

The Four Voices: How to Think Like a Christian

The Voice of the Holy Spirit

Rough Transcript

Patrick Morley

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Hello, men. Please turn in your Bibles to Titus, chapter 3. So, we're in this series, **The Four Voices**. We've looked at the world, the flesh, the devil. Today, we're going to look at the voice of the Spirit. The premise for this series is pretty simple. In fact, you don't really even have to listen to all the messages to get it. It's really quite simple. We all have a running conversation in our heads, but we're not the only voice up there. There are other voices in our heads that are also trying to exert influence on what we think, say, and do. The four voices in your head are the world, the flesh, the devil, and the Holy Spirit. Your job is to figure out which voice is speaking and then make the adjustment. Today, as I say, we're going to take a look at the voice of the Spirit.

RECOGNIZING THE VOICE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The first thing we want to do is look at recognizing the voice of the Holy Spirit. Paul was in Corinth one day, and he was talking to some of the believers, and he said this. He said, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" And they answered, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." That was my experience. I remember when I was in the army, I was going through what probably would have been diagnosed as a clinical depression. I remember going and trying to soothe my hurt feelings by buying a beautiful yellow, double-breasted blazer, kind of muted, double-breasted yellow blazer, didn't do anything.

One day, I went to see the pastor of one of the local churches that I'd been part of, and I wore my sunglasses all during the meeting because I was so depressed. I was sobbing hysterically before I got there and I was a mess. I explained after about 30 minutes of listening to me. He kind of had this little wry grin, I would call it a smirk, on his face the whole time I was talking. And what was happening was, is that I was yearning, longing for a connection to the almighty God. When we were done, he said to me, he said, "Well, Pat, we all have to go through things like this from time to time." Even though I didn't know God at the time, I knew enough about God to know that he didn't know what he was talking about.

So, I left that day, knowing that I was spiritually dead. I was spiritually dead. It would be six more years before I would be sitting in a Sunday school class one day. Now I'm married. Now I'm in business. I had traded all of these desires to know God in for becoming a materialist. I remember being able to buy a Hickey Freeman suit, one of the great pieces of goods of all time. I went to church with my wife. Looking back on it, really, the reason I was there is I was hoping to help her get her problem straightened out. And then also, that I could find some new investors for my real estate deals.

One morning, we were sitting in a Sunday school class of young couples. There were about 20 of us seated in a circle on those metal chairs that all churches have. I was staring down at the Terraza floor in my beautiful Hickey Freeman suit. I was, as I recall, leaning way back in my chair and I had my legs crossed. I don't know what I was thinking about, probably my calendar, what was coming up during the next week. I was daydreaming.

Suddenly, the teacher, Dan Stanley, who is reading the scriptures, I heard, I don't know what else he said, but I heard, what is it, from Ephesians 5:25. "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loves the church." And I immediately turned flush red. I immediately felt my body getting soaked with perspiration. I knew that every pair of eyeballs in that circle are now focused on me. I don't know who had told him that I had not been loving my wife the way that Christ had loved the church, but I knew that I was now being looked upon with disdain and derision, and all of these people had found me out, and that this was the end of me because I was a fraud.

Well, as it turned out, the teacher kept speaking and nobody was looking at me at all. This was something entirely that was going on between me and God. And as I have later come to realize, it was what the Bible calls conviction of sin. It's the work of the Holy Spirit. This was really the first time that I ever recognized the voice of the Holy Spirit. It was so powerful. And when you have heard the voice of the Holy Spirit, there's no mistaking the voice of the Holy Spirit.

We live on a lake. I'm looking out the window here at the lake. We have osprey and we have eagles. So, an osprey flies by, and I'm looking out the window and I'm thinking, "I wonder if that's an eagle. I'm wonder if that's an eagle." No, it's an osprey. Another day, I'm looking out the window. I see a bird. "I wonder if that's an eagle. I wonder if that's an eagle." Finally, no, it's an osprey. And then one day, I look out the window. I said, "Oh, my gosh, it's an eagle." The point is, is that when you see an eagle, you don't have to ask whether or not it's an eagle. It's pretty obvious. And when you hear the voice of the Holy Spirit, you don't have to ask if you've heard the voice of the Holy Spirit. It's pretty obvious. There are all kinds of different ways that we hear the voice of the Holy Spirit.

In his book, *Baptism and Fullness* by John Stott, he talks about having fresh experiences with God, and how God promises that his mercies are new every morning. Let me read to you from this book.

"Sometimes, the Holy Spirit's inward witness assures us that we are indeed God's children. Sometimes, he floods our hearts with such a tidal wave of his love that we almost ask him to stay his hand lest we are drowned by it. Sometimes, our hearts burn within us, as Christ opens the scriptures and we see him in the scriptures as we have never seen him before. Sometimes, we experience a quickening of our spiritual pulse, a leaping of our heart, a kindling of our love for God and man, a pervading sense of peace and well-being. Sometimes, in the dignified reverence of public worship, or in the spontaneous fellowship of a home meeting, or at the Lord's table, or in private prayer, invisible reality overwhelms us. Time stands still. We step into a new dimension of eternity. We become still and know that God is God. We fall down before him and worship."

And the world, the flesh, and the devil say, "Uh-oh," or in the words of Tony Evans in his book, *Kingdom Man*, "Oh, crap. He's up." In other words, the man becomes dangerous. There's another type of man too, though, and that's the man who doesn't experience this life. He leads a defeated life. We all go through periods where we are leading defeated lives. I remember being a materialist when I finally did become a follower of Jesus. After this conviction of sin, I pulled out my white handkerchief and surrendered one day. But I was still a materialist and I was still wanting to have all the benefits of the world and really, frankly, the flesh as well. And so, it stunted my growth at the 10-year mark. I realized that I was getting a very different result from the other guys. I called a time-out. I realized that I had moved, not from dead to being dangerous for God, but I had moved from dead to being defeated.

I want to go ahead and give you the Big Idea, and then I want to talk to you about experiencing the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. The Big Idea today is this. It's a question. **Are you dead, defeated, or dangerous?** I want to show you how you can be a dangerous Christian, so that when the world, the flesh, and the devil see you coming, they're thinking, "Uh-oh."

EXPERIENCING THE PRESENCE AND POWER OF THE SPIRIT

Next then, let's talk about experiencing the presence and the power of the Holy Spirit. One of my all-time favorite men is Hudson Taylor, the great missionary. One of my all-time, favorite quotes by anybody, including him. He said that many Christians estimate difficulties in light of their own resources, and thus attempt little and often fail at the little they do attempt. All God's giants have been weak men who did great things for God because they reckoned on his presence and power being with them. So, let's look then at how we can experience more of that. You should be at Titus, chapter 3. Let's look at verses 4 through 7 together.

The first thing that we see is this before and after theme. We won't look at the before, but you see it, we've looked at it before in Ephesians. You could also find it in First Corinthians 6. You can find it in Galatians 5. There was this old man. And then there's this new man that comes. We see this new man here in verse 4. "But when the kindness and love of God our Savior," period. "He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by," watch this, "by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life." So, yes, we are saved by grace through faith, by believing in Jesus Christ. And the Holy Spirit is the one who orchestrates all that.

So, if we want to experience more of the Holy Spirit, it's entering into a relationship with Jesus, and then allowing him to wash over our sins, to regenerate our soul, to justify us, to declare us righteous in his sight. And then in other verses, the sanctifying work is the work of the Holy Spirit.

Then, if you want to take a look at also another important concept, and we'll look at a couple here, turn to John, chapter 14, verse 15. And this is the passage where Jesus promises the Holy Spirit. He said, "If you love me, keep my commands. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever, the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives in you, and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans. I will come to you."

And then dropping down to verse 26, which is one of the key verses that we used in the week where we focused on the Spirit, in the introduction. "But the advocate, the Holy Spirit," or, "but the Paraclete, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and remind you of everything I have said." Experiencing more of the presence and the power of the Holy Spirit means experiencing more of Jesus Christ. It means allowing the Paraclete to be... He's the convictor. He's the converter. He's the comforter. He's the counselor. He is the one who has the ability to move us from dead to, through defeat and onto be dangerous. The Big Idea today; **Are you dead, defeated, or dangerous?**

OUR PART IN BEING FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

Let's take a look at our part in becoming dangerous. The next thing is our part in being filled with the Spirit. Turn to Ephesians chapter 5, verse 18. So, this is the key to how we release the power and presence of the Holy Spirit, and become dangerous. I first learned about this verse in a booklet called, *Have You Made the Wonderful Discovery of the Spirit-Filled Life?* written by Bill Bright. You can go online. You can type in on Google, "Have you experienced the wonderful discovery of the Spirit-filled life?" And pull up a digital copy of this, if you want to. Here's the gist of the passage. Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit.

So, what does it mean to be filled with the Spirit? It means to take advantage of all that the Holy Spirit has to offer. When we don't do that, we live in defeat. I love this story about a man who took care of his wife. She passed away. Some friends decided to bless him. He had never had more than two nickels to rub together, so they bought him a ticket for a cruise. So, he boarded his cruise ship, carried his rucksack over his back. On the first evening, when dinner was served, he went outside and pulled some cheese

and crackers out of his rucksack and was eating them. And he was looking through this big plate-glass window into this lovely dining room, where all these people were eating this fabulous food and having this wonderful time together. This went on for several days.

After several days, a steward came by one evening and said, "Sir, what are you doing out here?" He said, "Well, I'm eating my dinner." He said, "Didn't you know that the food is included in the price?" He said, "I had no idea the food was included in the price." Everything that the Holy Spirit has to offer has already been paid for. It's available to you in the same way. So first, be filled with the Spirit. And then reading on, in verse 19, "Speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord." The idea here is to do things with one another.

A pastor... I wish I could find the place where I picked up this story because I'd like to give the right credit. A man had gone to church for several years and suddenly, he stopped coming. So, his pastor dropped by one evening unannounced. The man answered the door. Course, he knew I was there, so he invited him in. They went and they sat in two chairs in front of a roaring fire. Neither man said anything. And after a few minutes, the pastor went over and picked up the fire tongs, took one of the logs out of the fire, laid it on the hearth. After the flames flickered a few times, they went out and soon, you could see that the log was growing cold. A few minutes later, the pastor picked up the fire tongs again, put the log back with the other burning logs. And it immediately burst back into flame. The pastor got up, said, "It's been good to be with you." Started for the door. The man said, "I understand. You can be assured that I will be in church on Sunday."

Importance to this, our part of being filled with the Spirit is that we do our faith with other Christians. And then the final thing we see here. "Always giving thanks to God our Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." Robert saw quite a bit of potential in Tim, invited him to an important meeting. And during the meeting, Tim made incredible contributions. He was well thought of. You could see that his star was rising during the meeting. But not once during the meeting did Tim ever even acknowledge the presence of Robert. And then when the meeting was over after six hours, it went through lunch, they were dismissed. Everybody was congratulating Tim for the part that he played in the meeting. Even after the meeting, he never once made any mention to Robert of how grateful he was for recognizing his potential and giving him the opportunity.

That's what this text is about, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything. And that's what happens when we don't give thanks to God our father. We're doing, and through the power of the Holy Spirit, we're doing the same thing that Tim did to Robert. And that's what makes a man lead a defeated life. The Big Idea today; **Are you dead, defeated, or dangerous?** Let's pray.

Our dearest Father, thank you for your word on the Holy Spirit. There's so much more, of course, that could have been said. But Lord, what we are asking is that you would help us if we are dead to allow the Holy Spirit to wash and renew us in the gospel of Jesus Christ. And if we are defeated, we are asking you, Lord, to teach us everything that Jesus taught us, and remind us of everything that he said, and fill us with the presence and power of Jesus.

And then finally, Lord, we want to pray for those of us who are dangerous. We want to thank you, Lord. We want to give you thanks. We want to continue to be filled with the Holy Spirit. And we want to make sure that we do our faith with other men who are also either dangerous or want to be, so that we could take the power of the Spirit that you've given us and pass it along to others. We ask this in your name, Jesus. Amen.

Thank you, men. Next week, you'll hear a second message on the Holy Spirit and then we'll wrap up the series.