

Pentecost

9th June 2019 am Hill and Acadia
Acts 2

A self-proclaimed pastor from 'Ambassadors of Christ Gospel Ministries church' in Polokwane has been heavily criticised after boasting of **feeding his congregants** dog meat as communion.

In a post on the church's Facebook page, two men standing with a dog's bloody head can be seen. Other congregants are seen eating the alleged dog meat.

Attached to the post are also **pictures of** a slaughtered and skinned dog. Next to a bowl filled with what is alleged to be the dog meat stands a bottle of cold drink.

"This is no longer dog meat but the body of Christ, this is no longer a Fanta but the blood of Christ, this is no different from the biscuits and the appetizer you buy at the shop and declare as the body and the blood, they are the same because they are declared one thing, when you eat here you will receive your freedom, healing and deliverance, this is our lord's body and blood..."

This is not a religious church, we don't follow a pattern but are led by God's Spirit..."

Don't miss the end of the quote. It is claimed by the likes of this particular pastor that these activities are carried out **under the direction and in the power** of the Holy Spirit of God.

With this kind of thing happening more and more; **how do we respond?**

Do we bury our heads in the sand pretending it is not happening? Do we join the happy throng and acquire some snakes and rats... and dogs?

The right response is to **examine the Bible** and seek to clearly understand the nature of the Person and work of the Holy Spirit;

- So that we can be **discerning** *Ephesians 5:10 ...and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord.* Not everything you see and not everything people claim to be of the Spirit of God is of the Spirit of God.
- So that we can know **the true blessing** of the Holy Spirit. To have what Jesus promised in *John 14:16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, 17 even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.*

There are clearly defined basic **truths and principles** given to us in the Bible that must govern our thinking and practice with reference to the person and work of the Holy Spirit.

It is important to first comes to terms with **the very basic question** of the identity of the Holy Spirit.

1 Who is the Holy Spirit?

What He does is vitally important; but what He does can really only be appreciated if we know **who He is**.

He is not only the Holy Spirit of God but He is **God the Holy Spirit**. In the same way that the Father is God and Jesus is God...

1.1 The Holy Spirit is God

We can confidently affirm **the divinity** of the Holy Spirit for the following reasons:

- **Divine attributes are attributed to the Holy Spirit**

There are certain characteristics that are **uniquely true of God** that He does not share with people created in His image.

God shares something of the nature of his love and holiness with you; but he does not make you omniscient or omnipresent...

Psalms 139:7 Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence? 8 If I ascend to heaven, you are there! If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there! 9 If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, 10 even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me.

1 Corinthians 2:10 these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. 11 For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.

Hebrews 9:14 how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

All of these are **only possible** of one who is God.

- **The Holy Spirit “alongside” the Father and Son**

The Holy Spirit is equal with the Father and Son in **blessing that comes to us...** 2

Corinthians 13:14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

The Holy Spirit is equal with the Father and Son in the command Jesus gives to his disciples in **the ordinance of baptism**. *Matthew 28:19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,*

Jesus warning about **the unforgiveable sin** showing that that the Holy Spirit can be blasphemed in *Mark 3:29 but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin*".

The Holy Spirit is God and secondly,

1.2 The Holy Spirit is a person

How do we know that He is **a person** and not an 'It'? We find in the Scriptures every indication that attributes belong to him and actions ascribed to him can only be true of personality.

Romans 8:7 speaks of **the mind** of the Spirit

Romans 15:30 speaks of **the love** of the Spirit

1 Corinthians 12:11 of **the will** of the Spirit

In *Ephesians 4:30* he can be **grieved**

And in *Acts 13:1* he **speaks**

Theologian **Octavius Winslow** sums it up for us: "*Because of the union with the Godhead; we ascribe to Him (Holy Spirit) divinity and because personal properties and acts; we ascribe to him personality*".

These few comments I trust will convince you that the Bible sets forth the mysterious but glorious truth that **One God exists as Father, Son and Holy Spirit**.

1.3 Implications:

- **The Holy Spirit cannot be considered to be a commodity to be used**

It is terrible error to have an attitude that believes that the Holy Spirit is a **magic producing genie**: "*Rub the lamp and you wish is my command*".

Neither does the Bible teach an approach in Christian life and ministry that sees the Holy Spirit as **the cherry on top** of your religious experience to really liven things up a bit.

Similar to some people who prefer **coke on its own**. But some people like to add some brandy to their coke to spice things up a bit. The Holy Spirit is God and not some 'optional additive' – so that you may "explode".

The Holy Spirit is God and **inseparable** from the Father and the Son. We must always consider God in the totality of His being and purpose.

- **The Holy Spirit cannot be treated as some kind of force**

It is **an insult** to think of God the Holy Spirit in terms of "it" or some kind of energizing force, independent of the Father and Son.

Having established an answer to the very basic question as to who the Holy Spirit is; we can now begin to think about His work among us...

2 Is the work of the Holy Spirit necessary in ministry?

Is it true that **Evangelicals** are “full” on the Word and “empty” on the Holy Spirit? Is the Holy Spirit present in some ministries and not in others?

Consider what Jesus said when the disciples were saddened by the news that He was about to leave them...

John 16:7 Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. 8 And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment

...it is to your advantage that I go away... when he comes, he will... The Holy Spirit will be at work doing a whole bunch of humanly speaking **impossible things**.

The salvation of an individual and the ongoing growth and usefulness of a new believer; including ministry to the world, cannot happen apart from the Holy Spirit.

In the same way that Jesus’ temporal presence was essential in the work he did; we must grasp the vital present and personal activity of the Holy Spirit and see this to be **indispensable** for any meaningful and lasting work of grace.

We must eradicate the notion that some movements are promoting that by adding the work of the Holy Spirit you end up with a **superior model** of Christian life and ministry. That is unbiblical nonsense.

There is **no legitimate ministry** where God is not present. And therefore there is no ministry where the Holy Spirit is not present. You are not a believer if you do not have the Holy Spirit in you...

Paul made it is clear in his letter to the *Romans 8:9 You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.*

It is the Spirit of God **that brings** you or me or anyone else into a living relationship with God. The Holy Spirit is essential for ministry to take place.

The very presence of the Holy Spirit **constitutes the church**. The body of Christ is the body of Christ because it is the dwelling in which God lives by His Spirit.

Ephesians 2:18 For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. 19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, 20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, 21 in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. 22 In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

The living presence of the Holy Spirit is an essential fact of the true church. What Christ has **accomplished historically and objectively**; the Holy Spirit applies subjectively and personally to the individual.

Is the work of the Holy Spirit essential in ministry? Absolutely!

See how this is confirmed in what happened around the coming of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost.

For your own consideration on **the meaning** of the coming of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, reflect on the details given in the book of Acts Chapter 2.

Acts 2:12 And all were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?"

3 Pentecost means that the Holy Spirit has come...

We live in the world where the Holy Spirit has come **as Jesus promised**. The Holy Spirit is present and at work...

3.1 To Confirm the Promises of God in the Word of God

Acts 2:16 ...this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel:

3.2 To Confer the Power of God on the people of God to be witnesses for God

Acts 1:8a But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses..."

3.3 To Clarify the Program of God for the Church of God

Acts 1:8b "... and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

3.4 To Credit the Pre-eminence of God with the salvation that is found in the Son of God

Acts 2:22 "Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know-- 23 this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.

3.5 To Commend the Person of Christ who is the Son of God

Acts 2:36 Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified."

3.6 To Convict the Public of their sin and their need of God

Acts 2:37 Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?"

3.7 To Convert the Person who repents before God

Acts 2:38 And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

3.8 To Compel the Penitent to come to God

Acts 2:40 And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, "Save yourselves from this crooked generation."

3.9 To Command the Priority of the Word of God in all the activities of the people of God

Acts 2:42 And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching...

3.10 To Call the People of God to join the fellowship of God based on the Word of God

Acts 2:42 "They devoted themselves to the fellowship,..."

3.11 To Celebrate the Price paid for our salvation by the Son of God

Acts 2:42 "They devoted themselves to ...the breaking of bread ..."

3.12 To Carry the Prayers of the saints to the throne of God

Acts 2:42 "They devoted themselves to prayer.

3.13 To Create the Privilege of sharing together in the provisions of God

Acts 2:44 And all who believed were together and had all things in common 45 And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need.

3.14 To Continue the Praise of God among the people of God

Acts 2:46 And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, Acts 2:47 praising God...

3.15 To Complete the Plan of God by perfecting the Church of God

Acts 2:47 ...And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.