

## Sermon Outline

# “The Spirit-Filled Church” – John 13:33; 14:1-20 – December 11, 2011 Terry Virgo

## Introduction

1. What makes Christianity and God’s people unique is that God is with us. This truth is firmly rooted in the Old Testament. God manifested his presence when he spoke to Moses from the burning bush. After the exodus, God’s awesome and fearful presence descended on Mt. Sinai, shaking the mountain with fire and an earthquake. To Moses, God’s presence was such a non-negotiable that he told the Lord, “If your presence will not go with me, do not bring us up from here” (Exodus 33:15). When the tabernacle was complete, the presence of the Lord descended: “then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle” (Exodus 40:34). And throughout all the Israelites’ journeys in the wilderness, the Lord’s presence led them as a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night.

## Temporary Tabernacle

1. It is the backdrop of the Old Testament experience of God’s presence that the Apostle John wrote in John 1:14, “And the Word became flesh and *dwelt among us*, and we have seen his glory, glory as the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.”
  - a. The word “dwelt” literally means that Jesus pitched his tabernacle or lived in his tent among us. God, in the person of Jesus, took on human flesh and lived among us. And in his earthly tent, he revealed the glory of God. Old Testament saints experienced God’s glory in magnificent displays of nature. New Testament saints behold God’s glory in the face of Jesus (see 2 Corinthians 4:6).
  - b. As the writer to Hebrews states (Hebrews 1:2-3), “in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son...He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature.” To see Jesus is to see God. To know Jesus is to know God. Why? Because Jesus radiates and shines forth God’s glory and is an exact representation of the Father. To understand how God responds to the brokenhearted, to little children, to the sick and weary, to the outcasts of society, or to the self-righteous Pharisees, all we need to do is look at Jesus.
2. The disciples lived an exciting life. Daily, they were living with the person and presence of God. And each day was as unpredictable as the last – teachings with unparalleled authority and wisdom, funerals interrupted with a resurrection, feeding of 20,000 men, women and children with a few loaves and fishes, and the miraculous experience of walking on water. God, in Jesus Christ, was with them and among them.

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### Devastating Departure

1. Into the disciples' exciting life of living with God, Jesus said that he was going away. "Little children, yet a little while I am with you. You will seek me, and just as I said to the Jews, so now I also say to you, 'Where I am going you cannot come'" (John 13:33).
2. Christianity for Peter and the disciples was being with Jesus. It was fellowshiping with Jesus. It was walking with him. It was experiencing the presence and the power of God in the person of Jesus. And now he said he was leaving. The news was devastating.
  - a. The disciples must have reacted with, "What do you mean you are going away? How can we live without you? We can't bear the thought of being without you."
3. To their troubled heart Jesus reassured them, "Let not your hearts be troubled...I will come again" (John 14:1, 3a).

### Permanent Presence

1. What is the church? Is it a group of people gathering together to recall a fading memory of Jesus? What does it mean that Jesus said he would not leave us as orphans but would come to us?
  - a. This is what it means: when the Holy Spirit fell at Pentecost, the fullness of Jesus returned. The coming of the Holy Spirit is the coming of Jesus. That's why Luke could open Acts with the words, "In the first book [Gospel of Luke], O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus *began* to do and teach..." The implication is that the book of Acts is all the Jesus is *continuing* to do and teach by the power of his Holy Spirit, through his church. Therefore, with the coming of the Holy Spirit, the disciples would have said, "Jesus is present with us, again!"
2. What does Jesus mean when he says that, "I go to prepare a place for you" (John 14:2)? Terry offered a possibility that Jesus is referring to more than heaven. Jesus is talking about the Holy Spirit and about dwelling with Jesus through the Holy Spirit. Being a Christian is being with Jesus every day. Being a Christian is a relationship; it is communion and fellowship with Jesus through and by the power and ministry of the Holy Spirit. Through the Holy Spirit, Jesus is our dwelling place.
  - a. That is why David could cry out in Psalm 27:4, "One thing have I asked of the LORD, that will I seek after: that I may *dwell* in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and to inquire in his temple."
  - b. Or the Apostle Paul could say, "...your life is *hidden* with Christ in God" (Colossians 3:2).

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3. Christianity is not about duties or rules. It is a life in the Holy Spirit that enables and empowers fellowship and communion with Jesus.

## **Fellowship Starters**

1. Take time as a Care Group to read John 13:33 and John 14:1-20.
2. Terry said that, for the disciples, Christianity was being with Jesus. Is that your description and experience of Christianity? Or is your faith a set of duties, activities and rules?
3. The news that Jesus was going away was devastating to the disciples; "How can we live without you?" Would it be devastating to take Jesus out of your life?
4. How can you grow in cultivating your fellowship and relationship with Jesus through the Holy Spirit? By the Holy Spirit, how can Jesus become your dearest treasure and pearl of great price?
5. Why isn't the church just a group of people gathering together to recall the fading memory of Jesus? What did the coming of the Holy Spirit do (and continue to do) to the church?
6. Pray for an increase in the work and ministry of the Holy Spirit in Covenant Life: for natural and supernatural gifts, for holiness, for unity, for reconciliation and for mission.