

The Power of the Holy Spirit

by J. Edwin Orr

The secret of revival is the person of the Holy Spirit, who is the only one who can bring about the renewal of our nation or the Christian church throughout the world.

Duration: 21:34

Scripture: Psalm 80:18-19, Psalm 85:6, Psalm 139:23-24, Zechariah 4:6, Matthew 9:38, Acts 3:19, Acts 13:2

Topics: "Power of the Holy Spirit"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher uses various illustrations to convey his message. He starts by talking about a farmer and his tractor, highlighting the importance of having the right tools and being well-organized. He then shares the story of a migrant worker who approaches the bus instead of asking the workers for a job, emphasizing the need to go directly to the source. The preacher also discusses the concept of the Trinity, explaining that while there is no perfect analogy, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are one essence. Finally, he talks about the disciples' expectation of the restoration of the kingdom and Jesus' response, emphasizing the importance of receiving power from the Holy Spirit to fulfill the great commission.

Transcript

Now, what is the secret of all this? I could give you so many more illustrations and facts, but I don't need to convince you further, I trust. This movement lasted roughly a generation. I think the secret, very simply, the person of the Holy Spirit.

There's a verse that puzzled me a great deal. I wonder if it's puzzled you. Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord.

Not by might, but don't we deal with a mighty God? Not by power, but don't we have the power of the Holy Spirit? What does that really mean? I discovered that, if you go into the Hebrew words, the word might there might be illustrated, have you ever heard of the German Wehrmacht? M-A-C-H-T. That's the same as the word might. Hitler and his generals organized a superb military machine.

It was the might of the German army. Those panzers were like a clenched fist, smashing into other nations. It was a superb organization.

There's no doubt about it. It took the rest of the world many years to catch up with them. That's the word might.

The word power means pressure, rather than the power of the Holy Spirit. The best translation I've seen of that is, not by force or chain of command, but by my spirit, saith the Lord. What could the churches have done in 1790 to stem the tide? It was too much for them.

Some things are too much for us. I was conducting a week of meetings in Bishop. The pastor said to me, come, I'll show you how I'm beating the energy crisis.

He took me to his living room in the parsonage, and there he had an old-fashioned black pot-bellied stove. He's up in the mountains there, there's plenty of wood. And he said, I'm saving a lot of money, I don't have to buy oil anymore.

Well, that's good for you, but I said, I doubt if it would work in Los Angeles. First of all, they wouldn't let us have incinerators, so I doubt if they'd let us have pot-bellied stoves again. Besides, we wouldn't have enough wood.

In one sense, this energy crisis, too much for any Christian congregation, isn't it? Too much for any little firm. It's a world crisis. And that's what the churches faced in those days.

And the answer was not by organization or chain of command, but by my spirit, saith the Lord. Now, the disciples said to the Lord Jesus before his ascension, Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel? They had been told that the Messiah would bring an end to the tyranny. And they expected him to do this now.

And the Lord Jesus said, it's not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father has put under his own direction. But you will receive power after the Holy Spirit has come upon you. And you will be my witnesses, both in Jerusalem and Judea and Samaria and to the uttermost parts of the earth.

There was that great commissioning. Now, what did he mean when he said you will receive power? I'm thinking, for instance, of different illustrations. I talked to a farmer up in the San Joaquin Valley.

I said, are you all prepared for harvest? He said, I'm all set. That tractor is the best tractor that money can buy. That's one reason why American farmers are producing so much of the fruit of the soil.

They're way ahead of Soviet Russia or any other country. They have the power to do it. They're well organized to do it.

But that tractor lies there to be used when he wants to use it. He covers it with a tarpaulin when he doesn't want to use it. Let's take a different illustration.

A man looking for a job, a migrant worker. He shows up at the edge of the field. He doesn't ask the worker working there, can you give me a job, because he's only a worker.

He says, where's the boss? He said, you see the tall man there with the straw hat? That's the boss. Pretty decent fellow. Wish you well.

He goes and speaks to the boss, I'm looking for work. What's your experience? Oh, I've had about 15 years in harvesting. Okay, we can use you.

Now, you see that second field there? You see the fellow in the blue jeans? Tall fellow? You go to him and tell him I sent you. Tell him I told you you were to work in that corner there. This is the boss.

It was the Lord Jesus who said, Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that he will thrust forth labourers into his harvest. Who is the Lord of the harvest? The Lord of the harvest is the Holy Spirit. Who was it that said to the church at Antioch, Separate unto me Barnabas and Saul for the work unto which I have called them.

It was the Spirit who said this. The Holy Spirit is the Lord of the harvest. I take it many men here have performed military service.

You know that in every organization of the military there must be a commanding officer. To paraphrase Harry Truman, the buck stops here. Somebody must be responsible.

But the commanding officer doesn't rush around doing everything. He delegates work. He has an adjutant.

If you want to see the commanding officer, you go to the adjutant and say, Captain, I must see the colonel. It's very important. The colonel just can't see you until ten o'clock tomorrow, but we'll put your name down.

You'll be here at ten o'clock sharp. Now remember, ten o'clock sharp. That's the adjutant.

On the other hand, if the colonel wants something done, he gives it to his executive officer. He may say, Major, we have a long hike tomorrow. See the men are all outfitted with heavy footwear.

And give them special rations and so forth. He doesn't rush around doing that himself. He tells his executive to carry it out.

Now may I use this as an analogy, remembering all analogies break down at some point. I use this as an analogy of the Godhead. God the Father is still on the throne.

Where is the Lord Jesus Christ? Now that he has accomplished the work of salvation, he is at the right hand of the Father, interceding for us. He is our adjutant. When we pray, we pray in Jesus' name.

But who is the executive of the Godhead? The executive of the Godhead is the Holy Spirit. It's through him that things are carried out. He has unlimited power, yet he will not intrude on anyone's will.

He will not make you do what you don't want to do. He will convict you, he will persuade you, but he won't intrude upon you. So I want you to get that idea of the Holy Spirit being the personal power of the Godhead.

Some people think the Holy Spirit is like a power additive. You see signs, you know, to use such and such a power additive, you get better mileage with your gasoline. People think, well, we do Christian work, but we've got something special, we really need the help of the Holy Spirit.

No, no, the Holy Spirit is in charge of everything. Everything. And we are sometimes like spoiled children, we just want to do things our own way.

Instead of submitting our wills to him. For instance, we could plan a great visitation campaign, say, for Pasadena. Supposing we do it entirely on our own.

Only the Holy Spirit knows that the day before that visitation program begins, there's going to be an earthquake that's going to shake the whole of Pasadena. We don't know that, he knows that. So he can lead us about timing, about everything.

The Holy Spirit is the one in charge. Now what can we say about the Holy Spirit, except that he seems to be the unknown member of the Godhead. I was preaching in Belo Horizonte in Brazil.

When the doorbell rang, I was having lunch with a Presbyterian minister, so he went to the door and greeted the man at the door. He said he was collecting por espiritu santo, for the Holy Spirit. To make conversation, my Presbyterian friend said, Who is the Holy Spirit? And the Brazilian said, Don't you know? He's a bird.

He used the word pasareño. You remember the American passenger pigeon? He said he's a pasareño. He's a pigeon.

Some churches have him carved above the altar, but our Padre noticed we didn't have the Holy Spirit in our church, so we're collecting money, this Whitsuntide, this Pentecost, to put the Holy Spirit in our church. Now people smiled at that, yet a Baptist lady in Portland and Oregon said to me once, How do you distinguish between the Holy Spirit and Santa Claus? After I got over my astonishment, I said, Santa Claus is fictitious. The Holy Spirit is the power of God.

But he's a personal power. You drive up your car to a gasoline station, you say, Fill my tank with gas. But the gasoline doesn't care whether you drive north, south, east, west, fast or slow.

But the Holy Spirit does care how you behave. Now he is a spirit, not a thing. How do we know he's not a thing? Not just the influence of God, as the Unitarians would say.

Or the Jews, or the Jehovah's Witnesses. We know he is a person because Scripture teaches he has intellect, he has will, he has emotion. He can think for himself.

How do we know that? He will teach you all things, he will lead you into all truth. He has will. He said to Paul and Silas not to go into Bithynia.

He forbade them. Why? He wanted them to go to Macedonia. Does he have emotion? Grieve not the Holy Spirit.

Not only is the Holy Spirit a person who can think for himself, act for himself, feel in himself, but he's a super person. I have a friend in Los Altos in California who has an IQ of 208. Albert Einstein's IQ was 209.

My friend Dr. Gerhard Dirks holds 240 patents for IBM computers. Now what do you think would be the IQ of the Holy Spirit? The figure thousand, would that do? Well, million? No, no, infinite. Is there a figure? Yes, there is.

You mathematicians know that little figure of eight lying on its side. The double alpha for infinity. That's his IQ.

The Holy Spirit has irresistible will. An Irishman said to me, well, you have to admit I've got a strong will. I said, your wife says you're stubborn.

I didn't tell him that a critic said he was pigheaded. Have you got a strong will? Yes. Perhaps it is strong, but strong at the wrong points.

Have you ever made up your mind to get up early in the morning to pray? How long did you keep it up? Did you ever make up your mind not to criticize other people unkindly? How long was before your tongue

was wagging again? You have a weak will. And you have confused emotions. You love some things you should hate.

You dislike some people you should love. But the Holy Spirit has infinite intellect, and will, and emotion. He is also God.

What a way to say it. He is deity. Now, this is hard for some people to understand.

How do we know he is God? Now, the Jehovah's Witnesses teach that Jesus Christ is a created angel, and the Holy Spirit is just the influence of God. But how do we know that this person, the Holy Spirit, is deity? Well, if he is not, what could he be? Could he be an angel? What other kind of life? Human? Animal? Now, we look at what the scripture says. In what way does God differ from all his creatures? You would have to say, well, he is omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent.

That means he is all-powerful, all-knowing, everywhere present. Men are not omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent. Neither are devils, neither are angels.

Certainly not animals. But only God. Can you think of a verse of scripture that suggests that the Holy Spirit is omnipotent? The second verse of the Bible.

The Spirit of God moved upon the chaos in creating the world. He can create. Can you think of a verse of the scriptures that teaches that the Holy Spirit is omniscient, that he knows everything? Well, he'll teach you all things, but there's a better verse still.

It says, just as it takes the spirit of a man to comprehend the thoughts of a man, so only the Spirit of God can comprehend the thoughts of God. You have a pussycat at home, you stroke the cat, the cat knows you're pleased. Kick the cat out of the way, the cat knows you're cross.

But if you're worried about your income tax returns, the cat doesn't know what's bothering you. The cat can't comprehend that, can't take it all in. Only the Spirit of God can comprehend the thoughts of God.

How much does God know? Everything. How much, then, does the Holy Spirit know? Everything. He's omniscient.

Is he everywhere present? Whither shall I flee from thy Spirit? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there. If I make my bed in hell, thou art there. The Holy Spirit is everywhere.

Therefore, he's deity. You say, yes, but I don't understand, how can he be a person and be deity? Well, that's a mystery. You have a body that's alive, a soul that's alive, a spirit that's alive.

For instance, pinch yourself. You have feeling in your body. When you step outside the church, you'll probably say it's a little chilly tonight.

It cools off here so much in California. You feel that in your body. But when our flutists were playing, we were stirred by good music in our souls.

It's in our soul we feel patriotism, certainly not in our bodies. Otherwise, a big fat man would be more patriotic than a little thin man. And in our spirits, we have conviction, too.

We worship God in spirit. You know, I meet all sorts of people. I had a pastor once who thought that it added to the spirit of the meeting to dim the lights and raise them again.

He would dim them and so forth. That's not spiritual. That's psychic.

I don't object to it, but it's not spiritual. It's psychic. Maybe it saves distraction.

You don't see the person directly in front of you. But you have a spirit. The Holy Spirit bears witness with your spirit that you're a child of God.

How did you arrange to be body, soul and spirit? Well, you didn't arrange it, but you are. Now, in the same way, we add up all the Bible says about the Father, we find he's the Eternal Father. We add up all the Bible says about the Son, we find he's the Eternal Son.

We add up all the Bible says about the Spirit, we find he's the Eternal Spirit. One God, but revealed to us as Father, Son and Spirit. It's a mystery, but it's true.

Is there any good analogy of this? I'm afraid not. One lady came to me recently. She said, I'll give you a good illustration.

An egg. I said, I beg your pardon. She said, I said an egg.

She said, an egg has a shell and a white and a yolk. But I said, there's no oneness there. The shell is made of calcium.

The white is made of albumin. The yolk is made of fat. Those are three things wrapped together.

Whereas we believe Father, Son and Holy Spirit are of one essence. A Baptist pastor in Tempe in Arizona said to me, I'll give you a good illustration. I am father to my family, pastor to my congregation, and a citizen of the state of Arizona.

I said, well, keep your functions straight. You kiss your family goodbye, but you shake hands with the congregation at the door and you go into a polling booth and you vote in the elections. But I said, that's one man acting in three ways.

That's not God. Jesus wasn't the father dressed up for a certain role. There's no real analogy.

But the truth has been revealed to us. You'll find God's footprints in creation. Everything that happens is future, present and past.

All three form time. I could give so many illustrations like that. Why do I mention this? The whole secret of revival is the Holy Spirit.

He's the only one that can do it. It doesn't mean we can't do anything. We can pray.

And trusting him we can preach the word powerfully. We can witness by our daily living. But when it comes to things of this magnitude, only the Holy Spirit can bring about the renewal of our nation or the Christian church throughout the world.

Therefore we should start asking him to do it. Then when we pray he tells us what to do. It's as simple as that.

Yet some people are afraid of the Holy Spirit. I know some ministers, if they thought that a movement of the Holy Spirit was beginning in the congregation, they'd say to themselves, I'd better not let this get out of control. They're afraid of the Holy Spirit.

You can be afraid of Satan's counterfeits and take every measure against that. But don't be afraid of the Holy Spirit. Because one of his titles is, he is the Spirit of Jesus.

And another title is, he's the Spirit of Christ. Do you love the Lord Jesus? Then you surely ought to love the Holy Spirit. Because he is the Spirit of Jesus.

The Spirit of Christ. First time I ever heard that little chorus, there's a sweet, lovely spirit in this place, was in Don Momo's church up in Bel Air. And I felt the hush of the Spirit there.

Do you remember you were in trouble? And the Lord comforted you? That was the Holy Spirit. Do you remember you faced temptation, but you were fortified? That was the Holy Spirit. You remember you were deeply convicted of sin? But now you look back and you think, I surely needed that.

That was the Holy Spirit. The same Holy Spirit is concerned with the work of God throughout the United States and all the world. He's in charge.

There was about time we started talking to him. But whether you're praying for a renewal in your own life, or revival in this congregation, or awakening all over this country, or throughout the world, the lesson is the same. It's the work of the Holy Spirit.

Now Charles Finney said, Revival is nothing more than the right use of the appropriate means. If he had said that of evangelism, I could have accepted it. But the scripture doesn't say that.

It says, Wilt thou not revive us again? Revive thy work in the midst of the years. And in the New Testament, times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. It's time for the Lord to work.

Let us pray. Search me, O God, and know my heart. Try me and know my thoughts.

See if there be any grieving way in me. Then lead me in the way everlasting. O God, when we contemplate the sin and unrighteousness in our nation today, wilt thou not raise us up again? Pour out thy Spirit on the Church to revive us, and on the people to awaken them.

Then give us the privilege of bringing them in. For that's the work thou hast given us to do. Amen.

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