

3-8-26 He Loves Me - Unconditionally Empowered

Overview

This message emphasizes that the "impossible" tasks Jesus calls us to—such as giving grace when slighted, forgiving the unforgivable, and loving people based on who they could be rather than what they've done—are only achievable through the empowering presence of the Holy Spirit. Jesus sent the Holy Spirit (the Paraclete/Helper) to live *inside* believers after His ascension, providing internal guidance, power to overcome sin, and the ability to live a godly life. The sermon outlines three practical steps to fully experience this empowerment: stop resisting the Holy Spirit, stop grieving Him, and actively invite Him in.

Main Points

1. The Holy Spirit as the Better Helper

- Jesus said it was *better* for Him to leave so the Holy Spirit could come (John 14:15–17; 16:7, 13–14).
- The Spirit is the Paraclete ("one called alongside") to help, support, and defend.
- Key shift: Before Acts 2, the Spirit was *with* people; after Pentecost, He lives *in* believers (John 14:17).

2. The Spirit's Transformative Role (like DNA directing every cell)

- He frees from sin's power, leads to life and peace, and confirms our identity as God's children (Romans 8:1–16).
- He provides everything needed for godliness, enabling us to grow toward love (2 Peter 1:3–8).

3. Three Essentials to Let the Holy Spirit Work Fully

- **Stop resisting Him** — Stop pushing back or ignoring His conviction (James 4:17; Acts 7:51).
 - Categories: "I know," "I think I know" (step out in faith – Hebrews 11:6), "I don't know" (seek God).
 - Resisting leads to separation from God's best (like experiencing a taste of "hell" on earth).
- **Stop grieving Him** — Stop causing Him sorrow through sinful choices (Ephesians 4:30).
 - Persistent grieving can lead God to "hand us over" to our desires (Romans 1:20–26 – *paradidōmi*: turn over).
 - He steps back from participating in ungodly behavior, yet remains ready to restore upon repentance.
- **Invite Him in** — Jesus and the Spirit do not force entry (Revelation 3:20).
 - Simply ask and welcome Him into every area of life (Luke 11:13 – the Father gives the Spirit to those who ask).

Reflection Questions

1. Over the past weeks, which "impossible" command (grace, forgiveness, seeing people's potential) has felt most difficult or impossible to you personally? Why?
2. Can you recall a recent moment when you sensed the Holy Spirit convicting, prompting, or warning you? Did you respond, resist, or ignore it?
3. How does the DNA analogy help you understand the Holy Spirit's intended role in your daily decisions and character?

4. In which areas of life do you most often grieve the Holy Spirit (anger, habits, attitudes, relationships)? What sorrow might He feel when you choose those over obedience?
5. Where in your life right now do you need to stop saying "no" or "later" and instead give a clear "yes" to the Spirit's leading?

Application

- **This week:** Identify one specific area where you've been resisting or grieving the Holy Spirit (e.g., unforgiveness, habitual sin, reluctance to serve/give).
- Confess it honestly to God.
- Intentionally invite the Holy Spirit into that exact situation/area with a simple, daily prayer: "Holy Spirit, I invite You fully into [this marriage / anger / habit / relationship / decision]. Lead me, empower me, change me."
- Take one faith step this week in the "I think I know" or "I know" category—act on what you already sense He is asking, even without the full picture.
- Pay attention to any inner peace, conviction, or new strength that follows as evidence of His work.

Group Discussion Prompts

1. Share one "impossible" thing from recent sermons that the Holy Spirit has been highlighting in your life. How has it felt—frustrating, hopeful, overwhelming?
2. How does knowing the Holy Spirit lives *inside* you (not just with you) change the way you think about overcoming sin or loving difficult people?
3. Of the three actions (stop resisting, stop grieving, invite Him in), which one feels most urgent for you right now, and why?
4. Have you ever experienced the Holy Spirit "stepping back" during a season of persistent sin or resistance? What brought you back to restoration?
5. If everyone in the group genuinely invited the Holy Spirit into one specific, messy area of life this week, how might that change our families, church, and community? Pray for each other in those exact areas before closing.