

BIBLE TEACHING SERIES
I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH – *Jesus*

CHAPTER FOUR
THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE WORLD

Introduction

As we proceed on our journey of learning about how Jesus builds His church, we continue to dwell on the person and work of the Holy Spirit. Since Jesus spoke of the church as “My church”, we acknowledge that, indeed, it belongs to Him. He is the Lord and owner of the church. He purchased it with His own blood.

Since Jesus often spoke about the person and work of the Holy Spirit it is very important that we listen to what Jesus said about Him. The Holy Spirit has been given the role of the oversight of the actual construction of the church. He is the project manager.

We continue in this study to learn more of what Jesus said about Him.

Significant works of the Holy Spirit

Jesus said the Holy Spirit, “.... will remind you of everything I have said to you”. (John14:25). There are many things in this world that can detract us and cause us to lose sight of the promises and provisions that Jesus brought us through His death and resurrection. The Holy Spirit, present within us, brings Jesus to our remembrance.

Jesus said the Holy Spirit, “.....will glorify me” (John 16:14). No man or woman is to receive glory in the church – Jesus alone deserves this. Glorifying a man or woman robs Christ of the glory due Him. Paul spoke of this in relation to division in the church in 1 Corinthians 1:10-17.

To glorify Jesus is to give Him rightful authority in the church. Original language meaning of “glorify” carries the idea of how one treats a dignitary. Jesus deserves this as well as all forms of praise and worship. Tithing is an example. In Hebrews 7 we are told that under the Old Testament covenant of law people tithed to the priests of Israel but in the New Covenant we tithe to Jesus. The Holy Spirit helps us in all matters pertaining to bringing honour and glory to Christ through His church.

There are many things the Holy Spirit does for us and through us. Then, the help we receive in turn enables us to help others. For the remainder of this chapter our focus will be about important ways the Holy Spirit relates to the world around us – the world of the unsaved.

The Holy Spirit reproves

Jesus said:

But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. ⁸When he comes, he will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment:⁹ about sin, because people do not believe in me; ¹⁰ about righteousness, because I am going to

the Father, where you can see me no longer;¹¹ and about judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned. John 16:7-10

The word translated “prove”, in verse 8, “reprove” in some translations, means to demonstrate by argument, to prove, to persuade anyone to do a thing by presenting reasons. It would apply to a prosecutor attempting to prove a crime in court. The Holy Spirit is in the world to convince or convict of sin.

Conviction of Sin

He will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin because people do not believe in me’.....John 16:8

Sin is any violation of a law of God. In John 1 3:4-6, we read:

Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness. ⁵ But you know that he appeared so that he might take away our sins. And in him is no sin. ⁶ No one who lives in him keeps on sinning. No one who continues to sin has either seen him or known him.

The word “sin” is not commonly used in modern vocabulary. Christians refer to it but the world seldom does.

In a sermon titled, “Whatever happened to the word “sin”, Philip Yancey said:

Today, although we hear about a health crisis associated with promiscuous sex and drug abuse, or the problem of illegitimate births, or the social injustice of poverty and homelessness, we do not often hear the word sin. Try dropping *sin* into a conversation on these topics, and you will see what I mean.

There is no doubt that the devil does all he can to convince the world that human problems are not a result of sin. The reason, simply, is that the word “sin” is a Bible word and that as such it has to do with man’s estrangement from God.

Christians, however, should not avoid the word. While use of the word “sin” is often used for condemnation-based preaching and legalism, the word is just as important today as it ever was. It is just as important as the Bible says it is.

Notice that Jesus said that the Holy Spirit convicts of sin because, “people do not believe in me”. The only sin that condemns a person is the sin of unbelief about Jesus. In the Bible, this was particularly true of the Jews who had rejected Him and crucified Him. The preaching of the apostles brought great conviction about this, which caused many to be convicted in their consciences and come to repentance and faith. See: Acts 2:22-23, Acts 2:37, Acts 3:13-15, Acts 4:10, Acts 4:26-28. This was prophesied in the Old Testament.

“And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication. They will look on^[u] me, the one they have pierced, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for him as one grieves for a firstborn son. ¹¹ On that day the weeping in Jerusalem will be as great as the weeping of Hadad Rimmon in the plain of Megiddo. Zechariah 12:10-11

Conviction of righteousness

Jesus said the Holy Spirit convinces the world, “About righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer” (John 16:10).

First and foremost, this refers to the innocence and righteousness of Jesus. He was persecuted, falsely arraigned on charges He was not guilty of, and as a result condemned and put to death. The resurrection and ascension of Jesus proved His innocence. Jesus has been exalted to the right hand of the Father. God would not have done this if Jesus was an imposter.

His statement to His followers that they would see Him no longer was not designed to create grief. Instead, this was necessary in order for the Holy Spirit to come to this world and do the great work He does.

Second, and also of great importance, is the work of the Holy Spirit to convince people that apart from Jesus, there is no righteousness sufficient to save us from sin. Our self-righteousness, the attempt to be good on our own always falls short. Righteousness is not self-attained but is given to us as a gift – the gift of His grace.

But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it—²² the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵ whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. ²⁶ It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. Romans 3:21-26.

Jesus said the Holy Spirit would convince the world, "About judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned" (John 16:11).

The prince of this world is the devil. The death and resurrection of Jesus was a judgment against the devil. The victory of Jesus over the devil proves that Jesus has power over all sin and evil. This means that no sin, addiction, bondage, evil, demonic oppression or attack can survive in His presence. The Holy Spirit, our Advocate, brings to us the power of the blood of Jesus that ensures that we can rise to a place of victory in our own lives. The church that Jesus is building is made up of men and women, young and old, and boys and girls from every nation under heaven that believe in Jesus and have received the gift of the Holy Spirit. He equips us to overcome every sin. The Holy Spirit is here to convince you that this is true.

Conviction of sin, righteousness and judgment, and the death of two men

This past week two well-known men died. David Mainse, the founder of Crossroads Christian Communications and the TV program, 100 Huntley Street, died last Monday, September 25, 2017, at the age of 81. Hugh Hefner, the founder of Playboy magazine, died last Wednesday, September 27, 2017, at the age of 91.

Concerning Hugh Hefner, Fr Dwight Longenecker, posted an article on a Catholic website titled "Is Hugh Hefner in Hell?" Here is some of what he wrote:

Hugh Hefner, the founder of Playboy magazine is dead.

The Catholic Church teaches that at the moment of death the eternal destiny of each soul is determined. You go up or you go down.

Hugh Hefner led a life that was not only sexually self indulgent, but it objectified women, glamorized sin and caused millions to dive into sin with carefree abandon. He not only hurt women, but helped in the breakdown of marriage, the destruction of the family and contributed to the culture of contraception, abortion and death. Predictably, he is being hailed as a trailblazer, a man ahead of his time, an entrepreneur and a great American.

“Playboy” was an apt name because his hedonistic lifestyle encouraged millions of men to treat sex as play time and to remain boys–addicted to adolescent fantasies about sex. A man who sold women? Entrepreneur is one name. I can think of a few others. A trailblazer? What he did may have been daring, but it was not new.

But let’s cut to the chase. The man is dead. The question remains– is Hugh Hefner in hell?

It’s not for me, or anyone to determine that. Any soul, at any time, up to the last moment may experience the grace of repentance and faith. He was ninety one. In his final years of old age did he have regrets? Did he turn to the light? We don’t know. We can hope.

<http://www.patheos.com/blogs/standingonmyhead/2017/09/hugh-hefner-hell.html#wxe4GhxCEbYISKLu.99>

Many articles, both secular and Christian, have been written about Hugh Hefner in the past few days. As an example, I recommend: <http://www.christianitytoday.com/edstetzer/2017/september/hugh-hefner-mourning-and-legacies.html>

In stark contrast to the life and death of Hugh Hefner is the life and death of David Mainse. Two 100 Huntley Street TV shows that aired on the two days following his death can be seen at: <http://www.100huntley.com/watch?videoID=331500> and <http://www.100huntley.com/watch?videoID=331491>

In a world that accepts every kind of philosophy, false religion, immorality, and celebrates those who practice such life-styles, we need the Holy Spirit to help us differentiate between that which is good versus that which is evil. We should pursue that which leads us to God, and flee from everything and everyone that leads to sin and the devil’s entrapments.

In order for a person to see their sin for what it really is one must first come to an understanding of Jesus, His sinless life, His love for us, and the price He paid to redeem us. Then, it is up to each of us to choose who we will serve, how we will live and eventually, how we will die.

(A related study is 2 Thessalonians chapter two, where Paul talks about the “man of sin”, the “anti-Christ”. He describes the Holy Spirit as the “restrainer”, the one who places limits on sin and the evil forces behind it. This is a study for a future time.)

