

The Pharisee in Me- The Spirit Under Fire

From His first mention in scripture, the Holy Spirit has been the source of immense difficulty for God's children.

His presence is a potent reality, our need for Him can be felt, and yet, we struggle to understand His role in our faith.

Psalm 51:10-13

10 Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me.

David seemed to understand that his own spirit was flawed, and that He needed to be cleansed on the inside.

11 Do not cast me away from Your presence And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.

He also knew God's presence would change him, but he feared that his own uncleanness would repel this Holy Spirit.

12 Restore to me the joy of Your salvation And sustain me with a willing spirit. 13 Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, And sinners will be converted to You.

He saw that once God had done His work in Him, he would have joy, willingness to serve God, and a testimony that would persuade sinners to follow God!

Seeking God is this way certainly gets His attention. If sinners can seek and find God's Spirit, there is great hope!

But sin, seeking an opportunity, works within the heart to keep us from the nearness of His presence...

Isaiah 63:10

10 But they rebelled And grieved His Holy Spirit; Therefore He turned Himself to become their enemy, He fought against them.

Romans 10:21

21 But as for Israel He says, "All the day long I have stretched out My hands to a disobedient and obstinate people."

At the religious culture, God the Holy Spirit is rejected by the very people who claim to worship Him and lay special claim to the Scriptures.

AB story- mocking worship- "ask me what I know" and "Get yourself under the control of the scriptures"

To a people in this condition, the Son of God came, offering the grace of God up close and personal.

Jesus announced, if possible, that He had a purpose beyond revealing God in the flesh and atoning for sin.

John 1:32-34

32 John testified saying, "I have seen the Spirit descending as a dove out of heaven, and He remained upon Him. 33 I did not recognize Him, but He who sent me to baptize in water said to me, 'He upon whom you see the Spirit descending and remaining upon Him, this is the One who baptizes in the Holy Spirit.' 34 I myself have seen, and have testified that this is the Son of God."

Jesus was very eager, once the atonement was complete, to give the Holy Spirit to all of God's people- to baptize them in the Holy Spirit!

Luke 12:49-50

49 "I have come to cast fire upon the earth; and how I wish it were already kindled! 50 But I have a baptism to undergo, and how distressed I am until it is accomplished!

John 14:16-19

16 I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; 17 that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you. 18 "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. 19 After a little while the world will no longer see Me, but you will see Me; because I live, you will live also.

John 16:5-7

5 "But now I am going to Him who sent Me; and none of you asks Me, 'Where are You going?' 6 But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. 7 But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you.

The Spirit of God is the Spirit of Jesus!

To receive the Spirit fully is to receive all the life of Jesus in you and upon you- a new man/woman in new clothes.

Most of us do not balk at the Spirit making us new creations, but we doubt that he would clothe us with power like Jesus was clothed at His baptism.

Acts 1:7-8

7 He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority; 8 but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."

This hour, like theirs, is not an hour to dig deeper into unknowns and controversies, but an hour to be very concerned about whether we are filled with power from on high!

John 7:37-39

37 Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. 38 He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.'" 39 But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

What are we waiting for? Jesus has been glorified and the Spirit has been poured, but maybe not in the kind of power Jesus would like to give in my life.

DP story- college

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The hurting world awaits an empowered church, moving out with marching orders from Jesus!