**St Martins C3 – June 11, 2023**

**Overflow – Be filled with God’s Holy Spirit**

**Sermon Summary:**

We all need more of God’s Holy Spirit in our lives. Because it is through the infilling of God’s Holy Spirit that we receive God’s abundant life. That fullness of God’s Holy Spirit in our lives happens as we surrender our lives to God and invite His Spirit to fill our life with His life.

On several occasions Jesus explained to His disciples what they would experience when they received God’s Holy Spirit in their lives.

**Read: John 14:15-18**

One of the first ways we will experience God’s Holy Spirit is experiencing the presence of God in our lives. As a Christian, God’s Spirit is already present in you, but we need to become more aware of His presence. Typically, Christians describe sensing God’s presence as a feeling of freedom, or a sense of peace, or a sense of love. It may feel quite subtle at first, but as you worship God and become more aware of what you are feeling, you will gradually develop an awareness that it is God’s presence with you.

It’s important to grow in our awareness of God’s presence because it’s through an awareness of God’s presence that we become more aware of other ways God is working in and around our lives.

**Read: John 16:5-13**

Jesus is explaining here, that we not only receive God’s presence, but God’s truth or revelation in our lives. Often this is through the Holy Spirit drawing our attention to a particular scripture or bringing a thought to mind that is from God.

At this point, many people ask, how do we know those thoughts are from God? This is where being familiar with God’s presence helps. God’s presence will always accompany God’s word. Secondly, the truth of scripture will not be in conflict with a specific personal word from God.

**Read: Acts 1:4-8**

With the reception of God’s Holy Spirit in our lives, also comes God’s power. God’s power to overcome sin, take a stand against Satan and bring God’s life to others. We will know it is God’s power working in us and around us, because God’s presence and God’s word will accompany His power.

**Jesus clearly communicated to His followers that they were to surrender their lives to Him and wait on God to fill them with His Holy Spirit.** God created our lives to be vessels that would overflow with His life. A life that comes from His Holy Spirit. As we prayerfully surrender to God and ask for His Holy Spirit to fill us, we will experience God’s presence, word and power in our lives.

The spiritual disciplines that help us be in a receptive frame of mind to receive God’s life, through God’s Spirit are worship and prayer. As we take the time to focus on God in our corporate and personal worship, we can ask for God’s Holy Spirit to fill us and confidently expect God to answer that prayer.

**Suggested questions for Connect Group discussion:**

*Why is seeking to be filled with God’s Holy Spirit important?*

*Why is surrendering our lives important preparation to receiving God’s Holy Spirit?*

*What evidence in your life have you seen of God’s Spirit being present in you?*

*What does God’s presence “feel” like for you?*

*How can we be confident that it is God’s Holy Spirit highlighting a thought or a word in our minds?*

*What are some examples of you experiencing or witnessing God’s power in or around your life?*

*How does worship or prayer (or anything else) help you identify how God’s Holy Spirit is working in or around your life?*

*What might a deeper experience or reliance on God’s Holy Spirit look like for you at the moment?*

**Monday’s Devotion – Active waiting**

**Acts 1:13-14**
*When they arrived, they went upstairs to the room where they were staying…**They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.*

Just as the Holy Spirit “came upon” the first followers of Jesus, the Holy Spirit still “comes upon” those who follow Jesus today. When the Spirit of God comes, He comes in power. We can expect to encounter the power of God, when we experience the reception of God’s Spirit. As the first church waited on God for His Spirit to empower them, we ought to wait on God, so that He empowers us.

It is important to note here that it was not a passive waiting. Some would have gone back to their homes and work places, rather than the prayer meeting. However, those who actively waited in prayer, received the promised Holy Spirit and the power that accompanies His presence.

Living a life where we are being filled with God’s Spirit on a regular basis, is a life of active waiting. Where in prayer every day we are inviting the Holy Spirit to fill us. We are not just assuming God will go with us into our day, we are actively seeking His presence and power to go with us. It doesn’t have to be a long prayer, but it ought to be an intentional prayer. An intentional seeking after the fullness of God’s Spirit on our lives.

**Tuesday’s Devotion – Surprised by the Spirit.**

**Acts 2:2-4**

*Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongue as the Spirit enabled them.*

I am not sure what the first church expected when the Holy Spirit came, but what they got was definitely a surprise. When God’s power connects with our humanity dramatic things can happen.

What impresses me about their response is how willing they were to cooperate with what the Spirit was leading them to do. They didn’t try to think it all through and write it all down, they simply received what God had given them and shared it with others.

With our western worldview, we will always seek to understand and find an explanation in our thinking as to what is happening to us, but sometimes the Spirit will surprise us. God’s Spirit will do something you won’t expect. In that moment, the most important thing is to put your trust in what God is doing. Allow yourself to be surprised by God’s Spirit and willingly cooperate with what He is doing.

We may be surprised by what the Holy Spirit is doing in the lives of those around us. Let us not be quick to judge or need to explain, but let us celebrate what God is doing and encourage those around us to encounter all that God has for them.

**Wednesday’s Devotion – Personal relationship**

**John 14:16-17**

*And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.*

It is difficult for us to think of God’s Holy Spirit as a person. However, He is one of the persons of the Trinity with whom we relate to. God’s Holy Spirit is not a force or a feeling, He is God, who is personal.

Jesus assures His disciples here that they will know who the Holy Spirit is and become familiar with His work, because God’s Holy Spirit lives with us and is in us. This is in contrast to our previous life before we encountered Christ. In that life, there was no awareness of God’s presence or work around our lives. But now there is. God is present with us through His Holy Spirit.

The best way for us to connect with God and the work of His Spirit in our lives, is to be responsive to what His Spirit is doing in us. When we feel drawn to prayer, we pray. When drawn to serve and love others, we do that. It is through obedience that we will come to know the Holy Spirit more.

Does all this mean I should also be praying to the Holy Spirit? – My conclusion on this one is that we should be directing all our prayers to God. Whether that be Father, Son or Holy Spirit. It doesn’t matter. What matters is we are seeking to know Him more and cooperate with all that He is doing.

**Thursday’s Devotion – Being led by the Spirit**

**Acts 16:6-8**

*Paul and his companions travelled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia. When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to.* *So they passed by Mysia and went down to Troas.*

I like how down to earth this explanation of the Holy Spirit’s work is here. Paul and his team were prayerfully seeking to do what God had called them to do. They were seeking to be responsive to the Holy Spirit. Because of this God was specifically leading them.

In this passage we are told that they Holy Spirit leads them away from ministering in one area, into leading them to minister in another area. Annoyingly we are not given the details of the specifics on how the Spirit led them. Just that He did. What is God revealing to us in this historical account?

The most important point here is an obedience to the leading of the Holy Spirit. It is one thing to be aware of God and His ways, it is another thing to receive a specific leading from Him. However, at the end of the day, we need to obey. Obedience is what matters.

Have you been seeking God’s guidance? What has He revealed to you? Are you walking in obedience to that?

**Friday’s Devotion – Prayer is the key**

**Ephesians 6:18**

*And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying.*

Those who are seeking God, pray. Prayer is the overflowing action that comes from a heart that is seeking after God. Prayer is the act of faith, where we don’t know what effect it will have, but we pray in faith knowing that God is shaping our hearts and lives as we pray.

It is through prayer that we receive the fullness of the Holy Spirit. As we have seen this week, with the fullness of God’s Spirit comes a deeper knowledge and closeness with God. So, prayer leads us to a deeper place in our relationship with God.

It is through prayer that we become aware of what God is doing in us and around us. As we pray, God’s Spirit will reveal and guide us into the ways of God.

It is through prayer that we receive from God’s Spirit clarity as to what obedience to God looks like. It gives us the opportunity to process with God how He is leading us that day and what He would have us do.

Take some time now and commit your day to the Lord. Ask His Spirit to empower you and guide you. Wait on Him, in a moment of stillness, so that He has the opportunity to direct your thoughts and encourage you. Maybe make it a habit to do this every day.