

“The Spirit of Wisdom”

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King City United Church
York United Ministries
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Prayer for Illumination

Living God, living Word, you still have many things to say to us. Speak, and we will try to bear them. By your word, may the Spirit guide us into all truth, that our lives may glorify you. Amen.

Scripture Readings

Proverbs 8:1-4, 10-12

¹ Does not wisdom call and understanding raise her voice? ² On the heights, beside the way, at the crossroads she takes her stand; ³ beside the gates in front of the town, at the entrance of the portals she cries out: ⁴ “To you, O people, I call, and my cry is to all who live. ¹⁰ Take my instruction instead of silver and knowledge rather than choice gold, ¹¹ for wisdom is better than jewels, and all that you may desire cannot compare with her. ¹² I, wisdom, live with prudence, and I attain knowledge and discretion.

John 16:12-15

¹² “I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. ¹³ When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. ¹⁴ He will glorify me because he will take what is mine and declare it to you. ¹⁵ All that the Father has is mine. For this reason I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

This is the word of God
Thanks be to God.

<Child in All of Us>

Hello, my friends who are young at heart. Today I have to explain a really complicated word used at church: Trinity. What is Trinity? You may have heard it more than several times: Trinity. It sounds like a word about three, like, printer, scanner, and fax machine; all in one. That's not wrong. These three represent God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. The Church explained these three characters in the most complicated and confusing debates. So, some Christians leave the church due to this illogical or at least weird explanation that they cannot accept. But my friends, don't worry about it too much. It's not a must to understand it fully in order to become a true Christian. This is like if you cannot understand your father who is putting some money into an RESP account for your future education, not buying computer game items, which is totally unacceptable to you, that doesn't mean that the man is not your father. Am I right? Sometimes I do not understand my father, but that doesn't mean he is not my father. Our God has a mysterious character that we cannot fully understand, but that doesn't mean God is not my Father God. No worries. Our lack of wisdom about the trinity doesn't affect the divine relationship between you and God. Instead, we intentionally try to understand what the Holy Spirit is because it is curious.

You know, Jesus was crucified and resurrected. When he ascended to heaven, Jesus informed his disciples that the Holy Spirit would be with them.

Jesus said the Holy Spirit is about truth. And the disciples experienced the Holy Spirit as a healing power and the strong power of miracles. We cannot explain it very well because we didn't experience it. Then how is the Holy Spirit working in us? Can you explain?

Hm... how about this? When you are praying to God or working for God, a new idea or an innovative thought may have come upon you. And you know that the thought is not from you, but a very new way to serve God. Wouldn't that be a work of the Holy Spirit within you? If you voluntarily dedicate yourself to serving God and serving others throughout your life, wouldn't that be a work of the Holy Spirit within us? If you hear the inner voice of truth and deep love towards the poor and the vulnerable, wouldn't that be a work of the Holy Spirit? If you are angry when you hear the news of violence in Ukraine, wouldn't that be the heart that the Holy Spirit gives to you? If you decide to spend your time and resources to make peace in the nations that have struggles at their borders or the tension of war in South Korea, or have a bloody democratic civil movement in Myanmar, wouldn't it be the work of the Holy Spirit? If we feel angry and want to mourn with the victims and their families of the Residential

Schools in Canada, wouldn't that be the work of the Holy Spirit? Yes, my friends, those are the work of the Holy Spirit. As Jesus said, the main characteristic of the Holy Spirit is truth. And where there is pure and innocent truth, there is the work of the Holy Spirit. In other words, when the truth speaks to you, that is the work of the Holy Spirit.

My friends, I hope you can experience the movement, the touch of the Holy Spirit in critical moments in your life and in every moment of your life. The Holy Spirit is of truth. Let the truth speak to you. God bless my friends!

<Reflection>

How do we understand the Holy Spirit? Nowadays, people say the word "holy" in situations that are not "holy" at all. Is there any usage in our life of the word "holy" in a real holy situation? Besides our current English usage of "holy," Christians have used it to describe something sacred. What is holy? How does the concept or meaning of holiness come to you? When do you feel the holiness in your life? It's not that easy, but, at the same time, it's not that hard.

Now let's find out together. Please focus on the cross over here: Just look at this, and stay focused on the cross for a

moment. How can you define "holiness" in your life? And when can you say that something is holy in your life? Any unexpected sensation? Awe? Wonder? A moment of enlightenment, a life-changing decision, or a calling from God? Or a moment of witnessing new life or death? I would say holiness comes first to us, it stirs our hearts and mind with a sensation of confusion, and then it creates another type of sacredness in us.

Holy Sacred Spirit, breathe your breath on us;
Holy Sacred Spirit, breathe your life in us.

I can't explain every aspect of the Holy Spirit today; however, there are a few things I'd like to briefly highlight about the Holy Spirit in the Bible. The Bible says the Holy Spirit is like breath, wind, the source of life who resides in our body, sometimes fire, power, knowledge, wisdom, and a counselor who gives enlightenment or advice. The Holy Spirit is the One who prays beside us when we pray and a guide who leads us to a life-changing moment and every moment in our daily lives.

In short, the Holy Spirit penetrates us from outside, stirs us inside, resides within us, transforms us into a being that possesses holiness, and sanctifies us as the children of God. I know this explanation holds complicated words.



But listen to the life of Dr. Francis William Schofield. Dr. Schofield was born in 1889 and immigrated to Canada in 1907. He had an academic career at the University of Toronto, but after his marriage to Alice, they decided to dedicate themselves to being missionaries in Korea. It was 1916, and you cannot imagine how miserable Korea was. Japan made Korea their colony in 1910, and the atrocities were brutal. While witnessing the tragedy, Dr. Schofield resisted against the Japanese Empire and became an advocate of human rights, the Korean Independence Movement, and the Christian faith. He also contributed to the education at Seoul National University, conducting Bible lessons for students and supporting two orphanages and a vocational school. He was awarded the Republic of Korea Medal of National Foundation in 1968 and passed in 1970. He was buried in the Korean National Cemetery in the patriots' section - the only foreigner to be honoured so, and here, in Toronto, Ontario, Koreans erected his statue at Schofield Memorial Garden within



the Toronto Zoo in 2012.¹

I can't imagine that he left his academic career at the University of Toronto; I can't imagine he dedicated his young and tireless life to serving and working for a poor colony of the Japanese Empire. I can only say that the fire of the Holy Spirit must have kindled at the very moment of his decision to become a missionary. I can only describe that his disseminating works as a missionary were stirred by the strong wind of the Holy Spirit. And I can only believe that his passionate and compassionate works for the Korean people were accelerated by the wisdom and power of the Holy Spirit. Look, Korea, a poor nation of Confucianism and Buddhism, has now become a developed country with more than 30% of the population of active Christians and has sent more than 27,000 missionaries worldwide. Can this be a holy and sacred story, the story that the Holy Spirit works in our time? Canadian Churches and your great grandparents' generation established a deep relationship with Korean churches and their society.

You may remember that I preached about young Canadian soldiers' sacrifice for Korea in the Korean War in 1950. It was in 1952 that Canada deployed over 26,000 men to defend South

¹ "Dr. Schofield statue unveiled in zoo's memorial garden," https://www.toronto.com/news/dr-schofield-statue-unveiled-in-zoos-memorial-garden/article_8ddaea3d-631a-54ca-92a8-c4e40484fd93.html; access as of June 10, 2022.

Korea, and the battle I mentioned was the Battle of *Kapyung*. The Canadian army of the 2nd Battalion of Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, called 2PPCLI, which is about 700 Canadian soldiers, brutally fought against Chinese troops on Hill 677 in *Kapyung*. And I explained in detail how the Canadian Army 2PPCLI saved a lot of refugees and the Korean Army who had to retrieve through the valley, passing the Hill 677. Young Canadians fought for peace and democracy in Korea, and their fighting spirit allows us to work for peace, declaring an end to the war in the Korean peninsula. As a result, Canada and Korea have developed a deeper relationship.

In that relationship building, has the Holy Spirit worked? Has the Holy Spirit worked in disseminating Gospel, fighting for Koreans, and saving the lives of the refugees in the Korean War? Yes, I believe in the works of the Holy Spirit, who resides in us for the world.

Then, let me shift the gear of the timeline from our great grandparents' generation to the 21st century. Although we can watch live streaming news while even walking, we still witness human violence and war around the world because human greed is not controllable. However, at the same time, although we, humankind, can travel to the moon and Mars, the work of the Holy Spirit is still ongoing. Therefore, our prayers for ending the

war in Korea, prayer for ending the war and war crime in Ukraine, and prayer for peace all over the world are one of the cores of the works of the Holy Spirit. Our works as an agent of the Holy Spirit are still in need and still valid.

Sisters, brothers and friends. Jesus says that when the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth. And we know that the truth is not very hard. The truth is not coming from a highly sophisticated scientific logic or claim but from loving, giving, dedicating, sharing, and serving. And as Jesus says, the Holy Spirit will guide you in doing so. May the Holy Spirit come to you, stir you, confuse you, and transform you so that the Spirit One and you create sacred holiness together today.

Let us pray: O God, we remember how you worked and walked with Schofield. Let the story speak to us, and let us be the part of the work of the Holy Spirit. Holy Sacred Spirit, breathe your breath on us; Holy Sacred Spirit, breathe your life in us. Amen.