

Wheelersburg Baptist Church 9/5/12 Wednesday evening [adapted from 2005 series]
"Let the Wind Blow: A Doctrinal Study of the Person and Work of the Holy Spirit"

Imagine you are sitting on your front porch on a hot, sultry, humid summer day. The leaves are motionless. The air is heavy. Then, all of a sudden, it happens. The leaves twitch, and you begin to feel a breeze of air. You savor it. You want more. You hope it won't stop. There's something very refreshing about the wind.

There's something very marvelous and refreshing about the Person the Bible calls the "Holy Spirit." Tonight, we are beginning a doctrinal study of the Person and Work of the Holy Spirit, entitled, "Let the Wind Blow."

You may wonder, "What does the image of wind have to do with the Holy Spirit?"

1. Word Definition

The Hebrew word translated "spirit" is a graphic word. It's the word "ruach."

--verb means "to blow, breathe" (or even "to smell")

--noun means "wind, breath" (Gen 6:17 "the breath of life") (387 in OT)

The basic idea is "air in motion."

--used of the "spirit" of man

Ps 51:10 "renew a right spirit within me."

Ps 51:17 "the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit."

--used of a supernatural, angelic being (I Sam 16:23 "a spirit from God")

--used of the "Spirit of God"

Gen 1:2 "And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."

Jd 3:10 "The Spirit of God came upon him."

I Sam 16:13 "The Spirit of God came upon David."

Isa 61:1 "The Spirit of the LORD is upon me..."

Isa 63:10 "But they rebelled, and vexed His Holy Spirit..." (also v 11)

2. Jesus' Use in Jn 3:8

Q: What is true of the wind?

"The wind blows where it wills, and thou hearest the sound of it, but canst not tell from where it cometh, and where it goeth." We can't see the wind. We can't predict the wind. But we can see the results of the wind.

Q: What does wind teach us about the Holy Spirit?

"So is every one that is born of the Spirit."

The Holy Spirit is God. He is directly involved in the work of salvation. Without the Holy Spirit, we could not become a Christian, nor live the Christian life. I am excited about the potential and privilege of studying the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit.

Objection: "But isn't it boring to study doctrine? Can't we study something more 'practical'?" When properly studied and understood, there is no more relevant and practical study than doctrine. Doctrine is what you believe. What you believe determines how you live.

Key: What you believe about the Holy Spirit has great implications for your life. And to be honest, there are plenty of misconceptions floating around concerning the Holy Spirit.

Discuss: What do the following statements reveal about various individual's views of the Holy Spirit:

#1 "I don't like your church. There's too much emphasis on teaching. I want a church where I can feel the Holy Spirit."

This person views the Holy Spirit as an emotion, a feeling. Lots of emotion means the Spirit is present. Little emotion means He is absent. The person also sees a conflict between the ministry of teaching and the ministry of the Spirit. How can we really tell if the Spirit is at work in our worship?

#2 "Your problem is that you need the anointing of the Holy Ghost. You could have it, too, if you'd try. My Christian life was really missing something until I got baptized by the Spirit."

This person sees receiving the Spirit as a second act of grace. Receiving Jesus is not enough. You don't receive the Holy Spirit at salvation, but at some later time.

#3 "I wasn't sure which car to buy. So I asked the Spirit to show me, and He told me to buy the Ford."

The Holy Spirit is a kind of inner voice that talks to us. He leads through impressions, feelings, or even outright speech.

#4 "I opened my Bible to find out which job God wanted me to pursue. The page flipped open to Amos 1:1 which says that Amos was a herdsman before he became a prophet. I knew the Spirit was telling me to sell my farm, and go into the ministry."

This person believes the Spirit speaks to us through circumstances which are kind of like "coded messages."

Which one of the above, if any, is the right view of the Holy Spirit? How do you know? We must turn to Scripture to find out.

Outline of Study of the Holy Spirit

I. The Person of the Holy Spirit

- A. Who is He?
- B. What is He like? (His attributes)

II. The Ministry of the Holy Spirit

- A. The ministry of the Holy Spirit in the Church
 - 1. In Worship (Jn 4:23-24)
 - 2. In Unity (Eph 4)
 - 3. In mobilizing for outreach ("filling")
- B. The ministry of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Christian
 - 1. In salvation (regeneration--John 3) (baptism--I Cor 12:13)

2. Fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-23)
 3. Filling of the Spirit (Eph 5:18)
 4. Sanctification (II Cor 3:18)
 5. Sets free from Habits (Eph 4-5)
- C. The ministry of the Holy Spirit in the World
1. Convicting of sin (John 16)
 2. Restraining (II Thes 1)

Next Week: The Person of the Holy Spirit

Discussion Time:

1. I said earlier that studying doctrine is very important and beneficial. What are some reasons many churches have avoided the study of doctrine? What happens when we ignore doctrine? What are some cautions we should exercise when studying doctrine?
2. What is the “typical” view of the Holy Spirit in fundamental, evangelical churches?
3. What are some of the benefits we can experience from a study like this one?

Prayer Time:

1. Share answers to prayer
2. Share prayer concerns
3. Prayer for various areas:
 - Children's & Teen ministries
 - Missionaries
 - Physical needs
 - Other