



REAL GOD, REAL CHURCH, REAL LIVES

REAL GOD - Week 7. God the Holy Spirit; what He does (His doing)

These notes support the current sermon series; both of which are designed to help us focus anew upon God and to seek His will for our future as a Church. They can be used by individuals, two to three people or within a house group. They can be read through reasonably quickly or form the basis of deeper consideration and meditation.

Readings

Ezekiel 36: 22-32; Psalm 139: 1-10; 1 Corinthians 12: 1-11; and John 16: 5-16

Prayer, Praise and Meditation. Recall the focus on who the Holy Spirit is; as the Spirit of God, Life and Truth. Meditate on the Psalm and marvel at God's omnipotence, omnipresence and omniscience (all powerful, everywhere and all knowing).

The Spirit of God Gives Life (Ezekiel 36: 22-32 & John 16: 5-11)

Meditate upon/discuss why it was necessary for Christ to leave and the Holy Spirit to come; what benefits does this bring to the world, Church and ourselves as individuals (John 16: 5-7 & 16; Matt 28: 20)?

On Sunday we considered how the Holy Spirit convicts and convinces the world of the truth of Christ through sin (ours), righteousness (Jesus Christ's) and judgement (Satan stands condemned)(John 16: 7-11); this is the source of our new life in Christ. Consider how the Spirit convicted us of these truths. How does this conviction lead to new life (Ezekiel 36: 25-7; and consider again John 3: 3, 5&6)?

In this new life we receive the Holy Spirit who 'seals' us in Christ (2 Cor. 1:22; Eph 1:13). Consider the meaning of this act of the Holy Spirit, its purpose, duration (Eph 4:30; Roms. 8. 23) and how it makes us feel; secure?

The Holy Spirit Gives Truth (John 16: 12-16)

Recall and reflect upon how Jesus is the Light and Life of the world full of grace and truth (John 1). Consider how the Spirit's conviction and revelation of this truth describes God's grace and leads to new life. Then note how, in vs. 12-16, we read that the truth revealed is not limited to the truth of the gospel; what else does the Spirit reveal? Consider the source of revelation and decide whether or not new revelations will ever contradict God's Word. How does the Spirit reveal truths and things to come; consider our own experiences? Is God behind all truths?

The Holy Spirit gives Gifts (1 Cor 12: 1-11 & also 12-30)

In verses 4-6 we see our Triune God working in relationship with His creation concerning gifts, service and works. Opinions vary on the actual interpretation of these verses so consider your own view and what the purpose of God's coordination is (1 Cor, 12: 18-20 & 23b-24).

The gifts described in this passage can be categorised as: the Revelation Gifts: Wisdom; Knowledge; & Discernment. The Power Gifts: Faith; Healings; & the Workings of Miracles. Finally the Vocal Gifts: Tongues; Interpretation; and Prophecy. Consider what each gift actually is and how it might be received and used; what are the purposes of these gifts (a study series in miniature!!)?

For further study: These are Spiritual gifts but clearly we have gifts of service, works, roles and practical gifts. What might these be and how might they be used (1 Cor 12: 22-31; Rom 12:6-8; Eph 4: 11-130? What are the greater gifts we should desire (1 Cor. 12: 31)? How are we doing in discerning our gifts for our Church?

Pause and Reflect (Ezekiel 36: 22-23, 31-32)

The work of the Spirit that we've considered is for God's Glory & to make Him known. This had been a purpose for Israel that has now continued into the Church. How is St Aidan's fairing in this role, as individuals are we bearing the Spirit's fruits (Gal 5:16 & 22-26); what might we do to live and keep in step with the Spirit?

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