

APOSTLE'S CREED
 "I Believe in the Holy Spirit,"

Who is the third person of the Trinity?
 Who is the Spirit of Truth?
 Who created the church?

If I asked a bunch of our All Stars those questions
 my guess is that one of two things would happen;

Either a number of hands would pop up (and that is a neat thing)
 and the names God or Jesus or both would pop out of their mouths
 orrrrr there would be an awkward silence,
 and finally but hesitantly someone utters, God? Jesus?

Some of us might hesitate too.
 And that might be because we really don't know.

We often emphasize God as Father or Creator;
 or Jesus; his life, death, and resurrection,
 but we just don't think, teach, or talk much about the Holy Spirit
 unless he is just mentioned in the flow of a prayer, song, creed, or Bible verse.

The Spirit does a lot.
 Martin Luther wrote "The Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel,
 enlightened me with his gifts and sanctified and preserved me in the true faith,
 even as he calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church."

But the Spirit doesn't get much of the limelight.
 He is the hidden person of the Trinity, the shy person of the Trinity.

Even in the creed itself, we only say "I believe in the Holy Spirit"
 the nature and the character of the Holy Spirit aren't mentioned
 but the benefits to people are; fellowship and forgiveness, resurrection and eternal life.

It's kind of like we don't see the wind, but we might hear the rustle of the leaves,
 or we see the slivers of snow sliding across the road,
 or feel the cool gentle breeze on a hot summer day
 or feel the harsh frigid breeze that bites.

And we don't always see, feel, or are aware of our breath, but it is there.

Jesus pretty much says that is how it is going to be with the Spirit, John 16.13-14,
**"He won't draw attention to himself,
 but will make sense out of what is about to happen
 and, indeed out of all I have done and said.
 He will honor me; he will take from me and deliver it to you."**

Francis Chen calls the Holy Spirit the Forgotten God because of the three persons of the Trinity, we don't talk as much about the Holy Spirit.

His concern is that if we aren't aware, don't acknowledge, can't verbalize, or haven't internalized that the Spirit is at work within us and within our community, then we'll begin to believe that God is not nor cannot work in our lives. And that God won't show up when we need Him, or worse yet, that we begin to think we don't need God.

Some research has shown that if the Holy Spirit was taken out of most mainline churches you couldn't tell the difference because 95% what goes on is not Spirit driven. People just do things, mostly good things, and then ask for God's blessing, not the Spirit's leading.

This morning before the early service Dave Jakes came up to me and handed me a battery for my microphone. Without it, what needs to be heard wouldn't be heard, would it?

It's like a person operating without the presence of Jesus. There is no power and what needs to get done, would get done would it?

Then at the start of that service I forgot to turn the microphone on. And that like not letting God's power turned on in our lives or in the life of the church. The church wouldn't look the same and tragically what God wants done probably won't get done.

Let's look at the Bible record, let's review some of the "history" of the Holy Spirit, the immensity and impact of the Holy Spirit's ministry.

The first appearance of the Holy Spirit in holy history is in Genesis 1.1-2. We're told that at creation the earth was formless, empty darkness, a soup of nothingness **"and the spirit of God was hovering (brooding) over the waters..."**

Then we know God spoke, the Spirit in the form of "God's breath, or as "wind from God' moved, and walla; order, beauty, and life were birthed.

In the Old Testament we read of numerous occasions the Holy Spirit helped in creation. Genesis 2.7, **"the Lord God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being."**

We also read of the Holy Spirit anointing Kings and prophets, equipping some to serve enabling others to speak, and encouraging all to live moral lives.

We read of the Holy Spirit redeeming and restoring the saints of old. David, lost in his lust, full of shame and guilt, and caught in the web of lies, murder, and adultery; finally with a broken and contrite heart cried out, Psalm 51.10-11, **"create in me a pure heart...do not...take your Holy Spirit from me."** God didn't.

After the Old Testament, we read of the role the Holy Spirit played in the birth and life of Jesus.

He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, anointed by the Spirit at his baptism,
 led by the Spirit into the wilderness (actually driven), empowered by the Spirit, Luke 4.14,
 offered himself as a sacrifice through the Spirit (Hebrews 9.14), ministered to by the spirit,
 raised from the dead by the Spirit (Romans 1.4)
 and gave his last instruction about the Spirit,
 Acts 1.4-5, **"...wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about ."**

Ah, then as Jesus promised, the promised presence of the Holy Spirit
 on the day of Pentecost **fell** on and **filled** the followers of Jesus,
 and that ushered in, actually birthed a new era for the people of God, the church.
 An era filled with miracles, conversions, and changed lives.

In the church today, when we say, "I believe in the Holy Spirit..."
 we should understand these things to be true about the work of the Holy Spirit;

The Holy Spirit isn't some impersonal "thing" out there that just tries to make your life miserable.
 Out of his love for you He teaches right from wrong and convicts you and I of your sin, John 16.8,
"When he comes he'll expose the godless world's view of sin, righteousness, and judgment;"

John 16.13 (MSG) continues,
"the Spirit of Truth will take you by the hand and guide you into all the truth there is ."

Where do we get our wisdom as to what we think and do?
 Wisdom for our business relationships, wisdom to relate to those we know and love,
 the wisdom to relate to those we don't know, those different from us,
 and wisdom as to how to relate to God.

Do we find our wisdom in the ways of the world, our flesh, or the lies of the devil?
 Or do we get our wisdom from the Spirit?

Hear this, 2 Timothy 3.16-17,
**"All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching ,
 rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,
 so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."**

Out of his love for you the Holy Spirit facilitates, co-ordinates, and orchestrates our experiences of God.
 He prompts us to do good works and even prompts us to confess Jesus as Lord, 1 Corinthians 12.3,
**"Therefore I tell you that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus be cursed."
 And no one can say "Jesus is Lord" except by the Holy Spirit."**

At Acquire the Fire last weekend God's loved overwhelmed some of our youth;
 the dam broke, tears flowed and fears were swept aside,
 sins were forgiven and hearts washed clean,
 walls were broken down and relationships were restored. Praise God.

God was praised and had to be pleased, as many of our youth

with arms raised shouted and sang, "Jesus is Lord."

I'm excited and want to hear more about that, but now the real work begins, for you and for us, for each of us, "to work out our salvation with fear and trembling."

There was a night to remember
and now there is a life with God to live, and I know it will be worth it.
That's not my promise, Jesus promised that he came to give you a real and an eternal life.

He promised the Holy Spirit would be in on that too, 14.26,
"But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you."

"Remind" in this context is to encourage, to urge us on, much like the word spur found in Hebrews 10.24, **"And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds."**

Spurred? Like a horse being spurred?
Ouch! Sounds painful, sometimes it is. Real change is painful. But it is worth it.

And the Holy Spirit will help.
He not only exposes us to wrong, and encourages and teaches us to do good, but enables and equips us to do those good deeds, 1 Corinthians 12.4-7, (MSG)
"God various gifts are handed out everywhere; but they all originate in God's Spirit. God's various ministries are carried out everywhere; but they all originate in God's Spirit."

**God's various expressions of power are in action everywhere;
But God himself is behind it all.
Each person is given something to do to show who God is;
Everyone gets in on it, everyone benefits."**

Do you believe that?
You see if you believe that
then that means you are called by God to do something special in the lives of others?
That you have been given something special and the expectation is
That you will help, heal, and give hope to others?

And as Frances Chen points out, sometimes it's not that we are afraid God won't show up, we're afraid because God will show, and ask us to do something we really don't want to do.

We're afraid that someone will get upset,
or we'll mess up, or we'll have to give up something.

Anyone see the show Radio?
Coach Jones was a football coach in a southern town.
Who much to the surprise of friends and family and much to the despair of many in the town takes a liking to young challenged African American young man called Radio, who got the name Radio because he always has a transistor radio to his ear.

The Coach ends up embarrassed and in danger of losing his job.

. He tells his daughter why he befriended Radio.

“When I was 12 I had a paper route that covered a large territory so I cut through the woods on a little dirt road.

One day I heard a noise that sounded like a rabbit caught in a trap.

It was coming from under a house with a skirt of chicken wire and barb wire woven together.

All of a sudden I saw fingers sticking out of the chicken wire.

So, I put down my bike, got down on my hands and knees, and looked.

There was a boy about my age. There was something wrong with him but I didn’t know what.

We looked at each other, stared at each other for awhile.

I ran that route for two years Mary Helen and never did a thing.

I just wanted to tell you that.

Coach Jones eventually found the courage to risk his life’s love and work, and advocate for one vulnerable and at risk.

Willis Becker shared that someone came to him for help.

Afraid of what he was getting into Willis hesitated and said no.

He later felt he’d said no to the Holy Spirit.

He asked for forgiveness and asked for the Spirit to send him another person.

He’d tell you now that Holy Spirit answered that prayer.

Not just once, but many have been sent to Willis for help.

You need to know the Holy Spirit gives us the power

and prompts us to set our fears aside, to do what we should do, to do what is not easy, to go through tough times, to resist temptation, or to risk the ridicule of others.

Paul’s words to Timothy should give you confidence, 2 Timothy 1.7,

“For God did not give us the Spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love, and of self-discipline.”

Do you believe that?

Do you believe that you have that Spirit, that power residing in you?

If you have accepted Christ and say no, Paul challenges your thinking, I Corinthians 6.19-20

“Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God?”

And again in Romans 8.9, **“You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you.”**

If you truly believe that I invite you to repeat these words with me, **“I Believe in the Holy Spirit”**

And now let’s stand and sing the Spirit Song.