

WHY IS GOD BORING?
Third in a Series: "Belief in a Post-modern World"
August 3, 2014 –Communion –I John 4: 13-21
The Church of the Covenant

Why is God boring? Well, God is not boring for those of us who are in Christ, who believe in God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit; God is not boring for those of us in whom the Spirit of the Living God dwells. So whenever someone says that "God is boring" what they are really saying is they do not understand, nor believe in, nor have the presence and the power and the work of the Holy Spirit in their own lives. Sad, really, this self-admission. God is not boring –the lives of some people are spiritually boring because they know not the Holy Spirit.

In this three-part sermon series on the Apostles' Creed we conclude today with the third part of the creed, that which begins, *"I believe in the Holy Ghost..."*. Our scripture from I John says this: *"By this we know that we abide in HIM and HE in us, because HE has given us of HIS own Spirit."* (I John 4: 13) We know that Jesus Christ abides in us, that Jesus lives in us, because of the Holy Spirit living and abiding in us. We abide in Christ, we live our lives to HIM, because HE lives in us. The Holy Spirit is the *"seal"* which marks us as a Christian. (Ephesians 1: 13) In Old Testament times the Spirit was the possession of the prophets and the Temple only. But with the coming of Jesus Christ the Holy Spirit broke free, was poured out now to those who believe in Jesus Christ as Lord and as Savior. The Spirit ceased to live in a stone temple and now lives in *"temples made without hands"* (Acts 7: 48); the Holy Spirit has come to indwell the heart of the Christian. The Holy Spirit now has come to indwell you and me. *"Do you not know that you are the temple of the Holy Spirit?"* asks the scriptures (I Corinthians 3: 16). So when you stand up and say, "I believe in the Holy Ghost" you are saying not that you believe in the Holy Spirit in your mind; you are saying I believe that the Holy Spirit lives, dwells and abides in me. And that, beloved, is exciting, not boring. To be sure there are many people who like only an empty "religiosity", an empty "going through the motions of faith", a saying of words that has nothing to do with the reality of their lives. The Bible speaks of these kind of people as people *"Holding the form of religion"* but who *"deny its power"* (2 Timothy 3: 5). They go through the motions of religion but they have not the Holy Spirit alive in their heart. Religiosity without the Holy Spirit is indeed boring; but Christianity in the power of the Holy Spirit is the most exciting thing this side of heaven.

Our scripture from I John notes that we know we abide in God and that God lives and abides in us, because God through Jesus Christ alone has given us of "his own Spirit". The creative Spirit of the universe has come to dwell in you. All the power and the might of Almighty God has come to give you life. The WORD which first dwelt in the Lord Jesus Christ, the WORD which became flesh in the flesh of Jesus has now come to take up residency in your flesh. Our scripture goes on to say that *"Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God."* (v. 15) Why do we stand up and say the Apostles Creed? Because we are confessing with our lips that Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of the Living God, and when we do, Jesus lives and abides in us, and when we do the Holy Spirit lives and abides in us. When we confess Jesus as Lord then *"love is perfected in us"*. We cannot love God and we cannot love one another without the presence of Jesus Christ alive in our heart by the presence and the power of the Holy Spirit. Love is not separate from Jesus. Love is manifested in our heart and in our life through the Holy Spirit. By the way, when we know that we know that we know that we know that the Holy Spirit is alive in us through faith then it is, as this scripture says, *"we have confidence for the day of judgment"* (v. 17) How do we know we're going to heaven? How do we know that indeed we are a Christian? How do we know we will be judged and admitted to glory? Because of the Holy Spirit that dwells in us. When we say, "I believe in the Holy Ghost" and indeed the Holy Spirit

dwells within, we are also saying we have connected our lives to the most exciting, dynamic, life-giving, transformational, exceptional Spirit in the universe. God dwells in us and we dwell in God when God lives in us by the presence and the power of the Holy Spirit. We profess this in the Apostles Creed.

Let me connect the dots for you...Open your bulletin and follow along with me, please. The first part of the Apostles Creed says that "God is the Father Almighty"; God is a personal God, and intimate, not a far-away kind of God. God is our Father because the Holy Spirit abides in us. Second, Jesus Christ was "conceived of the Holy Ghost"; the Holy Spirit came and in Christ became the perfect merger of flesh and Spirit. And by faith, when we profess Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, then Jesus comes and literally dwells in us, and we know that because the Holy Spirit comes and is active in our life. This incarnate Spirit, Jesus and the Spirit alive within the heart of the believer, is the very definition of what it means to be a Christian. We know Jesus lived because Jesus lives within our heart. Jesus does the miraculous, answers prayer, is present and alive in worship, heals, restores, strengthens and revives and we know this to be true because the Holy Spirit in our own life and heart has shown this to be true. Do we believe in miracles? Yes, because we have seen the Spirit's miraculous work in our own lives. One day Jesus will return to "judge the quick and the dead" as the Apostles Creed says. The "quick" are those who are alive in the Spirit; they are quickened, if you will, and made alive by the Living Spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ, He who was dead, but is alive forevermore. In that day of judgment God will see the Holy Spirit alive in us and we are judged "the quick" and are given as a gift eternal life forever. Eternity, where we spend it, is not boring, it is vitally important and exciting. The Holy Spirit living in the heart of the believer goes across every line we human beings draw in this life. The Holy Spirit allows us to believe in a "catholic church", a universal church, that cuts across every denomination and every tradition and theology. Those in whom the Spirit of the Living God dwells are the church. The Holy Spirit doesn't care what our ethnicity is, or our color, our politics, or our status in life. God shows no partiality; God's Spirit cuts across every dividing line we throw at it from our world and culture. God's Spirit creates the church. It connects us to those who have passed away before us in the communion of the saints; it brings what Jesus Christ did on a cross for us present to today; it makes the cross real for us; it brings the forgiveness of sins up close and personal to us in our heart. And that same Spirit, the Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead on that first Easter Sunday, is the same Spirit, when it is present and active in our lives, that shall raise us from the dead and that is why we may believe in *"the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting."* Do you see how the creed and the Holy Spirit connect the dots?

So, is the Holy Spirit alive in you? Is church boring or the most exciting place on the face of this earth to be? Do you or do you not believe in the Holy Ghost? And do you or do you not believe that the Holy Spirit has come personally, just for you, today to indwell your heart and give you power for daily living and eternal life when this life is no more? We come to a time of communion, a time where we will commune with the Living God, a time when God's Spirit will come to minister to our souls, a time when our sins are forgiven, Jesus is made real and alive, the communion of the saints hovers around us as a cloud of mighty witnesses, a time where we experience the real presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, a time where our own brokenness is healed by a broken body and new life is poured out for us through the blood poured out for us at Calvary by Jesus...Invite the Holy Spirit to be at work in your life and the Holy Spirit will...So who will stand and affirm with me that God is not boring, that God is not dead, but that HE is alive and well in our hearts and in this church and in our world through the Holy Spirit? Will you please stand and say the Apostles Creed with me????

*By: The Reverend Dr. Stuart D. Broberg, The Church of the Covenant, Washington, PA
IF THIS HAS BLESSED YOU, PLEASE PASS IT ALONG TO A FRIEND!*