

WEEK EIGHT (8)

THE PROMISE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit is the third personality of the Trinity. Before the ascension of Jesus, He promised to send the Holy Spirit to His disciples. He told them that when they are filled with the Holy Spirit they would be empowered and the Holy Spirit would teach them everything. Jesus prayed to God to give them the Spirit to make them continue in faith and He left them with the Great Commission of preaching the gospel around the nations of the world in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. He ordered them not to leave Jerusalem until the arrival of the Holy Spirit. When the Holy Spirit comes they would be filled with power to witness in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth

At Mount Olive, after Jesus had promised the disciples of the coming of the Holy Spirit, He ascended into heaven. The heaven opened and Jesus was taken up into heaven. The disciples were filled with awe watching Him going to heaven until He was covered by the cloud. After that they returned to Jerusalem waiting for the coming of the Holy Spirit as promised by Jesus Christ.

FUNCTIONS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

1. Teaching
2. Guidance
3. Counselling
4. Comforting
5. Advocating

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

1. The presence of the Holy Spirit creates awareness that man cannot go far with God without the power of the Holy Spirit.
2. Holy Spirit becomes the source of all provision to any man who wants to walk with God.
3. The Holy Spirit is man's vehicle of inspiration for guiding man into all truth.
4. The Holy Spirit is the facilitator of evangelism, the spread of the message of God.
5. The Holy Spirit is the one that propels man to thirst and hunger after God.

THE COMING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

On the day of Pentecost, the disciples of Jesus Christ were in the upper room in Jerusalem praying when the Holy Ghost came upon them. While they were together praying, a sound suddenly came from heaven like the rush of a mighty wind and filled the house. Then the Holy Spirit descended like a tongue of fire and rested on each of them. Consequently, they were filled with the Holy Spirit and they began to speak in different languages.

At that time, the Jews and many other people from various culture, countries and languages were living in Jerusalem. Each of these people was able to hear the disciples speaking his own language. Some were amazed and mistook the disciples for drunkards. They were amazed about how the disciples who were Galileans could be speaking in so many languages including the languages of the Parthians, Medes, Elamites, Phrygia, Egypt and parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene. These were all visitors from Rome, Crete and Arabia who were undoubtedly overwhelmed and were marvelled at the wonderful work of God.

The coming of the Holy Spirit greatly influenced the disciples who were now called the apostles. They gained boldness and were filled with extraordinary power and courage to witness Jesus Christ without fear and trembling. Peter was the first to address the people. He explained to them that the apostles were not drunk and that it was just the third hour of the day. He went further by saying that what they saw was the fulfillment of the prophecy of Prophet Joel.

Peter thereafter preached the gospel of Jesus Christ and about three thousand people gave their lives to Christ and became members of the church.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE COMING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

1. It showed that God is faithful to keep to His promise.
2. The coming of the Holy Spirit changed the perspectives of the apostles about their believe.
3. The Holy Spirit empowered them to preached the gospel.
4. The Holy Spirit gave them boldness and courage'
5. He came to power, credibility and relevance to the church of Jesus Christ in the collective relationship with God.
6. He came to give spiritual gifts to the body of Christ.
7. The coming of the Holy Spirit marked the beginning of the Church of Jesus Christ.

THE EFFECTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT ON THE EARLY DISCIPLES

The presence of the Holy Spirit in the lives of the early disciples was so significant that it was impossible for people to deny the power of God. The followings were so glaring that generations after the disciples are still referring to them as points of reference.

1. The disciples were empowered to speak in new tongues. This had never happened before, so people were amazed and critical about it.
2. The apostles became so bold in defending the gospel even to the point of death.
3. Signs and miracles began to follow them. The healing of the lame man at the beautiful gate was the first demonstration of the power of God by the apostles.
4. Death and authority could no longer scare them. The trial and death of Stephen was a major confirmation of this. Stephen was one of the seven deacons that were ordained by the apostles to take care of the sharing of foods and other items among the believers. He was full of power and wisdom of God and he performed many

miracles. He was summoned before the high priest and was condemned to death. He was stoned to death, yet he prayed for his accusers.

5. The Holy Spirit enabled the disciples to continue in faith and their service to God in the midst of stiff opposition and severe persecution. This religion (Christianity) would have died if not for the backing of the Holy Spirit.
6. The Holy Spirit empowered them with different spiritual gifts to enabled to carry on with the divine assignment.
7. The Holy Spirit increased them in number. People began to give their lives to Jesus and became members of the church.
8. Holy Spirit made provision for them. And there was love, peace and unity among them.

ASSIGNMENT :

1. Discuss three functions of the Holy Spirit.
2. Highlight five things the Holy Spirit can do in the life of a Christian.