



## The Gift: Spirit, Gift & Truth | May 20, 2018

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**Reading:** Acts 1.4-5

### Introduction

- Discussion around the Holy Spirit often reveals assumptions. Some people are ignorant of the nature and work of the Spirit, some are interested, still others confused, suspicious or even fearful. Who is the Holy Spirit and what does the Holy Spirit do?
- Our experiences are valid but as with any learning the best way to start is to begin with listening. As Christians are people of the book (the Bible) we begin there. What language, or images does the Bible use for the Holy Spirit?
- We can get even more specific. How does Jesus speak about the Holy Spirit?

### The Spirit: Gift and Truth

- When reading Jesus you will notice that he often speaks of the Spirit in a couple of ways: in terms of *gift* and *truth*.
- Jesus says the Spirit is a gift to us, for us and through us.

### A gift to us:

- Acts 1.4-5 - to be received, not conjured or manipulated.
- In line with Genesis 1.1-2, 2.7 - the Spirit is beyond us, beyond our control. God gives us his breath. God is spirit, God is a giver and God gives us. We have always been beings of breath.
- Because God is the origin of life he is also the origin of truth, or reality, or what is.
- John 14.16 - Jesus says he will never leave us but will send us the Spirit who leads in to all truth. The truth is that God is the giver of life and we are receivers.

### **A gift for us:**

- Along with John 14.16 Jesus also says (John 15.26) "I will send you the Advocate - the Spirit of truth. He will testify all about me."
- Advocate: comforter, encourager, councillor.
- Notice Jesus' positive tone and language. Notice the timing - in the darkest hour, just before his death when the disciples are most troubled.
- The Spirit of truth will testify about Jesus, pointing us toward the truth which is bound up in Jesus.
- When Jesus speaks about the Spirit in relationship to truth this should ring some bells. Who else does Jesus speak about the truth in reference to?
- John 14.6 - Jesus is the way, truth, life; John 8.32 - Jesus' teachings will lead us into the truth which sets us free; John 14.26 - Jesus sends the Spirit "in my name" or as "my representative". The Spirit Jesus' speaks of is not disassociated from him but very much connected.
- *The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Jesus.* Jesus is not physically present on the earth but his Spirit is.
- The character we see and experience in Jesus is the same character to be expected in the Holy Spirit. There is no need for fear or confusion. The same love, humility, service and patience found in Jesus' character is represented by his Spirit also.

### **A gift through us:**

- Not just to us or for us, but *through* us.
- John 15.26 - the Spirit is given to teach us about Jesus (God's character and life revealed) but also to work through us to display that to others also.
- Acts 1.8 - The power or breath of God to share Jesus with the world. Both in the Old and New Testaments the Holy Spirit was

given in order for people to *do something*. Life with God's Spirit isn't an inward life but outward, sharing the hope and life of Jesus with everyone.

- This is what it both means to live in the truth and share the truth.

## **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. What has been your experience with the Holy Spirit?
2. What questions do you have about the Holy Spirit?
3. Why is starting with Jesus so important when we speak about the Holy Spirit? What is the importance on being clear about God's character when we speak about and aim to experience the work of the Holy Spirit?