

## Need for Baptism with the Holy Spirit

Sermon Transcript by Rev. Ernest O'Neill

I know that I have to start with Revelation 3:20, dear ones. So if you would look to Revelation 3:20 I will trust Jesus to show me what I have to share. Revelation 3:20, and it's the Holy Spirit speaking as you can see if you look further back in the Chapter because in Verse 13 of Revelation 3 the Bible reads, "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." And the Spirit is capital S and it's the Holy Spirit and then this is the Holy Spirit speaking in Verse 20, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock," the door of the church, "If any one hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him and he with me." And we normally think of that as Jesus speaking but it really is not important that Jesus is sitting at the right hand of the Father and he is sending the Spirit to us and the Spirit is speaking to our individual hearts tonight and saying, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any one hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me."

And I know that I have to share that most of us experience the Holy Spirit usually through that first clause, "I will come in to him and eat with him." And most of us have an experience of moral impotence in our lives or an experience of guilt, or an experience of meaninglessness and we don't know what to do about it. And then we find that the history books teach us that this man Jesus died for us and we suddenly begin to see that God our Creator does not hold us guilty any longer because he regards all the guilt as having been settled on Jesus and he regards Jesus as having died for us and we realize that God has forgiven us. And so, we ask the Spirit of Jesus to come into our lives and we ask him to come in and eat with us.

Now he eats with us, we remain the host, it remains our house it remains our life. We retain the plans that we had for our life before we ever heard of Jesus or before we ever asked the Holy Spirit to come in. We retain the original plans that we had. We carry on in our plans for our career. We carry on the way we were going in our plans for marriage. We carry on in the plans we had for living in a certain place all our lives. So we don't change our way of life too much. We do probably begin to come to church, and we begin to read the Bible, and we begin to pray. But the main bent of our lives remains as it was before and that's what it means to allow the Holy Spirit to come in and eat with you. You invite him in as your guest and he eats with you. You tell him where to sit, you decide when to move the furniture in the room and when to leave it as it is, but you are in charge. You are in control.

I can see how it is like Peter in pre Pentecost days. If your reputation is going to suffer by what this guest in your home suggests you do, then you veto his suggestion and you simply keep quiet. So if he attempts to suggest to you that when the little maid in the courtyard, or the colleague at work, or the friend that sits beside you in the classroom asks you if you are a Christian or if you are identified with this man Jesus, the Holy Spirit wants to come forth and say glowingly, "Yes, I am and I can tell you something about it." But you veto that suggestion because you are the host in the house and you tell him to cool it and keep quiet because this is your house and you want to ensure that a certain reputation is established in the world for your house. And so you are really in charge of the house.

Now if you say to me, "But don't you have some experience of the Spirit of God inside you?" Yes you do but it is a periodic experience. At times in a meeting like we had his morning at church or in a meeting like we have this evening, the Holy Spirit will appear to be having his way in your life.

And you when you're with many others, who are respecting and honoring the Holy Spirit, will find yourself wanting to do the same thing. But the trouble comes when you're on your own at work on Monday morning, or when you're beginning to make the big decisions in your life like what you're going to do with your career, or whom you're going to marry, or where you're going to live, or how you're going to spend your money, or who your friends are going to be, or what your reputation in this life is going to be. On those decisions you require absolute submission from the Holy Spirit.

So there are many of us who live like Peter lived in the pre Pentecost days. We went with the Holy Spirit at times, we had some experience of the Holy Spirit at times, but we had no experience of overflowing life from within. And above all of course, we all experienced in those days the defeated Christian life which we've talked about so often and I don't need to elaborate to you. But we did experience the mixture of loving people at times with the whole heart and at other times loving ourselves. At times we experienced a great outgoing generosity and a desire to go to things and be at prayer meetings. At other times we would rebel against God and it would seem we almost had a glowing hatred and bitterness against God inside our hearts.

The dear ones that would live with us would often be baffled at the apparent schizophrenic Jekyll and Hyde personality that we possessed. They could not understand why at one time we would appear to be filled with love, and gentleness, and patience and at other times we would be absolutely our old selves. At one time we would be enthusiastic to be at God's house and we would be enthusiastic to be giving ourselves to a service and at other times we would be holding back, and pulling back, and looking in upon ourselves. At one time we would be utterly preoccupied with the person that we were living with and loving them and taking care of them. At other times we would be filled with self pity and self preoccupation.

Sometimes we would put on a show, an outward show of always being loving towards people but we knew in our own hearts that it was just from the lips out. It was just from the outward expression outwards, there was no joy or peace in the heart. At other times we would feel a real love and joy deep down. So some of the marks of that life were certainly a periodic experience of the Holy Spirit and a periodic experience of Satan within.

Now loved ones, the change comes when you move to the next clause in the verse and it is the last three words particularly in Revelation 3:20, "And he with me." Now, when the Holy Spirit comes in at the beginning really, in fact, the Holy Spirit says, "I will come in to him and eat with him." And so the Holy Spirit eats with us, looking upon us as the host. And then the Holy Spirit says, "And he will eat with me." In other words, "I will become the most important one and the person who receives me into himself will then eat with me and I will be the host and he will be the guest." And that is what you call a post Pentecost life, or an experience that follows upon your being baptized with the Holy Spirit. And here's what it meant for me in my life. It meant that instead of putting myself first and my career, and instead of putting my own marriage first, and instead of putting my home first and my reputation with others, I spread eagled myself before God and said, "Father you use me whatever way you want for your glory and I will no longer look back at myself to see what is happening or to see how I am being treated by you."

It was a complete change and turnaround loved ones. It was a coming to Jesus and saying, "Lord Jesus, I will rearrange anything to suit you, anything. And I will throw out my present career if that's what you want me to do, and I will throw out my present home if that's what you want me to do." But it was more than that; it was an inward dealing with the things I was reluctant to change before. It was a coming before Jesus and saying, "Lord Jesus, you have the right to live your life

over again in me whatever that's going to cost and I will never look back at myself to see what it is costing." It was a readiness dear ones, for the Holy Spirit to be the only important person in my life so that I was then the custodian of this body and looked after it for him and from then on it was up to him to do what he wanted with me.

So, if he wanted people to walk over me and despise me, and be contemptuous of me, then that was his right to have that done. If he wanted people to ignore what I had done or achieved then it was his right to do that. If he wanted people to take advantage of me when I could fully well react and retaliate and use my mind to get my own back on them, then that was up to him to do that. In other words, it was really an exchanging of my ownership of my life with him and it was a readiness for him to use it as he wanted.

Now loved ones, it's that kind of practical commitment of your whole life to Jesus that results in the baptism of the Holy Spirit. And I think many of us maybe were touched at the way God has dealt with us as a body in practical ways. Now he has dealt with us that way in love and generosity, he has given us things that no other person can give because there is a group of people in this body that have changed their whole way of life for Jesus.

Now some of us are kind of riding along on the basis of that and so we're enjoying some of the benefits of that and that's good, that's God's will. But it is his greater will that all of us here in this sanctuary tonight should be prepared to rearrange our whole lives for Jesus and should stop playing fast and loose with him, and should stop asking him to come in and be our guest. We should stop saying, "Father, yes I am interested in living forever, and I am interested in getting free from this miserable guilt I have, and I am free of this moral impotence that I have," and we should start saying, "Lord, I don't care about the disadvantages I have in my own life, I don't care about self. I don't care even if I go to hell, I want you to use me for your glory and for your pleasure and I want you to do it your way."

And loved ones, that's when Jesus baptizes you with the Holy Spirit. It's when you stop being selfish about your salvation. It's when you stop saying, "I want you in Spirit of Jesus to eat with me and to benefit me when I choose." And it's a complete changing over and saying, "Lord Jesus, I don't care what happens to me myself. I don't care whether I go to hell or to heaven, but I want you Jesus to use me and my whole life for your pleasure and for your delight, and to glorify yourself and I want you to live over again inside of me. And I'll never look into myself and ask what you're doing with me or to me. I'll never step back from this Lord. This is a once for all surrender."

Now loved ones, Jesus knows when you're making that and Jesus knows when you're stepping back from that. And there is – loved ones, I have to say it, there is just as wide and wider a gulf between two groups of us this evening as there is down that isle in this church. There is a great group of us who are carnal Christians, who believe we're going to heaven and want our sins forgiven but we want it at the lowest possible price that we have to pay for it. And so we've backed off some of our first love that we had for Jesus at the beginning and we're beginning to try and take care of the bank account, and take care of the house, and take care of the future, but those things aren't really important, those are external things that can stand either for full surrender or half surrender. Most of all, we're taking care of ourselves. We're a little concerned because somebody isn't taking as much notice of us as they used to. We're a little concerned because we're getting too much work to do. We're a little concerned because people aren't sympathizing with us as they used to and we're becoming a little preoccupied with ourselves and the way we're being treated. And

so we're drawing back and we're living carnal Christian lives.

And then there's another group of us who have passed beyond Pentecost and have passed beyond the crucifixion and we've made a once and for all and complete surrender to Jesus that we have decided we are not turning back from. We are settled in this. We have signed not only the large print in the contract that Jesus has died for us in 2 Corinthians 5:14, but that therefore we have died with him and we have no right and we claim no right.

And loved ones, when Jesus finds a man or a woman that is serious about that then he baptizes that person with the Holy Spirit and that gets you into the kind of prayer answering, power filled witnessing lives that we all read about and hear about. That is what introduces you to the kind of prayer life that gets answers. That is what introduces you to the kind of lie that is guided, and full, and complete. And loved ones that is what it involves a complete surrender.

And if you say to me, "Can I struggle along for a while as a Christian without the baptism of the Holy Spirit?" It seems to me it's very difficult to go very long like that. It seems to me eventually you get burdened down by the continuous guilt into which you enter as you sin again, and again the old besetting sins that you've already confessed and repented of a thousand times before. From the Father's point of view I believe you could carry on as a carnal Christian all through your life. He is willing to forgive until 70 times seven and until 10,000 times that again. But it does seem that as you sin again and again your heart grows harder and harder and it becomes more difficult for you to repent and therefore to receive forgiveness so it does seem from a practical point of view that it's very difficult to continue as a carnal Christian, Paul suggested, for more than two or three years. And it seems to me that many of us try to push it further than that and that's why we end up not being used fully and completely for Jesus.

Now loved ones, I would have to testify in my own life that there was an absolute change when I made that decision to go all the way with Jesus and to allow him to be the host in my life. And we can argue about technicalities until the cows come home, and we can argue about death to self and crucifixion with Christ, and what the baptism with the Holy Spirit is, but I tell you this, there's a fullness in the complete assurance that you have in your heart when you've said to Jesus, "Lord, I'm living for you and for you alone not for my place in heaven, not for the forgiveness of my sins, or the removal of my guilt, but for you because I love you and I want you to be glorified and I take no right to my own life." There's a complete difference and that is full surrender and you can call it what you like, and we can argue over the semantics but finally, a man and a woman knows whether they've made that commitment or not.

And so loved ones, probably part of the reason Jesus wanted me to preach at you unapologetically this evening is because it is important for us to have times in all the general, and the gradual, and the gentle teaching that he's given us. It is important to have times when you are faced directly with your need to stop listening and to take a step, and to take a step into what you may not fully understand. Loved ones, you cannot analyze yourself into it.

God was good to me, he answered my questions through the books and through my own thinking and then he brought me to a point and said, "Now the intellectual experimentation and research is finished; now you have to decide." And I had the sense at that point to decide. Now, I say that to you, that there will come times in our journeys together over the next 40/50 years and I'm going for 80, but there will come times when over the next number of years when Jesus will face you with your need to stop all the discussing, and stop all the reflecting, and stop all the haggling, and make your

decision and go for the baptism of the Holy Spirit or decide deliberately and consciously to try to remain as a carnal Christian. And loved ones, I don't know how long you can make that decision and hold with it.

So I know the Holy Spirit wanted me to share this tonight and it's not at all as great as the sermon I had but it's greater because it's what Jesus wanted me to say. And so I think that there must be some people here tonight who simply need to settle things quietly with Jesus. I don't think you need me to lay hands on you at all, I think it's necessary for you simple to settle with Jesus tonight whether you're going completely with him and fully with him and therefore going to trust him to baptize you with the Holy Spirit tonight as we bow in prayer or whether you're going to continue to try to fiddle along for a bit longer.

And loved ones, you know that you're welcome to fiddle along here in the body. That is what Jesus taught us, that we were not to keep forcing each other, we were to lovingly teach, and lovingly preach, and lovingly share, and lovingly live with each other so that bit-by-bit we'd all have an opportunity to see the kind of life that Jesus wanted to live inside us. So you're welcome to walk that way for the next 80 years if you want but I do think that some need to settle tonight. And I think you should cast away from you all doubts about, "Am I going to have a great experience, or am I going to speak in tongues, or am I going to have great feelings?" Let me say at this point, "No, you'll have none of that." Let's settle that, you'll have none of that.

If Jesus wants you to have it you'll have it. But let's settle it that you'll have none of it now. Let's go for the baptism with the Holy Spirit. Let's not go for emotions, let's not go for tongues, let's not go for a great sense of victory and cleanliness and purity, let's just make a quite honest surrender to Jesus and deal with him completely. And I would take it that some of you know what you have to deal with and about you see, so that's why I'm just going into it like this. I believe that Jesus has prompted me to speak this way because some of you he has been dealing with and you need to settle this.

And why? Well, if you don't come into it then you're going to limit tremendously the power that Jesus will have in this body to glorify himself. Jesus wants to answer miraculously prayers throughout the whole world with every one of you. Now, if you don't come into this you are going to have to be a parasite on other people who are baptized with the Holy Spirit and who are moving aggressively forward to reclaim ground for God. But if you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit then you yourself can be one of those people who lead out forward and that's what Jesus wants from us.

If you say to me, "What is the condition?" You give up all your own ideas; you give up all your own plans. Jesus may enable you of course to fulfill every one of them, but you give them up as far as your own determination to fulfill them is concerned and you give your life to Jesus and say, "Lord Jesus, from this day use me for your glory." Not, "Lord Jesus use me because I desperately want to be saved, and to go to heaven, and to be freed from my guilt so I have not so much trouble in my own life." But, "Lord Jesus, use me I do not care what happens to myself. From this day forward I'll care what happens to you and to your glory and I am tired taking from you, and taking from you, and trying to take advantage of all that you've done for me. I want Lord Jesus to give you. I want to give you myself completely and all my wishes, and all my reputation, and all the way people treat me and I'm willing to be treated as you were treated."

Let us pray.

