

**Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> October 2025.**

**Tenets 7: The Work of the Holy Spirit. John 16v12-15**

*12 "I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. 13 But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. 14 He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you. 15 All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you."*

Today is the seventh of our *Tenets* series looking at 10 things every Christian should hold to. Each week we have been looking at the core essentials of our faith, and what makes the Gospel of Jesus Christ such a unique and compelling source of hope for the world.

Last week Tom P, Bishop Michael and Andrew all looked at the most beautiful word in the English language – *Grace*. Although we were once spiritually bankrupt, dead in the depths, God came down to our level in Christ and reached out to us in grace, raising us up with him. As we believe and put our faith in him to save us, he revives us and reconciles us back into relationship with God. Today in faith, Arabella, Josh and Lydia have been recipients of God's grace and they are trusting the Lord to draw them closer to him as a family.

This week we are looking at the role of the Holy Spirit in our life together as Christians. For some people the Holy Spirit is rather strange, particularly as for many years the King James version of the Bible referred to the Father, the Son and the *Holy Ghost*. But the Holy Spirit is not a ghost, an apparition or even simply a spiritual force. Instead, the Holy Spirit is God himself creatively active in the world right now, the third person of the Trinity, who as the Nicene creed puts it, *is worshiped and glorified* with the Father and the Son.

When Jesus walked the earth there was something extraordinary about him that drew people to watch everything he did. It must have been amazing for those first disciples to see people saved, healed and delivered. Then when he ramped up the challenge, some turned away because he started teaching that following him means denying yourself, taking up your cross and prioritising him over everything including family. But Peter said 'to whom would we go? You have the words of eternal life!' The disciples were all in. They were totally committed, so just imagine their shock when after three short years he told them he would be leaving them. What is more, he told them 'it is for your good that I am going away.' In John 16v7, a few verses before today's reading, he explained: 'unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.'

Jesus came to be Emmanuel, *God with us*. But the Holy Spirit was sent to be *God in us*. Jesus called the Holy Spirit the 'Advocate' or *Parakletos* in Greek which is *one called alongside* - a helper or comforter. Instead of Jesus limited to a single point in time and space, the Holy Spirit would come to distribute his saving presence to all people everywhere.

I was very excited last weekend because I got my new extension lead. Not just any extension lead, but a big fat 63Amp extension lead for the kitchen area at the back of church. It requires safety and care but it means we can plug in a whole load of cooking and heating devices when we do catering and parties. Will anyone share my joy?



Jesus told the disciples to wait for the coming of the Holy Spirit saying: "you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come on you" Acts 1:8

The coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost meant that the same power that raised Jesus from the dead is there for every believer in every continent down through the centuries. You just have to have your spiritual eyes open to see where God is directing his power in any given moment.



Have you ever had a go with a power kite? A few years back I had a go with a 3m one and it was great fun – it pulled and dragged me around and the pull on the strings was amazing. I noticed dark clouds approaching so I thought it might start raining. But instead, suddenly out of nowhere, the wind went wild. A girl who was kiting next to me was suddenly dragged along the beach! I felt myself being lifted in the air, so I did the sensible thing - I let go! The kite went and wrapped itself round a car, but wow! The wind can be so powerful – you cannot take it for granted. And yet Jesus said the Holy Spirit is like the wind:

*"The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit."* John 3v8

The wind is so powerful it takes ships across the ocean; it lets Eagles soar on its currents. The Holy Spirit can be awesome.

But I have to admit that sometimes when it comes to flying my spiritual kite I feel more like Charlie Brown:



Sometimes we get in a tangled mess. Some churches have got themselves in a mess with the Holy Spirit, trying to use him to exert their own will rather than simply following his lead.

But I want to assure you this morning that God is kind and good and just as Jesus was the good shepherd, the Holy Spirit is kind, gentle and wants to bring freedom from religious control and hype.

*Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. 2  
Corinthians 3:17*

Jesus said *"If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed."* John 8v36

The Lord knows what we are like and what we need as human beings. In verse 12 of today's passage, he told his disciples <sup>12</sup> "I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. <sup>13</sup> But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth."

The Holy Spirit doesn't force himself on us – he guides us. He doesn't hide from us to catch us out, but loves to draw us closer to God and to each other.

There's a lovely story in 1 Kings 19 about the prophet Elijah just after he had been through an extraordinary spiritual battle and ended up hiding in a cave:

*<sup>11</sup> The Lord said, "Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by." Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. <sup>12</sup> After the earthquake came a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire came a **gentle whisper**. <sup>13</sup> When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave.*

The Lord's presence is like a "**gentle whisper**" (1 Kings 19:11-12)

Although the Holy Spirit is often pictured as Wind and fire, He is also pictured as a dove – the gentlest of all creatures.

- At Jesus's baptism, the Holy Spirit descended on him "**like a dove**" (Matthew 3:16).
- Jesus **breathed on his disciples** and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit" (John 20:22)

So the Holy Spirit is both powerful *and* gentle – and just as the first thing Jesus said to his disciples when he appeared to them all on the Easter day, he said 'peace be with you'. The Holy Spirit brings peace to the hearts of his followers. He then went on: "As the Father has sent me, I also send you"

Jesus came to reveal the Father and release the Holy Spirit. Therefore our assignment as believers must also be to reveal the Father and release the Holy Spirit.

So just for the remainder of our time I want to share just some of the ways the Holy Spirit helps us live fruitful lives:

## 1. **The Holy Spirit Transforms our Lives**

*“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law.” Galatians 5:22-23*

1. The Holy Spirit transforms us from within as he helps us swap out our worldly desires and selfish nature with Christian values and Godly character. The fruit of the Spirit emerges naturally as we allow him to work through us like the sap rising to fill the fruit

Jesus told His disciples to pray for God’s help, saying, “How much more will the Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?” (Luke 11:13)

## **2. The Holy Spirit Convicts Us of Sin, and assures us of God’s forgiveness**

*“Nevertheless, I am telling you the truth. It is for your benefit that I go away, because if I don’t go away the Counsellor will not come to you. If I go, I will send him to you. When he comes, he will convict the world about sin, righteousness, and judgment: John 16:11*

Conviction is not condemnation. Conviction draws us towards God, instead of condemning us to hide away in shame. The Holy Spirit prods our conscience to repent and change our ways, but also assures us that we are his beloved children:

*God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, “Abba, (Daddy) Father.” Galatians 4:6*

## **3. The Holy Spirit guides us to the truth and leads us in our thinking**

*“I have spoken these things to you while I remain with you. But the Counsellor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and remind you of everything I have told you.” John 14:25-26*

The Holy Spirit gives us a desire to wrestle to find the truth with a passion for integrity. He illuminates the scriptures and brings the words to life as we chew on them. Sometimes he uses other people or visions and dreams to nudge us along the path he wants for us, and Acts is full of stories of the Holy Spirit guiding the early church in their missionary endeavours. The Holy Spirit often spoke to and directed His people in the New Testament. In Matthew 4:1, our Lord Jesus was “led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.” In Acts 16, Paul and Barnabas were clearly led by the Spirit to go to Macedonia when they had no intention of going there. The point is that God often leads His people by His Spirit. We should be open to the gentle nudges and direction of the Spirit.

## **4. The Holy Spirit helps us to pray: Romans 8:26-27**

<sup>26</sup>In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. <sup>27</sup>And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God’s people in accordance with the will of God.

**Every believer adopted into God’s family and given the gift of the Holy Spirit for ourselves. But we are filled with the Holy Spirit for the sake of others.**

#### **5. The Holy Spirit Empowers Us to Proclaim Christ**

*“When they had prayed, the place where they were assembled was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God boldly.” Acts 4:31*

Spirit-filled believers are passionate about the hope that is ours in Christ – it is a gift to be shared!

#### **6. The Holy Spirit Gives Us Spiritual Gifts**

*“Now there are different gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different ministries, but the same Lord. And there are different activities, but the same God works all of them in each person. A manifestation of the Spirit is given to each person for the common good: to one is given a message of wisdom through the Spirit, to another, a message of knowledge by the same Spirit, to another, faith by the same Spirit, to another, gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another, the performing of miracles, to another, prophecy, to another, distinguishing between spirits, to another, different kinds of tongues, to another, interpretation of tongues. One and the same Spirit is active in all these, distributing to each person as he wills.” 1 Corinthians 12:4-11*

The Holy Spirit gives gifts to every believer. The purpose of these gifts is to serve the body and advance the gospel. I prefer to say the gifts are like the toolbox of the Holy Spirit, and each church needs a fully equipped toolbox!

#### **7. The Holy Spirit Empowers Us to Worship**

*“don’t get drunk with wine, which leads to reckless living, but be filled by the Spirit: **speaking** to one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, **singing** and making music with your heart to the Lord, **giving thanks** always for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, **submitting** to one another in the fear of Christ.” Ephesians 5:18-21*

The structure of Ephesians 5:18-21 is interesting. The central command is “be filled by the Spirit.” But this command is followed by five participles: “speaking to one another,” “singing and making music,” “giving thanks,” and “submitting to one another.” These actions are not done individually but are done together as a church. The Holy Spirit fills his people as we worship together and as we give thanks together. The Word for giving thanks is Eucharisteo, which is what we do in the *Eucharist* or Holy Communion. The Holy Spirit takes the symbols of bread and wine and makes them into signs of his presence among us as we submit ourselves to him. That is what we are going to do now, so you come for communion this morning, pray to be filled with the Holy Spirit to make this communal act of worship a celebration of true thanksgiving.