

The Holy Spirit in the Believer

by Richard Owen Roberts

The sermon emphasizes the importance of the nearness of God and the role of the Holy Spirit in our lives, highlighting the difference between remedial and final judgments.

Duration: 1:24:26

Scripture: Luke 3:16

Topics: "Holy Spirit"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of the Holy Spirit in the life of a believer. He highlights that the task of the church is not to persuade others, but to authentically bear witness to the truth of God. The speaker also encourages believers to acknowledge that their salvation is not based on their own efforts, but on the glorious work of God. He concludes by urging young men and women to be determined to see the blessing of God return to the land and to believe that God can bring about change.

Transcript

God in his incredible grace gives us amazing opportunities. The song that we have just sung is a favorite still in the Principality of Wales. It was, as Anthony just said, one of the great hymns that just moved the whole of that little nation in that marvelous season of divine grace known as the Welsh Revival of 1904 and 5. Just as soon as the first note was sounded tonight, I traveled in my spirit to the Heath Church in Cardiff, Wales, where it's often been my great joy to preach.

And I almost felt myself seated upon that platform and that great congregation singing that hymn. It's the only place I can ever remember preaching that no matter where you stood in the pulpit, somebody was still looking down your back. Most churches that have balconies, the balconies at most are on three sides, but in the Heath Church on four sides.

And to have that congregation sing that hymn is truly an arousing experience. All of us have heard the word revival, but maybe some of us haven't really understood what revival really is. There are two incredibly wonderful things that always happen in true revival.

Number one, God Himself always draws near. Are any of you familiar with these words from Psalm 73? At the end of the psalm, the nearness of God is my good. I can report to you and some of you can report to me that the most glorious days of our lives, the sweetest and most precious times that we've ever known, have been times when God was near.

Now, that is almost a meaningless statement to some rather foolish Christians because they take it as a given that God is always near. But that is perfectly ridiculous. Why should we be instructed in Scripture, draw near to me and I will draw near to you if God is always near? The simple truth is that God is holy.

And as a holy God, He has zero tolerance for sin. And when a person becomes tolerant of sin, God draws away. And when a church becomes tolerant of sin, God removes Himself from that church.

And when a nation becomes tolerant of sin, God withdraws His manifest presence from that nation. Once in a while you hear a rather silly preacher say, If we're not careful, God may judge us. It was an absurd statement.

Since when have the judgments of God been iffy or uncertain? We don't have to worry about God judging us. He already has. But what some of us don't seem to understand is that the judgments of God are two very different sorts.

One of them we refer to as remedial. And the other as final. And if you've never caught a hold of this truth, I urge you to do so tonight.

Now, the word remedial is not very commonly used among us today, especially in the church. But it is used in public education. Some of you who are teachers are well aware that it's very common to have a remedial reading class in a public school.

A child whose reading skills are underdeveloped, who is lagging behind the rest of his class in reading ability, may well be placed in a remedial reading class so that that child may have special help in order to catch up on their reading skills. God judges His people with remedial judgments, judgments that are intended by God Himself to enable us to catch up with Him when we have lagged behind, when we have backslidden, when we have become careless. God will bring upon us some form of a righteous judgment.

These righteous judgments are almost without number. They are virtually endless. The Scriptures portray a huge variety of remedial judgments.

A plague of locusts. An illness that falls upon large numbers of people. A threatening storm.

But of all the remedial judgments of Scripture, none is more prominent nor more consequential than the withdrawal of God's manifest presence. Now granted, there are some churches that pretend that God is with them to a degree that none of the other churches of that community are experiencing His presence. But the presence of God, or the absence of God, are very easily determined.

Whenever God is present, holiness is present. Every instance of Scripture that describes God manifesting Himself to a person or a people includes in some fashion language that clearly depicts the spirit of holiness. For instance, words like, Woe is me, I'm undone, I'm a man of unclean lips and an impure heart.

Depart from me. The churches that boast most loudly about the presence of God so clearly demonstrate by the lifestyle of the people and often a lifestyle led by the pastor that clearly demonstrates God is not with them because God is never present where sin abounds. So, as I've said, a great blessing of revival is the nearness of God when God draws near to His people.

Some of you will remember that passage in 1 Thessalonians 2 where the apostle is commending the Thessalonians because he says, When you heard me, you did not listen to me merely as if a man were

speaking to you, but as if God Himself were speaking. And in consequence, you laid hold of the Word of God and acted upon it and applied it and the proof of the fact that you were truly hearing the Word of God is seen in the holiness of your lives. But then he went on to speak of the Jews and he said concerning the Jews that they persecuted the prophets, they put Christ to death, and they were treating those who were followers of Christ as if they were lepers.

To the end, he said, that they always fill up the measure of their sin until the wrath of God is upon them to the utmost. Let me ask you to think now briefly on those words I've just cited. They go on filling up the measure of their sin until the wrath of God is upon them to the utmost.

Has it ever occurred to you that every entity has been allotted by God a measure of sin? Now, perhaps for the children, the word entity is not a good word. So, let me just take a moment to explain what I mean when a man and a woman marry. They form an entity that is called a couple.

When God blesses their marriage with children, we have a larger term. We speak of it as a family. A church is an entity.

A school is an entity. A business is an entity. A denomination is an entity.

A city is an entity. A state is an entity. A nation is an entity.

Let me repeat again what I said. God has allotted to every entity a measure of sin. When that measure is full, the wrath of God is upon that entity to the utmost.

And remind yourselves now of the two cleansings of the temple in which Jesus engaged. He entered the temple. He drove out the money changers.

He tipped over their tables. He said, My Father's house is a house of prayer. You have turned it into a place of merchandise.

What was the outcome of the first cleansing of the temple? Well, in actual fact, the same as the outcome of the second cleansing of the temple. Christ drove them out one door and they came in another. And after the second cleansing, Christ mounted the hill that overlooked the temple site and He spoke these words, Your house is left unto you desolate.

In what year were those words spoken? Well, we don't know for certain because in actual truth we're not absolutely clear as to what year Christ was born. Some say as early as 2 B.C. Some say 1 A.D. Simply to simplify the matter, let's assume He was born in the year zero in between B.C. and A.D. We know that He ministered for three and a half years. We know that He was approximately 33 and a half when He died.

So, if we simply say, although it may not be precisely accurate, He spoke those words about the temple in the year 33. When was the fulfillment of another prophecy that He made actually completed? He said the time will come when there will not be left standing one stone upon another. Well, we know for an absolute that happened in the year 70.

Have you ever done the math? Has it ever occurred to you that for approximately 37 years they went on with their religious practices in the temple in Jerusalem and during that entire 37-year period God was never, ever present? The withdrawal of God's manifest presence is truly a remedial judgment. The moment a person recognizes the absence of the manifest presence of Christ in their life, they should be

on their face pleading with God that the Holy Spirit will bring them to a realization of the sin in their life that has so offended God that He has withdrawn. And obviously, that should be the constant practice of the church whenever there is any awareness of the absence of God's manifest presence.

But as I said, there are two terms really that describe these issues of God's righteous judgments. A remedial judgment, I have simply said, is a corrective judgment. It is a greatest judgment.

It is a judgment sent by God to make us realize the urgency of repentance and turning back to God. A remedial judgment left unheeded will in God's time become a final judgment. And a final judgment is a judgment in which there is neither time nor opportunity for repentance.

If I were to ask you to think of a very clear-cut final judgment in the New Testament, what response would you make? Sir? All right, he's got it clearly. Ananias and Sapphira. You remember the incident, I hope.

Ananias came before Peter and pretended that he was bringing the full results of a sale of something. All Peter did was to verify that a lie was told. And immediately judgment fell upon Ananias.

He was carried out dead. Now, Peter didn't say to him, Over there, there's a doorway that leads to the prayer room. Will you not make your way to the prayer room to see if there's not some grounds for repentance? No, the lie was told and confirmed.

And the judgment fell. Shortly thereafter, Sapphira came, told the same lie and suffered the same final judgment as a nation. We have grievously offended God.

We have been under remedial judgment for a long time. Those remedial judgments are becoming increasingly severe and alarming to those whose eyes are open and whose spirits resonate with God and His Word. And there has been no return to the Lord as of now.

A final judgment will come. For all remedial judgments left unheeded become, in God's time, final judgments. So, I have said to you, the revival is a time when God Himself draws near.

That is the desperate need of every individual in the room. That is the urgent need of every church in this community, in this state, in this nation. That is so urgent, so incredibly needed, that all of us should be constantly calling upon God to move upon us and to bring us into true repentance.

But the vast majority don't even know what revival is and don't feel any desperate need and do nothing but continue in their waywardness and in their violations of God. So, I said there are two things that always are part of true revival. The nearness of God.

And the second, the Word of God itself taking on incredible power and flowing across the land like an incredible flood of divine blessing. Now, what most of us who are regularly preaching are observing is congregations who listen and who make ridiculous statements afterward like, oh, that was interesting. I'll have to think about that.

You preach on a direct command of God and you make it clear, God offers no choice. You do this or else. And some ridiculous person says, I'll think about it.

When God speaks, there's nothing to think about. It's time for action. So, when I say a revival includes the Word of God itself taking on incredible power and flowing like a tidal wave of blessing, I mean precisely that.

Those seasons when the preaching of the Word of God produces radical and enduring transformation. And believe me, I long to live long enough to see the Word of God advancing across the nation as a tidal wave of blessing. And to see countless numbers of people on their faces before God in repentance.

So, the song brings to mind the fact that in Wales in 1904, some scattered people here and there were feeling the need of revival and crying out to God and in His glorious providence, God drew near to that little nation and did a wondrous work of grace. When we look around our nation, we don't see an awful lot that's encouraging, but we do see some on their faces crying out to God. And wouldn't it be wonderful if this entire congregation would take so seriously the issues before us that God could no longer resist drawing near and making His Word like a tidal wave of blessing because He takes such delight in the earnest supplications of His people.

And before we turn to our text, I want to add this additional fact. Virtually every revival in recorded history was led not by old men like me, but by young men under the age of 30. Do you mind my looking at you guys and say the great hope of the world lies in the young men and the young women who don't like things the way they are and who believe God Himself can change everything.

You don't have to be famous. You don't have to be well educated. All you have to be is determined to see the blessing of God return to the land.

This evening we are focusing again on Romans 8 and focusing upon a subject that might not have struck you yet as being a major issue in this eighth chapter. Let me give you a few lines of consideration. I'm speaking tonight about the Holy Spirit.

I've got some notes here because I want to speak with accuracy. In the book of Acts, the Holy Spirit is mentioned 56 times. In the book of Romans, the Holy Spirit is mentioned 29 times.

In 1 Corinthians, the Holy Spirit is mentioned 22 times. In the book of Revelation, the Holy Spirit is mentioned 17 times. In the gospel of John, the Spirit is mentioned 16 times.

In the book of Galatians, 14 times. You say, so what? In the 14th chapter of John, the Holy Spirit is mentioned 4 times. In the 2nd chapter of Acts, He is mentioned 6 times.

In the 5th chapter of Galatians, He is mentioned 7 times. In 1 Corinthians 12, which is the great part of those extreme Pentecostals, He is mentioned 11 times. But in Romans chapter 8, He is mentioned 19 times.

There is more about the Holy Spirit in Romans 8 than in any other single chapter of the Bible. As I said already, He is mentioned 29 times in the book of Romans. 19 of those are in the 8th chapter.

But before we return to these references to the Holy Spirit in Romans chapter 8, I would like to ask you to turn for a moment to 1 Peter. And I would like to read just a very brief portion from 1 Peter chapter 1. 1 Peter, please. Listen to these words from chapter 1. Sense you have, in obedience to the truth, purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren.

Fervently love one another from the heart, for you have been born again, not of seed which is perishable, but imperishable. That is through the living and abiding Word of God. Look up for a moment.

Do you remember the occasion when Joseph was struggling with the question, what should I do about the girl that I am betrothed to? He had discovered that Mary was pregnant. He assumed that the pregnancy was a result of a relationship with a man. He was a just man.

And he was struggling in his heart. I don't want to shame her. I don't want to bring ill upon her.

But I don't want to marry a non-virgin. And in the midst of that struggle, an angel appeared to him. Matthew 1, verse 21.

And he was instructed, Don't hesitate to take Mary for your wife, because that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And when the child is born, call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sin. The angel did not say, He will save them from the penalty of their sin.

He did not say, He will save them despite their sin. He said, He will save His people from their sin. But listen to these words again from 1 Peter, For you have been born again, not of seed which is perishable, but imperishable.

That is through the living and abiding Word of God. The same seed that led to the conception and the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ is the seed that every believer has been born of. And we need to take that to heart.

That is an incredible truth. You, if you have been born again, were not born of perishable seed, but of imperishable seed. The very seed that resulted in the birth of Christ is the seed that has resulted in your new birth.

You are to live like a person born of imperishable seed instead of looking and acting like a person who possibly has something in them that may, if you are fortunate, turn out well. We have got to face the fact that a genuine new birth is truly a work of God. And it results in that which is absolutely glorious and extraordinary.

When I began this morning, I was speaking of the situation described in the last three verses of John's Gospel, chapter 2, and in the first portion of John 3. And I tried to make it clear to you that there is a parallel in that passage between physical birth and spiritual birth. And I asked this young fellow here about his blue eyes. Am I not right in saying, I asked you about your blue eyes? And what did you tell me? Yes, he made it clear he had nothing to do with those blue eyes.

I tried to make it plain that the new birth is a work of God. Now, I want to be very specific about this. The bulk of the American church believes that we are born again as a result of something we do.

And therefore, the teaching in most places is one retents if they still believe in repentance, which most don't. And if they believe, then they are born again. Did you ever go into a cemetery and stand there and holler at the top of your lungs, I command every dead body in this cemetery to arise? Well, I hope you haven't done that.

But if you were foolish enough to do it, I know perfectly well nothing happened. You cannot command the dead to arise, nor can you command the dead to repent and believe. We've got to get it straight that we were born with eyes that don't see, with ears that don't hear, with a heart of stone instead of a heart of flesh.

But God, in His incredible grace, quickens a person, replaces the blind eyes with seeing eyes, replaces the deaf ear with hearing ears, replaces the heart of stone with a heart of flesh. And that person then is enabled to hear the gospel. And when they hear the gospel and are alarmed at their sinful condition, then God offers them the two precious gifts of repentance and faith.

And when they reach out and receive and act upon those dual gifts of repentance and faith, then they are gloriously transformed. They are converted, having already been born of the Spirit of God. Now, look, I stress that because all around us are churches that have abandoned the prayer meeting.

They act as if whether or not people are saved depends upon us. They have been treating evangelism as if evangelism were salesmanship. So, the task of the church is to get people to sign on the dotted line.

Well, there are millions of people that have signed on the dotted line that are still dead in trespasses and in sins. And thousands of pastors are wearing themselves to the bone, trying to make the dead act as if they were alive. But when the Spirit of God takes away the blind eyes and the deaf ear and the heart of stone, a person is gloriously transformed by the gospel.

So, the great task of the church is not salesmanship. The great task of the church is bearing witness to what we know to be true. Suppose this is your dad having picked on you, and this little family being courageous enough to take the front row this evening, I'll pick upon the father.

I'll make an appraisal of him to begin with. Look him over with a measure of care. Yes.

Make him uncomfortable, you see. Make him wonder what's coming next. Do you agree with what your son said? That he had nothing to do with his blue eyes? Yes.

You would say the same thing about yourself. Would you say that about yourself? Would everybody here acknowledge that you were born again not by something you did, but something glorious that God did? And because of that, have you determined to focus on prayer? If you, sir, were called into a court of law, let us say that this afternoon you observed a man murdering another man. Indeed, there were five others with you who saw this murder taking place.

So, eventually, you're called into a court and required as a witness. What would happen if you undertook to persuade the jury that the man was guilty? What would happen? I'll tell him and the rest of you. He would be held in contempt to court.

The task of a witness is not to persuade either the judge or the jury. The task of a witness is to tell what they have seen and heard. Dear brothers and sisters, that's our task as believers, not to persuade anybody, but to tell what we know to be true.

And to tell it in such a way that those who hear it told know that we are speaking authentically, that we are proclaiming the very truth of God. That leads me, then, to the subject before us tonight. The Holy Spirit, as I've said, mentioned nineteen times in Romans chapter 8. But again, before we turn to Romans 8, I want to ask you to turn to one other passage.

And just to be sure, we've all got a clear picture of the Holy Spirit. I'm inviting your attention just briefly to the third chapter of the Gospel of Luke. I'll not go into any great detail here.

I'm going to focus in a moment upon verse 16. But before we read, and I comment briefly upon verse 16 of Luke chapter 3, I want simply to remind you that this is a passage dealing with John the Baptist. And I want to remind you that Jesus Christ said concerning John the Baptist, Of all those born of women there is none greater.

Let that lodge in your mind. Now, turn, if you will, to verse 16. I'll pick it up at verse 15.

While the people were in a state of expectation and all were wondering in their hearts about John as to whether he might be the Christ, John answered and said to them all, As for me, I baptize you with water. But he who is mightier than I is coming. And I am not fit to untie the thong of his sandals.

He himself will baptize you in the Holy Spirit and fire. Now, listen carefully. There is a powerful lesson here on the subject of humility.

Some of you, if you were to speak with candor, could stand up right now and say, I've had and still have a fierce problem with pride. That is perhaps the most common sin in the American church. But there is a very powerful lesson here.

I want to ask you this question. Do you suppose that John the Baptist was aware of the experience his father Zacharias had in the temple? Do you suppose that John the Baptist knew what happened to his mother and to himself when Mary, rushing to their house, called out a greeting and suddenly the babe leapt in the womb of Elizabeth and she was filled with the Holy Spirit, as was John himself? Now, obviously, the Scriptures do not tell us whether the parents ever mentioned that to their son or not. I expect they did.

I believe John knew full well that he was a man with an incredibly great mission. And I want to report to those of you who struggle with the issue of pride, humility is not denying the facts. Humility is keeping the facts in correct relationship with the greater facts.

Repeating again the words of Jesus, of those born of women there is none greater than God. He might very well have known that he was the greatest of those living at the time apart from Christ. I repeat what I said a moment ago.

Humility is not denying the facts, but keeping the facts in relationship to the greater facts. So, John is able to say, as for me, I baptize with water, but when he comes through sandals, I am not fit to untie. John was a man of humility because although he was great and I don't doubt knew how great his role was, he knew the One who was greater.

And he did not allow any sense of his greatness to override the greater greatness of Christ. For some of you who struggle with pride, lay that lesson to heart. One of the amazing things on the subject of revival is that men come out of total obscurity and are suddenly ushered to the forefront of the Christian church, and they become the best known names in the whole of society.

George Whitefield is a powerful example of this raised in the Gloucester Tavern. And suddenly the most famous man throughout the entire United Kingdom and soon throughout America. But at all times, he kept himself aware.

No matter how greatly used I am of God, Christ is so much greater that I have nothing to glory in save in the greats of the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, that was not the purpose for which I chose to read this 16th

verse, but it's an important part of what I want to say next. I've said in this passage two comparisons are made.

The comparison of the person of John with the person of Christ. And the comparison of the baptism of John with the baptism of Christ. Now, think seriously.

Is there anything wrong with water baptism? Is it an inconsequential matter that can be wisely overlooked? No. Water baptism is an incredibly important matter. But in relationship to the greater baptism, it is nothing.

Now, you see, part of what is happening in the church is that we pay great attention to water baptism and no attention to the baptism of the Holy Spirit and fire. And one of the reasons some of us are so reluctant to pay any attention to the baptism of the Holy Spirit and fire is because a lot of knotheds have gotten carried away into wild extremes and are making statements that are false and perfectly ridiculous and prove the invalidity of their claim. But why should I let the foolish act of some extremist rob me of the certainty of the greater baptism? So, this is what I must say to you.

We are baptized into Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit. And we are baptized by Christ into the baptism of the Holy Spirit and fire. Let me take just a moment to spell that out.

Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible. Through the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit, we are made one with Jesus Christ. Therefore, the opening words of Romans 8, there is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus.

So, baptized by the Holy Spirit into Christ. But don't stop there. Baptized by Christ in the Holy Spirit and fire.

Now, I know this will be new to some of you, but it is not new to the church. If you were to study with great care this passage and to ask this simple question, what is the distinction between the baptism in the Holy Spirit and the baptism in fire? Well, obviously, the baptism of the Holy Spirit is set forth in the book of Acts as a baptism of power. Jesus commanded the disciples, tarry in Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.

The baptism in fire is a baptism in passion and in purity. Let that sink in. A baptism in passion and in purity.

John Wesley said of one of his associates, William Grimshaw, if England had three William Grimshaws, the whole of England would be ablaze for God because William Grimshaw is a man of fire. And everywhere William Grimshaw goes, the fire of God falls. Now, that cannot be said of most of us.

We do not set anything on fire. In fact, I fear, some of us are better fire extinguishers than we are fire igniters. The baptism of the Holy Spirit, a baptism of power, the baptism of fire, a baptism of passion and of purity.

I have had the incredible honor of knowing a great many of the men who have labored in the field of revival over the last eighty years. Edwin Orr was preaching in Ridgecraft. He preached on the subject, Revival is like Judgment Day.

And the Spirit of God was powerfully at work. A friend of mine was rooming across the hall from Edwin that night. He woke up suddenly in the middle of the night and heard a commotion, rushed and opened his

door.

And an ambulance crew was carrying Edwin Orr out. Having just preached on Revival is like Judgment Day. He was ushered into the glory.

Another friend of mine, Armand Deswine, in his ninety-third year had been preaching in Scandinavia for three weeks with amazing power and came home and was meeting with his associates in their office in California. And suddenly had a heart attack. They rushed him to the hospital, but he was in the presence of God.

I talk with pastors fifty-five years of age and they're talking about retirement. Men of passion aren't interested in retirement. They're longing to see God do something incredibly wonderful in their lifetime.

Have you been endued with power from on high? Do you know the baptism of passion that makes you a firebrand, that sets ablaze everyone whose life you touch? But also, the baptism of fire is the baptism of purity, the refiner's fire, the Holy Spirit so powerfully at work in our lives, burning out all that is displeasing to God, reducing us to pure gold. Oh, brothers and sisters, I am speaking to you tonight about the Holy Spirit and I am pleading with you, take the Word of God seriously. Don't let its streams of some nut keep you from the precious truth that the baptism of John in water is of immense consequence, but nothing in comparison with the baptism of Christ in the Holy Spirit and fire.

But now, with that in mind, let us go then to Romans 8 and let me urge you to pay wonderfully close attention to what this chapter teaches us about the work of the Holy Spirit. As I've said already, there are nineteen references to the Holy Spirit in this single chapter. Look at verse 2. Anthony has read the chapter in our presence and done so with healing and appropriate emphasis.

Verse 2, the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and death. The Holy Spirit is the life-giving Spirit. I try to make that clear in speaking first of regeneration.

We are cursed by a church that is loaded down across the nation with dead people trying to behave as if they were enjoying the life of God in them. But thank God, not one of us needs to be trying to have life. The Holy Spirit brings imperishable life, vibrant, throbbing, thriving life.

I wonder why any of us are content to drag along in hope that maybe all is well when indeed the very life of God can be throbbing in our veins and enabling us to live to the praise of His eternal glory. You see, this morning I was stressing the fact that there's no condemnation. And this evening I'm stressing the place of the Holy Spirit in the believer's life.

Because I'm of the conviction that what the world desperately needs to be exposed to is men and women who know there is no condemnation because they're in Christ Jesus. Therefore, they are victorious and rejoicing. And they are contagious with the love of God because such a profound work of God has been done in them, such a vital inpouring of life into them that everybody whose life their life touches is affected for good and for the glory of God.

So simply ask, have you got that life that the Holy Spirit Himself brings? Look at the second reference to the Holy Spirit in this passage. Also in verse 2, He is the liberating Spirit for the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and death. And I ask you, have you been set free from the law of sin and death? Now, Romans makes it crystal clear that whatever master you obey, to that master you are enslaved. If Satan calls the shots in your life, then it's not wise to call yourself a born-again

Christian.

The Holy Spirit has set us free from the law of sin and death. We're not under the grip of the law. We're under the grip of the power of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

He has liberated us from sin and death. Any believer does God a great injustice if he allows himself to think that he is still enslaved by sin. That's why a verse I mentioned this morning is so tremendously consequential.

Reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin and alive to God. Say to your soul every day, I am alive in Christ! I am not going to live today as a slave to sin. I am going to live in the very righteousness of Christ through the power of the Spirit of God that dwells in me.

The world desperately needs exposure to men and women of every age who have been set free from the law of sin and death and who know the power of God to transform the life. Number three. Again, Romans 8, verse 4. Listen to these wonderful words.

In order that the requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. Listen to these lovely words. The Holy Spirit is the enabling Spirit.

Everything God wants you to be. Everything God wants you to do. The Holy Spirit is there to enable it.

If you live in defeat, it's because you're not living in faith. You see, what's happened to many is that we have been taught that we are justified by faith. And that is certainly true.

But Jesus Christ is not only the justifier. Jesus Christ is also the sanctifier. Do you know these words from Colossians? As you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him.

Let your heart dwell upon that. As you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him. How did you receive Christ Jesus the Lord? By faith.

How do you walk in the life adorned with the beauty of holiness? In faith. He is the enabling Spirit. The Spirit baptized you into Christ.

And Christ baptizes you into the Holy Spirit and fire. Live with the completed work of Christ. Remind yourself of these wonderful words from 1 Corinthians 1.30. But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom that is righteousness and sanctification and redemption.

Christ is our justifier. Christ is our sanctifier. Christ is our eternal Redeemer.

Learn to live in confidence in the finished work of Christ. Face the reality and enjoy the blessing of having the enabling Spirit dwelling in you. Number four.

He is the desire-affecting Spirit. Look at verse 5. For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. So the Holy Spirit in us can shape and mold and direct our thoughts and enable us to focus on the things of the Spirit and to abandon the things of the flesh.

Now, don't misunderstand. I'm not talking about this incredibly marvelous singular experience. I'm talking about a daily walk when every day I recognize the power of the Holy Spirit in me, enabling me to live

according to God's plan and purpose, affecting my desires so that I do not desire the things of the flesh, but the things of the Spirit.

Look at verse 6. Here is the next reference. He is the peace-providing Spirit. For the mindset of the flesh is death, but the mindset on the Spirit is life and peace.

Oh, what a wonderful thing it is to be at peace with God and at peace with your fellow man and to know that indeed God is on the throne of your life and peace, which surpasses human understanding, is yours. Number 6. He is the controlling Spirit. Observe verse 9. However, you are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you.

It's a wonderful thing when on a daily basis we yield to the influence and the power of the Spirit and we are enabled to fulfill the desires and the purpose of God. I'm afraid some of us haven't gotten the subject of faith correct yet. If you were to define faith, how would you go about it? I preached last Sunday in a Romanian Baptist church in Chicago.

And I was speaking upon that incredibly powerful and beautiful passage in 2 Peter 1, verses 1-11 that focus upon faith. But I prefaced the sermon by asking the people to think seriously what did faith really mean to them? And I gave them a little outline of Hebrews chapter 11. Would you mind if I shared that with you tonight? How many letters are in the word faith? Well, no trickery involved.

There are obviously five. Let each of those letters help you in evaluating whether you have the faith that saves. F. Let that signify facts in focus.

Do you remember how Hebrews 11 begins? Now faith gives substance to things that are hoped for. It provides the evidence of things not seen. A person with faith has the facts in focus. This chair is real.

This young man is real. But neither the chair or this brother are as real as God and eternity. Both the chair and this brother in terms of the body's shell are passing.

But eternity is not passing. When a person has faith, the unseen and the hoped for takes on greater importance in their life than the things that can be tasted and touched. So you can evaluate whether you truly have faith or not by asking, am I more gripped by the eternal than I am by the temporal? Is the whole of my life focused on the kingdom of God and that which endures forever? Or is it focused upon the here and the now? F. Facts in focus.

R. A. F. A. Faith is active obedience. Now, for a lot of professed Christians, faith is nothing but passive acquiescence. Is Christ the Son of God? Yes.

Did Christ die for the sins of the world? Sure. Was Christ buried? Yes, of course. Did He rise from the dead? I think so.

Did He ascend to glory? Well, that's what the Bible says. One can acknowledge every fact that has to do with the Christian faith and still not have faith. Faith is active obedience.

God spoke to Noah and told him to build an ark. And Noah said back and said, Now, that sounds like a huge task. I don't think I'm up to it.

Who are you going to send to help me? Where am I going to get the necessary timbers from? I don't really think I'm up to that, Lord. No. No, God said build the ark.

And he got busy. And for 120 years, he listened to the taunts and the jeers of his neighbors and others. And he went right on building.

Every person singled out in Hebrews 11 was given something to do, and they did it. Faith is active obedience. I. Intimacy with God.

Do you remember what it says about Enoch? Enoch walked with God, and he was not, because God took him. How long did Enoch walk with God before God took him? Three hundred years. Some of you would think it a miracle if you lived one whole day to the glory of God.

But faith brings one into intimacy with God. T. F. A. I. T. Tenacious valor. A person of faith lays hold of God and does not let go.

And the beautiful thing is that really, truly, God has laid hold of him. And no matter what opposition you meet, no matter what difficulty comes your way, you have tenacity. You hang on.

And you have valor, courage. H. Hope. All true faith is characterized by living hope that makes you absolutely confident.

It doesn't matter how hard the going is. It doesn't matter what jeers I have to face. I know that one day I shall see Him as He is, and I shall be like Him.

And I'm pausing and asking, do you really have faith? Or do you just simply nod your head in agreement with historic fact? Now, this message on the Holy Spirit is for those who truly believe. Look at verse 9 again. He is the controlling Spirit.

Not controlled by a sinful nature, but by the Holy Spirit. Then let me mention this number 7, that He is the indwelling Spirit. Look again at verse 9. If anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.

We know, but we are children of God because the Spirit of God indwells us. He is also, praise God, the excluding Spirit. Anyone who doesn't have the Spirit is excluded from Christ.

He is, verse 11, the resurrecting Spirit. Let me read these words. If the Spirit of Him who raised up Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead also gives life to your mortal body.

Well, you see what a glorious subject we have here. As I told you, 19 references to the Holy Spirit. I shall not go any further in my list.

I urge you to gather it together yourself. But I want to say to you that the desperate need of our world is men and women who are in the grip of the Holy Spirit, having been made alive by Jesus Christ, have the faith and the confidence that it takes to shape this world to its very core by the proclamation of the truth of God. If you're trying to serve the Lord in the power of your flesh, you're stumbling and you're falling and you're disappointed and you wonder sometimes if you can even keep going.

But the Spirit of God is in us who believe. And everything that is necessary for powerful living and for transformation of society is found in what the Spirit of God does. But we must never forget the role of the Spirit is not to draw attention to Himself, but to keep all eyes focused on Christ.

For let me add to what I have said about revival. What makes revival so glorious is that in a season of true revival, all eyes are drawn to Christ. Can you imagine anything more wonderful than being part of a church where the gaze of awe is focused on Christ? Can you imagine living a life where constantly the focus of the whole of your life is Christ? And I should add as a caution and a severe warning, it is very simple for Satan to bring a revival to an end.

For all he has to do is draw the attention away from Christ to you or to some doctrine overstressed or to some ridiculous action, some physical phenomenon. So I conclude by urging you to face the reality that the Holy Spirit was sent to help us to focus on Christ and to know Him and to love Him and to serve Him with all of our hearts. Don't try to live the Christian life apart from the power of the Holy Spirit.

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