

HOLY SPIRIT

UNDERSTANDING GOD'S EMPOWERING PRESENCE PART II: INDWELLING

Reading Assignment

Have students read Galatians 5.

Intro Discussion:

Do you have a favorite place? Where is it? Do you have a dream destination? Where?

The answer to the question above to the average Israelite living in ancient times would have been the temple. It was a place where God's presence dwelt. In a sense, it was God's house. It was heaven on earth.

By the time we get to the church in the New Testament, believers are called "temples of the Holy Spirit." The Holy Spirit comes to live inside of us!

Content:

Read John 20:19-22 together.

- What stands out to you in this passage?
- God gives the disciples the Holy Spirit by breathing on them.
- When else in the Bible do we read of God breathing upon people? In Genesis! When God created humanity and breathed life into Adam and Eve.
- In John, we see God is creating a new humanity, part of his new creation, indwelt by His Spirit, to be the people God originally wanted us to be.

When are we given the Holy Spirit? Do all believers have the Holy Spirit?

- All who are born-again, those who have given their lives to Jesus, receive the "in dwelling of the Holy Spirit" at salvation (see John 3 and 1 Corinthians 2:12 too).
- The Holy Spirit is actually evidence that we are God's children (Romans 8:16).

What does the indwelling of the Spirit mean for me?

- Before you met Jesus and had the Holy Spirit inside of you, you were powerless to sin. (Romans 7:15-24 gives a great example of what life in the "flesh" looks like, a life without the Spirit.)
- Now that we have the Spirit, we are empowered to live new lives! The Spirit changes us from the inside out. (Compare the desires of the flesh vs. the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5. Which characterize your life?)

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How do we know if we have the Holy Spirit?

- The evidence that we have the Holy Spirit within us is that our lives are increasingly filled with the fruit of the Holy Spirit from Galatians 5.

The fruit of the Spirit will not show up “automatically” or on its own without any help from us. We are told that we “toil” and work hard, but it is “with all the energy that [God] works within me (Colossians 1:29).” The fruit of the Spirit is like a garden that needs to be cultivated. It’s not as if we do some and God does some, but God “energizes,” or empowers, or enables us to live the life and be the people He called us to live.

- What does this look like on a practical level?
- What does it look like to toil by the empowerment the Spirit provides?

Challenge:

Is there evidence of the Holy Spirit’s in dwelling in your life? An easy way to find out is to look at the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5. Do you see those characteristics in your life? Which ones do you struggle with?

This week, ask someone in your life which of the fruit of the Spirit you are weak in. Ask God to empower you to fulfill them better (to be more patient, kind, loving, etc.).

For next week, read Acts 1-2.