



DEVOTIONAL MESSAGE

Life Giving Work of the Holy Spirit ... by Gareth

READ GENESIS 9:1-3

- **A**nd God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. The fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth and upon every bird of the heavens, upon everything that creeps on the ground and all the fish of the sea. Into your hand they are delivered. Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. And as I gave you the green plants, I give you everything
- From the beginning of scripture to the very end God is offering life, why because He is the giver of life not only in the physical realm but more importantly in the spiritual realm.
- Life—this is what the Holy Spirit is all about, giving us life. The Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, gives life to dead people. The Holy Spirit gives life in connection with Christ. And the Holy Spirit gives life through his empowering the church to proclaim the life-giving gospel.
- Now what about the person of the Holy Spirit? I mean, we’ve said something about his work, which is to give life, but what about his person? In other words, who is he? Is the Holy Spirit just some impersonal force or power?
- No, the Holy Spirit is a personal being, the Third Person of the Holy Trinity, true God, divine in his nature. He didn’t take on human flesh like God the Son did. No, when we call the Holy Spirit the Lord and giver of life, by saying “*the Lor*” we are confessing his divinity, that he is true God in his essence. the Holy Spirit “with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified.” We could not say that unless the Holy Spirit is true God, the Third Person of the Trinity. This is why Jesus, in his Great Commission, gave us the name of the triune God as “the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”
- The Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life. Now particularly when we look at our reading from *Ezekiel 37 1-14* and our reading from *Acts 2 1-21*.
- Look at the reading from Ezekiel. The prophet Ezekiel is shown a vision of a valley full of dry bones. “Can these bones live?” Not normally. Dead, dry bones cannot come to life on their own or by any human effort. But the Lord says to Ezekiel: “Prophecy over these bones, and say to them, O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: Behold, I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live.” Ezekiel does as he is told. The breath comes into them, and they live.
- The breath that gives life is a picture of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who gives life to dry bones and dead people. The Lord God says, “*An I will put my Spirit within you, an you shall live*” - *Ezekiel 36:27, 37: 14*.
- This is a word for us. We were like dead, dry bones. Our sins had killed us, condemned us to death. We had no life within us, according to our fallen sinful nature. We were dead spiritually, which leads to physical death and eternal damnation. But then the breath of God came, the life-giving Spirit, who raised us from the dead and stood us on our feet. This is the Holy Spirit, breathing life into us. Spirit, breath, wind: The Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life.

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WEEKLY EVENTS/NOTICES

- The Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, gives life to dead people. The Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of Life, gives life in connection with Christ. This is what Jesus says, isn't it, in the Gospel of John. In teaching there on the Holy Spirit, Christ tells his disciples: "He," that is, the Holy Spirit, *John 16:14* "He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you." The Holy Spirit gives life to us by glorifying Jesus. There is no life, real life, apart from Jesus. The dead bones would still be dead if it were not for what Christ did to win life for us, the very life that the Spirit now gives us.
- This life comes from what Christ has done for us. To raise dead bones, the life has to come from somewhere. And it comes—it only comes—from the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ on our behalf. By his death Christ conquers death. And by his resurrection he brought life and immortality to light. Jesus Christ died the sinner's death for us on the cross, the righteous and holy Son of God dying in your place and mine, taking the punishment for our sins upon himself. Jesus broke the back of sin and death in the process. Death lost its hold over you. Forgiveness was won by Christ's blood. And then when Jesus rose again on the third day, it was showing the victory of life, the victory that Jesus now shares with us. And it is the Holy Spirit who delivers this life of Christ to us, to each one of us personally and to all of us together, through the ministry of the gospel.
- The Holy Spirit gives life to dead people. The Holy Spirit gives life in connection with Christ. The Holy Spirit gives life through his empowering the church to proclaim the life-giving gospel. That is what we hear in the reading from the Book of *Acts 2:1* "When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind." Before his ascension, Jesus promised (*John 14: 15/16*)
- *Acts 2*, on the day of Pentecost, in Jerusalem—this is where and when it begins. The sound of the rushing wind signals the arrival of the Spirit for the purpose of empowering the witness, the church's gospel witness that will give life to people. And so this is what happens. The company of believers are all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they begin declaring the mighty works of God to the assembled multitude. Peter gets up, and he begins preaching a sermon. *Acts 4:5* But the bottom line is that he preaches the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and he calls people to repentance and faith, with the promise of the forgiveness of sins. *Joel 2:32 / Rom 10:13* "And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." There it is. The Holy Spirit is giving people life through the preaching of the gospel of Christ.
- The Holy Spirit is still giving people life in our day, here and around the world. Where the preaching of Christ crucified and risen for our salvation—where that is happening, there the Holy Spirit is giving life. So it is happening, right here, right now. The Spirit is glorifying Christ Jesus, your Savior. The Spirit is breathing life into you, raising you from deadness to life. Breathe in the life. The Holy Spirit is doing his work.
- How we need the Holy Spirit in these days to empower us to live for His Glory.

Events /Notices

- ▶ **Castledaly weekend** next *Friday 8th June to Sunday 10th June.*
- ▶ **'Closer' women's ministry event**, Esker house, Esker road, Lucan, *Saturday 2nd June 9.30am - 5.30pm €20 cost .*