

CCH Seminar on the Holy Spirit 1st July 2020

“Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace” Eph 4:1-3

Before we start housekeeping- handout (NB resources), [questions](#)- readers x8, prayer x1. SONG? Record it on zoom audio only. Another reason to stay muted when listening to one another.

Welcome and intros!

Let me start with that verse. Eph 4. Welcome! 2nd of what could be called “hot potato” evenings.

1. Recognising the dangers!

- a. misrepresent the HS- so we pray for my teaching, and our listening after long day
- b. Disunity- has been an area brought painful division to the church- hence eph 4. Make every effort. Strong language. Have to work tonight listen and to love!
- c. major on minors, worse minor on majors.
(so hope get balance full teaching of scrip on this, this in itself should remind us that where there are differences we may be closer than we think).

2. Explaining the approach!

- a. 7 aspects of the doctrine of the HS taken from throughout scrip. Using lens of the Names of The Holy Spirit which correspond with those aspects of his Person and Work. Hence Stats in grey. Starting with who Holy Spirit is in relationship with the Trinity, and then roughly in the order of our experience in the Christian life.
- b. First 5 in first half hour. Then a pause. Breakout groups. to do 2 things (see box) or if prefer just be quiet on your own. The slow down for point 6 (gifts- prob most questions, though perhaps not most important!). 7 then song. **Questions [here](#)**- I’ve tried to categorise them into these 7 topics and will try and answer as we go along).
- c. Hundreds of references to the HS in the Bible, so despite length of handout this will be an introduction, and probably there’ll be some disappointments for everyone!

3. Seeking the unity!

- a. Like when talked about women in ministry. My first aim for us this evening is to stay united. We may differ on some areas (some of what cover secondary issues, where bible believing Christians disagree). But opportunity to seek to love and respect and understand one another.
- b. **SO LET’S PRAY**

1) The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God who loves

*Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. **Genesis 1:2.***

*Stats: “Spirit of God”= OTx14, NTx11; “Spirit of the Lord”= OTx20, NTx4
Other passages: Judg 3:10, Luke 4:18, Acts 5:3-4, 1 Cor 3:16, 2 Cor 3:17.*

- *He is God!*
 - First ref to HS in OT.
 - Reminder in passing he is involved in creation.
 - He’s the Spirit of GOD!
 - This is central to who he is- the third member of the Trinity...Fully God.

Q: Any evidence of the HS activity in the OT? Yes. Creation & Life giving, and empowering, particularly judges (Judg 3:10 othniel) prophets, kings even craftsmen. But episodic and for purpose. OT looks forward to day when all infilled with the HS, and all speak for God.

- *He is a Person in relationship!*
 - He's a person. Can be grieved, lied to. Not the "Force" Star Wars. Not a drug.
 - Yes Bible almost inanimate lang "filled with Spirit", "quench the Spirit", but HE!
 - So we musn't call him "IT", lovingly sound klaxon in your life group!
 - He's in relationship with Father and Son. When Bible says "God is Love" reminder that God already is in relationship with himself before he created us! He's an outgoing loving God.

Lesson: *Worship the God who is Three in one! Spirit is God!*

2) The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Jesus who spotlights

He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you.
John 16:14.

*Stats: Spirit of Christ= NTx2, Spirit of Jesus= NTx2, Spirit of His Son=NTx1
 Other passages: John 14:16, John 16:7, Acts 16:7, 1 Peter 1:11.*

- *He is like Jesus!*
 - Gk word for Holy Spirit in John's gospel is *paraclete*. Lit "one alongside".
 - Such a lovely picture, esp if weary or discouraged in these tough days.
 - Key verse is John 14:16. "And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate/paraclete to help you and be with you for ever –the Spirit of truth"
 - As in kids spot on Pentecost (▲cricket photo). Jesus was teacher, encourager, friend, counsellor, advocate to friends. Holy Spirit more of the same, though not geographically limited in just one place, like Jesus' earthly body was.
 - So if hard to get head around HS, think of Jesus. He's like Jesus. Spirit of Jesus!
- *He is a "self-effacing" Person*
 - John 16:14 he glorifies Jesus. Has been described as his spotlight, or even floodlight role. Like floodlights on a church or spotlight at theatre, points away from himself.
 - When theatres reopen (and heard yesterday 70% of them might not) don't spend all your time looking up at the lighting behind. Spotlight wants you to look on stage.
 - In this way Holy Spirit wants us to focus on Jesus! Glorify Jesus, get to know Jesus.
 - The great Pentecost event was a day when actually Peter preached about *Jesus!*
 - A church passionate about the Spirit will be a church that is passionate about Jesus.
 - A person that is filled with the HS will be turned away from themselves. Esp now!!

Lesson: *glorify the Spirit by coming to know and love and be like Jesus!*

3) The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Truth who teaches

I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. **John 16:12-13.**

- *He taught the first disciples about Jesus*
 - This is called **inspiration**. This verse in John is often misapplied, Jesus is talking in the Upper Room to the apostles who became Bible writers. HS would help them post the cross and resurrection to understand all that they couldn't take in now.
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 - 2 Peter 1 was a passage we looked at in Bible series- men spoke from God as they were carried along by the HS (ESV). Like a boat blown by Wind.
- *He teaches unbelievers about Jesus*
 - this is called **conviction**.

- John 16, HS will convict the world of sin, righteousness, judgement.
- Talking in Take a look outreach, have to have that experience like Peter in the boat of “go away from me Lord I’m a sinful man”. Wonderfully, because of Cross, he accepts us!
- HS makes Jesus real to us, so that we are born again (more on that in a mo).
- *He teaches believers about Jesus*
 - This is called **illumination**.
 - God the Holy Spirit takes the Word of God and applies them to our hearts, and sharper than a double-edged sword, we find the Spirit of God applying the written Word of God to our very soul.

Lesson: Don’t separate the Word and Spirit!

It’s very unhelpful to divide churches into *Word churches* (good teaching) and *Spirit churches* (good worship or displaying the gifts of the Spirit). The sword of the Spirit (Eph 6) IS the word of God. The Spirit and Word go together. In Hebrew and Greek, the word for Spirit could also be breath. It’s on the breath that words are carried. You couldn’t have the Word without the Spirit.

Q: How does experience and the Bible come together to inform our understanding of the Holy Spirit? At this point, I’d like to remind us of the cheese we thought about in the Bible sermon series- do go back to those sermons. **BRIE**. Bible, Reason, Institution, Experience. We said that though we will read the Bible through the lens of our common sense, church history and especially our experiences, it’s the Bible that is the authority. Jesus himself submitted to Scripture as his authority and so should we. Any experiences of God must be measured by the Scriptures, and can’t be in contradiction to the Scriptures.

You see I can’t help feeling that sometimes some fuzzy thinking with no basis in Scripture is smuggled into the church through the back door under the guise of the “Holy Spirit”. As we’ve seen with the early church, a Spirit filled church will be devoting themselves to the apostles teaching, and the Spirit and Word are never in contradiction. Theol college> “now listen to God”

4) The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Life who regenerates

*But when the kindness and love of God our Saviour appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Saviour. **Titus 3:4-6***

*Stats: “Holy Spirit”= OTx3, NTx93; “Spirit of Life= NTx1 in Ro8:2
Other passages: Psalm 104:30, John 1:13, John 3:3-8, Gal 4:6-7.*

- *We are “born again” by the Spirit*
 - This takes us to the Nicodemus story in John 3. You must be born again. And that’s only possible through the miraculous work of the Holy Spirit, giving new life.
 - Every Christian is a “born again Christian” without whom we would have no life. *You cannot say “Jesus is Lord” except by the Spirit. (1 Cor 12:3)*
 - So if you aren’t a Christian, you will never become one yourself! Need to cry out to God for a miracle! You won’t have the HS if not born again and trusting Jesus.
- *He lives in every believer!*
 - What a wonder! What a privilege.
 - Are you finding temptation hard? You’re never alone.
 - Are you finding loneliness in lockdown hard? God is with you personally.
 - Are you struggling to follow Jesus? Fact it’s a struggle is evidence of the HS!

Lesson: Praise God, Praise God, Praise God, you are never alone!

Just pause on that. The Creator of the Universe is living in you. The Spirit who brought Jesus back from the dead is with you, to help you in the very down to earth daily issues you face!

Q: Do you have to have experience the Spirit to be a Christian? Are you wrong to not have it [him], or indeed to have it? Experiences vary in so many ways, including within one church. You can't be a Christian without the HS, but the experiences of him will include conviction of sin, coming to Jesus, fighting sin, wanting to serve. Some of us are emotional, some are stiff upper lip! Experiences differ (perhaps not compare), but every Christian has the Holy Spirit. It often doesn't feel like the Holy Spirit is with me. Is that normal? Should it feel different to be filled with the Spirit? [Coneygear Lifegroup] Feelings go up and down. Don't trust them! Some of the HS inspired laments of the Psalms include really low emotions, like Ps 88, "darkness is my closest friend", when the Psalmist felt most far from God, whereas he couldn't have written a Spirit inspired Psalm without God's Spirit. So don't overemphasise feelings. Wonderfully we sometimes have mountain top experiences of feeling close to God. Well praise God. But don't let feelings be a measure of spirituality. Jonah had feelings of peace when he was on the run from God! Feelings go up and down. Marks of the Holy Spirit at work can include the quite painful experience of fighting sin as we will come onto now

5) The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Holiness who changes

*So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want. **Galatians 5:16-17.***

- *The co-operation with the Holy Spirit*
 - later on in this passage Paul says Keep in Step with the Spirit. ▲ School friend whose dad was teacher. For every step dad took as walked home, friend had to take about three! We have to keep in step. He is at work, we are at work. Co-operation. HE wants to make you more like Jesus, and you have a responsibility. It's not ultimately your work, but depend on him. Fight with his help. A Christian in whom the Spirit is at work is a Christian who is fighting sin.
- *Be careful about "two tier Christianity"*
 - If every Christian has the Holy Spirit, we should be wary of making any Christian feel substandard. This is quite easy across both sides of the charismatic divide. All Christians have the powerful Holy Spirit at work.

Q: What does it mean to be filled with the Spirit, baptised with the Spirit etc? Is this different to becoming a Christian? [Coneygear Lifegroup] In Acts (and OT) occasionally description "he was filled with the Spirit" speaks of a person acting or speaking in the power of the Holy Spirit. Eph 5:18 says be filled with the Spirit. I don't think it's helpful to speak as some Christians do about us being leaky! But since the Spirit is a person, while we can't have more of him like a liquid, he can have more of us! So some Christians (including in our church) have had experiences subsequent to conversion, where they experienced God in a powerful way, and in a way that gave them a greater delight in Jesus and appreciation of his power and reality. That's wonderful, and if you want to call it a second blessing, praise God, so long as you are open to a third, fourth, fifth blessing, not all of which may be comfortable! Some Christians talk about being "baptised by or with the HS", (though I think that is sometimes due to a misunderstanding of Acts 8 which we will come to in Acts in due course).

Q: How do we understand variations in experiences of the Holy Spirit, e.g. feeling more connected with God in the Spirit through prayer, compared to already having the fullness of the Spirit in us? [Clayton's Lifegroup] Spoken a bit about variations between believers and even in ourselves some days, and being filled with the Spirit. But perhaps Luke 11:13 helps us. "how much more will your Father in heaven give the HS to those who ask him". Keep praying for the Work of the Holy Spirit in your life. And that leads to...

Lesson: *Cry often, "Holy Spirit Help!"*

That short 3-word prayer should often be on our lips. Help me Holy Spirit to do, say, think the right thing. Only you can help me to be Holy. There's a clue about the importance of holiness in the name Holy Spirit! We will have ups and downs on our journey (hence the graph!) but HS helping us to become more like Jesus.

BREAKOUT! Have a pause, loo stop. Back in ___ mins. If you want to join a breakout group, you can think about those 2 q's on the sheet:

- Breakout Groups** 1) what 1 thing do you need to remember and when?
2) what questions do you want to ask (that aren't [here](#))?
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6) The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Power who equips

There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work. 1 Cor 12:4-7.

- *Gifts are for serving others!*
 - I rather like the picture here of a guy with a mop!
 - Would have been v appropriate for the Corinthians.
 - You see they were a rather proud bunch that needed reminding that the gifts are for serving others, not self.
 - That's clear from analogies of the church as building- building itself up in love and a body, growing together. Build up others!
 - Straight away that takes this debate from being a self-centred thing to serving others.

- *There are many gifts!*
 - Those verses include the lists of gifts. Loads of them.
 - This answers first Q in this section. Are the gifts limited to those in the Bible?
 - Could add the gift of singleness in 1 Cor 7 (which I don't find many people ask for!)
 - And there's no doubt our techies have technological gifts which aren't found in the NT. They are simply seeking to love others by serving the church with what they are good at (for which we are very grateful, and would love some backup!)
 - This answers first Q in this section. Are the gifts limited to those in the Bible?
 - Every Christian is gifted with gifts, and we need each other!
 - Mike's Q: Do you know when three or more came together that is Christian s the Holly spirit is with us and there will be all the 7 gifts of the Sprit present plus Joy and happiness

- *The question of whether any gifts have ceased: "cessationalism", "continualism" and "in between"!*
 - This is perhaps the most difficult and controversial area. Most questions today!
 - It refers to the more "supernatural" or miraculous of gifts, healing, prophecy, tongues, words of knowledge. Though the Bible doesn't quite draw that distinction between supernatural and natural.
 - I've got a powerpoint to share for some of the arguments both ways.
 - Cessationists= gifts have ceased/stopped. [few are hard deniers of all miracles].
 - 1 Cor 13:8-12 "tongues will be stilled"
 - They were only to confirm the apostles as messengers of Christ.
 - They were needed before the Scriptures were finalised
 - Prophecy is always foundational 1st C. and shouldn't be added to.
 - Continualists= these gifts carry on in
 - 1 Cor 12-14 and commands to seek gifts
 - Church History shows they continued, though may have reduced
 - We are living in the same era "last days"
 - Prophecy in 1 Thess 5 is to be tested. Example of Agabus.
 - There are a few different evangelical voices on either side.
 - I would probably place myself in the middle category. Not a hard cessationist, but nor do I go along with all of the continualist movement.

- *The question of tongues today*
 - Johnny showed us in Acts 2 that tongues can refer to other human languages.
 - The tongues or “glossolalia” of 1 Cor 12-14 seem to be different though: a heavenly or angelic language where the Holy Spirit takes over control of speech in a language that can’t be naturally understood and needs interpretation.
 - I was very struck by Don Carson’s generous approach in a church which contained anti and procharismatics that they didn’t push tongues in their meetings but they sought to include and be united
 - I don’t think that they are a proof of anything, like being a Christian or being holy. Paul seems to be slightly downplaying them in favour of prophecy in 1 Cor 14.
 - QUESTIONS

- *The question of prophecy today*
 - Now Paul slightly downplays tongues in favour of prophecy
 - Key verse 1 cor 14:3 But the one who prophesies speaks to people for their strengthening, encouraging and comfort.
 - Big question about whether prophecy is the foundational prophecy of Eph 2:20 alongside Apostles (in other words Bible writers) or whether there’s a secondary less authoritative kind of prophecy that needs weighing. That would be my understanding of 1 Thess 5: 20 Do not treat prophecies with contempt 21 but test them all; hold on to what is good, 22 reject every kind of evil
 - I believe that prophecy can be defined quite widely to include the application of God’s word to someone.
 - That means it happens in all bible teaching, esp the application of God’s word, and in every bible study. Perhaps particularly applying the word to prayer points and circumstances.
 - I do think that God can act in quite remarkable ways in bringing this kind of encouragement . to bring about a situation that the person had no personal knowledge of.
 - QUESTIONS

- *The question of healing & miracles today*
 - Even the most hard cessationists believe God can heal!
 - But equally some extreme healing ministries have been unhelpful for 3 reasons...
 - They have implied that if you are not healed you don’t have enough faith. This is destructive to faith.
 - They have given a false expectation of the normal Christian life (even Paul in 1 Corinthians (with so much about gifts) talks about his thorn in the flesh) and the book of Acts ends with him in prison in Rome!
 - In doing so they have veered in the direction of a health, wealth prosperity gospel that is destructive to the church.
 - But I think we all believe in healing don’t we?
 - Whether it happens in the hospital
 - or miraculously with no seeming medical intervention.
 - And we should pray for it, and give thanks for it when it happens.
 - God is awesomely powerful and can intervene

- *The priorities of a Christian meeting*
 - I think we need to be careful. This is perhaps where my caution comes in.
 - What did the Apostles major on in the books of the NT that were last to be written about what a church meeting should look like?
 - Yes even if you grant some of the spontaneity of 1 Cor 12, and even if you believe that there’s a place for God to guide us and edify us through these gifts, What is the thrust of the emphasis Paul gave to the pastors that would follow him in the local churches?
 - “2 Tim 4:2 Preach the Word, in season and out of season”.
 - This I believe has to be the priority and emphasis of the services at CCH.
 - Even in 1 Cor 14 there’s a strong emphasis on intelligibility and order.

7) The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Glory who guarantees

*When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession – to the praise of his glory. **Ephesians 1:13-14.***

Stats: "Spirit of God"= OTx14, NTx11; "Spirit of the Lord"= OTx20, NTx4

Other passages: Romans 8:11, 1 Cor 15:42-44.

- *A guarantee means the future is secure*
 - Sadly talk of the HS can leave you feeling second best
 - or even wondering if you are a Christian at all.
 - Esp if feel missing out on
 - But the HS is a downpayment (even more secure than a deposit on a house, because you might not get it!) and like a seal of ownership branding a cow to say you are mine.
 - Wow! Do you know that you are heading for heaven.
 - The HS has convicted you of your sin
 - The HS has

- *Lesson: Look forward with confidence!*
 - What a wonder that we are heading forward to a place where we see God face to face. Rev 4&5.
 - The Father on his throne
 - The Son
 - The sevenfold Spirit of God.

QUESTIONS.

RESOURCES- see p4 of handout including links to click.