



GOOD NEWS
for the unsaved
WORLD!

(#40)
The Holy Spirit is not silent!

THE FALSE GOSPEL OFTEN LEAVES PEOPLE UNAWARE THAT CHANGE IS A PART OF SALVATION!

I'M SAVED, AND I DON'T SEE ANY DIFFERENCES IN MY LIFE!

GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY GUARANTEES THAT CHANGES WILL OCCUR, IF THE SALVATION IS GENUINE.

THE PREACHER TOLD ME: IF I ACCEPTED GOD'S LOVE, I WOULD BE SAVED! HE NEVER SAID ANYTHING ABOUT NEEDING TO CHANGE!

UNFORTUNATELY, THE APOSTLES HAD A TOTALLY DIFFERENT MESSAGE. READ THE BOOK OF ACTS AND FIND OUT FOR YOURSELF!



LAST TIME

WHEN THE **HOLY SPIRIT** IS PRESENT... THINGS HAPPEN!

THERE IS ALSO **RESPONSIBILITY** ON OUR PART TO MAKE CHANGES!

???  **So what happens if the Spirit is present?**

AND:

★ Since God says it does influence our conduct, **what can we expect to be doing?**

To get our answer, we need **TWO** focuses:

LAST TIME

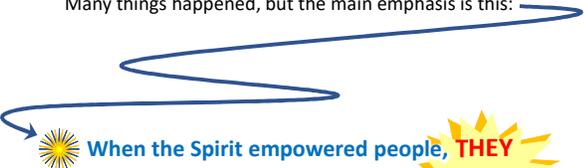
- ✓ **FOCUS ON the NEW TESTAMENT ...**
to get a general overview of what happens when the Holy Spirit is present in a person.

TODAY

- ✓ **FOCUS ON the book of ACTS ...**
to find out how the Holy Spirit worked in the early church to enable its great accomplishments.

WHAT ANSWER DO WE FIND IN THE BOOK OF ACTS?

Many things happened, but the main emphasis is this:

 **When the Spirit empowered people, THEY SPOKE!**

- ✓ When the Spirit was at work... people were telling others about the Good News.

"SPEAKING"

A NATURAL EXPRESSION OF THE SPIRIT'S PRESENCE!

- When the Spirit entered people, **THEY SPOKE!**

>> **IN FACT...**

- The Bible itself is an expression of the Spirit's voice!

GIVEN TO US THROUGH THE PROPHETS AND APOSTLES. ... men **spoke** from God as they were carried along **by the Holy Spirit.**

2 Pe 1:21b (ESV)

THE BIBLE — AN EXPRESSION OF THE SPIRIT'S VOICE.

... **the Holy Spirit spoke** to your ancestors through the prophet Isaiah!
Acts 28:25b (GW)

David, guided by **the Holy Spirit, said**, ... [followed by a quote from Psalm 110.]
Mark 12:36a (GW)

You [God] **said through the Holy Spirit**, by the mouth of our father David your servant ...
Acts 4:25a (CSB)

And **the Holy Spirit also testifies** ... [followed by a quote from Jeremiah 31].
Hebrews 10:15a (NLT)

... what we speak, ... **words taught by the Spirit**, ...
1 Cor. 2:13b (NIV)

... the Scripture ... which **the Holy Spirit spoke** ... concerning Judas...
Acts 1:16b (NIV)

WHEN THE SPIRIT ENTERED PEOPLE, THEY ALSO SPOKE.

✓ That's what the Holy Spirit (through Joel) **said** would happen!

I SAID I WOULD DO IT...
SO I DID IT!

Being Scripture, it was the **Holy Spirit** (using Joel) telling us what the **Holy Spirit** planned to do!

✓ And so it **did** happen!

In the last days, God said, I will pour out my Spirit upon all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, ... In those days I will pour out my Spirit ... and they will prophesy.
Acts 2:17-18 (NLT)

In the Bible, "prophecy" normally means "truth-telling" (not "future-predicting").

WE CAN SEE THIS FREQUENTLY IN THE BOOK OF ACTS.

JESUS TOLD THEM → ... but you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My **witnesses** ...
Acts 1:8a (NASB)

AT PENTECOST → All the believers were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages as the Spirit gave them the **ability to speak**.
Acts 2:4 (GW)

WHEN THE LEADERS QUESTIONED THE APOSTLES → Then Peter, because he was filled with the Holy Spirit, **said** to them, ...
Acts 4:8a (GW)

AFTER THEY PRAYED FOR BOLDNESS → After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and **spoke** the word of God boldly.
Acts 4:31 (NIV)

CONSTANT THEME OF STEPHEN'S LIFE → ... Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, ... the Spirit with which he was **speaking**. ... being full of the Holy Spirit, he [saw Jesus] and he **said**, ...
Acts 6:5b, 10b, 55a, 56a (NASB)

AS HE OPPOSED A SORCERER → Then Saul [Paul], ... filled with the Holy Spirit, ... **said**, ...
Acts 13:9 (NLT)

THE SPIRIT USED THEM TO TEST PAUL'S RESOLUTION → Through the Spirit they **urged** Paul not to go on to Jerusalem. [Agabus] **said**, "The Holy Spirit **says**, ..."
Acts 21:4b, 11b (NIV)

This is a → **SERIOUS ISSUE!**

BECAUSE:

We live in a day in which **many in the church encourage SILENCE!**

They **praise** silence!
They **prize** silence!



GOLDEN SILENCE AWARD

And then they wonder why so many churches are in a state of decline!

MAYBE WE NEED **MORE SILENCE!**

THIS TYPE OF SILENCE DOESN'T IMPRESS GOD!

⇒ We can't willfully ignore one of the MAJOR expressions of the Spirit's presence!

⇒ How can we claim that the Spirit controls our life, when we choose to hold back part of it?

OBJECTION #1 Don't many of those examples in Acts involve church leaders?
*I'm not a leader!
 I also haven't had Bible training!*

ANSWERS...

- ✓ Many of the leaders didn't have Bible training!

... they were unschooled, ordinary men, ...
 Acts 4:13b (NIV)
- ✓ The "average Christians" also told others the Good News!

... a severe persecution broke out ... and all except the apostles were scattered ...
 So those who were scattered went on their way preaching the word.
 Acts 8:1b, 4 (CSB)

THESE PEOPLE WERE NOT THE LEADERS!

OBJECTION #2 Doesn't the Bible say good things about silence?
*When I'm silent,
 maybe I'm just obeying the Bible!*

ANSWER...

- ✓ There is a time to be silent; but there isn't a time to make excuses.

[There is] a time to be silent and a time to speak; ...
 Eccles. 3:7b (CSB)
- ✓ Don't ignore the "time to speak" part of the verse!

Maybe it would be good to take a quick look at what the BIBLE says about being silent!

ACCORDING TO THE BIBLE: WHEN IS SILENCE GOOD?

- ✓ When you are in God's presence.

Do not be quick with your mouth, do not be hasty in your heart to utter anything before God.
 God is in heaven and you are on earth, so let your words be few.
 Eccles. 5:2 (NIV)

"But the Lord is in His holy temple. Let all the earth be silent before Him."
 Habakkuk 2:20 (NASB)
- ✓ When you are under God's judgment.

... so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world may be held accountable to God.
 Romans 3:19b (NET)

- ✓ When you are tempted to sin.

In your anger do not sin; when you are on your beds, search your hearts and be silent.
 Psalm 4:4 (NIV)
- ✓ When you are a (moral) fool.

Even fools are thought to be wise when they keep silent; when they keep their mouths shut, they seem intelligent.
 Proverbs 17:28 (NLT)
- ✓ When you need to pay attention to wisdom.

A fool's way is right in his own eyes, but whoever listens to counsel is wise.
 Proverbs 12:15 (CSB)

Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak...
 James 1:19b (CSB)

- ✓ Any time your talk is sinful.

I can guarantee that on judgment day people will have to give an account of every careless word they say.
 Matthew 12:36 (GW)
- Never use the name of the Lord your God carelessly. The Lord will make sure that anyone who carelessly uses his name will be punished.
 Exodus 20:7 (GW)
- Obscene and foolish talking or crude joking are not suitable, ...
 Ephesians 5:4a (CSB)
- ... the mouth of the fool gushes folly. ...the mouth of the wicked gushes evil.
 Proverbs 15:2b, 28b (NIV)
- ... a fool's lips are self-destructive. A fool starts out by talking foolishness and ends up saying crazy things that are dangerous. He never stops talking.
 Eccles. 10:12b-14a (GW)
- Don't use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them.
 Ephes. 4:29 (NLT)

THE PLACE WHERE YOU ARE SPEAKING MIGHT NEED TO CHANGE...

- ✓ Sometimes, people left those who didn't want the Good News ... and went to others who would listen.

If people don't welcome you, leave that city, and shake its dust off your feet as a warning to them.
 Luke 9:5 (GW)

But when the Jews opposed him and insulted him, Paul shook the dust from his robe and said, "Your blood be upon your own heads—I am innocent. From now on I will go to the Gentiles."
 Acts 18:6 (NLT)

BUT NEVER DOES THE BIBLE TELL US TO BE SILENT ABOUT THE GOOD NEWS!

God may lead someone to not speak in one place, in order to have them available to speak somewhere else...

[They] traveled ... having been **kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching** the word in the province of Asia. ...they tried to enter Bithynia, but **the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to.**

Acts 16:6-7 (NIV)

Ultimately, Paul ended up at Corinth, where God had prepared many people for salvation.

One night the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision: "Do not be afraid; **keep on speaking, do not be silent.** For I am with you, and no one is going to attack and harm you, because I have many people in this city."

Acts 18:9-10 (NIV)

In this example, the willingness to speak was still there! It's just that God wanted Paul's willingness to be demonstrated at a different location!

BUT I'M NOT AN "APOSTLE PAUL"!

NONE OF US ARE!

AS WE'VE ALREADY SEEN, "AVERAGE" PEOPLE ALSO SPOKE.

BUT I DON'T HAVE THE RIGHT "SPIRITUAL GIFT"!

GIFTS WILL VARY, BUT THAT DOESN'T REMOVE YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO RECOGNIZE AND USE THE GIFTS YOU HAVE.

WHAT IF I LOSE MY VOCAL CORDS AND CAN'T TALK?

GOD HAS GIVEN EACH PERSON ABILITIES – "GIFTS" – AND IF YOU TRULY DON'T HAVE AN ABILITY TO SPEAK, YOU HAVE ABILITIES THAT WILL HELP/ENABLE/ENCOURAGE OTHERS WHO CAN.

MORE OFTEN THAN NOT, THE REAL ISSUE IS FEAR...

1) FEAR OF PEOPLE; WANTING TO PLEASE PEOPLE

Fear of man will prove to be a snare, but whoever trusts in the Lord is kept safe.

Proverbs 29:25 (NIV)

Then Saul finally admitted, "Yes, I have sinned. I have disobeyed your instructions and the Lord's command, for I was **afraid of the people** and did what they demanded.

1 Samuel 15:24 (NLT)

Am I saying this now to win the approval of people or God? Am I trying to **please people**? If I were still trying to **please people**, I would not be Christ's servant.

Galatians 1:10 (GW)

For God has not given us a **spirit of fear**, but one of power, love, and sound judgment.

2 Timothy 1:7 (CSB)

A second fear issue may be also present ...

2) THE ABSENCE OF FEAR... FEAR OF GOD

As people who know what it means to **fear the Lord**, we try to persuade others.

2 Cor. 5:11a (GW)

Don't be afraid of those who want to kill you. They can only kill your body; they cannot touch your soul. **Fear only God**, who can destroy both soul and body in hell.

Matthew 10:28 (NLT)

[PERHAPS EVEN THE ABSENCE OF LOVE OR TRUST]

For Christ's love compels us ...

2 Cor. 5:14a (NIV)

It is written: "I believed; therefore I have spoken." With that same spirit of faith we also believe and therefore speak,

2 Cor. 4:13 (NIV)

IF YOU TRULY BELIEVE YOU DON'T HAVE THE ABILITY TO SPEAK:

- God's judgment is based on TRUTH; so make sure you are truthfully unable to speak.
 - Make sure it's a lack of ability, not a lack of willingness. (It is impossible for a "spirit of unwillingness" to come from God!)
- There will be some expression of the Spirit in your life, if the Spirit is in you. (Otherwise, you are not saved.)
 - If you are saved, you'll be willing to do the things the Spirit has enabled you to do. (It might not involve speaking; but whatever it is, you won't be making excuses.)

THIS WEEK: CONSIDER THESE THINGS!

We CAN'T say that every New Testament Christian SPOKE the Good News to others... but we CAN say:

- IF THE HOLY SPIRIT IS IN US**, it will influence both:
 - What we SAY.
 - What we DON'T SAY.
- Whether or not we are in the right situation for SPEAKING** the Good News, our willingness to recognize and follow the Spirit's leading will reflect our relationship to the Spirit.
 - Whether or not his leading involves speaking.

Credits

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