

The Holy Spirit at Work

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[0 : 0 0] Thank you. Now I am going to him who sent me, yet none of you asks me, where are you going?

Because I have said these things, you are filled with grief. But I tell you the truth, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the counselor will not come to you, but if I go, I will send him to you.

When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment. In regard to sin, because men do not believe in me. In regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father where you can see me no longer.

And in regard to judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned. And can you turn to Acts 2, verse 22, page 1098.

Acts 2, verse 22. Men of Israel, listen to this. Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs which God did among you through him, as you yourself know.

[1 : 2 9] This man was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge. And you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him.

David said about him, I saw the Lord always before me, because he is at my right hand. I will not be shaken. Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices. My body also will live in hope, because you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay.

You have made known to me the paths of life. You will fill me with joy in your presence. Brothers, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day.

But he was a prophet, and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne. Seeing what was ahead, he spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to the grave, nor did his body see decay.

God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact. Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit, and has poured out what you now see and hear.

[2 : 4 6] For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said, The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet. Therefore let all Israel be assured of this.

God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ. When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the other apostles, Brothers, what shall we do?

Peter replied, Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children, and for all who are far off, for all whom the Lord your God will call.

With many other words he warned them, and he pleaded with them, Save yourselves from this corrupt generation. Those who accepted this message were baptized, and about 3,000 were added to their number that day.

Thanks very much. Well, keep your Bibles open there at those passages. Michael's going to come now and speak. As he's doing that, I'm going to hand out pens, so if you want to take notes and use the back of your new sheet for that, you can do that.

[4 : 07] I think most of you know who Michael is. I know him a little bit. He probably knows me a lot more. Yes. There we go. Good to have you today.

Thank you. Thanks. Thanks. It is good to be here. I was looking at your notes before that I was the father of a well-known local pastor.

I know myself. I don't know who the other fellow is. But it is good to be back with you once again in Carragalline. And we want to talk about the Holy Spirit's work this morning.

And so, as we've been reminded, have your Bibles open at those two passages that we read. How do you do that? Well, for some means, I'm sure you can think of, as we'll be referring to both of these passages we go through the message this morning.

Let's begin with a question. What is the principal work of the Holy Spirit? I wonder how you would answer that particular question.

[5 : 18] What is the principal work of the Holy Spirit? Last week I was at a very charismatic church, and I'm sure they would have said something like this, miraculous power of the Spirit.

And they would think of miracles performed in the power of the Spirit. But is that the principal work of the Holy Spirit?

Some people would say, yes, gifts are the principal work of the Holy Spirit. But that isn't the answer that the Scriptures give.

If you look at John chapter 16 and verse 14, you read these words. He, that is the Holy Spirit, the Counselor, the Comforter, He will bring glory to me by taking from it what is mine and making it known to you.

The principal work of the Holy Spirit is to make known the Lord Jesus Christ. That is His work.

[6 : 26] If somebody fill with the Holy Spirit, then they will want to testify to the Lord Jesus Christ. One has said that speaking of the Holy Spirit, He has as His supreme mission, the glorifying of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And I think we all this morning are conscious of the fact that we need the Holy Spirit to work in our lives and our individual lives. But what will that mean?

Well, it will mean, of course, a likeness to the Lord Jesus Christ. It will begin to take on the family likeness. There will be that fruit of the Spirit that is evident in our lives.

We will give the Lord Jesus the honour that is due to His holy name. We will be ready to be submissive to His every command. And the Lord Jesus will be glorified because the Holy Spirit is at work in our lives.

If we think of the church, what will it mean for the church to be filled with the Spirit? Well, there will be a greater awareness of the Lord Jesus as we come together to worship.

[7 : 44] The fruit of the Spirit, again, will be in evidence among us. We will not be able to do anything else but love each other because the love of Christ has been shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit.

The Lord Jesus will be honoured as we speak, as we converse, as we testify one to another of His goodness in our lives.

So, as individuals, we will be affected. As a church, we will be affected. But also, there will be an effect on the community in which we live because we will want to be witnesses to the Lord Jesus Christ.

We will be witnesses, of course, in the way that we live. We will be witnesses in the way that we speak. Our conversation will testify of Him who was crucified, who rose from the dead, and who ascended into glory.

We will not be able to be silent. The Holy Spirit is so necessary. It is He that gives us new birth.

[9 : 07] It is He that gives us new life. But that new life is in Christ. Now, the promise of John 16 and verse 7 is, I will send Him to you.

And when He comes, He will do certain things that will bring glory to the Lord Jesus Christ. And those verses that were read, first of all, from John chapter 16 and verses 8 to 11 are the verses that we're going to be looking at.

But we're going to be looking at them in the light of Acts chapter 2. Because I would believe that Acts chapter 2 is a commentary, if you like, of what the Lord is saying in Acts chapter 16.

When the Holy Spirit comes, this will happen. And on the day of Pentecost, it did happen. So let's look at this passage together.

And the first thing that we will notice is this. That the Holy Spirit will convict men of sin that they might turn to the Lord Jesus Christ.

[10 : 23] Look at verse 8. When He comes, He will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin. And then in verse 9, there's an explanation of that.

In regard to sin, because men do not believe in me. What was the principal sin that was identified on the day of Pentecost?

That one sin, that great sin which embraces all other sins. Well, this sin that men and women do not believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is the sin of unbelief. And in Acts 2, the Holy Spirit that had been promised comes.

And Peter preaches in the power of the Spirit. He's speaking, remember, to people who had witnessed the miracles.

[11 : 27] People who had had ample opportunity to see that God had sent His Son into the world. But they did not believe.

Hear Peter in Acts 2 and verse 22. Men of Israel, listen to this. Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did among you through Him as you yourself know.

Those miracles, those signs, those wonders, they were not done in the corner. People spoke about them. It was evident that there was someone different among them.

But they did not believe. And the Holy Spirit, on the day of Pentecost, speaking through the mouth of Peter, was witness for the prosecution.

He was exposing unbelieving hearts. Of course, unbelief had been apparent all through the ministry of the Lord Jesus.

[12 : 45] It had been demonstrated in different ways, but it was unbelief nonetheless. If you think of His birth, remember the wise men arrive at the palace of Herod.

And what does Herod do? Well, he calls the wise men and they look up the Holy Scriptures. They look up the Word of God. Where is this new king to be born?

Well, it's in Bethlehem. It says in Micah, chapter 5, and verse 2. But what does Herod do? He tries to murder him.

He was a king who couldn't accept any other. So it was a sin of unbelief. He rejected the one that had been promised. As we see the Lord Jesus in His unfolding ministry, we read in John, chapter 7, and verse 5, even His own brothers did not believe in Him.

Initially, He had a great following. But if we look at Acts, chapter 6, we're told that many of His people, many of those who claimed to be His disciples, did not follow Him.

[14 : 06] They did not continue with Him. He told them that His, He offered them living bread. This bread, He said, is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.

But they turned away from Him. They turned away in unbelief. And the comment that is given in Acts, in John, chapter 6, and verse 64, Jesus had known from the beginning which of them did not believe and who would betray Him.

So there was this constant rejection, this constant unbelief. And this unbelief reached its climax, of course, in the crucifixion of Jesus.

And we see the heinousness of sin. Jesus, of course, had referred to it in the parable of the vineyard. How servants had been sent.

How they'd been ill-treated, abused, and some of them killed. Last of all, the son of the owner of the vineyard was sent. But they murdered him.

[15 : 21] And empowered by the Spirit, on the day of Pentecost, Peter drives it home. You, he says, no one else, you, have been responsible.

And with the help of wicked men, put him to death, nailing him to the cross. But let all Israel be assured of this.

God has made this Jesus whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ. Here's the result of your unbelieving hearts.

You have crucified the Lord of glory. You have taken the hammer and put those nails into his hands and into his feet.

you have jammed that crown of thorns upon his head and you did it because of your unbelieving hearts. And as the Holy Spirit worked and testified to what they had done to the Lord Jesus Christ, the people were affected.

[16 : 33] Sin that had been identified led that day to the salvation of many. The Holy Spirit convinced three thousand on the day of Pentecost that they did not believe in Jesus.

They were, as we are told in Acts 2, cut to the heart. They cried out because they saw the awfulness of the sin of unbelief.

What shall we do? And the answer comes back clearly, repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sin.

The Holy Spirit convicted men of their sin, the sin of unbelief, that they might turn to the Lord Jesus Christ in belief.

Let me ask you the question this morning. Do you know the work of the Holy Spirit in your heart convicting you of the sin of unbelief?

[17 : 47] Are you convicted of your rejection of the one who performed those signs and wonders? Are you convicted of your unbelief?

Oh, so many today say, I believe in Jesus. I believe he was a historical character. I was listening to an interview coming over today of two sisters.

They were religious. Oh, yes, if you asked them, did they believe in Jesus, they would have said yes. But do they believe in him in the sense that they've turned from their sin to the only way of salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ?

Christ. You can't sit on the fence as far as these things are concerned, can you? Remember those words of Jesus in John 3 and verse 18, whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son.

So we see on the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit brought glory to the Lord Jesus Christ as 3,000 people vowed their knees to the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

[19 : 24] How we need the Holy Spirit in our own lives, how the community in which we find ourselves needs to know something of the work of the Holy Spirit that they too might be convicted of sin.

For a time I was in membership in a church in the north of Ireland and there was a man who used to pray. He's now in heaven enjoying his reward, but he used to have a very quaint prayers and one of his prayers was this, bless those who are sick of our fellowship.

Well, we knew what he meant. But, you know, another thing that he used to pray was this, Lord, you know, we cannot raise an anxious thought.

And we can speak to people, we can testify to people, but oh, it needs the Holy Spirit to come upon them that they might have that anxious thought and that they might turn to the Lord Jesus Christ in repentance and faith.

Let's pray for our community that as we witness, the Holy Spirit will take our words and convict them of sin in regard to sin because they do not believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

[21 : 03] There's an old hymn I used to sing, I know not how the Spirit moves, convincing men of sin, revealing Jesus through the Word, create in faith in Him.

But the Spirit does convince, and the Spirit does convince. May we know His work in our midst. The second point, the Holy Spirit reveals the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ.

John 16 and verse 8. When He comes, He will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness.

righteousness. And then in verse 10, in regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father where you can see me no longer.

So how does the Spirit convince of the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ? Well, Peter on the day of Pentecost shows very clearly that the death of Jesus was an unrighteous act.

[22 : 25] Acts 2 and verse 23. You, with the help of wicked men, put Him to death, nailing Him to the cross.

They were aware of it. It was recent history. They had said, and their leaders had said, by our law, He ought to die because He claims to be the Son of God.

It was blasphemy. The law was clear. Blasphemy meant death. Jesus should be put to death. It was a righteous act in their eyes.

But Jesus had been approved of God. He always had the Father's approval. There is His baptism. This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.

At His transfiguration, the same thing happened. And Jesus Himself was able to say, I do always those things that please Him. But the people had said it was a righteous thing in putting Him to death.

[23 : 36] And they put Him to death between two thieves. It was a travesty of justice. But here Peter, on the day of Pentecost, as He proclaims in the power of the Spirit, He shows very clearly that the Lord Jesus Christ was righteous.

And that the Father had vindicated Him. God raised Him from the dead, He says in verse 24.

Verse 32, God has raised this Jesus to life. and we are all witnesses to this fact. Therefore, let all Israel be assured of this.

God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ. Far from being guilty, the Father was saying clearly, I have vindicated my Son.

The one you crucified was the Lamb without spot or blemish. And the Holy Spirit is drawing attention to the fact that the Father had accepted the sacrifice of His Son.

[25 : 03] Son. The Holy Spirit through Peter was proclaiming clearly that the death of Jesus was an unrighteous act.

When He comes, He will convict the world in regard to righteousness, in righteousness, because I am going to the Father. And He had gone to the Father, and He sent forth His Spirit.

They saw Him no more, but He lived on in the power of His Spirit. Notice how He draws attention to the resurrection in Acts 2 and verses 24 and 34.

Indeed, the majority of Peter's message that day centered on the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. He had gone home to the Father by way of the cross.

They saw Him no more, but He lives on a living, risen Savior. And the Holy Spirit testifies to this fact. It is as though the Father had placed His seal of approval on His Son by raising Him from the dead.

[26 : 24] And as Peter preached, so the Holy Spirit took the Word and planted it in the hearts of the hearers.

It became a living, acting, life-giving Word. These people had known the Holy Scriptures. They knew the Old Testament.

Many of them had memorized whole sections of it. They'd grown up with the Word of God. They would have known Psalm 16. Psalm 16 that is quoted by the Apostle Peter on the day of Pentecost.

You will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One, your Righteous One, your Perfect One, see decay.

On the day of Pentecost, they saw that this spoke of the Lord Jesus Christ, the one they had recently crucified.

[27 : 30] They saw it now clearly, and they saw themselves as guilty. They saw themselves as the ones who had crucified the risen Christ.

He wasn't with them anymore, but he descended up on high. He sent the Holy Spirit, that they might hear these things and believe.

No wonder they shouted out, brothers, what shall we do? They were saying, is there any hope for us? And Peter is able to say, yes, there is hope for you.

If you turn in faith to this crucified, risen Christ, and we're told in Acts 2 verse 40 with many other words, he warned them and pleaded with them, save yourselves from this corrupt generation.

You see, they came to see that Jesus was right and that they were wrong, totally wrong.

[28 : 43] do you know the Holy Spirit working in your life? Do you see him as the righteous one, the perfect one?

You do not see him in the flesh, he has gone to the Father, but he sent the Holy Spirit that we might see these things, and that the very righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ should become ours.

Not only that our sin might be wiped clean, but also the very righteousness of Christ should be put to our account.

In 1927, there was a revival on the east coast of England. I'm not talking about a mission. I'm not talking about something that man arranges. I'm talking about a work of God. A work of the Holy Spirit.

[29 : 56] A man had been appointed to preach a series of messages in a place called Loisdorf. It was a fishing town. It happened to coincide with the herring season.

The herrings went along and the boats caught the fish and then they moved up the coast following the shoals of herring. Big industry in those days. A lot of Scots fishermen had come down.

They were religious people. But they come down for the fishing season. They come down with their wives who gutted the herrings salted them as was a custom in those days.

But because they were religious they didn't go to sea on Sunday. They went to the church. It happened to be a Baptist church. church. And what happened?

An ordinary sermon was preached. I've read it. There's nothing particularly wonderful about it. It was ordinary. But it was made extraordinary by the Holy Spirit.

[31 : 11] Because people saw him as he really was. The righteous one. And they knew that they were not righteous and they turned to him. Many fishermen.

Many local people. And as they went up the coast so they took that message with them. And others were converted. It went right up to Scotland to the fishing villages.

It reached Edinburgh and Glasgow. And a great work was done. Because the Holy Spirit was present testifying to the Lord Jesus Christ.

That he was the righteous one. That he had ascended to the Father. And that the Father had vindicated him by raising him from the dead.

God said to God. The third and final point is this. That the Holy Spirit reveals the triumph of the Lord Jesus Christ.

[32 : 26] His triumph over evil. John 16 and verse 8. When he comes he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment.

And verse 11. In regard to judgment because the prince of this world now stands condemned.

And on the day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit reveals the Lord Jesus Christ as king and ruler. the one who had triumphed over the principalities and powers of darkness.

Look at Acts 2 and verses 29 to 33. Brothers I tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried.

And his tomb is here to this day. But he was a prophet. And knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne.

[33 : 44] Seeing what was ahead he spoke of the resurrection of Christ. That he was not abandoned to the grave nor did his body see decay.

God has raised this Jesus to life and we are all witnesses of the fact exalted exalted to the right hand of God.

He has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear. what does Peter say empowered by the Spirit?

What does he testify to? He testifies to one who wasn't allowed to remain in the grave but one who is the fulfillment of the prophet David that there was one from his very own line who would sit on his throne.

he testifies to one who has been exalted to the right hand of God the Father having triumphed over the principalities and powers of darkness having condemned the prince of this world having condemned him through his death on the cross Paul inspired by the Spirit testifies to these things in Colossians 2 and verse 15 having disarmed the powers and authorities he made a public spectacle of them triumphing over them by the cross a few days before people had looked at the situation and it seemed utterly hopeless there was their prince the one they thought who would redeem

[35 : 54] Israel hanging on a cross naked a spectacle to the watching crowd taken away and buried and a stone rolled in front of the tomb and a seal placed upon it with guards even his disciples spoke of Jesus in the past tense remember them on the Emmaus road in Luke 24 and verse 21 we had hoped that he was the one who would redeem Israel but remember that stranger who walked with them even the risen Christ speaking to them and rebuking them did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory but the glory had now been entered the son had triumphed the devil had been defeated the conquering king was demonstrating his power that day as three thousand people bowed the knee to him my friends what a saviour who has done all this when he comes he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment and the holy spirit has come and testified to all that

Jesus came to say and to do and the holy spirit calls us to submission to the triumphant Christ hear Peter in Acts 2 and verse 36 therefore let all Israel be assured of this God has made this Jesus whom you crucified both Lord and Christ he is Lord we sometimes speak of Jesus and we leave out his lordship but we cannot according to scripture he is Lord and he demands our submission what were the people to do when they heard the information they were to repent and be baptized and they did repent they did believe they were baptized and they continued in the apostles fellowship and in their teaching they had been delivered from the judgment that was to come they walked with the victorious risen

Christ they were convinced of sin and the righteousness and judgment so what are we going to do with the information that we have received today well there's two ways if you're not a believer turn from your sin to him it's as simple and as wonderful as that if you are the Lord's then there's a world out there that needs to hear of this Jesus but don't do it in your own strength look for the Holy Spirit to come and take your words pray that you will know the working of God's Spirit in your life that you may constantly glorify the Lord Jesus Christ pray that our words of witness will be effectual that they will be taken by the

Spirit and used to bring people to trust in the Savior but there we pray something else we do not despise the day of small things of one here and another there coming to salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ indeed we rejoice and why shouldn't we seeing that the angels rejoice over one sinner that repents so we don't despise the day of small things but there we pray that God would move by his Holy Spirit that Karageline would be transformed in 1904 and 5 there was a revival in Wales and a man got on a train early one Sunday morning to go to see this revival that was happening in the north part of Wales got off the train and he met somebody he says

I've come to witness the revival where is it he said walk down the road two miles and you will feel it the presence of God was so real courts didn't sit because there was no one charged with any offense even the unbeliever kept away from his sin such was the presence of God could it happen in Caragalline well I can't do it Johnny here can't do it but God can oh that he might come in the power of his Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit will testify of

[42 : 08] Christ let's pray father in heaven we're conscious so often of the coldness of our hearts we're conscious of the fact that we're not as thrilled with the message of salvation as we perhaps once were move in our own hearts revive our hearts we pray and send us out into the community that we might testify that we might show Jesus by the way that we live by the way that we act but also by the way that we speak that your name might be glorified and uplifted amen we we we we