

Introduction: I have been a follower of Jesus for over forty-three years. I have missed fewer than ten mornings of reading the Bible in that time. One thing I have appreciated about God from the beginning of getting to know His Word is His total, almost shocking, honesty about real life. He never tells us about ‘pie in the sky’. He never ‘sugar coats’ anything. *** The essence of Scripture from creation to re-creation when Messiah-Savior returns is, left to our own, no person is good enough, no person is strong enough, to live as God designed us to live without our surrendering to Him in dependent child-like faith that He is THE extremely strong, forgiving and loving Father who expects honesty and trust from His children. *** Did you hear the tension of the two themes in our central passage from Romans? God tells us of BOTH great groaning and suffering in this world AND as God’s adopted children we have hope as a gift of The Spirit so we live in eager expectation. *** The excerpt from Acts tells how one hundred twenty disciples of Jesus were gifted by The Holy Spirit to speak languages they did not know. Soon after, people from over fifteen nations heard of the wonders of God in their own language. *** The gift of The Holy Spirit at the creation of The Church of Jesus Christ is the way God chose to give weak people the ability to carry out Jesus’ last and vitally important command: to make disciples of all nations. People in His Church are to make disciples wherever they are in their life journey and then to baptize them and teach them to obey all Jesus commanded. *** Let’s now examine the details that support these summary truths.

I. Spirit filled disciples are given gifts, as God’s children, to have hope while waiting for freedom from suffering.

(Acts 2:1-4; Romans 8:14-21)

A. The Holy Spirit filled the disciples and gave them to speak in other languages. *(Acts 2:1-4)*

1. The day of Pentecost had come, and all were being together in the same (place). *(Verse 1)*

Time: All days, special and ordinary, come upon us in the steady march of time.

Pentecost: The third feast of spring is the Feast of Weeks, Pentecost (*fifty* in Greek). It was the eighth ‘first day’ of the week after Passover and First Fruits. It celebrated the spring harvest. (Exodus 24:22; Leviticus 23:15-22)

Together: One hundred twenty disciples of Jesus had been praying for ten days in an ‘upper room’. (Acts 1:12-17)

2. Suddenly, a noise from heaven, as being carried by a violent wind, filled the whole house where they were being sitting. *(Verse 2)*

Sound filled: The sound was like a tornado, and the house was filled with the noise of it as they sat.

3. And they observed, having been divided, like tongues of fire, and it sat on each one of them. *(Verse 3)*

Saw fire: First they heard a violent wind. Then they saw divided tongues of fire. Both happened to them. They were not in control.

4. All were filled of The Holy Spirit and they began to speak with other languages as The Spirit was giving them to utter. *(Verse 4)*

Holy Spirit filled: Each and every one was filled with The Holy Spirit.

Other languages: We are later told they were declaring the wonders of God in languages they did not know. (Acts 2:5-12; see Deuteronomy 11:1-4; Psalm 71:19-24)

Gift of Holy Spirit: They did not do this on their own, but by The Holy Spirit as a gift from God.

This was the first step in the humanly impossible task to make disciples of all nations.

The Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness

B. The Spirit makes people children of God and joint-heirs with Messiah, giving them hope while waiting to be set free from suffering and bondage. *(Romans 8:14-21)*

1. As many as are being led by The Spirit of God are being sons of God. *(Verse 14)*

Sons of God: The Holy Spirit makes all who will be led by Him to be God’s children.

2. Because you all have not received again spirit of bondage to fear, but you all have received The Spirit of son adoption, in which we are crying, ‘Abba, the Father’; The Spirit Himself bearing witness that we are children of God. *(Verses 15-16)*

Bondage: Before people are adopted by The Holy Spirit as God’s children IN Jesus, they are in bondage and fear.

Adopted: Once the adoption takes place and people become God’s children, there is no need to be bound by fear of anything in the world.

Witness: The Holy Spirit will bear witness to adoption deep in the soul of all who are God’s children.

Children of God are adopted by The Holy Spirit

3. But if children, then also heirs indeed of God, but joint-heirs of Messiah, since we are suffering with (Him) that also we may be glorified with Him. *(Verse 17)*

Joint-heirs: God’s children inherit from Him jointly with His Son, The Savior.

Identity: All who are IN Christ by faith identify BOTH with His suffering AND that they will be glorified by God with Him. Suffering and glory are two sides of the coin for all God’s children.

4. For I am reckoning that the sufferings of the present season are not worthy with the coming of the glory to be revealed in us. *(Verse 18)*

Now compared to future: Christians are suffering in this world (John 16:33). But this will fade away when Jesus comes in His glory and is fully revealed in His people. This is a work of God, not us.

5. Because the deep desire of the creature, the revelation of the sons of God is expectantly awaiting. *(Verse 19)*

Creature expectantly awaits: All creatures were harmed by Adam and Eve’s rebellion against God.

Now, each and every creature instinctively waits for the full revelation of God’s Spirit filled people.

6. Because the creature was made subject to futility not of his own will, but by reason of The One having subjected in hope. *(Verse 20)*

God of hope: Before Yahweh God gave Adam and Eve the penalty for their rebellion, He gave them hope by telling the serpent a descendant of the woman would crush his head. (Genesis 3:11-19)

5. Because the creature himself will be set free from the bondage of corruption in the liberty of the glory of the children of God. (Verse 21)

Freedom: So, as people become children of God by the work of The Holy Spirit in their lives to bring them to God IN Jesus, all creatures also are set free from corruption and death as God adopts children.

Children of God are adopted by The Holy Spirit

II. The Holy Spirit helps His first-fruits in their suffering and infirmities, praying so they will make disciples of all nations.

(Romans 8:22-27; Matthew 28:16-20)

- B'. Seeing creation suffering, The Spirit helps those who are His first-fruits in their infirmities as He prays for the saints according to God. (Romans 8:22-27)

1. For we have known that all creation is groaning together and is suffering together until now. (Verse 22)

All Suffer: Christians have come to know universal suffering and groaning by what Jesus did on The Cross. He now reveals this to His people from Spirit-inspired Scripture in light of what He did.

2. Not only, but also we ourselves, having the first-fruits of The Spirit are groaning in ourselves expectantly awaiting the redemption of our body. (Verse 23)

First-fruits: Paul now connects animals with people who have been adopted as God's children by The Holy Spirit as they wait expectantly.

Groan: Even while waiting in hope, God's children are currently suffering and groaning.

Redemption: The redemption of our body means our bodies will not be subject to illness and death.

3. By hope we have been saved, but hope having been seen is not hope, for who is seeing (already) what he is hoping; but, if we are not seeing, we are waiting through patient endurance. (Verses 24-25)

Saved: God saves all who come to Him, drawn by The Spirit, IN The Faith of Messiah-Savior.

Now: But in these last days, between the two advents of Jesus, we do not see that for which we hope.

Endurance: Therefore, we need The Holy Spirit to give us patient endurance.

4. Likewise also the Spirit helps us in our infirmities. (Verse 26a)

Help for weakness: No one is as strong as he or she would like to be. We all have weaknesses.

So, we thank God for The Holy Spirit because ...

The Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness

5. For what we may pray, according to what we ought (to pray), we have not known; but, The Spirit Himself is making intercession with groanings inexpressible. (Verses 26b-c)

Ignorant: We are ignorant as to exactly how we should pray.

Intercession: But, we can be grateful that after He facilitates our adoption as God's children, The Holy Spirit prays for us.

6. And The One examining the hearts has known the mind of The Spirit, because according to God, He is making intercession on behalf of the saints. (Verse 27)

Father: The Father examines the hearts of people and is of the same mind as The Holy Spirit.

Holy Spirit: And the good news is that The Holy Spirit intercedes with The Father for those He is in the process of making holy as God is holy – 'saints' being sanctified by the gift of grace! (1 Peter 1:13-16)

The Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness

- A'. Jesus commands eleven disciples to make disciples of all nations. (Matthew 28:16-20)

1. The eleven disciples, having gone into Galilee, to the mountain Jesus designated to them. (Verse 16)

Obedience: They obeyed what the resurrected Jesus had commanded them through the women who saw Him alive. (Matthew 28:8-10)

2. Having seen Him, they worshipped Him but others doubted; having come, Jesus spoke to them: ALL power and authority has been given to Me in heaven and upon the earth. (Verses 17-18)

Worship and doubt: In the three days it took the eleven disciples to go to Galilee many other disciples had heard the stories of Jesus' appearances. His eleven chosen disciples worshipped Him, but other disciples doubted He had risen from the dead.

Jesus given ALL power and authority: He declares His Father has given him ALL power and authority everywhere.

3. Therefore, having been directed (by Me), you all must make all nations disciples, baptizing them in the name of The Father and of The Son and of The Holy Spirit, and teaching them to observe (keep) all things as much as I have commanded to you all. (Verses 19-20a)

One command: Jesus gives them one command: to make disciples in all nations. This is extremely difficult for eleven men who failed Jesus often, including His death on The Cross.

Three actions: They will do it wherever they are led on their life journey, and when someone receives faith through their witness, that one will be baptized into Him, and from then on taught to keep all Jesus commanded His original disciples.

4. Behold, I am with you all, all the days, until the end of the age. (Verse 20b)

Immanuel: This is THE Immanuel ('with us God') promise fulfilled by the filling with The Holy Spirit of Jesus' one hundred twenty disciples in our first passage. Throughout the history of Christ's Church, it has always been

The Holy Spirit who has enabled God's children to obey the command by the actions Jesus enumerated to the first eleven.

The Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness

Conclusion: The gift of The Holy Spirit can make people to be God's children. They are then given hope in this age of suffering while waiting with hope to make disciples. This is what God desires His people to do as The Spirit helps them through intercession.

Homiletical Idea: *The Holy Spirit* (given at Pentecost) *helps us in our weakness*