

God's Empowering Presence Week 3

These weekly studies are loosely based on the previous Sunday's sermon. If you missed it, you will find a recording on our website (www.knaphillbaptist.org.uk). They are designed for both Home Group discussion and/or personal reflection. Don't necessarily try to cover all the questions and discussion topics in your group at one sitting. You may like to think about them later in your own time.



The Indwelling Spirit

Read John 4:15-27

In this passage Jesus promises another person just like him to help us. He is about to be taken away from them and the disciples are understandably distraught. He tells the disciples that the Spirit's presence will replace his own presence that they had experienced while he was with them on earth in the years of his flesh. This had been good - they had enjoyed a certain intimacy, friendship and closeness with him. But Jesus is saying here that they do not have to worry about being left bereft like orphans because a whole new level of intimacy with God is coming their way. The Holy Spirit would not only be with them, alongside them in the world, but would come to them and take up residence *inside* them! The Holy Spirit is described in this passage as 'The Counsellor' but he is also called the advocate, guide, teacher, comforter, helper. It is the Greek Word (the language of the New Testament) *Paraclete* which means 'One who stands alongside in order to help us.' God doesn't **want us, ask us or expect us** to do anything in the Christian life without the help of the helper.

Questions and pointers for discussion/reflection

1. Have you received new life by the Holy Spirit? Do you **know** you are spiritually alive (see Ephesians 2:1-5)?
2. Would you call yourself a Christian? If so, do you **know** the Holy Spirit lives in you? How does that make you feel?
3. Read Acts 19:1-7. Do you HAVE the Holy Spirit? What difference does he make to your life?
4. Read Psalm 139:1-10. Do you ever want to avoid God? If so, why? Is being 'hemmed in by God (v.5) a comforting or a discomfoting thing to you?
5. You have the Holy Spirit living in you but does he have the best room in your life house or is he relegated to the equivalent of the shed at the bottom of the garden, as far away from the main events of our life as possible?
6. If God were to take the Holy Spirit from you – would you notice?
7. 'Whilst every believer has the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit does not necessarily have every believer', A W Tozer (1897-1963). Is the Holy Spirit in control, in charge, or are you?
8. Obedience is not a popular concept today. Rather like the word 'submission', it is a real buzzword. What is your reaction to these words and the concepts and requirements they contain?
9. In the light of John 14:15,23 and 1John 2:3-6, discuss/reflect on the following quotes on obedience: -
'The first duty of every soul is to find not its freedom but its master'
~ P T Forsyth (1848-1921). *'Instant obedience is the only obedience there is. Delayed obedience is disobedience. Whoever strives to withdraw from obedience, withdraws from grace'* ~ Thomas a Kempis (1380-1471).
10. Read 2 Corinthians 5:16,17. Are you a new creature in Christ? What has changed? Are there still things from your past that are holding you back? The Holy Spirit can help you overcome them.
11. 1 Corinthians 6:19,20. Do you honour God with your body? The Holy Spirit lives in you. Does anything still have to change?
12. Another quote from Tozer – 'If the Holy Spirit were removed from the first century church, 90% of its activity would have ceased. If the Holy Spirit were removed from the modern church 90% of its activity would continue.' Do you think this is an accurate assessment of the Church today? If you what do you think could or should be done to rectify the situation?