

## REFORMED CHURCH CLANWILLIAM : SUNDAY 10 AUGUST 2014 EVENING SERVICE

**Sing before:** Psalm 104:17, 18, 20

*Let us commence this meeting with God by declaring openly to one another and to God:*

Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth. Beloved grace and peace be to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, through the mighty working of God the Holy Spirit.

**Amen**

Psalm of praise: 33:1, 3

**Prayer:**

- **Doxology**
- **Worship**
- **Confession of sins**
- **Forgiveness**
- **Gratitude**
- **Prayer for the need of the congregation of the church, the authorities and the sinful world and appeal to God's promises**
- **General prayer**
- **Enlightenment from the Holy Spirit for the sake of the ministry of the Word.**

**Amen**

Psalm 139:3

**Scripture reading:** John 16

**Scripture text:** John 16:12-14: Catechism Sunday 20

**12 "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.**

**13 "However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.**

**14 "He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you.**

John 16:12-14)

One of the features of an insincere faith is that it doesn't understand the full truth. People who do not believe sincerely always come up with distortions of certain Biblical truths, or simply reject parts of the Scriptures.

- The result of such crippled faith is that the person cannot believe in salvation through the Lord Jesus, because such insincere faith is the same as disbelief.
- It's so sad to think that such a person is lost.

There are more kinds of unbelief.

- One, for example, is when people only believe when miracles are performed.

- Another is when somebody has faith for some time and then his faith disappears like water oozes away in the sand.
- Dead faith is when someone knows all the facts regarding faith, but none of it has any meaning – it's dead. This clearly shows that his faith is dead and that God the Holy Spirit does not dwell in his heart.

Let's focus on two things we believe with regard to the Holy Spirit:

### 1. The Holy Spirit our Teacher

### 2. The Holy Spirit is God Almighty

#### 1. The Holy Spirit is our Teacher

The Word of God teaches us that the Lord Jesus died for us and rose from the dead, and that He obtained eternal life for us. The Lord Jesus teaches us in the Scriptures that He promised to send the Holy Spirit to comfort us after his ascension into heaven.

- The Comforter was coming to the church. Jesus also calls Him the Spirit of the truth.
- The Holy Spirit was poured out on the church, and He is still with us and will always be.
- He will remain with us forever.

The question now: Do you and I know the Holy Spirit?

How do we/I know that He is teaching you/me the truth if you/I don't know who He is?

- It means that the Holy Spirit will fully reveal to us the secret counsel and will of God concerning our redemption, and that He will teach and guide us through the Word of God.
- Therefore the Bible guides us in our faith.
- And the Teacher is God the Holy Spirit.
- Hence it is written here:

**. . . when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth.**

Three things are important in this regard:

- Firstly, you must know the Person of the Holy Spirit.
- In the second place, you must know the work of the Holy Spirit and wish for it.
- Thirdly, you may then enjoy the comfort the Holy Spirit works in you.

Galatians 4:6 expresses this comfort:

**And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!"**  
(Galatians 4:6)

Hence the Holy Spirit works together with the grace of God.

- He teaches us to know God Himself and to worship him with our entire life.
- He teaches us to know the grace of God and to avail ourselves of it.

- This is also why He tells us what to pray. At one place the Bible teaches us that if we don't know what to pray, the Holy Spirit teaches us what to say.
  - It is so comforting to know that my need to pray comes from the Holy Spirit.
  - The Spirit of God prompts every honest word in every prayer.
  - The Holy Spirit lets me take refuge to God in my crushing trouble and suffering

The Holy Spirit teaches me to renounce all my vanity/arrogance.

- There are people who often use the Name of the Lord as if they are deeply religious, but when we listen very carefully we realise that they are their own idols.
  - They are the best and the cleverest.
  - They are capable of everything and just use the Name of the Lord from time to time to hide their self-importance.
  - They want to pretend that they are still humble before the Lord.
- And then there are also the people who want everything for themselves. The egocentric people.
  - Life must only revolve around them:
    - Their time and possessions and everything are only for themselves.
    - They are utterly miserable when they have to sacrifice something for someone else.
  - This means they also will not sacrifice anything for God, because the Lord regards service to Him as service to your neighbour.
- Such people should repent and listen more often to the Holy Spirit and more and more approach the throne of God in order to learn that they are mere instruments in the hands of God to glorify Him.
- Self-importance and selfishness are the very characteristics of the devil and probably his most powerful weapons with which he fights against true service and worshipping of the Lord.

## **2. The Holy Spirit is God Almighty**

The Holy Spirit is God Almighty together with the Father and the Son. He is the third Person of our Triune God.

- The Father created us,
- And the Son, Jesus, saved us from the power of the devil. He also atoned us to the throne of God.
- God works in us through his Spirit to sanctify us.
  - The Holy Spirit comes to us from both the Father and the Son. Jesus once said that He would pray to his Father to send the Holy Spirit to us, and on another occasion He said He Himself would send the Holy Spirit to us.

Let us have another look at the false doctrine at the present time:

- Many people from various religions claims that the Holy Spirit is not God but merely a power emanating from God.
- This is not true. The Holy Spirit is not a power or a disposition. He is Almighty like God. He has all the same features as God. In fact, he is God who must also be worshipped like we worship the Father and Jesus Christ.

- He is fully honored and worshipped as God because He is God.
- Because he is God, He works in the way we know God through his work:
  - He rules over our spirit and converts it.
  - He remains with us through his omnipresence.
  - In his presence he teaches and convinces us.

Let's have a look at how the Scriptures describe God the Holy Spirit and his work, and then we'll understand very well how the Holy Spirit works.

- In the Old Testament the Spirit of God revealed to the prophets and other people what would happen according to God's counsel.
  - He came upon the prophets and they prophesied.
- Our Scripture text refers to the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of truth.
  - In other words, God who reveals the truth to us.
  - This comprises the assumptions that there is no truth outside of God.
- John 14:26 calls the Holy Spirit our Comforter. In other words, he comforts us when we are overcome by the thought that we are lost because of our sins.
  - For example, when we are put to the test, He comforts us with the knowledge that the power of God controls everything, and conquers everything.
  - He convinces us that God still loves us, and that he will always protect us in all our tribulations.
- We sometimes fall in sin.
  - Then our conscience and feelings of guilt torture us.
  - But then the Holy Spirit comforts us with the knowledge that God forgives us if we truly repent and plead with Him to forgive us.
- The Holy Spirit leads us to truly feel remorse for our sins and He brings us to kneel down and pray for the grace of God.

But it is of no use to know all these things and we do not do anything about it. We must realise that God the Holy Spirit has also been given to every one of us.

- He also works in your heart
- He works faith in your heart, and obedience to God.
- So, if you are disobedient, it means you oppose the Holy Spirit – God Himself.

Now you should not think that the Holy Spirit only guides you in matters regarding church and faith. Let's read Galatians 5:16 onwards:

**16 I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.**

**17 For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.**

**18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.**

**19 Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness,**

**20 idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies,**

**21 envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.**

(Galatians 5:16-21)

Hence the Holy Spirit leads you along every aspect of life to avoid evil. Then take note of the fact that the Spirit and evil things are in conflict with each other.

- You are either led by the Holy Spirit, or by desires of the sinful nature.
- There is no alternative.
- The list of things that are in conflict with the Spirit includes everything we still regard as detestable.

Let's be positive: Then look at verse 22. The fruit of the Spirit is described as follows:

**22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,**

**23 gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.**

**24 And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.**

**25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.**

(Galatians 5:22-25)

Now you can apply this part of the gospel to yourself:

- How faithfully do you seek fellowship with God and his church? Or we can put it like this: How much time do you spend on dealing with the Lord in your thoughts?
- How much hatred do you bear inside you? How much of your heart, your mind and your time do you practically sacrifice for God?
- If your life does not reflect the guidance and comfort of the Holy Spirit, then conceit, hatred, self-importance and poor and half-hearted worship will characterize your life.
- Then you have much to worry about, because the Bible teaches us that the person who has been reborn will prove by the way he lives that he has really turned away from sin and turned to God.

The comfort lies in the fact that the Lord knows that we are sinners.

- He knows we get lost among evil things and that we not always know and do what is right.
- Hence the Lord says that He will send the Spirit of truth to us to teach us the truth.

Hence, the Lord carries us through life.

- The Lord never forgets about us.
- Through his Spirit He puts right what is wrong inside us.
- It is also comforting to know that we can obey God. We should just listen!

Let's read together Catechism Lord's Day 20.

Sunday 20

53. Q. What do you believe concerning the Holy Spirit?

A. First, He is, together with the Father and the Son, true and eternal God.[1] Second, He is also given to me,[2] to make me by true faith share in Christ and all His benefits,[3] to comfort me,[4] and to remain with me forever.[5]

[1] Gen. 1:1, 2; Matt. 28:19; Acts 5:3, 4; I Cor. 3:16. [2] I Cor. 6:19; II Cor. 1:21, 22; Gal. 4:6; Eph. 1:13. [3] Gal. 3:14; I Pet. 1:2. [4] John 15:26; Acts 9:31. [5] John 14:16, 17; I Pet. 4:14.

**Amen.**

Closing prayer.

Closing Song: Scripture Versification 19-1:1

The Lord bless and keep you, the Lord make his face shine on you, the Lord turn His countenance to you and give peace.

**Amen**

Dr MJ Du Plessis  
 Helping Reverend  
 Reformed Church Clanwilliam  
 10 August 2014  
 Scripture Modern King James Version