

## The Promise of the Holy Spirit

(Joel 2:28-32, Gal 5:22-26, John 14:15-21)

The Holy Spirit is a person. We believe, He is the third person of the trinity. We know God because He has revealed Himself to us. Without God's self revelation, we can never know God. God's self revelation has come to us through

1. The book of Nature
2. The Son of God the incarnate word of God.
3. The Bible, the written word of God.

- 1. The book of Nature:** By looking at the creation we know the creator. That's what Paul said in Romans 1:19; what may be known about God is plain because God has made it plain. God's invisible qualities, His eternal Power and divine nature have been (can be) clearly seen, being (can be) understood from what has been made.
- 2. The Son of God :** The Son of God has come and given us understanding so that we know Him who is true. (I John 5:20). No one has ever seen God , but God the one and only who is at the Father's side has made Him known (John1:18)
- 3. The Bible:** The Scriptures testify about Jesus (John 5; 39). The Bible is the mirror which shows us the glory of God. (2 Cor 3:18).

God is infinite and we are finite, so we can never know anything about God, unless He reveals. That's why Moses said, "Secret things belong to the Lord our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law (Deut 29:29) Things are revealed by God and it is God alone can make us understand things concerning Him. when different people talk of the promise of the Holy Spirit , we hear different things which we can not understand by our experience. One example is speaking in tongues. Through faith God has given everyone the blessing of receiving the promise of the spirit in Christ Jesus (Gal 3:13). God the Father has revealed this through His prophets as in today's Old Testament lesson. God the Son has ratified this promise in today's Gospel lesson .To day's epistle lesson speaks of the fruit that everyone who claims this promise will have in their lives

## **The Old Testament Lesson: Joel 2:28-32 The Promise of the Holy Spirit**

God has sent His prophets in the past to His people to show their rebellion and sins, urging them to change their ways and turn back to God. The people of Judah became complacent when they had become prosperous. They took God for granted and even started bowing down to idols. God sent Joel and warned them that this kind of life style would inevitably bring down God's judgment. To those who respond to God's call and change their ways God is promising them His spirit, by which they can fulfill God's purpose. Peter quoted this passage in Acts 2:16-21 and told on the day of Pentecost that the out pouring of the spirit predicted by Joel occurred on that day. While in the past God's spirit seemed available to kings, prophets and Priests. Joel envisioned a time when the spirit would be available to every believer. Ezekiel also spoke of an out pouring of the spirit (Ezekiel 39:28, 29). God's spirit is available to any one who calls on the Lord, repenting for their sins and asking God to forgive their sins. This will be first manifested in their lives first as an attitude of learning and obeying what the spirit of God teaches. This is what Jesus is teaching in today's Gospel lesson.

## **The Gospel lesson –John 14:15-21 Holy Spirit filling manifests first in learning**

The Holy Spirit is nobody's private property. Speaking in tongues and healing are not the only manifestations of the Holy Spirit. Christian life from the day we are born again to the day we are with the Lord in heaven is a life in, by, through, with and for the spirit. The day we hear the truth of the gospel of our salvation and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and accepts him as our personal savior we will be marked with a seal, the promise of the Holy Spirit (Ep 1:13). He is like a deposit, a surety of our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession to the praise of His glory (Ep1:14).

The day we asked Jesus to come into our hearts He starts living in us. The more we submit ourselves to Him, the more He will be manifesting himself in manifold ways. But first he transforms us. That means he will be manifesting Himself in our new nature. We will become new people day by day. He will be in us and with us as comforter and a counselor. He is Emmanuel God with us and working for us. We need not fear for anything that may come upon

us in future. God alone knows what will happen, but he tells us all we need to know to prepare for the future. He wants us to live by His standards. Because He lives we also live. So let us submit ourselves totally to Him so that He will manifest Himself to the world through us. One day all our questions will be answered and makes everything clear to us .Till that time let us love Him and show it by our obedience and He will manifest His love through us and that is the fruit of the spirit. This is today's epistle lesson.

### **The Epistle Lesson – Gal 5:22-26 The fruit of the spirit**

A tree is known by its fruit. But everything starts with the seed of the word of truth of the spirit. When we obey the word of God and accept Jesus the incarnate word of God He lives in us. The words of Jesus they become life and spirit to us (John 6:63). The word becomes flesh that is it becomes alive in us when we are made alive by His word and we start bearing the fruit of the spirit that is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self control. No fruit knows whether it is good or not. Only those who taste tell the quality of the fruit. What will people say about the fruit of our lives? By this we show ourselves to be His disciples when we bear much fruit for the glory of God (John15:8). Let us be aware of the fact that the ax is already at the root of the trees and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire ( Mat 3:10). May God help us!

#### **Life Application and tips for daily devotions:**

The following are some devotional thoughts from various Pastors

**Monday:** Meditate Luke 13:6-9 –  
From Chris Benjamin

David & Joyce Chadwell tried to plant a garden in Africa. The soil there was so very rich that they decided to bring seeds from home back to Africa. So they planted their beans and peas, tomatoes, and other good seeds and waited for the rich nutrient-filled soil to yield a great harvest. And lo and behold huge plants sprung forth from the ground. Large plants, larger than they typically grew back home in America. And so they waited for the fruit. And they waited. And they waited. There weren't any fruit. There weren't even any blooms. For whatever reasons, the environment in Africa was wonderful for growing their seeds into

large, green, healthy plants, but there were no fruit. Rather disappointing wouldn't you say?

Compare to the parable. God is looking for fruit. He has a reason for expecting fruit from his people. God wants his people to bear fruit because he desires a harvest. *Bearing Fruit* has to do With God's purpose for us. If we are caught up and involved in Gods mission then we will bear Fruit. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit; we are immersed in an environment and connected to a source of life that will do more than grow big green leafy plants – it will bring forth fruit.

**Tues day:** Meditate on Gal 5:22-26

From Chris Benjamin

**1. What do we mean when we speak of the Fruit of the Spirit?**

- a. First, notice that there is "one fruit."
- b. "Fruit of the spirit" is not a way of talking about a list of good characteristics so as to make them sound holy or churchy. "Of the Spirit" means that these qualities are the result of the spirit active in our life together
- c. The Fruit of the Spirit are not a collector's set. They are not our individual possessions. They are virtues and virtues: 1) the disposition to act in a certain way that are rooted in life together; and 2) they are rooted in common soil which are the common values and faith of the Christian community, *so ...*

**2. We are concerned not merely with the fruit that individuals bear, but the fruit that springs forth from the church – from this congregation.** Now that involves all of us as individuals, but it is more than just us as individuals. Too often we tend to think of every Christian as a little tree in God's orchard. Growing in the spirit is not a matter for private study.

- a. Let's look at another teaching of Jesus using an agricultural image (**John 15:1-6**). Not only does this affirm what we said about being in step with God's spirit, it also indicates that if we are going to have any sort of spiritual life at all we must be connected to Christ. Now use a little logic – if I am connected with Christ and you are connected with Christ and he is connected with Christ and she is connected with Christ then aren't all of us

connected with Christ also connected with one another. Sure we are (and John even affirms that in his letters).

- b. The language in Galatians 5 is plural – *"Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other."* **If the Spirit animates and courses through the Church, then the church should be bearing producing giving forth the fruit of the spirit.**

**Wednesday:** Meditate on John 15:1-8

From Chris Benjamin

Before we get concerned about the fruit we first need to go back to the vine, our spirituality and our Christian walk is not based on the fruit we bear, but on the vine that gives that fruit life. It is about the Spirit coming into our life together and into our congregation and filling us so full with the love of Christ that we act toward one another and toward the world in ways that give glory to the God. Christians whose lives remain in Christ will bear fruit charged with the richness of the Holy Spirit.

I have heard it said that we are not judges but we are fruit inspectors. I am not sure we are worthy to be either. If we recognize the fruit of the spirit it is only because the love, joy, peace patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control are as easy for us to recognize as are apples, oranges, bananas, and grapes. The fruit inspector is God. He comes to us and wants more than a great big leafy plant. He seeks the fruit of the spirit that embodies before the world the sort of changed lives that God desires for all creation. The story of the man who owned a vineyard and a fig tree is not just a story of judgment – or fruit inspection – it is also a story of grace – or good gardening. There is still time to see a bountiful harvest.

The soil of any culture may not be the best, but the true vine can grow in the most hostile environments.

The true vine, the sign of God's mercy and love, was a horrible, scandalous cross raised up in a city garbage heap outside the respectable borders of town. If we remain in the true vine, nourished by the life-giving Holy Spirit, then there is real hope of bearing fruit.

## **Thursday:** Meditate on Gal 5:22-26

Do a little assessment using the questions given by Pastor John Ortberg from today to Saturday .

Here's the scale: "S" if you would say you are "Superior" in this dimension; "P" for "Pretty darn good"; "N" would mean "Needs improvement." You can use that scale or another if you want to. Just assess how your soul is doing.

### **Number One: Love**

- How tender is your heart towards God and towards other people?
- Do you find yourself habitually engaging in acts of servanthood?
- Do you ever have a critical, judgmental spirit in your heart?

Rate yourself "S" or "P" or "N." How are you doing on the "Love fruit" these days

### **Number 2: Joy**

- What is your current "irritability factor?" (If you're not sure, the person next to you may be willing to give you a little help.)
- Are you more inclined to speak words of complaint or gratitude?
- How often did you laugh this week? How much fun did you have?
- Are you able to choose Joy in times of frustration or difficulty?

Do you find yourself, even now, rationalizing your lack of Joy?

### **Number 3: Peace**

- To what degree are your heart and mind at rest in God?
- How consistently are you troubled or anxious?
- Would people who know you describe you as being contented or discontented?

How do you come out on Peace?

## **Friday: Meditate** on Gal 5:22-26

### **Number 4: Patience**

- How do you respond when you don't get your way or you're frustrated?
- Are you able to wait gracefully? Would people describe you as a "peaceful, patient waiter?"
- How do you handle it when people aren't moving as quickly as you would like?

How are you doing on Patience? If you have already moved on to Number 5, give yourself an "N," because you need Patience!

### **Number 5: Kindness**

- How inclined are you to lend someone a helping hand even though you're busy, or you know you won't get credit?
- How are you doing at encouraging and affirming people? Do you consistently take the time to actually notice people and listen to them?

### **Number 6: Generosity**

- What portion of your time and material resources are you actually giving—not just thinking about giving—to God, to the poor, to other people?
- Do you ever find yourself wanting to give just the least amount acceptable?
- Is your heart to give growing or shrinking?

That's Generosity. Rate yourself.

**Saturday:** Meditate on Gal 5:22-26

### **Number 7: Faithfulness**

- Would people around you say that you are dependable?
- When you say you are going to do something, it gets done.
- Do you ever use words to deceive or to put a spin on things?
- Do you ever wrestle with procrastination?

If you haven't started your list yet, give yourself an "N" on this one!

### **Number 8: Gentleness**

- How successfully do you speak the truth with grace?
- Do you ever get angry and inflict pain on someone just because it will feel good in the moment?
- Over the last week, how often have you come along side somebody who was hurting to give them comfort?

How are you doing on Gentleness?

### **Number 9: Self-control**

- Have any bad habits?
- Ever give into an impulse?
- How's your mouth doing these days?

Rate yourself on Self-control.

I want to ask you one more question. You don't have to write anything down. As we were walking through the Fruit of the Spirit, did anybody in here feel a little inadequate? It's a funny thing: when we come to the Fruit of the Spirit, this is the core of what spiritual growth is about. People get all kinds of goofy ideas about what spiritual maturity really looks like.

My daughter took me to see a movie this weekend. It was called "Saved." I don't necessarily recommend it, but it's one of those movies that takes a few real cheap shots at the faith, while part of it accurately shows what happens in a community when people get a distorted idea of what spirituality is. It's painful to watch.

Spiritual maturity—or spiritual formation—is defined at its core not by being busy with a lot of Christian activities, or knowing a lot about the Bible, or piling up spiritual accomplishments. The Pharisees did all of these things, and Jesus said they were the least fruitful of anybody. To grow in authentic Biblical love and joy and peace and patience—that's the center of the target! That's the kind of people we want to produce. That's the kind of person that you and I want to be. But sometimes, I can look at that list of qualities, and I am overwhelmed by how far I fall short. And I'll tell you something else. Sometimes, I start violating the Fruit of the Spirit before I get out of bed in the morning. I really do.