

# Winchester Cathedral—Adult Education & Spirituality Lecture Series 19th May 2010

## The Holy Spirit — God's Gift among us

### INTRODUCTION

- The universalism of the Holy Spirit in creation and recreation is clearly evidenced in the Old Testament  
C.f. **Genesis 1 : 2, Psalm 104 : 29-30**
- The particularity of the Spirit's presence, his permanent indwelling of the people of God, was made possible by the death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ.  
C.f. **John 7 : 37-39, John 14 : 15-18, John 16 : 7**
- For the first Christians, the fact that God had come to make his home in their lives was something that radically affected them. It made a difference; a difference they experienced and that was noticed.
- *N.B. Christianity is not merely things we believe, but an experience of God.*



- Therefore, if we claim to be Christians, we should expect to see signs of the Spirit's presence and of his work in our lives.

- **Key words:**

- **FREEDOM**

- free to be the people God created us to be  
**2 Corinthians 3 : 17**

- **TRANSFORMATION**

- to become like Jesus  
**2 Corinthians 3 : 18**

- The Holy Spirit is God's empowering, liberating and transforming presence in our lives.
- The Spirit, God's Gift among us, does many things in the lives of individual Christians:

### 1 NEW LIFE

**John 3 : 5-8 Romans 8 : 8-9**

- **New spiritual life given by the Spirit living in us**
  - *Before a person comes to faith, the Holy Spirit:*
    - ☞ leads us to Jesus
    - ☞ convicts us of sin and of our need of the Saviour
  - *When a responds personally to God's love they are:*
    - ☞ brought to life spiritually
    - ☞ given the gift of God's Spirit

### 2 NEW RELATIONSHIP WITH THE FATHER

**Romans 8 : 15-16**

- **Children of God**

The Fatherhood of God is the bedrock of Christian experience.



### 3 NEW CHARACTER

Romans 8 : 29    2 Cor 3 : 18    Galatians 5 : 16-26

- **Being transformed**  
God's purpose is to make us like Christ

Romans 8 : 29



- **Bearing fruit**  
The Holy Spirit helps us to grow by changing us from inside producing the fruit of the Spirit

Galatians 5 : 22-23

- **Being tested**  
The Holy Spirit helps us to grow by leading us through dry times



Hosea 2 : 14-15    Romans 8 : 28

### 4 NEW OWNERSHIP

1 Cor 6 : 19-20    Ephesians 1 : 13-14

- Holy Spirit is the owner's stamp; the seal marking us out as belonging to God.

### 5 NEW COMMUNICATION

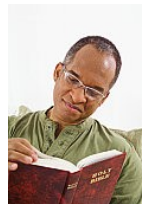
- **He helps us to pray**  
The Holy Spirit helps us in our prayers and interprets our deepest sighs, groans, thoughts, desires to our Father. (c.f. the value of speaking in tongues)

Romans 8 : 26-27

- **He enables us to understand God's word**  
As Christians we are not left on our own; we have the maker's handbook (= Bible) and a personal instructor (= Holy Spirit)  
The Spirit enlightens our mind to understand what God is saying.

John 14 : 26    John 16 : 13

Eph 1 : 17-18



### 6 NEW RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER CHRISTIANS

1 Corinthians 12 : 12-27

Being a Christian inescapably involves commitment to the church = the people of God.  
The Spirit is the 'life-blood' of the one body.

1 Corinthians 12 : 13

- **One body**
  - Every member different
  - Every member important
  - All are interdependent
  - The condition of each member affects the whole

1 Corinthians 12 : 4, 14

1 Corinthians 12 : 21-24

1 Corinthians 12 : 12, 20

1 Corinthians 12 : 26



## 8 NEW HOPE      Romans 5 : 5    Romans 8 : 23    2 Corinthians 5 : 5    Ephesians 1 : 13,14

- **The Holy Spirit is the first instalment of what one day we will experience.**  
He keeps us looking forward expectantly and hopefully



The Spirit, God's Gift among us, reveals his presence in the community of Christians:

### THE HOLY SPIRIT CREATES UNITY IN THE CHURCH

**Ephesians 4 : 3-7**

- This is one of the most noticeable signs of the Holy Spirit's presence in the church      **Eph 4 : 4-6**
- Holy Spirit creates unity; the task of Christians is to keep it, guard it and not spoil it!
- Unity is based on the fact that we have a common bond, the Spirit within us      **1 Cor 12 : 13**

- UNITY IN 3 AREAS:-

#### i) Unity of purpose      **Ephesians 1 : 9-12**

- our aim is to glorify God

#### ii) Unity of message      **2 Corinthians 4 : 5-7**

- the one gospel to proclaim

#### iii) Unity in relationships      **Ephesians 4 : 15-32**

- building each other up as members of one body
- honesty in a climate of love



#### **Key words:**

☞ ACCEPTANCE - ENCOURAGEMENT - FORGIVENESS - VULNERABILITY



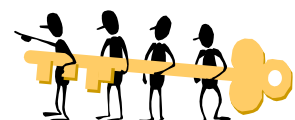
### THE HOLY SPIRIT MAKES FELLOWSHIP POSSIBLE IN THE CHURCH

**2 Corinthians 13 : 13      Philippians 2 : 1**

- 'Fellowship' = word often only superficially understood
- **Acts 2 42-47** = example of fellowship of the Holy Spirit in early church
- It involves:-
  - practically sharing our lives
  - materially sharing our goods
  - emotionally sharing our needs
- God has designed it such that in the church we need each other for health and growth      **1 Cor 12 : 7**
- Therefore we have responsibility to minister to (= serve) one another.
- That is one way in which the fellowship of the Spirit is expressed & deepened.
- C.f. **1 Corinthians 12 : 7, 25-27**      **Ephesians 4 : 15,16**

#### **Key words:**

☞ PRIVILEGE - RESPONSIBILITY - BELONGING - COMMITMENT



## THE HOLY SPIRIT GIVES GIFTS TO EQUIP US FOR MINISTRY

1 Corinthians 12 : 7   1 Corinthians 12 : 1-11   1 Peter 4 : 10

- Every Christians is a minister!
- The Holy Spirit gives to each one of us gifts that God wants us to use to bless others.
- Each member of the church is different; each has different gifts.
- All are important, all are needed.

They are:-

- ☞ **free gifts**
- ☞ **to each one**
- ☞ **for the common good**
- ☞ **tools to build God's Kingdom**
- ☞ **weapons to fight spiritual warfare**

## THE HOLY SPIRIT INSPIRES WORSHIP

- The early church, filled with the Spirit, was notable for its joy and praise even when experiencing suffering & persecution.
- Upsurge of praise because of the recognition of who God is and what he has done in our lives.
- The Holy Spirit wants to inspire, enthuse us in worship; and to reveal the presence of God
- Worship is to be characterised by :-
  - expectancy not apathy
  - freedom/spontaneity not legalism
  - Spirit-lead not manipulated
  - participation not spectacle
- N.B. beware of today's freedoms becoming tomorrow's legalisms!!

## THE HOLY SPIRIT INITIATES & EMPOWERS EVANGELISM

Acts 1 : 8   Acts 8

- **Question:** Why did God send his Spirit?  
**Answer:** To give us power to help us witness for Jesus Christ.
- So where the Holy Spirit is really at work in the church, we can never be an inward-looking cosy club. "The Comforter comes not to make us comfortable but to make us missionaries."
- "The Holy Spirit is sovereign in evangelism. He it is who energises the evangelism of the church & drives its often unwilling members into the task for which God laid his hands on them: mission." (E.M.B.Green)