

The Holy Spirit

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[0 : 0 0] listening I'm asked to announce that there is juice after the service but wait a minute wait a minute if anyone would like hot chocolate not the music group okay could you come to the back or could you go to the back is that okay don't disappoint that lady at the back and her husband who put all these cups out for you to drink hot chocolate or juice and god will bless you and bless carol let's read together god's word found in acts chapter 1 and verses 4 to 14 let's then read together and hear god's word on one occasion while he was eating with them he gave them this command do not leave jerusalem but wait for the gift my father promised which you have heard me speak about for john baptized with water but in a few days you will be baptized with the holy spirit so when they met together they asked him lord are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to israel he said to them it is not for you to know the times or dates the father has set by his own authority but you will receive power when the holy spirit comes on you and you will be my witnesses in jerusalem and in all judea and samaria and to the ends of the earth after he said this he was taken up before their very eyes and the cloud hid him from their sight they were looking intently up into the sky as he was going when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them men of galilee they said why do you stand here looking into the sky this same jesus who has been taken from you into heaven will come back again in the same way you have seen him go into heaven then they returned to jerusalem from a hill called the mount of olives a sabbath day's walk from the city when they arrived they went upstairs to the room where they were staying those present were peter john james and andrew philip and thomas bartholomew and matthew james son of alpheus and simon the zealot and judas son of james they all joined together constantly in prayer along with the woman and mary the mother of jesus and with his brothers and god will add a blessing to reading and the hearing of that word tonight tonight and

they were filled what do you think it must have been like for those disciples as they waited in expectancy on the promise that jesus had made to them you see god has given to the church two gifts the gift of love himself in christ god's love as revealed in jesus and the gift of the holy spirit and of course the holy spirit himself give gifts and only those who see the invisible can do the impossible i want us to concentrate just for a few minutes this evening on the holy spirit the holy spirit uses us we do not use him he is given to us not to be manipulated not to be negotiated with he is there that we may be open in our lives to him and that he may use us to his glory when god gave the gifts to church he did so in order that the world would not see christianity as simply an external ethic but an internal dynamic transforming experience and that is what the church should be craving for and asking god to do within its remit within the community in which it is situated that we may allow the holy spirit to do his work not our work but his work in the world you see we so need to make our lives available in order he can freely flow through us and not be stagnated by our unwillingness to release our bodies for his service the understanding of the doctrine of the holy spirit is extremely important for the complete functioning of the body of christ when you look at the life of the lord jesus christ from beginning to end you see the holy spirit had an important part to play in his life he was there at his conception matthew chapter 1 and verse 18 she was found to be with child through the holy spirit when he was 12 years old we see jesus in the temple his mother and father had thought he was with them and then

found out that he wasn't and they hurriedly rushed back to Jesus to see if they could locate him and only the Holy Spirit could have enabled Jesus to say such words. I must be about my Father's business. We see the Holy Spirit involved in his baptism. The Spirit of God came. Matthew chapter 3 and verse 16 saw the Spirit of God descend like a dove at his testing or temptation. Matthew 4 and 11 the Spirit ministered to him and all through his ministry the Holy Spirit was important in his life and all through our ministry we need to allow the Holy Spirit to be important in our lives. The last message which Jesus promised to the disciples was the Holy Spirit. John 16 and verse 7 if I do not go he cannot come and he will teach you all things not just some things he will teach you what you need to know to live the Christian life and to be an ambassador for me. The first message of this in Christ is to receive the Holy Spirit, the *pneuma* to those disciples in the upper room. John chapter 20 and verse 22 and his parting words before he ascended was a promise of power from the Holy Spirit. Acts chapter 1 and verse 4 do not leave Jerusalem but wait for the gift my Father promised which you have heard me speak about. Wait for the promise and oh how the church today needs to wait in expectancy that God will do a mighty work in and through it that God will enable the church to radiate the love of Christ and radiate the power of Christ and radiate the holiness of Christ and when Jesus went back to his heaven that was the first message that he did. The first message he did was to send the Holy Spirit. In Acts chapter 2 the first promise Christianity made to men was repent and receive the Holy Spirit, the gift of the Holy Spirit. Acts chapter 2 in verse 38 the first

question to decide if a new testament person was a Christian was found in Acts chapter 19 in verse 2 did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed. The Holy Spirit has done through the centuries been using men and women who have made themselves available to him and he has blessed them in amazing ways and you look through church history and you see time and time again when God has brought a revival into nations and into countries how men and women have been found deep in prayer that God would do something mighty amongst them. God wants to use this church to be a light in the community. Doesn't want to use a building he wants to use the people who congregate here but that means that we have to make ourselves available wholeheartedly available to him. The Holy

Spirit will use us not abuse us when you look at scripture you see some examples of how the Holy Spirit used people. The Holy Spirit speaks into lives of men and women you think of Philip and the Ethiopian and how he was motivated. Philip was to go to that man in the chariot and ask him if he understood what he was reading and Philip's response was no. I don't come up and tell me and Philip had the opportunity of sharing the good news with that man and so the Holy

[14 : 45] Spirit can use you to speak into the lives of men and women whom you meet day by day and you can use those situations to formulate the gospel into a situation that they will understand and know he doesn't just speak but he teaches. John chapter 14 verse 26 he will teach you all things said Jesus to the disciples and that promise is no different today than it was then. The Holy Spirit wants to be the master teacher as we read God's word as we come before him in prayer as we lay ourselves open before him he wants to teach us all things those things important that we can share with others he prays we are told by

Paul in the church at Rome that the Spirit intercedes on our behalf you know how it sometimes is difficult what you want what you want to say to God when we are really in the Spirit the Holy Spirit takes our words and he puts them before God he helps us to say the things that we should be saying and he leads all who are led are sons of God and if God speaks then I must listen there's no alternative if God speaks to me I have to listen to what he's saying and if he teaches I must be willing to learn from him and if he prays I must be found on my knees

I'm currently reading Francis Magaw's book on praying Hyde a great man of God 19th century person he says this this means he talks about Hyde and his prayer life this means gaining the same heart of prayer and the same burden that Jesus had Hyde was called the apostle of prayer his own prayer life was summed up as this I that I might burn out rather than rust out I might burn out rather than rust out and the secret of

John Hyde's prayer life was this it was a life of prayer and so if he leads I must follow and we cannot fill him but we have to allow him to fill us Paul says the church on emphasis be filled with the spirit that simply means let there be an ever continuing replenishment in my life of God's Holy Spirit for you see the Holy Spirit never leaves a surrendered vessel empty when we give ourselves over completely to him he has to fill us with himself we need to get rid of the dross from our lives that God may work in us in a way that will bring him glory of course there are some people who would teach us that unless you speak in tongues you're not filled with the Holy

Spirit nowhere have we taught that in scripture in fact Sidlow Baxter would tell us that one of the first things that really happens when filled with the Holy Spirit is not that you speak in tongues but you learn to hold the one tongue you have and if you take yourself back to your school days or even to listening to your mother and father when they say to you hold your tongue have you ever tried to hold your tongue and speak if you can do that you're a wonderful person but I don't think many people could

[20 : 53] God wants to fill us with his Holy Spirit that our vocabulary might be God like and our lives might radiate the likeness of Christ so when God fills us and when we allow God to fill us and the Holy Spirit to do his work in us what happens there is a new consciousness of Christ God in dwelling Paul says to the church at Colossae Christ in you the hope of glory 1 verse 27 Christ in you the hope of glory and

Andrew Murray goes on to say about that this means gaining the same heart of prayer as Jesus and the same burdens which Christ had there is a new consciousness of Christ everything we do is done with Christ in control and Christ in our mind a new concept of prayer never have we prayed like this before when God fills us and we begin to say things that we didn't even think we're going to say but it's God speaking through us the Holy Spirit speaking through us in Jude chapter 1 verse 21 he writes this keep yourselves in the love of

God by praying in the Spirit keep yourself in the love of God by praying in the Spirit very often we can say words but they have no meaning but when we allow the Holy Spirit to captivate us and we sometimes don't know what to say he takes those words and he puts them before the throne of grace there's a new Christ likeness of character and the real test the real test in that is not tongues it's not healing it's not miracles but it is the ugly character made beautiful the selfish heart made generous and the embittered spirit full of forgiveness and that is a new

Christ likeness of character that the Holy Spirit brings to us and it is a new communicativeness of Christ we know what it means to gossip the gospel Christianity is one beggar telling another beggar where he can find bread Christianity is you helping another person find life life in Christ and life filled with the Holy Spirit and when that happens revival takes place when the

Holy Spirit is allowed to come upon God's people as never before revival takes place dr jim purvis the baptist union mission and ministry advisor says this we need a real expectant expectation and longing and dependency on the Holy Spirit's infilling and enabling mission that is not birthed out of a prayerful longing for God's presence felt and God's directing known is likely to be as ineffective as mission without love and forgiveness and reconciliation at its center the church today not just this church but the church today needs to be reawakened we need to be brought out of our slumber and our sleep that

[26 : 51] Jesus may be seen to be preeminent in everything and we need as Christian people to be able to say to our friends and our neighbors and our families to say to them and invite them to come to a church that will attempt them to do the impossible revival refers to a spiritual awakening from a state of dormancy or stagnation in the life of the believer it encompasses the resurfacing of love for God an appreciation of God's holiness a passion for his word and his church a convicting awareness of personal and corporate sin a spirit of humility and a desire for repentance and growth in righteousness you see the church needs to know what it means to repent before God before he will do anything in its midst

Andrew McCray some of you might remember him Andrew McCray was the general secretary of the baptist union of Scotland a number of years ago and he wrote one of the books he wrote was called your church must grow must choose if it wants to grow your church must choose if it wants to grow so often he says the church spends its time choosing whether guitars should be used in worship the kitchen requires two electric sockets rather than six the building should be painted lime green or bottle green or yellow as it is outside we weren't given a choice someone just did it it's okay instead of its priorities strategies programs emphasis involvement and mission and the

Reverend Jim Graham who recently passed away to be with his Lord talked many years ago when he came to an Elba meeting the church is a school for sinners the church is a school for sinners where we learn a new way of living a new way of doing a new way of loving sometimes that can be difficult they can be hard lessons to learn but they can be beneficial lessons and they can be empowering lessons if we are willing to let the Holy Spirit have his way amongst us for if we do not believe in the growth of the church then we do not believe that the body of

Christ is alive and growth we're not just talking about numbers here we're talking about individuals growing in grace and in love if this church remained the same next year with the same amount of people who came here but we are all different and we have grown in grace and in Christian likeness then that's wonderful and God can use that but I believe that if we allowed God to use us to grow in love and in grace and in forgiveness and in Christ likeness we would not be the same because those whom we speak to and those whom we relate to will want to know what it is that's made us different and they'll want to come to this church to find out but if we remain the same then the body of

Christ is not alive and we imply it's doomed to death in that case it's doubtful whether we truly believe in the risen Christ says Macrae because if we believed truly and totally believed in the risen Christ we would let him fashion our lives and shape our lives in such a way that this world this community your community wherever it is will know the difference but are we willing to let him do that in our lives how we need to pray that the

[33 : 12] Holy Spirit would come upon us in a new way would shape us differently would motivate us and we would see amazing things happening because he is in control and not us father god thank you for who you are thank you for what you want to do with us bless us we pray and grant and grant to us and infilling of your Holy Spirit that you in your trinity may take preeminence thanks in everything we do and everything we see and everything we think for

Jesus glory amen so Thank you.