



God's Spirit, Jesus' Church

Sunday's Teaching: In our fourth teaching in the CORE CONVICTIONS series, we focused on the relationship between who the Holy Spirit is and what He does, and how He invests in the unified ministry Jesus' church. Our key teaching idea (EFCA articles printed on back):

Commissioned by the Father through the Son,
the Spirit empowers
the remarkable renovation of Jesus' disciples (EFCA Article 6)
and the unified witness of Jesus' body. (EFCA Article 7)

Let's get STARTED – begin by

- (1) **reading out loud** together the 6th and 7th Statement of Faith (SOF) articles
- (2) **sharing something** that the Holy Spirit has “renovated” (something old changed out for something new) in your life since you became a disciple of Jesus
 - ♦ why was this change important in your life?
 - ♦ what renovations is the Spirit currently working on with you?

Let's Explore in the WORD

In the early church, apostles wrote letters to Churches (i.e., gathered bodies of believers) in cities around the Roman empire. In virtually every letter, the Spirit moves the apostles to urge “renovation” in the lives of their readers. We belong to a Father who longs for each of us to increasingly become, through the Spirit's working, like the Lord Jesus himself.

So, let's explore the changes one of these early letters called for. Tackle the following:

- (1) Read *Romans 12* together
- (2) Taking 10 minutes, and using a separate sheet of paper, have each person list any 10 “renovations” Paul calls for in these 21 verses. THEN...rank the 3-4 that you consider to be most important for you personally.
- (3) Taking 15 minutes, share your “Top 3” and why you identified these
- (4) Finally, what role does the Holy Spirit have in causing these “renovations” to happen?

* read and discuss the implications of Romans 8:1-8 and Galatians 5:16-18

Let's Prioritize APPLICATION

So...how does the Holy Spirit want to renovate you? In *God is Closer than You Think*, John Ortberg writes, “Spiritual growth, in one sense, is simply increasing our capacity to experience the presence of God. That means finding constant pleasure in His divine company, speaking humbly and lovingly with Him in all seasons, at every moment, without limiting the conversation in any way.”

Take moments to pray for each other's renovations! There is strength from the Spirit in such praying.

The Evangelical Free Church of America SOF

Statement of Faith articles

God

1. We believe in one God, Creator of all things, holy, infinitely perfect, and eternally existing in a loving unity of three equally divine Persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Having limitless knowledge and sovereign power, God has graciously purposed from eternity to redeem a people for Himself and to make all things new for His own glory.

The Bible

2. We believe that God has spoken in the Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, through the words of human authors. As the verbally inspired Word of God, the Bible is without error in the original writings, the complete revelation of His will for salvation, and the ultimate authority by which every realm of human knowledge and endeavor should be judged. Therefore, it is to be believed in all that it teaches, obeyed in all that it requires, and trusted in all that it promises.

The Human Condition

3. We believe that God created Adam and Eve in His image, but they sinned when tempted by Satan. In union with Adam, human beings are sinners by nature and by choice, alienated from God, and under His wrath. Only through God's saving work in Jesus Christ can we be rescued, reconciled and renewed.

Jesus Christ

4. We believe that Jesus Christ is God incarnate, fully God and fully man, one Person in two natures. Jesus—Israel's promised Messiah—was conceived through the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He lived a sinless life, was crucified under Pontius Pilate, arose bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father as our High Priest and Advocate.

The Work of Christ

5. We believe that Jesus Christ, as our representative and substitute, shed His blood on the cross as the perfect, all-sufficient sacrifice for our sins. His atoning death and victorious resurrection constitute the only ground for salvation.

The Holy Spirit

6. We believe that the Holy Spirit, in all that He does, glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ. He convicts the world of its guilt. He regenerates sinners, and in Him they are baptized into union with Christ and adopted as heirs in the family of God. He also indwells, illuminates, guides, equips and empowers believers for Christ-like living and service.

The Church

7. We believe that the true church comprises all who have been justified by God's grace through faith alone in Christ alone. They are united by the Holy Spirit in the body of Christ, of which He is the Head. The true church is manifest in local churches, whose membership should be composed only of believers. The Lord Jesus mandated two ordinances, baptism and the Lord's Supper, which visibly and tangibly express the gospel. Though they are not the means of salvation, when celebrated by the church in genuine faith, these ordinances confirm and nourish the believer.

Christian Living

8. We believe that God's justifying grace must not be separated from His sanctifying power and purpose. God commands us to love Him supremely and others sacrificially, and to live out our faith with care for one another, compassion toward the poor and justice for the oppressed. With God's Word, the Spirit's power, and fervent prayer in Christ's name, we are to combat the spiritual forces of evil. In obedience to Christ's commission, we are to make disciples among all people, always bearing witness to the gospel in word and deed.

Christ's Return

9. We believe in the personal, bodily and glorious return of our Lord Jesus Christ. The coming of Christ, at a time known only to God, demands constant expectancy and, as our blessed hope, motivates the believer to godly living, sacrificial service and energetic mission.

Response and Eternal Destiny

10. We believe that God commands everyone everywhere to believe the gospel by turning to Him in repentance and receiving the Lord Jesus Christ. We believe that God will raise the dead bodily and judge the world, assigning the unbeliever to condemnation and eternal conscious punishment and the believer to eternal blessedness and joy with the Lord in the new heaven and the new earth, to the praise of His glorious grace. Amen

What have you learned from the 1st three Articles as we've studied them in our Gather Worship Teaching?
