

Kingdom Life
Sunday, July 22, 2012
Pastor Rob Smith

We are continuing in our series on the topic of the Kingdom of God and today we're going to take a look at the idea of Kingdom Life. What does it mean to live a Spirit-filled life!!!?? I'm really excited about this message because if we get this, and we begin living a Spirit-filled life, Satan's gonna' get a little nervous because of this group of people here at HOCL...who are dispersed throughout our entire region!!!! And I don't know how you feel about it, but I think Satan should be nervous about who we are and how we live!?

READ Galatians 5:16-26

Pray

Ill. If I were to go outside right now and start a fire in our parking lot, what would happen? First, you'd probably think I was a little crazy.....BUT THEN, as the fire grew, most people would start to take notice, some people who will drive right by in complete oblivion about what is happening in our driveway, but others would slow down as they drive by in order to take a look, some would pull off to the side of the road and observe from some distance, others would come in and park and watch to get a closer view, and others would park their car and come right over to where the fire was taking place to get a front row seat.....and all of these people would do this for one reason.....Because there's a fire in our parking lot.....it isn't the normal, it isn't the usual.....something's happening in our parking lot and people are going to come to check it out.

It works the same way spiritually as well and it reminds me of Acts 2....."¹When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. ²Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. ⁴All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in many different languages as the Spirit enabled them.

⁵Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. ⁶When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard them speaking in his own language. ¹²Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, "What in the world is going on with these people!???" (my paraphrase)...ARE they CRAZY? Does the light not go all the way to the attic? Are they a few fries short of a happy meal? Or are they plain old DRUNK? "

And while they were asking these questions, Peter stands up and Addresses the Crowdand said, "Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain what's going on here..... listen carefully to what I say. ¹⁵These men are not crazy, their light and their fries are ok.....and guess what.....they're not drunk either, as you suppose. ¹⁶No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: ¹⁷" 'In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people."

Friends, do you suppose that maybe, just maybe if God were to pour out His spirit on us in a new and fresh way, that people would come to watch? Maybe people might get curious and bold enough to ask us what's different about us around the lunchroom table, the cubicle at the office, the place that you frequent for your morning cup of coffee.....the bookstore.....in your backyard.... It could happen anywhere that you go?

That's what would happen if I lit a fire out here in the parking lot.....people would ask questions about what's going on. That's what happened in Acts 2, people were wondering about what was going on and they began to ask questions. And friends, my prayer is that this is exactly what would happen if we are living a spirit filled life! That people would start asking questions about what's going on in our life and in our church?

And so this morning let me share some thoughts with you about What it means

to live a spirit-filled life?

1. A spirit-filled life is a life that is fully yielded to God (Read Gal. 5: 16-17, 24)

The place of beginning for us is to live a fully yielded life. And this is what it looks like

a. It means that we will live with a wholehearted effort – Romans 6:17 – “But thanks be to God that though you USED TO BE slaves to sin, you wholeheartedly obeyed the form of teaching to which you were entrusted.” One commentator writes that, “the crisis experience of yielding all to God is only done in the context of wholeheartedness. There is never a partial, piecemeal surrender, because God expects to receive all there is of us.”

b. It means that we are going to be fully obedient – obedience is at the core of scripture and in our pursuit of living a yielded life to God!!!! We cannot live a spirit filled life if we are not fully obedient to God.

Isaiah 1:18-20 - Isaiah is addressing a rebellious nation and he’s sharing what God is saying...¹⁸ "Come now, let us reason together," says the LORD. Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool. ¹⁹ If you are willing and obedient, you will eat the best from the land; ²⁰ but if you resist and rebel, you will be devoured by the sword. For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.....”

1 Peter 1:14 – “As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. “

We can only live a holy lifestyle if we are obedient to the things of God....

c. Living a yielded life also means that we will live a life that is fully loyal - To be loyal means that we are trustworthy, reliable, devoted, faithful, dedicated to God in anything and everything that he has for us!!! If we are going to pursue and live a spirit filled life, we need to make sure that we are loyal to God.

The choice is really up to us.....we can choose to live a yielded life and put ourselves on track to living a spirit-filled life with all of it’s blessing and eat from the best of the land, or we can choose to be like the Israelites who chose to do their own thing, make their own plans, and rebel against what God was instructing them with and for 40 years, they failed to enter the land that God has promised them....

Are you yielding today? Am I yielding today? Are we as a community of faith, yielding today?

2. A spirit filled life is a life that is transformed

Romans 12:2 is a familiar passage for many of us and here’s what it says, “Do not conform any longer to the patterns of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.”

Transformation happens in 2 basic ways.

First,

a. Transformation happens in the change of living that you and I agree to when we enter into a relationship with Christ. When we accept Christ and invite him into our life, we are saying that we want him to be the master, the ruler, the Lord and the Savior of our lives. And when we do that, we are acknowledging that there will be changes taking place in how we choose to live our lives!! And friends listen, there has to be a marked difference in our lives between the old life and the new life as a result of accepting Christ into our lives. We cannot stay where we are if we are going to be transformed. But here’s the key – it’s point #1. Transformation will happen when we yield our life to Christ.

Secondly, transformation happens in

b. The change of nature that God agrees to provide us with through the work of the Holy Spirit. God has promised to do a new work in our lives in order to transform us into his image!! [2 Corinthians 3:18](#), Paul says, “ And we, who with

unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being **transformed** into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, *which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.*" **GOD WANTS TO DO A GREAT WORK IN YOUR LIFE AND IN MY LIFE!!!!** He wants to transform us from the inside out!!!!

If we are the same today as we were last week in our walk with Christ, we are not experiencing transformation. If we are still carrying the same attitudes and behaviors that we were carrying 5 years ago, we haven't experienced transformation!!

And friends, here's the deal.....living a spirit filled life is all about being transformed!! And in that process of being transformed, three things will happen...(this is out of the Romans 12 passage)

1. we will offer our bodies to God. This sounds a little weird, but here's what the passage (vs. 1) says, .."in view of God's mercy, offer your bodies as living sacrifices...holy and pleasing to God, this is your spiritual act of worship." Before we trusted Christ, we used our body for sinful pleasures and purposes, but now that we belong to Him, we want to use our body for His glory.

2. We will give him our mind. (v. 2a). "Do not conform any longer to the patterns of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind." The world wants to control our minds, but God wants to transform our minds. If the world controls our thinking, we are *conformers*; if God controls our thinking, we are *transformers*. God transforms our minds and makes us spiritually minded by using His Word.

3. We will give Him our will. Vs 2b("then we will be able to test what God's will is (as opposed to our will) his good, pleasing, and perfect will." Here's how this works.....our mind controls our body, and our will controls our mind.

What happens is that many of us think that we can control our will by "willpower," (how many of you have ever tried to change something about your life according to your will power?) And what happens is that we usually fail (how many of you have failed in those attempts?) Paul addressed this in Romans 7 just a few chapters before when he was addressing his struggle with sin. In his own power (his will), he couldn't do the things that he wanted to do because the pull of sin was so much stronger than he was on his own!! But it's only when we yield the will to God that His power can take over and give us the willpower (or the "won't power!) that we need in order to live a transformed, spirit-filled, victorious Christian life!!!

3. A spirit filled life is continual.

Our spiritual life is not a life to be lived in a moment.....it's to be lived on a continual basis –

When Paul writes about being filled with the Spirit, it's a statement about the continual process!! Our Galatians 5 passage speaks to this idea in verses 16 and 25. (16) "So I say, LIVE by the Spirit...." (vs 25) Since we live by the Spirit, let us KEEP IN STEP with the Spirit".

We could look at the life of Peter, or of Stephen and many others throughout scripture who "were filled with the spirit" and we have to notice that it doesn't say that they were filled for the moment, it implies that their entire life was filled with the spirit on a continual basis.....

We call this spirit-filled life....."Holiness" And Holiness is not a once and done deal. Holiness is a life long experience of spiritual growth and fellowship with God through the Spirit. There's a beginning.....there's a moment.....but it doesn't end there.

III. What would have happened if those who were filled with the Spirit on the day of Pentecost in ACTS 2 just wanted to stay right there and bask in the "awesomeness" of the moment!! I'm just gonna kick back and savor this time.....I'll cherish this time forever!!! I don't want to leave this place or do anything with it because it feels so good.....I just want to live in the moment!!!!"

Friends, I wonder today if the American church is just kind of living in the moment without any process of spiritual growth and maturity and fellowship with God and the Holy Spirit?

I wonder if sometimes we, as a church, just kind of live in the moment from 11am-12pm on Sundays in hopes that it will get us to next Sunday until we can get another moment to make it another week, unless of course there are better options with how we can spend our time? And what happens is this.....we go from moment to moment to moment hoping that we can receive all the blessings of a spirit-filled life without ever developing or establishing the process for our own spiritual growth and maturity and fellowship with God throughout the week?

"If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, His Son, purifies us from all sin." (1 Jn 1:7). We have to WALK.....be in process.....in order to grow and mature.

Our spiritual life cannot be lived in just a moment, or even in a series of moments. It has to be lived out on a continual basis.....

Friends, the thing that we need the most in our lives is to be spirit-filled. We need to live a life that is yielded to God, that is being transformed, and that is being lived out on a continual basis.....and maybe what we need today is for the Holy spirit to fall fresh on us

III. Old Chorus that has been around for a while and the words are very simple - Spirit of, the living God, Fall fresh on, me, Melt me, Mold me, Fill me, LORD use me, Spirit of, the living God, Fall fresh on, me

Pray and invite those who need a fresh outpouring of the holy spirit.

Matthew 6:9-13 –

"Our Father who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name. – We acknowledge his authority in and over our lives.

¹⁰*Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in Heaven. – we acknowledge his plan for our lives (yielded life)*

¹¹*Give us this day our daily bread. – we recognize His provision for us*

¹²*And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. – we recognize his power and purpose in forgiveness*

¹³*And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. – we are asking him to deliver us, not based on our will power For Thine is the Kingdom, and the power and the glory for ever. Amen."* – we are acknowledging His power and glory and that it will reign forever and ever!!