

Not A Fan

Self-empowered or Spirit-filled?

John 16

Fans tend to be comfortable talking about Jesus and God the Father and the Trinity, but the third member is kind of like the Cousin Eddie of the Trinity. You just don't know what to do with him.

The truth is, you can't be a follower unless you are filled with the Holy Spirit. Let me explain: When we try to follow Jesus without being filled daily with the Spirit we find ourselves frustrated by our failures and exhausted by our efforts.

Instead of following Christ and sticking close to Him in the storm, they become discouraged and keep their distance. Followers have discovered that doesn't work without the power of the Holy Spirit.

So, the question to you this morning is, are you a self-empowered fan or a spirit-filled follower?

- Jesus said in Acts 1: 8-9, "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.
- I'm sure they were overwhelmed as they watched Jesus leave. Its one thing to serve him while he is here. I'm sure the question came to their minds, "How are we going to do all of this?"
- Remember Jesus said, "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you." In John 16 we see Jesus having one of the last conversations with his followers before his arrest. He said in vs.7 "But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you."

- I have noticed a shift in terminology from the Old Testament to the New Testament. The Old Testament talks about God being with man. God being with Abraham or Joseph or Elisha. But the wording shifts from God with us to God in us!!
- God with you is good...God in you is better!!! Romans 8:11 “And if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of his Spirit who lives in you.”
- So, why do we need this power? Because we are weak. See, being filled with the power of the Spirit begins with an honest acknowledgment of our own weakness. Some of us go to great lengths to disguise our weakness.
- Can any of you guess what the most dreaded job interview question is?? What is your greatest weakness? How do you answer that one?!! You can't say, I'm never on time. I constantly procrastinate, and I have trouble getting along with others!!!
 - Monster.com is a job search website and it gives you a strategy for answering that question. For example: I'm such a perfectionist that I sometimes expect too much of myself. Or I work so hard that sometimes my life can be a little out of balance. In other words whatever you do, don't acknowledge your real weakness!!!
 - We try to portray that we are strong. We've got it all together and can handle it. The apostle Paul wrote “I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”
- Paul understood that living in the power of the Spirit means shining a light on our weakness. Fans learned to show everyone their strengths and that no one finds out about their weaknesses.

- Galatians 5:25 states, “Since we live in the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.” It’s hard to stay in step with the Spirit when you only acknowledge his presence once a week on Sunday!!
- Followers of Jesus understand that it’s a journey they were never to take alone. Instead we keep in step with the Spirit and he supernaturally gives us the strength and power we need.
- This morning if you want to be empowered by the Holy Spirit and come clean with your weaknesses, then begin to make your way down to the front and get ready to have your life changed forever!!!!