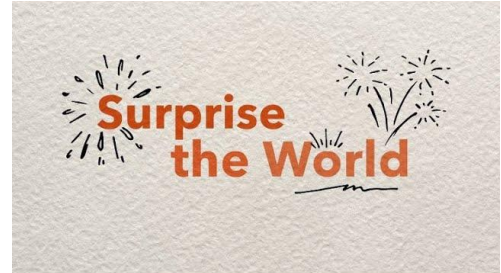


## **The Sermon - In 10 Sentences Or Less**

### Surprise the World (Week 5) - Listening to the Spirit:



1. Just the mere notion that God and His Spirit communicate with us in a real way, and in a way that we can hear (if not with our ears) is a remarkable claim.
2. Romans 8.16 says that God's Spirit speaks directly to our spirit, and in John 14.26 Jesus says that the Spirit will be an ongoing teacher to us, like unto His own presence with His disciples.
3. Chp. 5 in the book asks us to set aside one time a week to eliminate distractions, let God in, and then heed His promptings (the Lent 2021 series, "Your Home Spiritual Workout," would be a good resource for practices you can use to do that).
4. When we do this, we can expect that the Spirit will be speaking to us about going out into the world like Christ Himself did (John 20.21-22) and giving us the fortitude and power to do so (Acts 1.8).
5. As the book "Missional Spirituality" puts it, this time with the Spirit will give us a strong "divine must" or "spiritual necessity." We will sense the spiritual urgency and conviction to go and love our neighbors in Christ's name.
6. According to The Brief Statement of Faith (1984), we should expect that this in part will look like the Spirit "unmasking the idols in the church and culture."
7. Human beings are perpetual idol-making factories (as John Calvin put it), and God's own people are hardly immune from that, as the scriptural narrative makes clear.
8. Idolatry happens when a) we make good things into ultimate or most important things, b) we find our security and grounding in anything other than God, and c) we warp Christ or God into our own image and likeness.
9. We can also expect that the Spirit will be helping us "hear those voices long silenced."
10. It's best to understand how this will work at a micro, not macro, level: the Spirit will be directing your eyes and ears to people you may have been inadvertently ignoring or marginalizing.

## **Quotes to Remember**

From The Brief Statement of Faith (1984): *"In a broken and fearful world, the Spirit gives us courage to pray without ceasing, to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior, to unmask idolatries in church and culture, to hear the voices of peoples long silenced, and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace."*

From Martin Luther: *"Whatever your heart clings to and confides in, that is really your God, your functional savior."*

From Voltaire (French philosopher, 1700s): *"If God created us in his own image, we have more than reciprocated."*

## **Prayer for the Week**

From The Church of England: *"God, may Your Spirit, who hovered over the waters when the world was created, breathe into us the new life He gives. May Your Spirit, who spoke through the prophets, speak through us. And may Your Spirit, who empowered and sent the first church, now bring the world the love of the risen Christ through us, amen."*