

## **SERMON NOTES: Increase of the Spirit**

**John 3:1-8** “There was a man named Nicodemus, a Jewish religious leader who was a Pharisee. After dark one evening, he came to speak with Jesus. ‘Rabbi,’ he said, ‘we all know that God has sent You to teach us. Your miraculous signs are evidence that God is with You.’ Jesus replied, ‘I tell you the truth, unless you are born again, you cannot see the Kingdom of God.’ ‘What do you mean?’ exclaimed Nicodemus. ‘How can an old man go back into his mother’s womb and be born again?’ Jesus replied, ‘I assure you, no one can enter the Kingdom of God without being born of water and the Spirit. Humans can reproduce only human life, but the Holy Spirit gives birth to spiritual life. So don’t be surprised when I say, ‘You must be born again.’ The wind blows wherever it wants. Just as you can hear the wind but can’t tell where it comes from or where it is going, so you can’t explain how people are born of the Spirit.”

### **1. He Connects With Us**

The Spirit connects with us.

The God who starts this world by creating it stays true to His creative nature and He initiates connection with us.

Every day, the Spirit is initiating connection with us and we have the freedom and opportunity to respond.

Jesus initiates the sending of the Holy Spirit.

**John 14:16,17** “And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Advocate, who will never leave you. He is the Holy Spirit, who leads into all truth. The world cannot receive Him, because it isn’t looking for Him and doesn’t recognize Him. But you know Him, because He lives with you now and later will be in you.”

Jesus promises the Holy Spirit.

And at the same time He tells them about the nature of their relationship with the Spirit. Jesus says, ‘He lives with you now and later will be in you.’

The Apostle Paul picks up the same principle.

**Romans 8:11** “The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you. And just as God raised Christ Jesus from the dead, He will give life to your mortal bodies by this same Spirit living within you.”

The same Spirit that resurrects Jesus gives new life and new freedom to us.

Being who we really are comes from having an increase of the Spirit. The Spirit gives us freedom to be who God creates us to be.

And because of Jesus, we now have complete access to the Father.

**Heb. 4:16 “So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive His mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most.”**

But it's one thing to be able to go into God's presence anytime you like. It's another thing to actually have God's presence living in you.

There's a deeply revealing question that's asked in Matt. 11:3.

**Matt. 11:3 “Are you the Messiah we've been expecting, or should we keep looking for someone else?”**

It's John the Baptist who asks it.

But now John's in prison. And this person, who experiences so much and does so much life with Jesus asks, 'are you the One or should we keep looking?'

Life has gotten to him and he has doubts. He's lost his certainty. He's struggling. He's feeling defeated.

Even after John has doubts, Jesus, just a few verses later, says this.

**Matt. 11:11 “I tell you the truth, of all who have ever lived, none is greater than John the Baptist.”**

When we understand that our struggles don't disqualify us, then it takes my relationship with Jesus to a whole new level.

The Spirit of the Lord lives in us and we are free and there are no freer people on this planet than followers of Jesus.

## **QUESTIONS:**

1. Why do you think God is trying to connect with us?
2. Where does God presence live?
3. Are our faults and doubts a reason for God to disqualify us as heaven material?

## **2. We Connect with Him**

We connect with the Spirit.

We connect with His leading, we connect with His guiding, we connect with His comforting, we connect His convicting.

And we especially connect with His power.

In a message in Acts 10 Peter says these words.

**Acts 10:38 “How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power...”**

And Peter doesn't come up with this truth on his own.

The very last thing Jesus says to His disciples before going up into heaven is this.

**Acts 1:8 “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you...”**

We have His power as well.

When we exclude God we're just like everybody else with nothing to distinguish us as His followers.

Here's an exhortation from the Bible.

**Zech. 4:6 “Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,” says the Lord Almighty.”**

If we lean in to what the Spirit can do then get ready because amazing things will begin to happen in our lives.

## **QUESTIONS:**

1. How do we connect with the Holy Spirit?
2. What happens when we exclude God?
3. What happens when we lean into the Holy Spirit?

## **Putting it all together (Application)**

1. **He is looking to connect with us.** That is not a small thing. God, the creator of all things, is looking to connect with you. When we receive Jesus as our saviour he doesn't come alone. He leaves the Holy Spirit in us. The Holy Spirit lives within us. That means he is with us 24/7. Even when we are at sleep. Even when we are watching a movie on Netflix and so focused, we are not thinking on anything else. God understands us and lives within us through his Holy Spirit. We just need to acknowledge it and be intentional on our daily relationship with him. Increase the closeness with him. He is looking to connect with us, lets not ignore it.

2. **Connecting with his Holy Spirit is intentional..** Leaning into the Holy Spirit is an intentional act from us. He is already looking to connect with us. When we lean in and we look for him and intentionally recognize his existence, presence and authority in our lives we connect with him and his power. His power is then manifested through us and the results in our lives of his power are the materialization of his will for us.