

Getting to Grips with

God

How our understanding of God changes everything

Part 3: Welcoming The Spirit

Session #3 The role of the Spirit in the life of the believer

"... For this God is our God..." – Psalm 48v 14

Sladebrook Evangelical Church

www.sladebrook.org.uk

Introduction and Aim of this Teaching Series:

This series of Sunday morning talks introduces us to the magnificent doctrine of God. Often trivialised (and certainly simplified) Christian faith and maturity depends on an ever-increasing appreciation of who God is and what He has done. As well as “*getting to grips with God*” we will also attempt to loosen our grip on what God is not, dispelling some commonly held misunderstandings. It is hoped that with Scripture as our guide and with the Holy Spirit’s help, we will discover more about the God we worship and seek to apply this knowledge in our daily Christian walk and witness.

Subject in this series include:

- Honouring God the Father (September)
 - *Who God is (and isn't) – Reality, Trinity and revelation of God/unhelpful stereotypes*
 - *God in God's own words – biblical descriptions of God/Who He is/what He does*
 - *Finding the Father's Heart – understanding just how much God loves us, and how that should be experienced*
- Following God the Son (October)
 - *Why Jesus changes everything for everyone*
 - *Finding acceptance in Christ – what Jesus has brought us into: forgiveness/acceptance/purpose/unconditional love/grace*
 - *The current role/ future prospects of Jesus and His church*
- Welcoming God the Spirit (November)
 - *Who is the Holy Spirit? Confusions and clarifications regarding the Holy Spirit*
 - *What does He do? The ministries and manifestations of the Spirit*
 - *How should He work in me? The role of the Spirit in the life of the believer*

Getting to Grips with God: The role of The Spirit in the life of the Believer

No doubt you have heard the illustration that Christians are more like colanders than buckets: they tend, as D.L. Moody once famously said, to leak! If only we could retain the spiritual highs! That sense of the Spirit's presence, His activity and His blessings can, at times, be so vivid, and yet, not long after, we wonder if we imagined it, as things return to "normal."

The New Testament heralds the age of the Spirit. As post-Pentecost people, we are no longer promised occasional empowerment, or infrequent visitations of the Spirit. Gone is the angst of King David's cry *"take not your Holy Spirit from me"* (Ps. 51v11) The Spirit no longer makes occasional forays into human affairs. His is now a personal, permanent ministry within the lives of God's people everywhere. As Joel predicted and Peter explained: *"In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy."* (Joel 2v/Acts 2v 17-18) Note the promise is for *"all people"*, not just Judges, Kings and super-spiritual saints, but *"...even on my servants..."* The age of the Spirit is indeed a fulfilment of all that the Old Covenant looked and longed for and also a precious prospect of what life in heaven's glory will be.

So how should this precious reality affect the way we live? What is the role of the Spirit in the believer's life? How, as the Spirit's influence within us develops, can we remain in the good of these things? Paul says to *"keep in step with the Spirit"* (Gal.5v25) not to *"quench"* His activity (1 Thess. 5v19) and to *"keep on being filled with the Spirit."* (Eph. 5v18) Such exhortations and warnings should motivate every spiritual step we seek to take. Growing in Christ cannot happen apart from the work of the indwelling Spirit of God. Neither can a lost world be reached unless the Spirit's power is released. The church's challenge is clear: *Do we help or hinder the work of the Holy Spirit?* In this session we will consider some of the practical implications of seeking to live the Spirit-filled life.

Read: Romans Chapter 8 v1-17

(Also: Rom. 12v 3-8; Gal. 5v 16-26; 1 Cor. 3v 16-17; 12v 1-11; Rev. 1v 9-11; - for more references about The Holy Spirit in the life of the Believer.)

The role of The Spirit in the life of the Believer:

Once we realise who The Holy Spirit is and what He does, we must look for His leading in our lives. Here are the 3 essential areas in which He works:

1. In Salvation: The indwelling Spirit: How am I born of the Spirit?

The Holy Spirit's role has always been essential within the redemptive purposes of God. Jesus Himself declared that firstly we need to be "born of the Spirit."

2. In Sanctification: The infilling Spirit: How am I filled with the Spirit?

Once we are born of the Spirit, He not only indwells us, but seeks to commence His life-long work of transforming us to become fruitful and more like Christ.

3. In Service: The empowering Spirit: How am I gifted by the Spirit?

The gifts of the Holy Spirit are essential if we are to go beyond simple social reform and on to a supernatural ministry that edifies others and glorifies God.

Welcoming the Spirit:

Questions:

- ***Are you born again?*** *How were you aware of the Holy Spirit at work in you? Share your testimony being sure to **comment on how the Spirit continues to bring noticeable change in your life.***
- ***What is our part in encouraging the Fruit of the Spirit?***
- *How is the fruit of the Spirit different from similar attributes that are seen in non-Christians?*
- ***Can you identify any of the New Testament gifts in your life?***
- ***Do you think that all of the gifts of the Spirit are in use and therefore available today? Explain your answer.***
- ***Which gift/s would you like to use for God? How did you discover your gifts? How would you encourage someone to discover theirs?***
- ***How do we tend to approach the discovery and use of gifts within the church? Is it working? Is it similar to the New Testament way?***

Response:

- ***As we draw our studies in the Holy Spirit to a close, what is the main challenge that will stay with you?***
- ***Think about your relationship with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Look again at your spiritual routines. How might they go deeper from now on?***
- ***Pray for God's help in revitalizing your relationship with Him, seeking to honour the Father, follow the Son and welcome the Spirit in fresh and significant ways***