

The Holy Spirit

by Sandeep Poonen

Sandeep Poonen emphasizes the importance of the Holy Spirit as a personal guide who affirms our identity and helps us grow closer to Jesus.

Duration: 38:04

Scripture: John 14:16, Romans 8:16

Topics: "Holy Spirit", "Gods Love"

Description

This sermon focuses on the importance of understanding and experiencing the Holy Spirit in our lives. It emphasizes the need to recognize the Holy Spirit as a person who reminds, affirms, helps, and glorifies Jesus in our hearts. The speaker encourages the audience to prioritize Jesus above all else, seek the Holy Spirit's guidance daily, and fight against the lies of the devil by embracing the truth of God's love and grace.

Transcript

You know, that quickly we've come to the last day of the camp. It seemed like we had so much time before. I've got two sessions today.

I think there are some others as well. We've been concentrating on the theme of maturity and responsibility. And I've been going through the last week of Jesus.

If Jesus, if we had one week left to live, how would we live our lives? And Jesus knew he had one week left and how he lived his life. I actually was not planning to speak primarily on the Holy Spirit, but based on what we discussed the first evening, I thought it would be worthwhile for me to show you what I understand of the Holy Spirit. Now, I speak this knowing that I have a very incomplete understanding of the Holy Spirit.

I only share with you what I have and I want to lead the way in being willing to be corrected by people who know more about it than I do. So I share with you what I know and what I've experienced of the Holy Spirit in my life. Is it complete? Most probably not, but it's something that inspires me.

So I will share with you what I know about the Holy Spirit. Because these are questions that I feel have come up numerous times in the different things that were filled out on Friday. How do you know if you have the Holy Spirit? How do you know if you're filled with the Holy Spirit? I mean, I think that was one of

the questions that was asked here.

How do you assess us? How do we assess our spiritual growth? And how do you know whether or not you are baptized and filled with the Holy Spirit? It's a, I mean, based on what we hear here in church, in this church here, it's a very important question which demands a very thoughtful answer. So I hope this session will be hopefully very meaningful, if not the most meaningful session of the camp that I speak about. Of the sessions that I'm speaking on, there's five sessions, I hope that this session you'd pay special attention to.

Because the Holy Spirit is an incredible person who's meant to be with us. Let's do a quick review as we've always done. Why are we here? Did you know you gave up three days and you've probably taken vacation? Hundred dollars, hundred rupees per hour, twenty-five hundred rupees was the cost, including everything that it takes for each one of you.

Imagine if I gave you twenty-five hundred rupees, that's not a small amount of money. That's how much is the cost that you are all getting. So we have taken twenty-five hundred rupees from you and we want to give you something back for twenty-five hundred rupees.

How are you going to ensure that you are a success in life? Well it depends on what your definition of success is. And I suggested that you consider three verses. I hope you've written it all down to consider and if you don't want to use them, use something else but write down what your success metrics is, whatever it is.

And follow that. That should be your pointer and saying this is where I'm going to get to in life is how you define success. Session one we talked about donkeys and horses.

Jesus came riding in on a donkey, not on a horse like all the kings of old did. The kingdom of God has need of donkeys not horses. With yours sticking out, with simple colors, with things all messed up, not pretty like a horse.

So you and your brokenness and your messiness and your limited ways, the Lord has need of you. You have to hear that from the Lord. You are not entering the kingdom of God if you don't get this, if you don't understand that God is using donkeys to enter into it.

And as illogical as it sounds, even in that day, that the culture said you should use a horse if you're going to come into the kingdom as a king, Jesus said no, my kingdom does not work on those same principles. I'm using donkeys. So us with limited talents, us who think we don't have it all figured out, this message is for you.

The Lord has need of you. Are you submitted to his needs? In session two, we talked about house hunting. The moment God comes in to the praises, he looks for a dwelling place.

He looks for a temple. We look for different metrics in a house. What is God looking for? God is looking, saying I'm going to come and find a place in your heart, but I'm either going to find it to be a house of prayer or a den of robbers.

And so the opposite of stealing is praying, is giving, but giving myself and my time and my devotion to God. The opposite of stealing is not not stealing. The opposite of stealing is doing something which is bowing down and praying, talking to God.

If praying is a word that is something that is mysterious, use the word talking. Talking to God is all I mean here. Often.

Session three, is this your final answer? What is your final answer when the devil and other people are asking you if your faith is for real? This is the ultimate question that will dispel all the devil and all the demons. Do you love the Lord with everything you have? And we saw that in Mark chapter 11 and 12, how the people came asking Jesus, came up to Jesus asking questions to him, and finally they let him alone when he said, here is all the law. You should love the Lord with everything you've got.

And we saw the temptation of Jesus the same way. The devil kept probing at Jesus and finally his final question is, is your worship negotiable? And Jesus said, not a chance. My worship is not negotiable.

And the devil said, I can't tempt you anymore because that is the ultimate test that the devil and the world is trying to test to see if you're a hypocrite, is your worship and your love for the Lord negotiable by a career, by a spouse, by money, by all kinds of things. Is it negotiable? Will it grow cold if I gave you a pretty girl, if I gave you a cool job, is your love for me negotiable? And a lot of us are falling for it. A lot of us have fallen for it in the past.

But we got to be aware now of the Satan's schemes that this is the ultimate test. This separates the pretenders from the real ones. Session four, what is the Holy Spirit? I'm not going to let you answer this one because it's the wrong question.

It's the wrong question because the Holy Spirit is not a what. And we often reduce the Holy Spirit to a what. Who is the Holy Spirit? It's so important for us who grew up in a church talking about the Holy Spirit to reduce the Holy Spirit from a who to a what.

The Holy Spirit is a person. The Holy Spirit is not an experience or a set of experiences to have, but is a person to be with you. I cannot underline that enough because for so many years, I have kept going to God and saying, God, I want an experience.

And God gives experiences to some people, but it oftentimes may not be the experience in the way I'm looking for it. I may be looking for something that gets me to shake. I may be looking for something that gets me to do something, but it may not be that it comes that way.

But God may still have given you the Holy Spirit. If I look for a particular experience and say, this will be what tells me that I've got the Holy Spirit, I feel there's many chances for me to get misled. But if I judge the Holy Spirit as a person who was promised to be with me, I have certain metrics that I can share with you to tell you, this is how you can know that you've got the Holy Spirit.

And for your benefit, I have never had any kind of spine tingling, crazy experience or unbelievable supernatural experience with the Holy Spirit. I have not. I long for it.

I'd love to have it, but it's not become such a mandatory thing anymore. I look at the saints of old and I love the fact that they saw visions and they were taken up to the third heaven. Do I want to have that? Of course, I'd love to have that.

But I'm not going to say that I don't have the Holy Spirit because I don't have that. Because I don't heal people, it doesn't mean I don't have the Holy Spirit. I have a confidence that I have a Holy Spirit and I want you all to have a confidence that you can have the Holy Spirit or you might already have the Holy Spirit.

And I can share with you how I am confident, how I've gotten the assurance that I have the Holy Spirit with me. The Holy Spirit is so important. Now the reason why you write down saying, hey, listen, I want to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

The reason we talk about the Holy Spirit is because the Holy Spirit is so important. He came to replace Jesus. He tells us what would Jesus do here on earth because he is the one who says, I have replaced Jesus.

If you wished you lived 2,000 years ago when Jesus was around, that's a nice wish to have. But there's really no reason to wish it because the Holy Spirit is with you. In fact, it's better because the Holy Spirit is in you.

So here are things I want to give you three metrics of what the Holy Spirit comes to do for us. First of all, he reminds and he affirms. I can give you this later on.

I can give you this document and things like that later on. But this is the first thing you need to know about it. He reminds and he affirms.

He reminds me about the Word of God. That is why it's so important for us to have the Word of God in us. Because the Holy Spirit will remind us of it.

And most of all, most of the times, the first thing the Holy Spirit tells to us is that he loves us. If you go to God and you hear him telling you all the things that you've messed up with, I think you need to understand who the Spirit of God really is. First of all, the Spirit of God, as far as I have understood it, first tells me how much I am loved.

Don't kneel down and pray. Don't ask God to commune with you with the Holy Spirit and expect God to first beat you. Or correct you.

He first comes to tell you how much he loves you. Romans 8.16 The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God. He brings to remembrance the fact that you are a son and daughter of God and you have a father.

And I brought this point in because in my conversations that I've had with a few people here, I feel that that is a doctrine that we've heard, but it may not be a reality that we've embraced. I fear that we are still very insecure. I fear that we are still struggling with this God and we condemn ourselves and we beat ourselves up because we're not a success.

And rightfully so, we may not be a success, but we beat ourselves up because we don't have a God properly defined. And I spoke a message on it called the prodigal father which is on the website, you can read it, but I want to share with you my perspective is I have been relieved of a lot of my burdens. I have changed my perspective of God when I took this very picture and I put it on my computer screen on my desktop.

And every day I started up my computer, I might have been sleepy, I might have been stressed out at work, but this picture was what I looked at. And what I loved about this picture is it didn't show me my face. And I think a lot of us who grew up with the people who talk to us about the truth and we know where we're messing up, which is a good thing, but the bad thing about it is we don't ever look at the face of Jesus.

And this is a picture of Jesus, his face probably didn't look like this in person, but I'm okay with it. I understand it probably doesn't look like him, but what I'm looking at is I'm looking at his face. And I'm looking at this painting that shows me satisfaction.

I'm looking at his face and I see joy. Not my joy, I'm seeing his joy. I'm not seeing my satisfaction that I came home, I'm seeing his satisfaction that I came home.

Me, sinner, messed up, broken, falling all over the place. He's got relief on his face. He's got joy on his face.

He's got satisfaction on his face. And the Holy Spirit comes to reveal to you that this is who you worship. This is your father.

And yeah, I know it's Jesus, but I'm just saying if you can understand that this is the God you worship, and you need to see somehow, maybe you have to print out 10 copies of it and plaster it on every room of your house. You have to be creative to get your mind to snap from thinking about yourself and how beat up and broken you are to first thinking about how happy God is that you're talking to him, that you're coming to him, that you want to listen to him, that you want to read his word. You may not be getting much out of his word, but see how happy he is that you're coming to him.

If you don't see this face, pick whatever picture you have. If you don't like pictures, pick a verse. Do whatever it's going to take.

That's going to remind you of who God is and who you are. First of all, you're a child of God. There is no place for condemnation when I start and spend a lot of time with this face.

When Jesus taught us how to pray, he said, our father who is in heaven, and maybe some of us need to stop at that first line and say, I'm not going to go any further. Because that first line is deep enough that I'm going to stop at that and just chew on that all day long. My father who is in heaven, my father who is in heaven, not my God who is in heaven, not this big king who is in heaven, my father who is in heaven.

And maybe you just take that first line and meditate and chew on it for six months. That's what I did when I put this picture on my desktop. It took me months to shake this for me, but now I seem to get it a little easier.

That this is the God I am worshipping, and that is how I invite the spirit into my life again every day. I say, Holy Spirit, you help me remember this face today. As I go into these tough meetings, as I go into all these problems at work, as I deal with all these issues in my own life, help me to see this face.

The spirit testifies in our spirit. Holy Spirit will testify in our spirit that we are children of God. If you remind yourself through the scriptures, through the word of God, this is who your God is, the spirit will testify in your spirit too.

If you ask me who God is, I instinctively go to this, and I can talk about it with a passion, because I get it. And my life is a reflection of that now, because I don't deal with condemnation that much anymore. I still sin, but I don't deal with condemnation anymore, because I got this face.

So if you're dealing with condemnation, you've not got God as a father. You've not seen the joy on his face. We need to stop looking at our faces for a while.

We need to stop looking at how bad we've messed up. We know it. We don't have to tell ourselves anymore.

What you need to see is, what is God's response to you? And I'm going to come back to you about that with the father, one more point about the father at the end. But let me talk about another one. So the first one is that he reminds and he affirms us.

Let the Holy Spirit first do that to you, that you are a child of God. First of all, then he's a helper and a groaner. He helps and he groans.

He's a help, which means he comes alongside to help. So every day, when I see God as a father, I say, God, thank you, there's no condemnation. But I know that these lusts are so strong inside of me.

I know my nature has been allowing me to get angry for so many years. I need your help. And as you, if you are flippant about your anger, the chances of the Holy Spirit being inside of you is pretty slim.

But if you find a groaning inside of you, if you find a kind of yearning, a desire to say, I want to be different, it is a mark of the Holy Spirit inside of you groaning, saying, I want to be like Jesus. It is not some holy desire of yours. It's the Holy Spirit that God has given in you, quickening your conscience, saying, I want to be different.

And he comes alongside you. He puts his arm around you. That is the Holy Spirit.

I've got to see that Holy Spirit as a helper. That's why I often have to ask the Holy Spirit to help me. Lord, give me your spirit to help me just in this particular situation.

I don't need to be filled with this Holy Spirit in this fantastic event or experience. I just need the Holy Spirit for the next ten minutes. Because these co-workers are saying these things to me, and I'm on the edge of saying something real nasty back to them.

Holy Spirit, come alongside me and help me. Or it's late at night on Friday, and these friends are calling me, and I'm really finding it hard not to go out with them and do things I shouldn't do. Holy Spirit, come alongside and help me.

And groan, and you hear the groaning inside of you because you don't want it, that's the Holy Spirit. He shows you the Father, he helps and he groans. But this, this is my favorite.

And this is what convinces me I have the Holy Spirit inside of me. The proof of the Holy Spirit to me comes down to one simple point for me. He makes Jesus bigger.

In my mind. And in my eyes. More than he shows me the Father, and God is a Father, more than he yearns and helps along me.

I love the Holy Spirit and I know I've got the Holy Spirit in me because compared to 2007 December, Jesus is bigger to me than he was. Jesus is more magnificent. Jesus is more desirable.

Jesus is more who I want to be like. The Holy Spirit will glorify Jesus. Which means he'll make Jesus bigger and bigger in your view.

That's all it means. Glorify is a tricky word for me. For me I understand glorify as he will say Jesus used to be this big, now he's going to make him this big to you.

And sooner or later as the Holy Spirit continues to fill you up, Jesus becomes bigger and bigger and bigger. That is the secret to victory over sin. Not I have to keep fighting those lusts.

You have to keep fighting but you fight because this guy is consuming everything you're looking at. And for this guy Jesus to become everything you're looking at you need the Holy Spirit. And so you come to the Holy Spirit and you say God I need the Holy Spirit to make Jesus more beautiful to me.

I need him to do that. And I'm going to read his word and I have one purpose in mind. I want Jesus to be more beautiful, more desirable, more of a hero in my life than he was last year.

Simple. No experience, no speaking in tongues, no healing people. Let Jesus and the exalting of Jesus be the metrics by which you decide whether you have the Holy Spirit.

So you wake up in the morning and you say God fill me with the Holy Spirit. I'll tell you if he fills you with the Holy Spirit. You just have to answer one question.

How big is Jesus in your mind? Is Jesus still as big as it was yesterday? He's given you the Holy Spirit. Brothers, sisters, you have it. Now live in that.

Live with that spirit. Live with that Holy Spirit that says spirit keep Jesus this big for me today. And I'm not saying every day he'll just suddenly become bigger.

Over time you will see that Jesus becomes more and more desirable. Every day you go to the God and say God give me your Holy Spirit so that Jesus can be this amazing person to me. And we all think of Jesus in a vacuum as being this amazing person.

But the problem comes in when it's Jesus and my career. Right? You understand these things. It's Jesus or this other option.

And it's not that I discount Jesus. But it's just that this career or this other option is clouding my perspective of Jesus. They've got other things that distract me from looking at Jesus.

The example I sometimes use is for me it's if it's a sports game like cricket. If it's the last over and it's four runs left to win. And I have my computer and I'm chatting with somebody or sending an email or doing something from work.

I find myself curiously not interested in writing my email or chatting with somebody because the cricket game is getting more and more exciting. Because the cricket game is getting more and more exciting. It's easy for me to turn away from this computer email that I'm doing or that chat that I'm working on.

Because the cricket game is so exciting. It's not hard work to turn away from the computer because the cricket game is so exciting. That's what it means when it says the Holy Spirit will glorify and exalt Jesus.

It's that I have to turn away from sin but his burden is easy and his yoke is light. Because Jesus is becoming so valuable to me. It's not hard to turn from it.

In the beginning it is hard because Jesus is small. But as Jesus becomes bigger in your view, in your panoramic view of what Jesus fills your landscape, sin will become easier to resist. It is that way.

I speak from experience. I spent years fighting, fighting, fighting and I seem to have found a relief where I do fight. But it's easier to fight because I'm looking at somebody else.

Who consumes my view, consumes my passion, consumes my interests. Now if you're interested in these other things, we'll have to wait for a while. But when you're willing to give up some of those interests and say, Jesus, I want you to become bigger in my view.

I really do. And if it means me taking three or four practical steps to help me get there, I will do that. But you, for 2009, Jesus, I really want you to become bigger.

And if it comes at the cost of not me making as much money, if it comes at the cost of me still being single, I will do it. Because Jesus, I'm sick of this 50% Jesus, 40% Sandeep, 5% my wife, 5% my career. It's not working for me.

And you can put your name in and put whatever percentage you give to God, whatever percentage you give to yourself and you can say it's not working. And then you say, OK, I'm going to give Jesus everything. And I'm going to make Jesus foremost, as I said yesterday.

And then you ask the Holy Spirit to remind you of him. Jesus, remind me of your word, how big you are. Remind me that you're my father.

Help me, put your arm around me and walk with me. Help me to keep looking at Jesus. Here's the goal.

I would suggest that this be the goal for all of us. I need to be sure that I have the Holy Spirit with me every day of 2009. I want you young people to be sure of it.

I walk my life now knowing that I can be sure if I have the Holy Spirit with me. I really do. I don't doubt it.

And these are the metrics that I use. So I'm sharing with you the metrics that I use that convince me that I have the Holy Spirit in me. Because I often open my heart up to say I'm going to believe the truth about God's word.

That I am a child of God. And Holy Spirit, remind me of it. And he's a helper and a groaner.

So the Holy Spirit comes and tells me, don't give up. It's dark. It's lonely.

There doesn't seem any sign of the sun, but don't give up. You're a son of God. You're a daughter of God.

You've got all kinds of things working against you. You may have these doubts you can't resolve, but don't give up. And stop looking at that.

Look at that. Stop looking at this. Look at that.

Stop looking at your problems. Look at Jesus. See how beautiful he is.

Stop looking at your singleness. See how beautiful Jesus is. Stop looking at all these.

How much money you could make. Look at Jesus. Change your focus.

Change your focus. Look often and say, Jesus. Let me turn again and look.

We talked about being a house of prayer. And not stealing from God, but praying often. It's these little prayers in the middle of the day.

We talked about that yesterday. It's these short, machine gun kind of prayers, whatever. They call it popcorn prayers, whatever.

But it is that little things. That's mostly what I'm talking about. During the day, saying, Jesus.

Tell me once again how beautiful you are. Holy Spirit, show me once again how beautiful Jesus is. Stop letting me get enamored by beautiful women and beautiful cars and beautiful houses.

Remind me again how beautiful you are. Holy Spirit, help me. Holy Spirit, remind me.

Holy Spirit, exalt Jesus. You've got to remember. I wrote this just when we were singing.

We've got to remember that God is a father. And I want to get back to this. I talked about God being a father.

God is our father. And you know, some of us may not have had as good parents as others do, sitting here. Some of us may not have had Christian parents.

But you've got to imagine. What I always try to do is imagine how you would treat your own child who wants to please you but keeps messing up. You guys are all old enough that you can imagine being a parent if you're not already a parent.

Even if you're not married, you can imagine how you would treat a child that was your own child. And you're not this evil, sinful person. You're a nice person.

You guys are all nice people. How would you treat a child of your own who's messing up? How would you treat a child who needs to be disciplined? Would you discipline them? Of course. But you discipline them with love.

You discipline them and then say, Listen, I want you to still understand I'm your father and I love you. And I discipline you for this reason. And as a father, you will take things away from your kid.

And you won't allow your kid to do things. But it's okay. Because you understand you're a loving father or a loving mother.

You've got no problem embracing your own love for your children and saying, It's no doubt I do love my parents. I do love my children. I know I love that child.

That is why I'm not giving them this. And I'm giving them a spanking. And I'm giving them that.

I'm making their life kind of hard for them. But because I love them. And you have no problem with that.

And you treat your children with such mercy and with such grace. But yet we so often don't give God that same dignity. We think God who is a father is not as kind as we are.

We think that though we would be so merciful and gracious and choose correctly balancing love and strictness. We can do that because we're good people. But we don't give that same dignity to God.

And we say, No, God, you're messing my life up. God, you're withholding things from me. God, you are not blessing me like you should.

We don't give him the same dignity we give ourselves. And you know Jesus used that analogy. Jesus used this analogy to talk about how the father would give the Holy Spirit.

If you being evil know how to give good gifts to your children, the father will give you the Holy Spirit. And we've made this complicated process by which we get the Holy Spirit. And it isn't.

If God is my father, he's a good God. He will give me the Holy Spirit for those who ask him. Now I need to be faithful to protect that Holy Spirit.

But let's not put it on God. And I found out that I received the Holy Spirit way before I acknowledged that I received the Holy Spirit. And I received the Holy Spirit way before I believed that I received the Holy Spirit.

That is the truth about my life. That God gave me the Holy Spirit months, years before I finally became convinced that the Holy Spirit was with me. Now I dishonored the Holy Spirit at times.

I refused to keep that Holy Spirit, continue filling me up. That's different. But I ask him for the Holy Spirit.

He's going to give it to me. Now it's up to me to honor that Holy Spirit. And I've given you ways in which you say you're going to honor the Holy Spirit.

Honor the Holy Spirit every day in your life by these three metrics. And for me, I have taken these three metrics and I say, If I honor these three metrics based on the word of God, I am going to be convinced I have the Holy Spirit. And none of these are tough to do.

We have to give God the same dignity we give ourselves. And we've got to be willing to say, Jesus, I really do want you to become more important to me. And these are not difficult to do.

So it is not difficult to be assured that you have the Holy Spirit with you. So this is the action. This is what I want you to spend the rest of your time writing down.

So this is what I told you, right? We need to be sure in 2009 that this is how it's going to be. So you can choose to write the first one or you can choose to write the second one or you can choose to write both. Every day I will consciously fight the lie of the devil.

Yesterday I gave you options like every week and every month. But this is a little way more serious than to give it to you every week. Here you have to do it every day.

Every day I will consciously fight the lie of the devil that, fill in the blanks for yourself. Is it the lie of the devil that God is not the loving father that you've understood him to be? That God is condemning you? I will consciously fight it. Every day.

I'm not going to tell you what to write. You should write down what you think the devil has been lying to you about. And every day I will consciously choose to believe the truth, the reality.

That, what? Maybe it is that God is my father. Maybe it is that I should continue to fight, that I should not give up. Maybe that I should start looking at Jesus more.

Those are some options that you can write down in there. Any questions about what I'm asking you to do? No? Okay, I hope it's pretty clear. Look, I'm asking you to write this down not to fill the time.

I'm going to ask you to write this down to take it home with you. Write it on a piece of paper. Put it in your Bible and you're going to keep it for the rest of 2009.

And this is going to drive your spirituality. I've asked you to fill down, write down over here. You're going to write it on a fresh piece of paper.

Put it in your Bible and read it every day or every week or whatever it is. Remind yourself what you have taught here. That's why I'm asking you to write it down in your words.

That's why I'm not filling in the blanks for you. Because I want you to write down what you can commit to. And what you know is the problem in your life.

I really do want to come at December 2009 if I do make it here, God willing. And hear that a lot of you, if not all of you, were faithful to just keep... I've asked you to write down one or two things every session. So maybe I've asked you to write down seven or eight things.

For a whole year, just keep those seven or eight principles.

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