

LESSON 15

ACTIVITIES OF THE HOLY SPIRIT - II IN THE CHURCH AGE

Reading : Acts 2:1-47

Memory verses : Acts 2:1-4

Theme : *To be filled with the Holy Spirit and produce fruits and gifts of the Spirit.*

Introduction: Have you ever thought why so many fail in their Christian lives? Do you have the power to tell the gospel of salvation to non-Christians? There was a time when the disciples were afraid of the Jews after crucifixion of Jesus Christ (John 20:19). But how did they get the courage to challenge Jews saying: "Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36). That was when we were all filled with the Holy Spirit. The secret of success in spiritual life is the in-filing of the Holy Spirit.

I. WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN SINNERS:

1. The world or the unsaved people cannot know or receive the Holy Spirit (John 14:17).
2. The Holy Spirit convicts the world of sin, righteousness and judgement (John 16:8). But those who ignore the voice of the Holy Spirit do not receive salvation.
3. Holy Spirit calls sinners to God and warns against hardening of their heart (Heb. 3:7-11).
4. Holy Spirit bears witness to the gospel truths that Jesus Christ saves sinners and solves all their problems (Acts 5:30-33, Heb. 2:3-4).
5. Holy Spirit works together with the Word of God to move hearts of

people when it is preached. Anointed Word is the power of God when spoken by a spirit filled preacher (Rom. 1:16, 1 Cor. 2:4-5, 1 Thes. 1:5).

6. When the Word of God enters the heart of a person, the Holy Spirit works in him and leads him to the experience of rebirth. Rebirth happens by the water (Word) and the Spirit (John 3:5, Titus 3:5). He receives by faith in Jesus Christ justification, adoption as son and freedom from the bondage of sin.

II. ACTIVITIES OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE SAVED PEOPLE:

A person is said to have been saved when he receives rebirth and justification through faith in Jesus Christ (Eph. 2:8). But he grows from glory to glory into the image of Jesus Christ by nature by the Word of God and power of the Holy Spirit. An important part is played by the Holy Spirit in this transformation.

1. He gives freedom from the law (power) of sin and death:

Holy Spirit gives new life to a person who receives Jesus Christ as his Saviour and Lord. He becomes a new creature. This is rebirth (John 3:5-6, 2 Cor. 5:17, 1 Cor. 5:11). Holy Spirit, then, frees him from the bondage of sin and death. (See Rom. 8:1-17 for details). Take the example of a person who gets into an aircraft for travel. He is not able to get up from the earth because he is subject to gravitational pull of the earth. But the power of the aircraft which transcends the gravitational force lifts him up into the sky. Although gravitation still exists, the passenger is not subjected to it. In the same manner, the power of the Spirit helps me to transcend the pull of sin and the world and frees me from the dominion of sin. The nature of the flesh goes out from me and I receive a spiritual nature. "I" am always subject to failure. But "I" die. Christ lives in me and this is the secret of victory. I take steps into a Spirit-controlled life from a self centered life. "I" in Rom. 7 is substituted by "Spirit" 21 times in Ch. 8. We must surrender our selfish nature completely. Then the Holy Spirit will fill us and give us freedom from the self.

2. Holy Spirit empowers (Eph. 3:16, Acts 1:8):

After the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, His disciples were found dispirited and weak (John 20:19, 21:3). Therefore, He

instructed them to remain in Jerusalem and wait for the promise of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4-5). He told them before His ascension: "You will receive power when 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" (Acts 1:8). Holy Spirit is the source of power. The word used in Greek for 'power' is 'dunamis' meaning 'dynamite' which can shatter even rocks. It is true that Holy Spirit comes into a person in a measure when he is born again. The disciples were believers of the Lord Jesus and had taken baptism and had been following Him forsaking everything else (Matt. 16:16, 19:27-28, Acts 1:5). But still they needed the baptism of the Holy Spirit for power. We identify with the death and resurrection of Jesus in water baptism. We identify with His power in the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Christianity is a way of power. Gospel contains the power of the Holy Spirit to save people from their sin, sickness, evil spirits and fear. This power was manifested in the apostles and ordinary believers in the first century church (Acts 4:12-16, 8:5-8, 11:19-21). The same power is available even today. The power of the Spirit of God will never diminish with time (Isa. 59:1-2). God has been pleased to pour this exceeding power in our pots of clay (2 Cor. 4:7) for the following purposes:

- a) **To witness about Jesus Christ (Acts 1:8, John 15:26-27):** Several churches were established in the then known world by the spirit-filled preaching of Peter, Stephen, Paul and co-workers. Will you decide to be powerful witnesses of Jesus Christ in this world today when atheism and other religions hold sway over people? God wants powerful witnesses.
- b) **To overcome obstacles:** There are obstacles in the way of the people of God. We need the power of the Holy Spirit to overcome them and go forward. The Holy Spirit abides with us, leads us, teaches us and strengthens us (John 14:16, 16:13, 14:26, 2 Cor. 4:7-12). The same Spirit which strengthened Paul is also with us.
- c) **To defeat the enemy:** People of God are in a battle field. But our fight is not with flesh and blood. We should not consider any man as our enemy. Our enmity is with the powers of darkness or the powers of the devil (Eph. 6:12-18). We are empowered and clothed with the armour of God by the Holy Spirit.
- d) **To pray and worship (Rom. 8:26-27, Eph. 5:18-20, 6:18, Jude 20, Phil. 3:3):** Holy Spirit helps a child of God to pray and praise

the Lord and worship Him. Are you able to do that? If not, find out the of life that we see in the books of Revelations and Ezekiel is the flow of the Holy Spirit.

- e) **To produce good fruits (Gal. 5:22-23, Rev. 22:1-2, Eze.47:12):** God has redeemed us through Jesus Christ so that we may produce good fruits which are pleasing to man and God (John 15:8,16). The river of life that we see in the books of Revelations and Ezekiel is the flow of the Holy Spirit. The trees that grow on the banks of this river bear good fruits. Holy Spirit gives us power to produce fruits of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control.

3. **Some other works of Holy Spirit in believers:**

- a) Holy Spirit assures our spirit that we are children of God (Rom. 8:16).
- b) He leads us in all truth (John 16:13).
- c) He brings to our remembrance the words of Jesus Christ (John 14:26).
- d) He reveals things of God (1 Cor. 2:9-14).
- e) He calls people for different assignments, Paul and Barnabas were called for the Lord's ministry by the Holy Spirit (Acts 13:2-4).
- f) He leads us in our daily lives (Acts 8:29, 16:6-7).
- g) He will quicken our earthly bodies (Rom. 8:10-11).
- h) He distributes spiritual gifts to individual believers and the church (1 Cor. 12).

Questions

1. How does the Holy Spirit work among the unsaved in this Church Age?
2. How does the Holy Spirit lead a sinner to repentance?
3. Describe the way in which Holy Spirit frees one from the law of sin and death.
4. Describe the purposes for which the Holy Spirit empowers us.
5. List the works of the Holy Spirit in believers with references.
6. Are you baptized in the Holy Spirit? Which works of the Holy Spirit do you experience in your life?

