

***The Spirit of Holiness  
in our lives and  
Church***

Christ Church  
Home Groups  
Summer 2024

Christ Church  
Theme Verse  
2024

***Live a life  
worthy of the  
Lord and please  
him in every way:  
bearing fruit in  
every good work,  
growing in the  
knowledge of God***

*Colossians 1:10*

## *1. Meeting The Spirit*

### WELCOME

Who are those for whom you are most thankful for in your own life? It could be someone who has been out front in your life or behind the scenes, always there, always supporting.

### WORSHIP

Think how God has been at work in your own life and how things may have somehow '*come together*' as you look back at your life. Thank God for his ever present, hidden, yet powerful work in your life.

### WORD

**Please read John 16: 1-15**

Describe the mood of Jesus as he speaks to him.

Why do you think Jesus refers to the Spirit as a counsellor? Some translations use 'helper' or 'Advocate' what do you think these words imply and are they helpful to you?

Have you ever felt the need of someone who would act in this way for you?

What is the advantage that Jesus talks about? Why do you think Jesus calls it an advantage that he goes away?

Look at verses 8 to 11 what is it that the Spirit does according to these verses? Do you see that happening in the world, or do you see it happening in the church and in your own life?

Read verses 12 and 13, how would you describe the Spirit's ministry to Jesus followers? What does that say to us about how we now read the New Testament? Do you value your Bible?

What is the Spirit's relationship to Jesus' and to the Father like in verses 14 and 15? Do you ever think that God the Father has different attitude to you than Jesus or the Spirit? Do you struggle with this?

#### WORK AND WITNESS

From what we've seen in these verses do you think we need more of the Spirit in the life of our church? In the world? How can that happen in our services, in our meetings? How can that happen in our homes?

## *2. The Speaking Spirit*

#### WELCOME

*Which voices do you hear most in our society. Is it always the case that those who shout loudest win?*

#### WORSHIP

*Spend time thank God that he is a speaking God who spoke the word into existence, gives his Word, Jesus to us and speaks life into our hearts.*

#### WORD

***Please read 1 Corinthians 2:1-16***

Describe the content of what Paul is saying here and the *spirit* of Paul as God's messenger?

What does Paul tell us he is not using in verses 1-5. If he was using those things, how do you think that would get in the way of the Spirit's power?

In what ways are we tempted to use our own strength to serve God? How does this take the place of God's real work?

What does human wisdom lead to in verses 6 to 8 and by contrast what are the results from following God's wisdom?

Paul builds on this, in verses 9 and 10. What does he say '*fails to uncover the good things that God has prepared for us?*' If these methods fail, how can we discover the good things from God?

Do you think Paul's argument would convince you that the Holy Spirit is God in verses 11-12?

Given that Paul and the Apostles are no longer here to speak to us directly; where can we find the words '*taught by the Spirit*', (see verse 13), today?

What insights can you gain from v14 which may explain why a person might reject the message of Christ and the clear teaching of the Bible?

So, thinking about the work of the Spirit and the power of the Spirit and how he speaks; how do we pray for those people, speak to those people, live with those people, and love them?

As a result of the study of this passage how will we listen to go to the world and what specific

things can we ask the Holy Spirit to do whenever we read and pray and study the Bible

#### WORK AND WITNESS

As a result of this study of this passage how will we listen to go to world and what specific things can we ask the Holy Spirit to do whenever we read and pray and study the God Bible

### *3. The Spirit Renews*

#### WELCOME

What does a new freshly made bed feel like, or a spotless kitchen, tidy desk, clean room?

#### WORSHIP

Thank God that he has made you clean.

#### WORD

***Please read John 3 :1-28***

How would you describe Nicodemus in this chapter? How does Jesus describe him in v 2 and what was positive about what he said and what was lacking in what he said?

How would you describe Nicodemus' initial understanding of being Born Again in v 4?

Jesus talks about two births: the birth from the flesh, natural birth and one from the Spirit. How would you describe this if you were explaining it to someone?

What role does the Holy Spirit play in the New Birth and in what ways is the Spirit working in v 8?

Is there such thing as a *Born -Again Christian* as opposed to an *ordinary Christian* according to these verses? For further explanation look at John 1:12-13, what does John say about the new birth who were Christians born of?

Do you think our church exhibits the new life of God in its midst or do outsiders think we're just like them?

#### WORK AND WITNESS

What are the signs of spiritual life that Jesus described in this passage, and which of those are most obvious in our own lives and our community? Which are least obvious and what would it take for us to change that?

## *4. The Spirit Invades*

### WELCOME

What is your favourite, concert, performer, play or film. What makes it so for you?

### WORSHIP

Thank God or his work in you to change you in his own way however big or small.

### WORD

#### **Please read Acts 2: 1-13**

Look at vv 1-4, what would you want to capture on video what would the soundtrack sound like?

What was the reaction of the crowd? In this scene where would you want to be and in which place would you felt safest, in the upper room or with the crowd?

What happens to the flames in verses 2-3 and how does this symbolise what is about to happen in verses 3-4 What do you think fire does in terms of light and heat and purifying?

How does the Holy Spirit work his fire in you? Paul tells us not to quench the Spirit in 1 Thess 5:19, what is the opposite of fire?

So, in what areas do we feel cold and dead and lifeless, what areas do we need his purifying work?

In vv 14-41 Peter explains the events as they were occurring. Based on Peter's quotation from the Old Testament from Joel 2:28-32 what would you expect to see and experience when God poured out his Spirit in all people? In what way does that apply today?

The crowd were aware of Jesus' ministry, miracles, and death, so what was new in Peter's message in vv 22 -36.

When Peter describes what happened what does he focus on and what does he leave out from the experience? (look at v 24 and compare with vv 1 to 4)

And what does Peter promise to those who repent and believe in Jesus in verse 38 and 39?

#### WORK AND WITNESS

Please Read Acts 2: 42-47 What can you discover about the attitudes and practises of the early Christians? Which of these do we miss and how can we be more open to the Holy Spirit to restore these to us?

## *5. The Spirit Liberates*

#### WELCOME

Have you ever felt 'free'? What made it happen?

#### WORSHIP

Praise God for the freedom he gives, the freedom we have and his generosity.

#### WORD

***Please read Romans 8:1 -27***

What does Paul describe in verses 1-3, how liberating is this news for people?

How does God set us free from being dominated by the sinful nature in vv4 - 9?

How does God free us from the destruction of death in verses 10-11?

What do vv 15- 17 tell us about how we relate to our Father in heaven? How is that helpful and how often do we need to be reminded of this?

Even as we live in the Spirit what is often our experience now? How is this true in your own experience?

What does Paul tell us that these groans show we're waiting for?

How do the promises in vv18 -25 help you face times of difficulty?

In what ways does the Spirit minister to us in our weakness according to verses 26-27

How can we be sure that our prayers are in line with the Spirit in v26- 27 how do you respond to the idea that the Holy Spirit intercedes for you as an individual takes up your words in your life and makes them his own?

The passage starts with not being condemned, to being liberated, and talks with the Holy Spirit all the way through and yet focuses on the achievements of Jesus Christ how is the work of the Spirit and the achievements of Christ one and the same?

#### **WORK AND WITNESS**

Read Heb 7:25 give thanks for how Jesus' prays for you every moment along with the Spirit. Think of those parts of our world and parish that need Jesus' intercession



## 6. *The Spirit Transforms*

### WELCOME

Think about your favourite holiday or safe place to go and how it makes you feel.

### WORSHIP

Praise God that's he is at work in you along with his world to develop his likeness in creation.

### WORD

**Please read Galatians 5:16-26.**

What do you think people usually mean when they say they are *'being led by the Spirit'*? is there a difference between a strong desire and God's leading? Have a look at Psalm 106:9 & Ezekiel 20:10?

Where does the Spirit lead Jesus in Luke 4:1 -13? Skim read and notice how Luke describes how Jesus enters the desert and how he is described

coming out. Do you think the Spirit leads us to places we do not want to go?

Compare Galatians 5:16- 26 and Romans 8 :12 -17 look at the contrasts that Paul makes in both passages. Who is being led by the Spirit do you think? And what does it mean to be led by the Spirit here?

Look again at Galatians 5: 25; it says *'live'*, or more literally *'walk'*. What do you think Paul means by this and how does Gal 5:17 describe the reality of what it means to *keep in step or walk with the Spirit*? Do you think you can be a Christian and not be led by the Spirit?

As Christians we've been set free in Christ what are some limitations of that freedom? In what ways do the lists of a sinful nature find expression in our society or even our church, think of factions and splits and anger and backbiting?

What does Paul mean when he says in v21 *'those who live like this will not inherit the Kingdom of God'*?

When Paul describes the Spirit's work, why do you think Paul uses the singular *'fruit'* of the Spirit rather than *'fruits'* of the Spirit as a plural?

Which of the qualities in vv 22-26 are most prevalent and dominant in your own life? Could they just be natural personality traits? If so, how can they be given over to the Spirit?

What does Paul say in verse 24 that happens to the sinful nature? If this is so, why then, do we struggle with its power in our lives do you think?

How can we cultivate more of the Spirit's power in our lives?

Which person do you know has all these fruits of the Spirit in their lives in perfection in all their fullness?

## WORK

How can you walk in the Spirit and keep in step with the Spirit this week?

## *7. The Spirit Influences*

### WELCOME

*When you think of the word 'control' is that a positive thing or negative or both?*

### WORSHIP

Praise God for his empowering presence in your life. Reach out to him now, to receive more of him as you study this passage.

### WORD

#### **Please read Ephesians 5 :15 to 22**

We have looked at this passage in the last study with the theme of being led, now we are looking at what it has to say about being filled.

Have you ever been drunk and how does drunkenness transform a person? Have you ever been falsely accused of being drunk looking at your behaviour and would that be a bad thing?

Do you remember when the disciples were accused of being drunk in Acts 2: 9, it was only 9:00 in the morning that's a good party!

Read Ephesians 5:15-22 what are the two commands in verse 18 *to be and not to be?* (This is ripe for Shakespeare!)

How does Paul describe life in verse 16, do you agree with this and what are we to do? What is the command in verse 17 and what is the outcome at the end of verse 18?

What are the four actions that show that someone is filled with the Spirit in vv19-21? What do these four things have in common? And why does Paul call them being filled with the Spirit?

Would it be correct to describe being filled with the Spirit as a particular experience? Is it for one time only or continual experience? Can you give reasons for why you think this?

So how can we tell if someone is truly filled with the Spirit? What will they do? What will they like and what will they love?

#### WORK AND WITNESS

What are we commanded in verse 21 and how does this command relate to the verses that come before it? So, what will be the mark of the fruit of the Spirit in someone who is filled with the Spirit?

## *8. The Spirit Equips*

#### WELCOME

What are you good at? What do you enjoy doing? What makes you feel creative?

#### WORSHIP

Thank God for the purpose he has given you in life by being you! By being what he has remade you in Christ, for the gifts he has given you.

#### WORD

**Please read 1 Corinthians 12:1-31**

Throughout this passage what are the various actions of the Holy Spirit?

Who have you known that seems to have a particular gift from the Holy Spirit and to be able to minister in a particular way? What was the person like? What gifts did they have and how did they help you?

What did the Corinthians worship before they were Christians? What guidance does Paul offer in verse 2 to distinguish between their previous religious life and the genuine work of the Holy Spirit in their lives, look at vv 1-3

In vv 4- 7 Paul deals with the problem of disunity, what does he particularly highlight?

Look at the various gifts Paul mentions in verses 8 to 10, how does each give evidence that Holy Spirit is working in the life of the church?

In verse 11 Paul emphasises the same point he made in vv 4-6 why do you think he makes the same point again here?

Have you ever had the experience of deep Christian unity amongst people of diverse spiritual gifts what did it feel like and what did it look like?

Is there a danger that we elevate certain gifts above others and therefore certain people above others who have those gifts?

Look at v7, what is the goal that the Spirit wants to accomplish in the church. How have you seen that play in the life of our church?

In verses 12 to 20 Paul talks about the unity of Christ's Body at the time as he talks about spiritual gifts, why is it important for Paul to emphasise this?

In your opinion are Spiritual Gifts different from natural abilities? Can you explain how and what that might mean for the life of the church? This is similar to the question about the fruit of the Spirit that we saw a few weeks ago.

Read vv 28- 31 what are the 'greater gifts' what do they have in common and what is the role of the people who have these gifts?

What do you think it means to desire the greater gifts have a look at 1 Cor 14:1-5 how does that help us understand what the greater gifts are?

*Notes / reflections*

Now read 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 What does this add to this and how is this helpful to us now?

Do you think that particular gifts of the Spirit are to be used all the time on every occasion or is it wise not to use our own gifts on occasion? Have a look at 1 Cor 14:26-32.

#### **WORK AND WITNESS**

What would our church and world look like if God's good gifts were fully exercised and how do you think this can happen today? Read Ex 31:1-5 and reflect on God's creative purpose and pray for more gifts!