PREACHING & TEACHING

Sermon on the Holy Spirit

Preaching notes on the Holy Spirit for a mixed congregation, where the subject arrives carrying a century of denominational argument and half the room is braced for something. Includes how to preach it without either defending or attacking a tradition nobody in the room chose.

topic notes · 4 segments

Topic notes. Movement two is about the room rather than the text, and on this subject the room is the harder problem.

BEFORE YOU RECORD

- This is the one doctrine where a congregation's prior experience varies enormously within a single room. Some have been in churches where it was everything and some where it was never mentioned, and both groups arrive defensive.
- Pentecost Sunday gives you the occasion without needing a reason. If you are preaching this outside Pentecost, say why now, or the congregation will spend the first five minutes wondering what has happened.

01. Three texts, three costs

choose one

[Romans 8 is the safest and the deepest]

Acts 2. The obvious choice, and it commits you to addressing tongues, which you should then do plainly rather than glancing off it.

John 14:15-27. The Spirit as advocate and the promise not to leave them orphaned. Quieter, relational, and it lets you preach the Spirit as a person rather than a force.

Romans 8:26-27. The Spirit praying for us when we do not know what to ask, in groans too deep for words. The most pastorally useful passage on the subject and the least preached.

02. The room, not the text

the real difficulty

[name the history once and move past it]

Some of you come from churches where this was the centre of everything and some from churches where it was mentioned once a year. A few of you were hurt by what was done in this doctrine's name.

Saying that out loud, once, costs thirty seconds and lets everybody relax enough to listen. Skipping it means half the room spends the sermon working out which side you are on.

03. The trap

avoid this

[a topic rather than a person]

Preaching the Spirit as an influence, an energy, or a set of effects. The language slides towards it easily, and a congregation that hears it for years ends up with a two-person Trinity and an atmosphere.

04. An angle worth taking

if you want it

[the fruit, as one thing]

The fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5 is singular. One fruit, nine facets, not a menu of nine you might specialise in. That grammatical detail undoes a great deal of the self-assessment this passage usually produces.

USAGE

Free to use. Preach it, adapt it, record it, publish under your own name. No credit required.

Record it with Hilite — hellohilite.com

Studio-quality audio from your laptop mic. Free to start.