

“Are you plugged in?”

Written October of 2013

Scripture Reading: Galatians 2:20

Introduction

Today's Message is one that is of utmost importance for all who call themselves "Christian". God willing with the help of the Holy Spirit we will gain a deeper understanding of what it truly means to call ourselves "Christian". Today's Message will be more in the format of an interactive Bible Study, because the goal of today is to get deeper into the Word of God. Let us bow our heads in prayer so that we may invite the Holy Spirit to lead us to ALL truth and understanding!

Sermon

In order for us to understand today's Message title a little better I would like to better define the words "**plugged in**". **We are going to do a group illustration of this phrase and I would like everyone's participation.**

Illustration:

What do you think about when you hear this little phrase: "**plugged in**"? Probably most of you immediately think of: plugging in a TV, a toaster, a coffee maker, computer, cell phone charger or maybe a lamp.

Now ask yourselves this: WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF PLUGGING SOMETHING IN? I know it seems silly but, believe it or not this is the main point of today's Message. Most everyone is thinking well that's obvious, you must have those items plugged in so that they can be used and work probably. **If not they are practically useless without them being connected to a power source. Do we all agree on these points we just talked about?**

I want you to think about a lamp in a dark room. Now if this lamp isn't plugged in is it effective in its Purpose, is it fulfilling what it was designed for? Think really hard about this my dear Brothers and Sisters...

Many of you have answered different things but along the same point, if the lamp isn't plugged in it cannot fulfill its PURPOSE and WHAT IT WAS DESIGNED FOR. So basically whoever created these things wasted their time if we never plug them in. Now, obviously we didn't come to church to discuss the importance of electricity in our lives but let's begin tie all of this in to today's Message.

Let's turn in our Bibles to: **Matthew 5:14-16**

This Scripture tells us two important things, what do you think they are? **1)**. We are called to be lights in this World of darkness. *(that's the easy one to understand)*. **2)**. Just as we talked about in our opening illustration we have to be plugged INTO GOD. **We can NOT be an effective LIGHT for God if we are not plugged into Him.**

Think about the statements we made in the illustration that we all agreed upon, if that object isn't plugged in, **it cannot and will not fulfill its purpose and what it was designed for.** We also agreed that if that object is never plugged in by us, then whoever created or designed that object basically wasted his/her time.

My dear Brothers and Sisters God has given us the Ultimate Gift of Salvation by His Grace, we all know what **John 3:16** says: ***"For God so loved the World (you and me) that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever (that means everybody and anybody) believeth in Him shall not perish but have ever lasting life."***

Brethren God gave us Jesus Christ to die a horrible death on the Cross on Calvary. But the important question this morning is WHY? Why did God make this sacrifice my dear brothers and sisters? WHY did He (God) sacrifice His only begotten Son for us? I will tell you why...Sin had separated us from being connected to God, or let me put this another way, SIN had kept us from being truly plugged into God.

But God in His infinite LOVE and MERCY sent His Son Jesus Christ to die and pay our debt of sin, so that we could get PLUGGED into Him again. This is the only way that we can be true LIGHTS in this World.

As we stated with our opening illustration, if we are NOT plugged into God, we cannot and will not fulfill our PURPOSE and WHAT GOD HAS DESIGNED AND CREATED US FOR. Brothers and Sisters we will waste the precious Blood of Jesus Christ if don't learn how to get truly plugged into GOD.

The next question I have for you is: what is the first step to getting plugged into God? Let's turn in our Bibles to the story of the night time encounter Jesus had with Nicodemus, because Nicodemus asked Jesus the same question? Let's turn to: **John 3:3-7**, we will go verse by verse to capture the importance of this passage.

So now that we have read up to **Verse 6**, what is the first step to getting plugged into God? **You are correct to be BORN AGAIN through Baptism.** Now this morning a brother from your Congregation was baptized by water in the ocean, and before we began today's Message we laid hands on him to invoke a double portion Baptism of the Spirit of God into his life. There is a very important two part equation that happens with the BORN Again Experience.

First you must be baptized by water, which symbolizes remission of sin, and death to the old-self in those baptismal waters. Second the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. I would like to pause here for a second and help to lay down a foundation of understanding of why this Baptism of the Spirit is so VITAL and IMPORTANT FOR OUR LIVES. Keep your finger or book mark on **John chapter 3** and we are going to briefly jump to **Matthew Chapter 3 Verse 10 and 11**.

I wanted to begin with **Verse 10**, because it is yet again reinforcing what our opening illustration showed. Either get plugged in or you WILL perish. But the focal point of this passage is **Verse 11**. John baptized in water for the Remission of sin, which we now know is the first part of what? Yes, you are correct the “Born Again” experience. But lets look at what this text is stating at the end of it.

Who is this “**HE**” John the Baptist is referring to? You are correct, it is Jesus Christ; now John the Baptist says He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and fire. Now, if I have no knowledge of the Bible and I randomly open the Bible and see this text for the first time ever, I would get a little scared because its talking about a Ghost, maybe Casper with a flame thrower, because its talking about fire.

Is this text talking about the Physical Dimension or Spiritual Dimension? We have to be very conscious when reading the Scriptures and try to apply what you read to both the Physical and Spiritual Dimension. Of course, John the Baptist is speaking in a Spiritual context here. Now we all know that the Holy Ghost is the Spirit of God or Holy Spirit as we commonly refer to Him. But what is this fire it is talking about, and what is the importance of using this particular word to describe the second half of the “Born Again” experience?

Let’s look at the word FIRE in the context of the Physical dimension. I will give you a simple illustration to understand this word better. Have you ever heard of the Division of Forestry doing a “controlled burn”? If not this is when they purposely set fire to certain areas of the forest. You may ask yourself, well what’s the purpose of that? Its real simple, when they do these controlled burns it burns away weeds and dead debris that keeps the trees and other vital plant from growing, in essence the fire purifies the land and makes it fertile for new growth to take place.

Here is a question for you, we all saw just recently the fires that broke in the mountains out west, and seeing those pictures on the news was an eye opener of how quickly the fire was moving, but also that it burned everything in its path. So what does fire do? It consumes and purifies EVERYTHING! So, with the fire we saw in the news could there be just one tree in the middle of the forest standing and everything else burned around it? No, because a fire consumes everything in its path.

This illustration is important so that we can understand what the Fire of God does when we are Baptized by the Holy Spirit. **My dear brothers and sisters the Fire of God in our mind, body and spirit consumes every evidence of sin.** Now just like the forest fire can there be one or two trees standing in middle of that fire, no. If we truly invite the Holy Spirit to baptize us, we can't be holding on to one or two sins, we have to lay them at the Cross and ask God to help us with those things.

Brethren the Fire of God purifies our body, it sanctifies it. Now I would like to elaborate on this word **SANCTIFY**, because we see it in many places in the Bible, but few people have truly begun to understand the depth of what this word means. Webster's dictionary literal translation of this word means:

- **Sanctify** = set apart as holy, free from sin, outward and inward holiness.

The only way you can get a deeper meaning of this word is through asking God to help you get a deeper understanding of it, however we will lay this basic foundation today for this word. Spiritually speaking, Sanctification is the process of making something Holy, and special inwardly and outwardly. Lets expand on this word by now re-reading the texts we read earlier in **John 3:5-7. Jesus tells us clearly we must be Born Again!!!**

***Notice what is says in Verse 6, "that which is born of the Spirit is spirit".**

This text is telling us that in being BORN AGAIN we are connecting ourselves to the Spiritual Dimension. So what's the big deal in that, what is the big deal that our bodies are SANCTIFIED, RECREATED AND MADE HOLY? Let me ask you this: **Where do you believe God dwells?** Let's look our following text found in: **I Corinthians 3:16.**

Wrap your minds around this my dear Brothers and Sisters, when we are baptized by the Holy Spirit we are being SANCTIFIED or made HOLY so that not only does our body become a temple of the Holy Spirit, but also of God and Jesus Christ. Think about this my dear friends, the Great I AM who created galaxies by just speaking them lives in us. We become ONE in the Father, Son and Holy Ghost because he lives and dwells in us.

Religion teaches the opposite of this; they teach that up there (*in the Heavens*) is God looking down on us waiting for us to mess up so that He can punish us. But this is a backwards mentality. Paul tells us in **Romans 12:2** that because of the Baptism of the Spirit "**our minds are renewed**" because of the Born Again experience. In turn we will know the Will of God because he dwells in us.

This is why teaching people to have a RELATIONSHIP WITH CHRIST is so important. Because when we have a relationship with God, we have intimacy with HIM, FELLOWSHIP WITH HIM and that is when we begin to understand that **HE IS NOT UP THERE; BUT IN HERE** (*pointing to my heart*) **LIVING AND DWELLING IN OUR HEARTS!!!**

To those who follow Religion all this that have said about the Spiritual Dimension and the Supernatural act of being Born Again is foolishness to them. But the Scriptures tell us two things about those people.

- **I Corinthians 2:14** tells us: Spiritual things can ONLY be spiritually discerned. So, if you have understood what God has spoken through me today, it is the Holy Spirit helping you to understand it NOT ME!
- The second thing is that God is clear in his Word and tells us: ***“The wisdom of men is foolishness unto God” I Corinthians 3:19.***

When we began today’s Message today most of you applied the phrase **“PLUGGED IN”** to the Physical Dimension; but I pray that through the Holy Spirit you have gained a deeper knowledge of the fact that when we are Born Again, we plug ourselves into to the POWER OF GOD.

In turn we are able to fulfill our Mission as True Christians to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom as it tells us in: **Mark 16:15-18. I love what it says in Verse 17 & 18 “and these signs shall follow them that believe”, because we are plugged into God and He dwells in us, we share in the same Power He has and we can do mighty works for the Lord and His Kingdom.**

In Closing

I would like to go back to our opening Scripture reading: **Galatians 2:20** and I would like to focus in on the last part of the text where it says: ***“and the life that I now live in the flesh I live by the FAITH of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me”***. When we are PLUGGED INTO GOD we will live by the same Faith that Christ Jesus had, always believing in Gods’ Supernatural Power.

Are you living by the Faith of Jesus?

*I would like to close with a brief little story that illustrates this.

There was a small town in South America which was a farming town, and it hadn’t rained for (4) months and all the crops were about to be totally wiped out because of the drought. So, all the Religious leaders and the biggest and most well-known Pastors came up with the idea to hike up the tallest mountain to come together a pray for rain.

So here all of these great women and men of God went up the mountain, dressed in their best clothes, all proudly carrying their Bibles in their hands so that they could all go and pray for rain. Picture this scene, hundreds and almost thousand of them climbing up this mountain dressed like if they are going to church.

Then here comes two small children making their way through the crowd up the mountain, and as they passed all the adults starting balking and a making fun of them because they were not dressed in church clothes, but in bright yellow rain coats, wearing rain boots and they each carried an umbrella in their hands.

I ask you this question: who had the greatest FAITH? If you said the two children you would be 100% correct. Because, they prepared themselves for the blessing of the rain. They were ***“walking by Faith not by sight”***. These young children understood what it meant to be PLUGGED INTO THE POWER SOURCE (who is God Almighty). Religion can only take you so far, my dear Brothers and Sisters and ultimately puts God in a box, which limits Gods’ Power. **But being Born Again helps you to be PLUGGED INTO GODS’ INFINITE SUPERNATURAL POWER!**

Altar Call

The purpose of today’s Message was for you to truly understand the Spiritual significance of this phrase and ask yourself **“ARE YOU PLUGGED IN”?** As the last song plays, I want to invite you to come forward and ask God to “Plug you in” and to help guide you into ONENESS with HIM. God bless you all.