himself on you. You have to give permission: Lord, take control of me.

2. To teach us and remind us.

John 14:26 ²⁶ But the Counsellor, 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."

Another area of ministry of the Holy Spirit in our lives is to teach us all things and to remind us of the things which Jesus taught us. Our job: to read God's Word. God's Spirit's job: to remind us and to teach us everything.

What a wonderful privilege! I have seen this many times. When I go through tough times, a verse comes to mind. I don't know when I read it, but God's Spirit brings it as an encouragement; sometimes as a challenge, and sometimes even to convict me. God's Spirit does that all the time if you allow Him.

3. To help us testify about Jesus.

John 15:26 ²⁶ But when the Counselor comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, goes out from the Father, he will testify about Me.

Note again, this verse has God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit – the Triune God in this very verse. It says that God's Spirit will testify about Jesus or He will witness. Without the Spirit, we cannot be witnesses in our own respective places.

In the very next verse it says: ²⁷ "and you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning." We need to testify, but before that, God's Spirit testifies to us about Jesus. Wonderful! What a way of ministering! We need to just make full use of God's Spirit's ministry in our life.

4. To convict the world of guilt.

John 16:7-8 ⁷ But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counsellor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. ⁸ When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment.

So the ministry of the Holy Spirit is to convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment. How does He do that? I'm sure that in our respective places, when somebody asks you why you take a particular stand; and you get an opportunity to witness when you do that. Or sometimes, somebody might ask you about your faith, and you share. Or sometimes, maybe you have been sharing with your friend for whom you have been praying for a long time on God's Word, but you are concerned that you don't see any change. Remember, it's not your job to convict anybody. It's the Holy Spirit's job to convict. Your job is to be faithful in witnessing. God's Spirit will

convict. The Spirit will do His job. How encouraging! Our job is to be faithful in witnessing, in sharing when God gives an opportunity. It's God's Spirit's job to work in that person's life.

Again, it's God's Spirit's work to convict us. I've seen it so many times when I do something wrong, quick, immediately, God's Spirit convicts – that was not right. What do you do? Ask for God's forgiveness. Don't ever try to defend yourself. Ask for God's forgiveness. Also, ask God to give you more strength and God will cleanse us. That is all that's required. Sometimes we carry this heavy load on ourselves, and that is so wrong. Ask for God's forgiveness and that's it. God would take care.

5. To guide us.

John 16:13 ¹³ "But when He, the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, he will speak only what He hears, and he will tell you the things that are to come."

Here we find about God's Holy Spirit's role in our life to guide us. I'm sure we need guidance all the time. Sometimes we make a mistake. Only sometimes when we make major decisions like marriage or job, we want God's guidance. That's wrong. If we are in the habit of taking God's guidance on a day-to-day basis, we know God guides and we know when God says 'No', let it be 'No'.

Be sensitive to God's Spirit's guidance throughout your life. When we take up a course of study, do we consult God? Do we ask for God's guidance? When you take up a job, do you ask for God's guidance or you just take a decision? Every decision we take in our life, if we ask for God's guidance, God's Spirit will guide you. I have seen that in my life. God's Spirit has a way of guiding each and every one of us. The way the Spirit guides me is not the way the Spirit will guide you. We need to get used to that. This is God's Spirit guiding me, this way or that way.

Remember, God's Spirit is with you forever, a permanent resident, and it would be so foolish to live our Christian life in our strength. That's the most foolish thing we can do. All that we need is to ask God to take control and God will do that.

WHAT IS MY ROLE?

Last week, Pastor said that we often tend to lock up God's Spirit in our hearts. The Lord's Spirit is the gentlest person; unless you give permission, God's Spirit will not take charge of your life. so, what is my role? Yes, I want to live a righteous life. I want to live a life pleasing to God. What is my role? I thought I'll talk about two things.

1) To have a Christian mind.

Romans 8:5-8. This entire chapter is all about life through the Spirit.

⁵ "For those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature decides, but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on the Spirit decides. ⁶ The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace. ⁷ The sinful mind is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so, ⁸ and those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God."

In these verses, the word 'mind' comes many times. We are reminded of the greatest commandment, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind." There's a lot we can do. Today, I believe one of the biggest problems all of us face is this area of attack on our minds. This is not something new. Satan's attack has always been on our hearts and our minds, and today unfortunately, social media has a huge influence in our life. There's nothing wrong about WhatsApp or other media. But the danger is how much of it do you allow in your life.

Some years ago, a member of our church took a session on the dangers of technology. He showed statistics which were very shocking. "If we just take stock of the time we spend on social media, and I'm talking only about Christians right now, on an average, a person spends about three hours a day. Compare that with the amount of time you spend reading the bible. Fifteen minutes? We don't have the time, we're too busy. But we have three hours to spend without your knowledge. Why? it's spread out throughout the day." I'm sure all of us would agree to this, I am also on many WhatsApp groups. In five minutes, there are ten messages. To read it will take hours and hours, so I just skip through. The point I'm trying to make is all these are good. social media is good. but do not allow it to control you. That's one of the biggest dangers I believe today, that we are being influenced. So the target is our hearts and our minds.

Let me repeat, think about having a Christian mind. We need to be intentional. Yes, I will set my heart, I will set my mind.

Colossians 3:1-3 You'll see the same thought coming in again.

"Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ²Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. ³For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God."

Paul is talking about setting your hearts on things above, setting your minds on things above. This is so important. That is in our hand. What do you think? What do you put your heart on? It's in your hand. And that has a huge role to play in living a Christian life pleasing to God.

2) Being controlled by the Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 5:18 "Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit"

What is the comparison here? I'm sure all of us have seen drunken men. When somebody is drunk, that particular person is controlled by that drink. In the same way, apostle Paul says: Be controlled by the Spirit. Does God's Spirit have control over your life? That is a question we have to ask ourselves. have I given my life's control to God's Spirit? Do you ask our Lord to take control of your life. my thoughts, my actions, my reactions, what I say, what I do – take control. If you do that, God's Spirit can work in you

That's a huge role. We need to be intentional about it; it's not just automatic. Intentional – I am determined to set my heart, my mind on Godly things. I am determined to hand over control. If you do that, God's Spirit will change you. Just allow God; He will do all. That's the key thing. God will do everything.

ENCOURAGEMENT

The final portion of my message. This is more of an encouragement. I don't know what you think about yourself. If you ask me about myself, I have never thought much about myself. But do you know that each one of you is precious in God's sight. You have a unique role to play which nobody else can play. If you don't do it, that particular part will be missing in the kingdom of God. It's that precious. Each one of you here, if you have surrendered your life to Christ, that's the most important thing to remember. You are all precious and that I think should encourage us.

Matthew 5:13-14 ¹³'You are the salt of the earth. ¹⁴You are the light of the world."

Notice that. he did not say, "You will be the salt of the earth or you will be the light of the world. But He says: You are. imagine that! As imperfect as we are, yet Jesus says: You are the light of the world; you are the salt of the earth. The point is that we are crucial. God wants us so desperately. God has placed each one of us in our places of work – school, college, work, home, wherever you are. Your presence there makes such a difference. We all know how much salt we put in the curry to give it the

right taste. But we also know if that salt is not there. What a difference that little bit of salt makes! In our society or wherever God has placed you, your presence makes a big difference.

But remember, you cannot do it on your own. God will give you that saltiness, God will give you that light and help you so that others seeing you would glorify God. Others look at us and they will see that this person is different because of what God has done in his life. I'm sure that God can do that, and God will do it if you let Him.

Let me read another couple of verses which I find very encouraging.

Philippians 2:14-16 ¹⁴Do everything without grumbling or arguing, ¹⁵so that you may become blameless and pure, 'children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation.'" Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky ¹⁶as you hold firmly to the word of life.

Do everything without complaining or arguing. That is difficult for me. I don't like many things which are thrust on me. But Paul says everything. Why? So that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars. God has placed us in a depraved generation (this was in the first century and it's true even today), so that we may shine like stars. That's a great privilege for us and God will do that. I believe that it is only because of Christians in any place including this county, that there will be a change. Christians will make a difference. Keep that as a calling. Wherever God has placed you, don't take it lightly. God has a great plan for you. If you surrender your life, God would use you in a big way like Daniel or Joseph or Nehemiah and others.

Summary:

- Do not try to live the Christian life in your own strength. If you do so, you will be another case history to say that you will fail. Instead depend on God. God would do it for you. God would give you the strength.
- Always remember the divine resources which are available to you which God has given – God's Word, prayer, and God's Spirit.
- God's Spirit's ministry in our lives.
- The big role we have to play, submitting our hearts and our minds to God, allowing God's Spirit to control us.
- Encouragement: Philippians 1:6 "He who began a good work in you, will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.
