

## “Holy Spirit Alive! IN US”

Scripture: Psalm 139:1-18, 23-24

Graphics: dove, person, core, string

Big Truth: The Holy Spirit is the living, active presence of God. That Holy Spirit lives in each person that follows Jesus as Lord and Savior. And, the Holy Spirit is active with the body of Christ in the world. This series begins with an introduction about the Holy Spirit and then, through the Psalms, teaches us about the Holy Spirit alive ON us, IN us, WITH us, THROUGH us, and TO us. Every person that comes to PUMC will be invited to allow the Holy Spirit more access to their life and to the church we serve.

Focus Phrase: Holy Spirit come alive IN me so I will follow the lead of Jesus!

### 1. Introduction

#### A. VIDEO/AUDIO - HolySpiritAliveIntro Video

#### B. PRAY!

- C. Holy Spirit ALIVE! That’s the title of this series focusing our attention and hearts on the work of the Holy Spirit of Jesus in our lives.
- D. As believers, the work of the Holy Spirit is the essence of our faith...of our church...and of our growth as disciples of Jesus. And EVERY SINGLE ONE OF US must be glowing and growing as disciples, no matter how old or young or what gifts you have and use in the church.
- E. The goal of this series is for **each one of us to allow the Holy Spirit more access to everything in our lives**, especially our lives of worship, community, openness, obeying, serving, and sharing. You’ll recognize those as our 6 waypoints in our SHIFT Intentional Discipleship Process.
- F. Last week, we began by inviting more of the Holy Spirit ON us. If each one of us allows the Holy Spirit ON us to have more access to our lives, then the world will see Jesus in all we do. The Holy Spirit activates and shines the presence of Jesus outward from you and me.
- G. This week, we turn to giving the Holy Spirit more access IN us. We begin our Holy Spirit journey in the book of Psalms, allowing the psalm writers to express our desire for more of the Holy Spirit...more access to the Holy Spirit.
- i. Now, there’s always been some debate as to whether or not the Holy Spirit was active or present in the lives of the people of the Old Testament.
  - ii. Certainly, the psalm writers didn’t have the clear understanding of the Holy Spirit that Jesus gave to us in the gospels and Acts.
  - iii. However, that doesn’t mean that the Holy Spirit wasn’t present. Indeed, the Spirit WAS present in Creation...and gave and gives life to all creatures. The Spirit empowered the Israelite leaders like Gideon and Saul and David to lead with God’s heart. The Spirit was the inspiration of the prophets like

Ezekiel and Isaiah. The Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity, was and is the inspiration of the Good News about the coming Messiah.

- iv. I liken seeing the Holy Spirit in the OT to looking through a pair of binoculars to see a deer in a field. If the binoculars are out of focus, you can still see that something is out there...and may even be able to tell that it's a deer. But, when you focus, then you can definitely see that it's a deer. The focus doesn't change the fact that the deer is present.
  - v. From Creation until Jesus' birth, the people of God KNEW that the Spirit was present, they just didn't have complete focus. When Jesus came, he adjusted everything about the view we have about the Holy Spirit so that we can be confident in the presence and power of the Holy Spirit.
  - vi. So, even though the psalm-writers didn't know what Jesus knows, they still knew that the Spirit was alive ON, IN, WITH, THROUGH, and TO them.
- H. So, let's turn our attention to Psalm 139 this morning. Grab your bible or bible app and flip there with me. At home, take a moment to clear the space around you as you prepare to read along with us.
- I. Psalm 139...starting in verse 1...

## 2. Scripture

### A. READ Psalm 139:1-6

- i. When someone is running for political office, the political party's leadership will oftentimes ask for character witnesses to affirm the integrity of the person running.
- ii. If someone gets into trouble and is facing some legal challenges, lawyers and judges will often call character witnesses to help the person's case... that she or he is not fully represented in the crime.
- iii. In both those scenarios, the reason why the committee or the lawyer would call a character witness is because the person is KNOWN by that witness. These witnesses are more than mere acquaintances. These witnesses truly KNOW the person.
- iv. Throughout our lives, we're blessed if we have 3-4 people who truly KNOW us. If you're married, then your spouse is usually someone who KNOWS you. Or a good, close friend with whom you share all the details of your life.
- v. In Psalm 139, the psalmist starts by telling us, "God knows me." God has searched me and KNOWS me. The sense we get is that God is not some distant, angry entity who stands away off and watches the psalmist's life unfold without engagement. The sense we truly get is that God is INSIDE him...KNOWS him.

- vi. And not just because God is omniscient - meaning He knows everything - but because God has engaged in searching the psalmist's heart and mind.
- vii. The author went on to explain what he means:
  - a. You KNOW me wherever I am - sitting, rising, near, far, going out, lying down.
  - b. You KNOWS all my ways.
  - c. Even before I speak, You know the words...completely.
  - d. You are behind and in front of me...and ON me.
- viii. Those things can only happen if God is living IN him. Which, frankly, blows the mind of the author, who simply says, "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me...to lofty to attain."
- ix. The author is confident that he is KNOWN by God who is IN him, intimately, and is attempting to be **open** to the incredible truth of that.
- x. Let's move to the next section...verse 7. In verses 7-12, we see the binoculars zoom out to a reality beyond the author...

**B. READ Psalm 139:7-12**

- i. Every single one of us has been to lots of places in our lives. Even as youth and children, we travel to school, college, military service, work, church, shopping, travels here and abroad, and countless other places.
- ii. Two things we always find when we move about this world on the legs or wheels God has given us:
  - a. First, the Holy Spirit Alive IN US is there already. We're never alone and we've built in communion with the Spirit.
  - b. #2, (unless you attempt to go off-grid or something) there are usually other people there...there's community with others.
- iii. The Holy Spirit is a constant presence...but not as a cloud that hangs out around us. The Holy Spirit meets us in every circumstance, any height or depth physically or emotionally, any distance we try to go, any time - day or night, the Spirit is there...guiding, calling, comforting, challenging, and building up God's people.
- iv. Wherever the psalmist goes, there is community - at the most basic level it's with God...and then also with other people. The Spirit IN us builds community around us because the Spirit in ME connects with the Spirit in YOU.
- v. One last section...verses 13-18, which is the psalmist's response to the unattainable knowledge that God is IN him and all around Him...worship.

**C. READ Psalm 139:13-18**

- i. John Wesley said this about worship: “In divine worship, (as in all other actions,) the first thing to be considered is the end, and the next thing is the means conducing to that end. The end is the honour of God, and the edification of the Church; and then God is honoured, when the Church is edified. The means conducing to that end, are to have the service so administered as may inform the mind, engage the affections, and increase devotion.”
  - ii. The psalmist basically sat down and worshiped God, after having been blown away by God’s presence IN him - at all times and everywhere.
  - iii. He sang, “I praise you because I’m fearfully and wonderfully made.” “How precious to me are your thoughts.”
  - iv. Only when we realize that God’s Spirit is IN us can we truly allow the Spirit the access God wants to our hearts of praise and gratitude.
  - v. And hearts focused on praise and gratitude are hearts ready for worship...to marvel at God and His ways.
- D. The psalmist tells the world to be open to God’s presence IN them, to meet with God’s presence wherever they go, and to worship the God whose ways are higher and better than OUR ways because God’s Spirit is IN us.

### 3. Application

- A. Yet, there’s one more prayer for allowing the Spirit to have more access to our lives...as we rise from your knees in worship.
  - i. Once you begin to increase your openness, community-building, and worship because the Spirit is alive IN you, then God is calling you to allow Him to LEAD you.
  - ii. Verses 23-24 say it like this: “Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my thoughts. See if there is any wicked way in me, and **lead me in the way everlasting.**”
  - iii. Having the Holy Spirit alive IN you must spur you on to growing as you are being led by that Spirit in you.
  - iv. I have this image in my mind of a “holy string” that’s anchored inside each one of us...anchored by and to the Holy Spirit IN us.
    - a. The string stretches outside us, to the hands of God who is calling and leading us.
    - b. Because the Holy Spirit is IN you, where God leads you, the Spirit IN YOU responds and guides you gently (or sometimes not so gently) to the place where He wants to use you for His glory and to build up the church.

- c. This is all about obeying. We can pull on that string and pull on that string and dig in our heels and refuse to be led.
    - v. But allowing the Spirit IN you to guide you to where God leads is the pathway to giving the Holy Spirit more and more access to your life.
- B. Here are 3 realities about growing as a disciple because the Holy Spirit is IN you:
- C. Because the Holy Spirit is Alive IN you, **You are Known.**
  - i. This is all about Openness to God and, as we heard last week, openness to others.
  - ii. It's about being confident of the God who dwells IN you in order to show others that you're a new creation...every day!
  - iii. I have to admit, I sometimes (often?) say stupid things to Stacy. I DO things that don't build her up. Yet, we don't go to bed mad and we wake up in the morning with an agreement that the new day is a new gift. The only way it's possible to do that is because the Spirit is alive in her and in me. We KNOW that we are KNOWN by God and by each other.
  - iv. Be known...be open to God knowing you inside and out. Talk to Him.
- D. Because the Holy Spirit is alive in you, **The World is Waiting for You.**
  - i. This is all about allowing the Spirit IN you to connect with the Spirit IN others. This builds community, which is the second waypoint in our Intentional Discipleship Process.
  - ii. The Holy Spirit has gone before you to prepare your mission field. It may be near or far, now or later, day or night, but God is already there and the world is waiting.
  - iii. There's no time that I can recall in which the world needs to hear about Jesus more than THIS moment. THIS season. THIS week.
  - iv. Let the Holy Spirit work IN YOU to prepare YOU as you build and change the community with Jesus.
- E. And, because the Holy Spirit is IN you, like we're doing today, **Give thanks and praise to God.**
  - i. The Spirit wants to praise. The Spirit IN YOU wants to worship. So often, we attempt to keep the Holy Spirit in a bottle. The Spirit IN YOU wants to sing and dance and shout to the Lord (as it says in Psalm 100). The Spirit wants to move you in Worship. Open the valve just a little, church!
  - ii. Wesley said, "...inform the mind, engage the affections, and increase devotion." Open the valve and let the Spirit flow!

- F. And, when you leave here today, don't leave the Spirit in your pew. **Be Led by the Spirit**...out the door, down the street and wherever He leads this week.
  - i. This is all about obeying, which is our 4th discipleship waypoint.
  - ii. Jesus obeyed the Spirit ON Him after his baptism. Jesus obeyed the Spirit IN Him which led Him to the cross.
  - iii. Let the Spirit LEAD - that tug on that holy string - to a new ministry, a new devotion, a new learning opportunity, a new way to serve. Step up and step out for Jesus. There's no better time than right now.

#### 4. Conclusion

- A. Henry Blackaby said, "Will God ever ask you to do something you are not able to do? The answer is yes - all the time! It must be that way, for God's glory and kingdom. If we function according to our ability alone, we get the glory; if we function according to the power of the Spirit within us, God gets the glory. He wants to reveal Himself to a watching world." (Henry Blackaby, Experiencing the Spirit: The Power of Pentecost Every Day)
- B. We're beginning to allow the Holy Spirit to come into focus. The Spirit is alive ON us. The Spirit is alive IN us.
- C. Be open to being known. Be ready to build community. Worship! And be led by the Holy Spirit.
- D. To GOD be the glory!
- E. Let's pray...