

# Tampa Bay Vineyard – The Work of the Holy Spirit

- We highly value, welcome and invite the Work of the Holy Spirit in drawing us near to God, empowering the Church for works of service, the distribution of gifts for the edification of the body and the releasing of various ministries in the Church for the instruction of the believers.

Throughout history Christianity has gone in cycles. There are great outpourings of the Spirit of God where power is released and there are many signs and wonders and the gifts of the Spirit are used to great effectiveness for the expansion of the kingdom. A generation later, the children and grandchildren of those that experienced that outpouring are trying to duplicate that outpouring. By the next generation the fruit of that original outpouring has been institutionalized and it has been robbed of its power. The generation after that finds it hard to believe that the outpouring ever happened or that the stories they've heard about what happened are real. They now develop a theology to explain why what they are experiencing is true Christianity and why anything that departs from that norm must be of the Devil. Then another outpouring of the Holy Spirit happens, and the cycle starts all over again. Every time there is a fresh outpouring there is a part of the body that denounces it as being counterfeit, as not being from God.

God sent His Son to redeem us for Himself, to ransom us from slavery to sin. Because the Father did not want the effectiveness of that work to be lost, He sent His Holy Spirit to continue the work of Jesus on this earth. When He sent His Son, He came in human form. Because of that He was limited to time and space. He could only be in one place at a time. Now he comes to us as spirit, therefore He can be everywhere at the same time. In fact, He lives inside of each and every one of us.

Have you ever tried to describe a powerful personal experience you've had to another person – who clearly wasn't getting it? No matter how hard you tried, you just couldn't find the right words, the right metaphors, the right images to adequately communicate the depth of emotion you felt in that moment? Describing the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Trinity, is something like that! Yes, there are titles, images, word pictures, and metaphors for the Holy Spirit throughout the Bible. Yet all of those descriptions will only have value if they actually help us *experience* the Holy Spirit. God doesn't want you or me to only understand Him with our minds, though sometimes we have to start there. He wants to engage our hearts and wills as we learn about *His presence, His love, His gifts, His heart, and His mission*. The Holy Spirit is like the oxygen of the Kingdom of God. If you're going to stay alive, you can't just read about air – you have to *breathe it in!* It's the same with God's Spirit.

## 1. The Counselor

While there are many attributes to the Holy Spirit, we are going to concentrate on three that impact our relationship with the third person of the Trinity.

When Jesus ascended into heaven, He did not abandon us. He did not leave us alone to fend for ourselves. He sent the Spirit of truth to be with us, to live in us and to counsel us.

**John 14:15-17**

***"If you love me, you will obey what I command. <sup>16</sup> And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever— <sup>17</sup> the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.***

**John 14:25-26**

***"All this I have spoken while still with you. <sup>26</sup> 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.***

Once He went up to heaven, who was there to turn to? The Holy Spirit is here with us at the ready to counsel, comfort and empower us. Positionally, Jesus is at the right hand of the Father, but the Holy Spirit is here indwelling and empowering our lives. He does not leave us or forsake us.

The Spirit is here to help us understand the mysteries of the Kingdom of God.

He is here to communicate the Father's will for our lives.

He is here to amplify and magnify the work of Jesus.

He never speaks in the first person, and He never speaks for Himself. He is here to carry out the will of

the Father and to remind us of Jesus's teachings.

## **2. Communicator of Truth**

The Spirit testifies about the life and ministry of Jesus. He communicates truth. Truth is immutable; it does not change or evolve.

### **John 15:26**

***"When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me.***

Part of the work of the Spirit is to point out sin. Unfortunately, too many Christians think that this is their job. The reason it is the job of the Spirit is because He does it:

1. To point out to the world that there is a right and a wrong. That there are absolute values. To keep us pointed in the right direction instead of being swayed by the relativism of the world.
2. Because He wants us to no longer live according to the rules of this world but to live righteous lives that are pleasing to God. He does it to draw us closer to the Father. He does it to eliminate boundaries between us and the Father. He does it to help us to achieve the kind of intimacy with God that Jesus experienced.
3. He never does it to shame us or to make us feel like failures.
4. Because He does not want us to share in the fate of the evil one who already stands condemned.

### **John 16:7-15**

***But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. <sup>8</sup> When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment: <sup>9</sup> in regard to sin, because men do not believe in me; <sup>10</sup> in regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; <sup>11</sup> and in regard to judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned. <sup>12</sup> "I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. <sup>13</sup> But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. <sup>14</sup> He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you. <sup>15</sup> All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you.***

While Jesus taught many things, so many that all the libraries of the world could not contain them, there was more that God wanted to reveal about Himself, so He sent the Holy Spirit to teach us. Not that there new revelation beyond that which is in the Scriptures, but each generation has to learn these things anew. The Spirit will make all the things that Jesus taught us come alive and become relevant for our lives. While the Bible is written in simple language, it cannot be understood apart from the work of the Holy Spirit.

### **1 Cor 2:6-8**

***We do, however, speak a message of wisdom among the mature, but not the wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. <sup>7</sup> No, we speak of God's secret wisdom, a wisdom that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began. <sup>8</sup> None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.***

### **Acts 1:8**

***But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."***

## **1. The Empowerer**

Perhaps the most neglected and misunderstood part of the work of the Holy Spirit is His work in our lives to become effective witnesses. Anyone can quote the Bible, in fact, Satan quotes the Bible, but that does not make them effective witnesses. Anyone can talk about Jesus. That does not make them an effective witness. It is well document how John Wesley came to the United States and preached the Gospel in his own strength and how he failed miserably. It is equally well document how many people came to a saving knowledge of Christ when he returned to this country and preached under the power and anointing of the Holy Spirit.

### **1 Cor 2:4-5**

***My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, <sup>5</sup> so that your faith might not rest on men's wisdom, but on God's power.***

***1 Cor 4:20***

***For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power.***

***Heb 2:3-4***

***This salvation, which was first announced by the Lord, was confirmed to us by those who heard him. <sup>4</sup> God also testified to it by signs, wonders and various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will.***

Many evangelicals believe that once the New Testament was completed and we had the full revelation of God, we no longer needed signs and wonders, miracles and the gifts of the Spirit, because we had the Word.

Where in Scripture does it say that these things would end when the Bible was complete? In fact, the Scriptures themselves tell us that this is the standard that is expected until Christ's return. Or else, why spend so much time teaching us about them, and showing us how to use them correctly.

They reduce the work of the Holy Spirit to the work of transformation that makes us a new creature once we accept Christ as our Lord and savior.

After that it is all about studying the Bible and growing in its' knowledge. They believe in "sola scriptura", which is Latin for the Bible only.

We on the other hand, believe in "Word and Spirit"

In Luke 4:18, Jesus gets up to read the prophet Isaiah (Isa. 61:1), declaring "...*The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free...*" The Spirit then visibly empowers Jesus to perform signs and wonders, resist temptation, preach with power, proclaim good news to the poor, bind up broken hearts, bring freedom to those enslaved, and release prisoners from captivity! As the first Spirit-filled man, Jesus heals the sick, raises the dead, reveals the Father's love for humankind, casts out demons, feeds the hungry, and gives hope to all. In Matt. 10:20, Jesus teaches twelve disciples to trust the Holy Spirit to use them in the same kind of power ministry, receiving the Father's words to speak when faced with trouble.

Our prayer needs to be continuously, "Come Holy Spirit". It is through the ongoing work of the Spirit of God that we can live effective, abundant lives that reflect the ministry of Jesus Christ and the advancement of the Kingdom of Heaven.