

Holy Spirit Words

A question as we begin our consideration of these blessed words of truth today . . . how comfortable and how confident are you when someone engages you in a conversation about the gospel that's spoken about in these scriptures.

I've found that if the conversation is a casual one, between close friends, the words usually flow freely. But I've also found that if the circumstance is one of a more formal setting, perhaps one in which a person is asked to speak before a crowd of people, very few people will feel confident enough to agree to take on the task.

And then further, imagine a circumstance where you might be called before some governing authority and are being compelled to give an account of your faith in Christ, what would be your response.

That is the circumstance that the Lord Jesus is speaking about in these words of our scripture text today. Listen and let's consider these words given to us in Luke chapter 12, beginning in verse 11,

¹¹"Now when they bring you to the synagogues and magistrates and authorities, do not worry about how or what you should answer, or what you should say. ¹²For the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say." (Luke 12:11-12)

In these words, Jesus presents us with a circumstance that's intended to convey a condition of fear and of possible repercussions depending upon the answers that we give. And while we might not often be faced with this kind of threatening circumstance, as we can see from the cultural wars that have begun to be fought in these recent years, there is a very real possibility that we might face those very kinds of threatening circumstances in the not too distant future.

And when, and as, we do, Jesus wants us to know that we will not be left alone to figure out on our own what we are to do and to say, that His Holy Spirit will be close at hand to help us.

As we have been told in Ezekiel chapter 36, for those of us who have received God's blessed salvation, His Holy Spirit now lives within us and will actually "cause" us to do and to say the right things at the right moments.

Listen to these words given in Ezekiel chapter 36, beginning in verse 26. There God assures us saying,

²⁶I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them. (Ezekiel 36:26-27)

These words, given through the Prophet Ezekiel several hundred years before Jesus came to the earth, were intended as a message to prepare the hearts of those who would listen, saying that there surely will come a time when He, God, will do a new and mysterious work within the hearts of men and women, that there will come a time when He would no longer remain separate from His beloved creation, but would come again to personally and intimately live within us, indwell us with His Holy Spirit, and unite His Spirit with our spirit.

And that is what God has done in the Person and Work of the Lord Jesus. As we receive the Lord Jesus as our Savior and Lord, the Holy Spirit does exactly as the Prophet Ezekiel promised. The Holy Spirit now lives within us.

And folks, this is no small thing that God has chosen to do within us. He has a purpose and an all-encompassing plan. His plan is to reach Himself down deeply within us and entwine Himself within the heart, soul, mind and spirit of all those who would receive Him. And by His indwelling presence, change the whole sum and substance of men's souls, yours and mine, back into the glory that He once designed for us before we fell into our state of sin.

When God first created Adam and Eve there in the Garden of Eden, their hearts and their spirits truly were pure and holy. And they enjoyed a very intimate fellowship with Him.

But as they were tempted and as they failed, He removed His intimate presence from them. That is why, even today, as each of us are born into this world, we come without God's Spirit within us. We instead come with the unrepentant spirit that Adam and Eve endowed us with.

And that is why these words of prophecy given here through the Prophet Ezekiel, along with the many promises given by the Lord Jesus, are so precious and provide us such blessed relief. These words are a promise of restoration, a

returning to that blessed condition that was once ours there in the Garden of Eden. Those words of prophecy again,

²⁶I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them. (Ezekiel 36:26-27)

The message that is hidden behind these words tells us that without Christ we truly do have “hearts of stone” and our spirits are corrupt, and in severe need of redemption.

And folks, that is the whole reason why the Lord Jesus came to us, to give you and me and our loved ones the opportunity to once again return to the relationship and the unity that was once ours, so that we might again be the true “sons” that God designed us to be. Jesus said it this way in John chapter 1.

¹²But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: ¹³who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. (John 1:12-13)

Our hearts, our minds, our souls, our spirits can be restored folks. But it can only “begin again” for us as we surrender ourselves back to Him, and as we receive the redemption of Christ and as we receive the indwelling presence of His Holy Spirit.

But we must also be warned. We cannot have just a part of Him. We must receive all that God has to offer us. Our response must be with our “whole heart”.

Over and over again in these scriptures, God reminds us of this requirement. Our surrender, our response, our love back to Him must be with all of our heart, all of our soul, all of our mind and all of our spirit.

Throughout these gospels, Jesus is spoken of as being the “Lord Jesus”, our “Lord”. And to think that we can have His salvation without allowing Him to also be “Lord” over us and all that we are in our daily lives, is misguided. And that is echoed strongly in His insistence that He will put His Spirit within us to guide, to move, to cause us to walk in His statutes. Those words again in Ezekiel 36,

²⁷I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them. (Ezekiel 36:27)

And also, later on in John chapter 16, as Jesus was instructing His disciples about the necessity for Him to return back to heaven, He spoke of His Holy Spirit saying,

⁷. . . I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. ⁸And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.

¹³. . . when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth. (John 16:7-8, 13)

This is Jesus speaking forth much the same words as those He had spoken earlier through the Prophet Ezekiel. In the salvation that Jesus would provide, God was now able to again live within His people, and by His Spirit guide them into all truth.

And that was the blessed comfort that Jesus was speaking about as He spoke these words of our text,

¹¹“Now when they bring you to the synagogues and magistrates and authorities, do not worry about how or what you should answer, or what you should say. ¹²For the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say.” (Luke 12:11-12)

Folks, I do confess to you that even as I know and accept these things that I have just said to you about the indwelling presence and guidance of God's Holy Spirit, I still find it difficult to fully surrender myself up to actual dependence upon God's Spirit to give me answers and to guide the words of my mouth.

I am so accustomed to thinking and conducting my daily life experiences using my own efforts and wits and intellect.

And it is a fact that God has given each of us common sense to help us with such matters. But a question that this text brings before us is, “Is common sense where all our best answers are supposed to come from?” And the answer to that question is an emphatic NO! Common sense often has very little wisdom within it, especially very little “Spiritual Wisdom”.

And this circumstance that Jesus is addressing here has the absolute necessity for “Spiritual Wisdom” added into it. Here, Jesus is speaking specifically about those times when our “faith” is being brought to the forefront and tested.

And yes, all the matters of our life have to do with faith and with the spiritual things of God. And all the matters of our behavior and conduct whether public or private are governed by the laws and ordinances of God.

But in these words, Jesus was addressing those specific times when we will be called to openly speak forth a defense of our personal faith, and specifically, as in this case, those times when people in positions of authority who are listening to us might be resistant to our words and even corrupt in their judgments.

But regardless of whether those people, those church leaders, those magistrates are righteous or not, you and I are ever and always held accountable for our own righteous response.

And having no personal righteousness of our own, the only possible way for us to remain righteous while “under fire” from unjust judges is to do as our scripture passage instructs us, and that is to surrender ourselves over entirely to the righteousness provided by the presence and guidance of God’s Holy Spirit.

And here in these words, Jesus was assuring His disciples, and consequently, you and me, that although we may be very unlearned and ignorant in so many matters of life and especially of the laws of God, if we will simply humble ourselves before the Lord and ask Him and His Spirit to do our talking for us, then words will come forth out of our mouths that we could never imagine we would say.

And again, let’s admit, that is a very strange thought to our logical minds. But folks, I also know that even right at this very moment this very thing is taking place within your hearing. Right at this moment, these words that I’m saying to you, and the words that I say to you every Sunday from this pulpit, all come out from these scriptures and from the guidance of the Holy Spirit within me.

Why and how do I know that for sure? It is because folks, I know that I am not smart enough, or intelligent enough, or well-versed enough in these scriptures to know the things that I should say to you.

The simple truth is, I know what I know only because the Holy Spirit puts it into my mind. And as long as I remain surrendered to Him, the words that I speak back out to you are God's thoughts and God's wording coming forth.

I truly have no personal claim upon these words except as you do, and that is to accept them and to believe them.

So then, what is the response that God wants you and me to always have as we journey throughout our day? It is as these words of today's passage tell us, to be surrendered to His Holy Spirit and to be confident that He will speak through our voice.

Another question . . . do these words imply that we don't need to study these scriptures and be knowledgeable about them, that God will simply put words into our minds and onto our tongues when it comes time to say them. No! Not at all! But rather, we are to do as the Lord instructs us to do. We are to study these scriptures carefully and continually. Listen!

¹⁵ Study to show yourself approved unto God, a workman that needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. (2 Timothy 2:15)

And also,

¹⁵ . . . in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you. (1 Peter 3:15)

One of the best examples of what we are to do is the one given in the Book of Acts chapter 7 describing the response given by one of the Deacons, Stephen, just before he was stoned to death. There, Stephen recited all the many words that he had learned from the scriptures that spoke of God's watchcare over the children of Israel. He was well studied in the scriptures and ready to give an account of why He believed.

As for us, for you and for me, we might never personally be put under that kind of life-threatening circumstance presented here because of our beliefs, but then again, maybe we will be? Let's think about that for a moment!

Every day, good men and women of solid believing faith walk the hallways of their places of their employment with the firm belief that the judges and the magistrates and leaders are prohibiting them from telling each other about the

one thing in life that is truly worthwhile and truly of eternal value, and that is the redemption provided for us through the Lord Jesus.

Each day, tens of millions of good solid believing Christians hold their tongues, saying very little or nothing at all, because they are fearful of what those in authority over them might do.

Jesus is saying here that you and I and every other one of those devoutly believing Christians need to open our mouths and let His Holy Spirit speak words of truth through our tongues, that we are not to be concerned about the consequences, the mistreatment, the loss of our jobs, the loss of our livelihood.

Is our God not able to provide for us? Is not the God who created all things, who sustains all things, who owns, possesses, and controls all things, able to make adequate provision for us, above and beyond anything that we ourselves might provide?

Folks, you and I are the very ones that Jesus is speaking to in these words. We are not to live with "hamstrung tongues", with silenced voices.

There is a secular quotation by the Irish philosopher Edmund Burke that very much bespeaks this circumstance that Jesus is warning us about. That quote is, "All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing."

And yes, we and our nation and every nation on earth are in the corrupt condition we are in simply because of that one thing, that "All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing."

Good men and women walk the streets of our nation, the hallways of our workplaces, the classrooms of our schools and colleges "doing nothing". And look at the result of our silence. The enemy of our souls seems to be winning the day. The morality in our families, our neighborhoods and our nation is self-destructing all around us. Men and women of evil intent have discovered that they are being given a free voice. And they are using it with great success.

Our college campuses of today are filled with dissent and vile corrupt language and behaviors, lifestyles that promote disharmony, discord, and blatantly immoral conduct, coming first through the academic leaders and then being well taught to the college students, those young people who in a short while will

become our government and business leaders. And yes, it can be traced back to the willful silence of good men and good women doing nothing.

Now with all of that being said, before we step into the battle and suffer immediate loss, I'm not suggesting that we be flagrant with our words and go about our witness without the use of God's wisdom. May I quickly read these words of our Lord again, this time from the Book of Matthew chapter 10. Listen!

¹⁶ "Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves. ¹⁷ Beware of men, for they will deliver you over to courts and flog you in their synagogues, ¹⁸ and you will be dragged before governors and kings for my sake, to bear witness before them and the Gentiles. ¹⁹ When they deliver you over, do not be anxious how you are to speak or what you are to say, for what you are to say will be given to you in that hour. (Matthew 10:16-19)

Again, no, we are not to be flagrant with our words, but "wise as serpents but harmless as doves". And then, wherever the results of our witness for Christ takes us, He will always be there to guard, to guide and to protect us in our trials.

Are you, am I willing to trust Him with our witness? Listen again, and we'll close.

¹⁶ "Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves. ¹⁷ Beware of men, for they will deliver you over to courts and flog you in their synagogues, ¹⁸ and you will be dragged before governors and kings for my sake, to bear witness before them and the Gentiles. ¹⁹ When they deliver you over, do not be anxious how you are to speak or what you are to say, for what you are to say will be given to you in that hour. (Matthew 10:16-19)

Let's pray.