

## **Ephesians - The Holy Spirit and the Church**

### **Introduction – Honouring the Spirit**

- “Within many Protestant churches the person of the Holy Spirit is often either given so much emphasis so as to overshadow the other members of the Trinity, or else the Spirit is forgotten, with the chief focus of Christianity being placed upon the providence of the Father or the atonement of Christ upon the cross.” Kevin DeYoung
- The Spirit is the “shy sovereign” who delights to glorify Jesus.
- He is also God who is to be blessed and worshipped forever.
- Whenever we are drawn to Christ as Saviour or are led to worship Christ as Lord or helped to behold the glory of Christ, we are being ministered to by the Holy Spirit.
- Without the ministry of the Spirit there would be no conversions, no powerful anointed preaching, no growth in holiness and no assurance of salvation.
- Every spiritual blessing which we enjoy comes through His influence.

### **A. 2:19-22 - The Holy Spirit lives in the Church**

#### ❖ **Paul uses three pictures to describe the church.**

- **2:19** - The church is like a kingdom of which we have become citizens.
  - ⇒ **Philippians 3:20-21** - Our citizenship is in heaven.
  - ⇒ As citizens we have both responsibilities and privileges.
- **2:19** - The church is like a family or a household.
  - ⇒ **Matthew 12:49-50** - We have God as our Father, Christ as our older brother and all other believers as our siblings.
- **2:20-22** - The church is a spiritual temple.

#### ❖ **The Spiritual Temple.**

- One of the great themes of the Bible is the dwelling of God with His people.
- **Genesis 3:8** - In Eden God walked with man in the cool of the day.
- **Exodus 40:34-38** – God dwelt in the Holy of Holies in the Tabernacle.
- **2 Chronicles 7:1-4** – The glory of God filled the temple.
- **Ezekiel 10:15-19** – Before the Exile God’s glory departed.
- **Malachi 3:1-4** – One day God would return to his temple.
- **John 1:14; 2:18-22** – This promise was fulfilled in Christ. In Him God tabernacles with us.
- **Acts 2:1-4** – At Pentecost God’s presence came to dwell in the church.
- **1 Corinthians 3:16-17; 6:19-20** - The Spirit dwells in individual Christians.
- The most exciting thing about being among God’s people is that God is there.
- **Ephesians 3:20-21** – God’s Spirit now dwells in the church.
- The church is to be both Bible-based and Spirit filled.
  - ⇒ **2:20** - It is built on the solid foundation of the testimony of the Apostles contained in Scripture. The Bible creates the church and keeps it healthy.
  - ⇒ **2:23** - God fills the church with his Spirit.
- **Revelation 21:1-4; 22-24; 22:1-5** – This is a foretaste of the new creation.

❖ ***What are the implications of the fact that the Spirit dwells in the Church?***

## ***B. 4:1-16 - The Holy Spirit gives unity and diversity to the church***

### ***❖ Ephesians 4:1-6 – Unity***

- **4:1** – Paul begins to apply the gospel and he begins with the church.
- **4:2-3** – The Spirit creates unity, but we must work hard to maintain it through the attitude of our hearts.
- **4:4-6** – The foundations of unity are Trinitarian.
- **John 17:20-23** - Unity is the passion of Christ.

### ***❖ Ephesians 4:7-16 – Diversity.***

- Within this united Body the Holy Spirit gives a diversity of gifts.
- There are five principles to recognize here:
  - 1) Every Christian has a gift.**
    - **4:7,16** – Each Christian has a gift.
    - A gift is a capacity for service to be used for the good of the church.
  - 2) All gifts come from the glorified Christ.**
    - **4:7-11** – The gifts of the Spirit are the fruits of Christ's ascension and glorification.
    - Seated at the Father's right hand He poured out the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost.
      - ⇒ We cannot boast about them.
      - ⇒ We must not despise them.
  - 3) The gifts include gifts of leadership.**
    - **4:11** – Christ gives Apostles, prophets, evangelists and pastor-teachers.
    - God gives leaders to His church.
  - 4) Leaders are to equip and mobilize God's people to use their gifts.**
    - **4:11** – Leaders are to "prepare" the people of God so that they can engage in the works of service.
    - The word "prepare" has a number of shades of meaning:
      - ⇒ To equip and "coach".
      - ⇒ To make adequate and sufficient.
      - ⇒ To repair nets.

**5) This is the way that Christians and the Church can reach maturity.**

- **4:13-16** – The marks of maturity are:
  - ⇒ The unity of the faith.
  - ⇒ The knowledge of the Son of God.
  - ⇒ The measure of the fullness of Christ.
  - ⇒ Stability, maturity and growth.

❖ **How do I know what my gifts are?**

- **1 Peter 4:11** – There are two types of gift – “word gifts” and “gifts of service.”
- There are five lists of gifts (1 Corinthians 12:8-10; 12:28-30; Romans 12:6-8; Ephesians 4:11 and 1 Peter 4:11).
- These lists are not meant to be exhaustive or determinative.
- Five questions
  - 1) What are my natural talents? What am I good at?
  - 2) What are my circumstances?
  - 3) What are my experiences?
  - 4) What do people say?
  - 5) What do I enjoy?

**C. 6:17 - The Holy Spirit helps the Church in spiritual warfare.**

❖ **6:10-13 – The Church is a spiritual army which faces a spiritual foe.**

- Why is it so hard to be a Christian? Why do churches split apart? Why does the world oppose us? Why do I face a daily battle with sin? Why is marriage so difficult? Why can the workplace be a place of conflict?
- It is not the total explanation, but we must not be naïve – we face a vicious, malicious, cunning and persistent enemy.

❖ **6:17 - The Spirit gives us His Sword.**

- The Holy Spirit has given us the “*sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God*”
- The term used refers to the short-handled stabbing sword - an important weapon in close combat.
- All the weapons depend on understanding the truths of revealed in Scripture.
- **Matthew 4:4,7,10** – This is how Jesus overcame temptation.
- **Hebrews 4:12** – The Holy Spirit gives the sword its cutting edge.

❖ **2:18 – The Spirit helps us to pray.**

- The Trinity is involved in every act of prayer
- **Matthew 6:9** – The Father is the focus of prayer.
- **Hebrews 10:19-22** – The Son gives us access.
- **Romans 8:26-27** – The Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness so that our prayers are effective.

❖ **6:18-20 – The comprehensiveness of prayer.**

- **6:18** - The Spirit helps us to pray:
  - ⇒ On **all** occasions (1 Thessalonians 5:16-22).
  - ⇒ With **all** kinds of prayer (intercession, confession and praise).
  - ⇒ At **all** times (always) – Perseverance is vital (Romans 12:12; Colossians 4:2)
  - ⇒ For **all** the saints – the focus is particularly on God's people.
- **6:19-20** – Paul is in prison, but he asks them to pray that he may continue to preach the gospel.
- **Philippians 1:12-18** – How were his prayers answered?
- **1 Thessalonians 1:4-5** – The Word must be accompanied with “*power, the Holy Spirit and deep conviction.*”

❖ ***How does the Spirit help us to pray?***

❖ ***What does Paul request prayer for?***

- **Romans 15:30-32**
- **2 Corinthians 1:11**
- **Colossians 4:3-4**
- **1 Thessalonians 5:25**
- **2 Thessalonians 3:1-2**
- **Philippians 1:19**