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The Sustainer

MESSAGE INTRODUCTION

The picture of Jesus on the cross at Calvary is the loneliest portrait of a man in the history of the world. He hung dying, incurring the wrath of His Father as He bore the sins of the world. These sins were not His own, and He had never before been prevented from communing with His heavenly Father. Yet, the Holy Spirit sustained Jesus through His sacrifice, and He preserved Him just as He had done from the moment of Christ's conception. This same Spirit who fortified Jesus to atone for the sins of His people dwells in us today, an unspeakable privilege that should unite the church in humility, thankfulness, and love.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Psalm 22; 24; Matthew 27:46; John 14:15–17; Acts 1:9; Romans 1:4; 1 Corinthians 15:42–49; 2 Corinthians 3:16–18; Hebrews 9:11–14

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. To see how the Holy Spirit remained with Jesus at the end of His ministry and life
2. To understand the complete harmony in which Jesus and the Spirit commune
3. To recognize that marriage serves as a hint of the relationship between the persons of the Trinity, particularly the Son and the Spirit
4. To realize that the same Spirit that dwells in Jesus dwells in each of His sheep

QUOTATION

For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of a heifer, sanctify for the purification of the flesh, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

—Hebrews 9:13–14

LECTURE OUTLINE

- I. The Role of the Holy Spirit at the End of Jesus' Life
 - A. Hebrews 9:14: As Jesus offered Himself as the atoning sacrifice on the cross, the Holy Spirit sustained Him.
 - i. Jesus felt the abandonment of the Father as He bore the judgment of God's wrath upon sin.
 - ii. The Holy Spirit sustained Jesus on the cross and enabled Him to bear the sins of the world.
 - B. The Holy Spirit vindicated Jesus through His transforming power in the resurrection (Rom. 1:4).
 - C. The Holy Spirit played an important role in the ascension of Jesus (Acts 1:9)
 - i. A cloud takes the ascending Jesus out of sight.
 1. This is the glory cloud revealed among the people of God during the old covenant.
 2. The Spirit ushers the victorious Jesus into the heavenly realm and the right hand of the Father.
 - ii. The Spirit plays a role in Jesus' life from His birth, to His ascension, and beyond.
 - D. 1 Corinthians 15:42–49 and 2 Corinthians 3:16–18 speak about the nature of resurrection bodies.
 - i. Jesus' body was sown in dishonor but raised in glory. Christians experience this same fate by their union with Jesus.
 - ii. Paul explains that this knowledge only comes when the Spirit removes the veil of unbelief.
- II. The Harmony of Jesus and the Spirit
 - A. God has placed hints of His Trinitarian interrelation in His creation.
 - i. Marriage between man and a woman serves as one of these hints.
 1. As marriage partners progress, they learn more and more about each other's subtleties.
 2. They arrive at a place in which they can communicate without words because they know each other intimately.
 - ii. The Holy Spirit and Jesus possess a harmony and intimacy far beyond a human marriage.
 - B. Jesus sent His own Spirit to dwell in His people.
 - i. The same Spirit that dwells in Jesus dwells in believers.
 - ii. This reality should cause believers to love and cherish one another naturally and humbly.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. The Holy Spirit abandoned Jesus on the cross.
 - a. True
 - b. False
2. The clouds at Jesus' ascension signified the presence of _____ .
 - a. a storm
 - b. the Father
 - c. the Holy Spirit
 - d. God's wrath
3. Marriage is a hint from God about what His Trinitarian fellowship is like.
 - a. True
 - b. False
4. A different Spirit dwells in Jesus than the one that dwells in Christians.
 - a. True
 - b. False
5. In regards to the Spirit, we should focus our attention on the following question: _____
 - a. "what does the Spirit mean to me?"
 - b. "what does the Spirit mean to Jesus?"
 - c. "what does the Spirit mean to the church?"
 - d. "what does the Spirit mean to my spouse?"

BIBLE STUDY AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Did the Holy Spirit abandon Jesus while He hung on the cross? If not, what role did the Spirit play in that act of atonement? In His resurrection?
2. Why does the book of Acts specifically mention the presence of clouds in the ascension of Jesus? What role does the Holy Spirit play in this episode in redemptive history? How did the early church understand this act?
3. Read 1 Corinthians 15:42–49 and 2 Corinthians 3:16–18. What is Paul saying in these passages about the relationship between Jesus and the Holy Spirit?
4. How does marriage reveal, in a truncated, imperfect manner, the interrelations of the persons of the Trinity, particularly the Son and the Spirit?
5. Since the same Spirit that dwells in Christ dwells in each one of His sheep, how should that affect the way Christians treat one another?