

FOR YOUR GIFT OF God THE SPIRIT

Act 1:8; Eph 1:13,14

INTRODUCTION

Last summer we did a series on Emojis from the Psalms – Summer Psalms. This year I’ve decided to do a series on Summer Songs.

Each week I’ll key off a hymn of the church – some classic and well known, some may not be known as well.

Why do this?

OT believers and NT Christians have always been a singing people. – Book of Psalms

The night that Jesus celebrated the Passover with his disciples, having finished the meal, they sang a hymn and went out to the Mount of Olives- Mt 26:30. Wouldn’t it be great to know which hymn they sang that night?? Imagine having the copyright for that song!!

Eph 5:19; Col 3:16 – **One evidence of the “spirit filled life” is the teaching, speaking, and admonishing one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs.**

Throughout the ages, Christians have been singing and writing hymns and spiritual songs.

It is appropriate to start the series on Pentecost Sunday since the Holy Spirit moves God’s people to sing. While the songs and hymns of the people of God are not “inspired” in the same way that the Bible is inspired, they can be “inspired” in an artistic sense. Religious or secular artists, musicians, scientists, writers, etc often speak of being inspired by a person, idea, or event.

So too, Christian musicians and songwriters draw inspiration from the truths of the Gospel and the work of the Spirit in their hearts.

We start this series with a hymn written by Margaret Clarkson (1915-2008). She grew up in a nominal Christian home in Canada, and in her early youth became spiritually minded. She enjoyed reading through hymns which were a source of comfort for her.

http://hymnary.org/person/Clarkson_EM

Through hymns, she gained a “sense of the community of saints” which “led naturally to a search for other writings of the hymn writers.” She came in contact with “such people as John Bunyan, John and Charles Wesley, Martin Luther, William Cowper, John Newton, James Montgomery, Isaac Watts, Frances Ridley Havergal, and Fanny Crosby.” As she read hymns she began to see the church “as one continuous, living stream of the grace of God” in which she too had a place.

I think we’ve all had an experience of hearing or singing a hymn or song that resonated with our hearts. It seemed as though the author were reading our minds and knew our hearts. This is what Margaret Clarkson means when she speaks of a “sense of the community of saints.”

Since today is Pentecost Sunday our first hymn focuses on the Gift of the Holy Spirit. As with most hymns there is a scriptural reference that “inspires” the author. For this hymn the associated text is Eph 1:13-14, but I’ve taken each verse and found a text that is reflected in the words of the hymn.

Eph 1:13-14 In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation- having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, 14 who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory.

ACTS 1 To these He also presented Himself alive after His suffering, by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over a period of forty days and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God. 4 Gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised. "Which," He said, "you heard of from Me; 5for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

6 So when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, "Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?" 7He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority; 8but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."

Eph 4 There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; 5one Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.

7But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift.

8Therefore it says,

"When He ascended on high,
He led captive a host of captives,
And He gave gifts to men."

**1 For your gift of God the Spirit, power to make our lives anew,
pledge of life and hope of glory, Savior, we would worship you.
Crowning gift of resurrection sent from your ascended throne,
fullness of the very Godhead, come to make your life our own.**

The Holy Spirit is the crowning gift of the resurrection and through Him God is in the process of conforming us to the image of Christ. This is a main reason why God created us and chose us...so that we would be conformed to the image of Christ.

Rom 8:29 For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren;

The Holy Spirit is the promise of God WHO IS given to apply Christ to our hearts so that we might be filled to the fullness of God...

So that you may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, 19and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God.

As we are filled to the fullness of God, the life of the Holy Spirit is manifested in us. We are BORN AGAIN by the Spirit so that we might be transformed.

APPLICATION – Do you think of your life as your own, or do you see that you have been bought with a price and that God's mission is to conform you to the image of Christ,

That is the work of the Holy Spirit in you?

APPLICATION PRAYER

Lord, fill me today with the fullness of your Spirit
and make YOUR LIFE my own.

TEXTS FOR STANZA 2

Gen 1; In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. 2 The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters.

TITUS 3 But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, 5 He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, 6 whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior,

John 15 - "When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me, 27and you will testify also, because you have been with Me from the beginning. John 15

2 He who in creation's dawning brooded on the lifeless deep, still across our nature's darkness moves to wake our souls from sleep, moves to stir, to draw, to quicken, thrusts us through with sense of sin; brings to birth and seals and fills us saving Advocate within.

The same Holy Spirit who was hovering over the formless lifeless void of the earth also brought life to our dead souls.

This touches on the ISSUE of Regeneration – the giving of new life or making alive again.

Mankind was created with life and in connection with God, then through sin we died spiritually. But God , by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, gives life to those whom the Father has chosen.

What does that look like? We are stirred to see our sin and to know our need for a Savior and to embrace Jesus.

APPLICATION PRAYER

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TEXTS FOR STANZA 3

Rom 8:14ff

For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. 15For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!" 16The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, 17and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him.

18For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us. ... 22For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now. 23And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.

Col 3 Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to

God. 17 Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.

*3 He, himself the living Author, wakes to life the sacred Word,
reads with us its holy pages and reveals our risen Lord.
He it is who works within us, teaching rebel hearts to pray,
he whose holy intercessions rise for us both night and day.*

God the Holy Spirit is the author of the Word and applies it to our hearts – it's His primary work He is at work in us teaching us to pray. He understands groaning prayer. The Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.

The Holy Spirit yearns for our hearts to be rooted and grounded in the Word, that He inspired. There is NO SUBSTITUTE for the Word in our hearts – read, memorize, meditate.

APPLICATION PRAYER

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TEXTS FOR STANZA 4

Eph 6:10-17 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. 11 Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. 12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.

Rom 14:17 For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit

*4 He, the mighty God, indwells us; his to strengthen, help, empower;
his to overcome the tempter ours to call in danger's hour.
In his strength we dare to battle all the raging hosts of sin,
and by him alone we conquer foes without and foes within.*

There is spiritual power for the believer. The Christian life is a supernatural life; that is why we can experience strength in the battle – Eph 6

Jesus dealt with temptation by the Word, so must we, and he dealt with it through the Word; so must we.

The process of growth is through the Ordinary means of grace – trust them as they represent the God given best practices for spiritual growth – Prayer, Word (public preaching and private reading), Sacraments and the corporate worship/fellowship of God's people.

These may not be flashy, but they are the means by which God has designed our growth.

Our role in spiritual warfare and in growth is to call on God – to admit our need. The means of grace are the ways in which we “download” the grace of God in our lives.

It seems too simple- God says, “When you need help, call out.”

EX: teacher giving an exam – If you need help raise your hand

Some kids raise their hands and get help and get the right answers. Other, “smarter” kids don’t seek help and miss the questions – THEN THEY GET MAD. “It’s not fair, they cheated; they got help.”

IT’S NOT CHEATING WHEN THE TEACHER OFFERS HELP- It’s pride that kept you from getting it.

HOW OFTEN IS IT SIMPLY PRIDE THAT KEEPS YOU FROM SEEKING HELP FROM God, or from those He has put in your life???

God is opposed to the proud but gives grace to the humble.

APPLICATION PRAYER

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TEXTS FOR STANZA 5

Eph 5 Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, 16making the most of your time, because the days are evil. 17So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. 18And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, 19speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; 20always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father;

1 Thess 5

Rejoice always; 17pray without ceasing; 18 in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. 19 Do not quench the Spirit; 20 do not despise prophetic gifts. 21 But examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good; 22abstain from every appearance of evil.

Gal 5:16-18; 22-26

But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. 17For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. 24Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

25If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. 26Let us not become boastful, challenging one another, envying one another.

*5 Father, grant your Holy Spirit in our hearts may rule today,
grieved not, quenched not, but unhindered, work in us his sovereign way.
Fill us with your holy fullness, God the Father, Spirit, Son;
in us, through us, then, forever, shall your perfect will be done.*

The work of God is one of our hearts coming under His rule, His sovereign way; His will being done.

Let’s be honest and admit that we don’t like that. The natural heart of flesh lives with the attitude of “You’re not the boss of me.”

Fortunately, God loves us enough not love us as we are, but not leave us as we are. He pursues us so that we will walk in His ways, which also results in our own good.

God'S GLORY AND OUR GOOD ARE NOT MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE

Eph 3 shows that the fullness of God comes when our hearts comprehend the length, height, depth, and width of the love of God in Christ.

ROOTS, BRANCHES, FRUIT

The Holy Spirit is the God given agent for sinking our roots in the reality of all that God is for us in Jesus. The normal means by which he does this is through the Word. That should not surprise us.

Healthy BRANCHES AND FRUIT grow from the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives. .

APPLICATION PRAYER

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