

Lesson 3 - "Learning to Rely on the Holy Spirit's Power"

Sunday, June 20, 2010

Lesson Scripture: Titus 2:13-14

Lesson Objective: - To learn what the Holy Spirit does for a Christian and how I am to respond to His presence.

The Holy Spirit's Purification of the Christian - The Greek word used to describe the Holy Spirit's power is 'dunamis' which is translated into our English word 'dynamite'. That is what the Holy Spirit does to sin in the life of the Christian. He blows away the sin that has entangled us. Act 2:3 described a manifestation of the Holy Spirit as "*divided tongues, as of fire*". This was not literal flames of fire but a supernatural indicator that God had sent the Holy Spirit upon each believer. Isaiah 1:25 says ²⁵ *I will turn My hand against you, And thoroughly purge away your dross, And take away all your alloy*. Sometimes God has to literally burn away the sin in our life. His purpose is to accomplish a complete and permanent purification of the Christian. Anything that makes us impure before the Father needs to be burned away. In Romans 8:10-11 Paul describes the Christian's body as being dead, but the Holy Spirit who dwells within the Christian will give them life. Titus 2:14 says that God ¹⁴ *who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works*. As a Christian we are to be purified and *zealous for good works*.

What does it mean to be *zealous for good works*?
How does the Holy Spirit *redeem us from every lawless deed*?

When we speak of fire and burning away the sin of our lives, it is not a pleasant thought for us. If the Christian accidentally burns him or herself with fire, there is temporary pain until the injured part is healed. If the injury results in death, then there is no more pain as the Christian is then with the Lord. The same principle applies to the Holy Spirit's burning away the sin of our lives. There is pain associated with the action, but it will subside. The difference is the resulting purification of the Christian. This is a necessary process we must go through in order to be sanctified and set aside for God's purpose. When we go through sanctification, our life is purified and we continue to walk in the purity of the Holy Spirit. Purification is done only by the Holy Spirit. We can not purify ourselves. Some people seem to think they can by the activities they perform such as reading their Bible, beginning to go to church or attending a Sunday School class, giving to the church, and even saying some prayers. The problem is that these actions are self-performed and are not the working of the Holy Spirit in their life. The Christian can only be cleansed by allowing the Holy Spirit to do His work in their life.

How has the Holy Spirit worked in your life to refine your character? Have you found the Holy Spirit's purifying to be painful? Was the change worth the temporary discomfort?

Conviction, Strengthening, and Victory by the Holy Spirit - The Holy Spirit does not come in and automatically start removing sin from our lives. Before the sin can be removed, we must recognize it as sin and confess it to God. Paul's encouragement to the Corinthian believers found in 1st Corinthians 3:16-17 says ¹⁶ *Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?* ¹⁷ *If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are*. The believer's body is the temple of God. We should not want to destroy it or desecrate it in any way.

Our body is the Holy Spirit's dwelling place. He will not allow us to maintain anything in it that is not holy, pure, or unrighteous. In John 16:8 Jesus said ⁸ *And when He (the Holy Spirit) has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.* The Holy Spirit will convict us to the point of becoming righteous. Our job is to recognize the sin in our life and confess it. But here is where the danger lies. If we ignore the Holy Spirit's conviction, we harden our hearts to the point that we can barely hear Him. The Holy Spirit will continue to convict us until we confess that sin and are cleansed of it. The problem is that the longer we wait, the greater the pain of the cleansing process. The key is to immediately repent of any sin that has come into your life as soon as the Holy Spirit convicts you. This restores your walk with the Lord.

The second aspect of the Holy Spirit's power is that He strengthens the believer. In Ephesians 3:16 Paul's prayer was that God would ¹⁶ *...grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man.* We become weak either by nature or circumstance. Every Christian has a problem with staying obedient to God's Word and sometimes we forget that our strength is through the Holy Spirit. Paul reminded the Ephesian believers that they were to become mature in the ¹³ *...measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;* ¹⁴ *that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting.* (Ephesians 4:13-14) We should be excited that the Holy Spirit is working in our lives. By allowing Him to do so, we can make the same claim Paul made where he said ¹³ *I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.* (Philippians 4:13) We can live the Christian life and be free from sin. We can be bold in our witness because the same Holy Spirit that came upon Jesus has come upon us as a believer in Christ. The Holy Spirit enables us to endure hardships and times of pain. He also enables us to say NO to the temptations that come our way and to be obedient to God's Word. (See 2nd Corinthians 12:9)

Based on 2nd Corinthians 12:9, what does it mean to have God's strength made perfect through your weakness? What does it mean that God's grace is sufficient for you?

The Holy Spirit will give us the necessary power to have victory over three areas in our life.

1) Temptations - 1st Corinthians 10:12-13; 2) Satan's Lies - John 16:13; and 3) Satan's Attacks - Ephesians 6:18.

Equipping the Christian for Ministry - In Acts 1:8 Jesus said ⁸ *But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.* We are to be His witnesses. Our lives changed by the Holy Spirit will demonstrate to the world the righteousness and power that God has to change people. God will transform them from a life of sinfulness to a life of righteousness. God wants to use us to fulfill His plan. We each have a unique place and purpose in God's plan. If we do not do our part, then people may not come to know Jesus Christ as their personal Savior. There is no way we can be successful without the Holy Spirit's help and guidance. If we try in our own strength, we are destined to fail. The Holy Spirit is our helper, teacher, and guide. He makes those same skills available to us to use in reaching others. He gives us His wisdom for good decisions and judgments; His heart for us to love others; and His will that we might be able to move in strength and obedience thus avoiding the pitfalls of sin. Everything we do that is enabled by the Holy Spirit will last for eternity. Ask the Holy Spirit how He desires for you to testify His presence. Here are Dr. Stanley's challenges for spiritual growth in today's lesson.

Challenges for Today and Tomorrow	
Today:	The Holy Spirit gives me everything I need to purify my life and conquer the enemy.
Tomorrow:	I will ask the Lord this week to show me areas in my life which need to be purified.