

The GIFT of God - Part 4

Sunday, June 2, 2019
10:30 AM

We are in the middle of a series leading up to Pentecost Sunday that follows the life of Samson but focuses on the Gift of The Holy Spirit. Remember that Samson's life is an illustration, a shadow if you will, of the gift of the Holy Spirit, that

Our key texts concerning the gift of The Holy Spirit are...

Luke 11:11-13 New International Version (NIV)

11 “Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? **12** Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? **13** If you then, though you are evil, know how to give **good gifts** to your children, **how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!**”

Acts 1:1-5 New International Version (NIV)

1 In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach **2** until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. **3** After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. **4** On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: “Do not leave Jerusalem, but **wait for the gift my Father promised**, which you have heard me speak about. **5** For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.”

7. THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT (From 16 Fundamental Truths)

*All believers are entitled to and should ardently expect and earnestly seek the promise of the Father, the baptism in the Holy Spirit and fire, according to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ. This was the normal experience of all in the early Christian Church. **With it comes the enduement of power for life and service, the bestowment of the gifts and their uses in the work of the ministry.***

This experience is distinct from and subsequent to the experience of the new birth.

With the baptism in the Holy Spirit come such experiences as:

- ***an overflowing fullness of the Spirit***
- ***a deepened reverence for God***
- ***an intensified consecration to God and dedication to His work***
- ***and a more active love for Christ, for His Word and for the lost***

So far the story of Samson has taught us that...

1. We must **BELIEVE IN THE GIFT**
2. We must **NURTURE THE GIFT**
3. we can **MISUSE THE GIFT**
 - We misuse the gift when we complacently take it for granted and fail to allow its development in our lives.
 - We misuse the gift when we foolishly pursue our own plans and pleasures rather than the purposes that God has for our lives
 - We misuse the gift when our focus is directed by bitterness, anger and revenge
 - We misuse the gift when we mix the Holy and the profane

While, like Samson, we may not immediately lose our strength; continued sin in our lives separates us from God and weakens us spiritually.

Judges 16:6-21 New International Version (NIV)

6 So Delilah said to Samson, “Tell me the secret of your great strength and how you can be tied up and subdued.”

7 Samson answered her, “If anyone ties me with seven fresh bowstrings that have not been dried, I’ll become as weak as any other man.”

8 Then the rulers of the Philistines brought her seven fresh bowstrings that had not been dried, and she tied him with them. **9** With men hidden in the room, she called to him, “Samson, the Philistines are upon you!” But he snapped the bowstrings as easily as a piece of string snaps when it comes close to a flame. So the secret of his strength was not discovered.

10 Then Delilah said to Samson, “You have made a fool of me; you lied to me. Come now, tell me how you can be tied.”

11 He said, “If anyone ties me securely with new ropes that have never been used, I’ll become as weak as any other man.”

12 So Delilah took new ropes and tied him with them. Then, with men hidden in the room, she called to him, “Samson, the Philistines are upon you!” But he snapped the ropes off his arms as if they were threads.

13 Delilah then said to Samson, “All this time you have been making a fool of me and lying to me. Tell me how you can be tied.”

He replied, “If you weave the seven braids of my head into the fabric on the loom and tighten it with the pin, I’ll become as weak as any other man.” So while he was sleeping, Delilah took the seven braids of his head, wove them into the fabric **14** and tightened it with the pin.

Again she called to him, “Samson, the Philistines are upon you!” He awoke from his sleep and pulled up the pin and the loom, with the fabric.

15 Then she said to him, “How can you say, ‘I love you,’ when you won’t confide in me? This is the third time you have made a fool of me and haven’t told me the secret of your great strength.” **16** With such nagging she prodded him day after day until he was sick to death of it.

17 So he told her everything. “No razor has ever been used on my head,” he said, “because I have been a Nazirite dedicated to God from my mother’s womb. If my head were shaved, my strength would leave me, and I would become as weak as any other man.”

18 When Delilah saw that he had told her everything, she sent word to the rulers of the Philistines, “Come back once more; he has told me everything.” So the rulers of the Philistines returned with the silver in their hands. **19** After putting him to sleep on her lap, she called for someone to shave off the seven braids of his hair, and so began to subdue him. And his strength left him.

20 Then she called, “Samson, the Philistines are upon you!”

He awoke from his sleep and thought, “I’ll go out as before and shake myself free.” But he did not know that the Lord had left him.

21 Then the Philistines seized him, gouged out his eyes and took him down to Gaza. Binding him with bronze shackles, they set him to grinding grain in the prison.

4. We can LOOSE THE GIFT

- Acknowledge the possibility

1 Thessalonians 5:19 New International Version (NIV)

19 Do not quench the Spirit.

Last week we spoke about Pauls admonition to Timothy to fan into flame the gift of God that was within him. Here we read of Pauls warning not to put out the Spirit’s fire.

I realize that as soon as I mention something like loosing the gift of the Holy Spirit I immediately arouse a variety of responses but before you dismiss me completely take a few minutes to consider what I am saying.

There was a time in which I would not have to defend a statement like that in a Pentecostal church. Our preaching was filled with a passion that included the possibility of backsliding and warning against the same. We vigorously defended our doctrinal stance against eternal security. But over time I have witnessed a diminishing of such preaching and stances and there are many in our churches who will no longer preach or defend such stances.

Because of this many in our churches no longer even believe it is possible. I think that such a state of belief leaves us vulnerable to the attacks of the enemy and in great danger spiritually.

There are too many warnings in scripture to ignore the possibility of backsliding and of ending up in a condition such as we see Samson.

Jeremiah 2:19 New International Version (NIV)

19 Your wickedness will punish you; your backsliding will rebuke you. Consider then and realize how evil and bitter it is for you when you forsake the Lord your God and have no awe of me,” declares the Lord, the Lord Almighty.

Jeremiah 3:21-22 New International Version (NIV)

21 A cry is heard on the barren heights, the weeping and pleading of the people of Israel, because they have perverted their ways and have forgotten the Lord their God. **22** “Return, faithless people; I will cure you of backsliding.” “Yes, we will come to you, for you are the Lord our God.

Revelation 2:4-5 English Standard Version (ESV)

4 But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first.

5 Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent.

Perhaps one of the causes of this dilemma is our attempts to draw a hard and fast line - to figure out exactly how far we can go before we are considered backslidden. In doing so we fail to prove completely one side or the other of this argument. It is not our job to draw the line, but to know that the line exists. God and God alone is the judge of when that line has been crossed. Let us live with the possibility and then set boundaries that keep us well removed from that possibility

- **Assign a greater value to the gift**

As we discussed last week, Samson took his gift for granted. He failed to value what he had been given by God. The greater the value we place on something the more care we take in protecting it.

We are like the child who ignorantly leaves their toys out in the elements where they are destroyed because they do not know the value of those gifts

1 Peter 1:13-19 New International Version (NIV)

13 Therefore, with minds that are alert and fully sober, set your hope on the grace to be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed at his coming. **14** As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance.

15 But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; **16** for it is written: “Be holy, because I am holy.”

17 Since you call on a Father who judges each person’s work impartially, live out your time as foreigners here in reverent fear. **18** For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your ancestors, **19** but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.

- **Assess the plans of the enemy**

1 Peter 5:8 New International Version (NIV)

8 Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.

2 Corinthians 2:11 New International Version (NIV)

¹¹ in order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes.

- **Accept the conviction of the Holy Spirit**

Hebrews 3:7-15 New International Version (NIV)

7 So, as the Holy Spirit says: “Today, if you hear his voice, **8** do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion, during the time of testing in the wilderness, **9** where your ancestors tested and tried me, though for forty years they saw what I did. **10** That is why I was angry with that generation; I said, ‘Their hearts are always going astray, and they have not known my ways.’ **11** So I declared on oath in my anger, ‘They shall never enter my rest.’ ” **12** See to it, brothers and sisters, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. **13** But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called “Today,” so that none of you may be hardened by sin’s deceitfulness. **14** We have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original conviction firmly to the very end. **15** As has just been said: “Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion.”

- Attempt to live a life of repentance

Psalms 51:17 New International Version (NIV)

17 My sacrifice, O God, is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart you, God, will not despise.