

Holy Fire
The Dove – Matthew 3:16; John 1:32-33

Introduction:

1. **1 Chronicles 12:32 says Sons of Issachar, men who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do"**
2. Today I am going to attempt to thread a very fine needle
3. As I previously have said everything we hear from the pulpits whether on TV or this venue must line up with scripture
4. If we are truly going to experience God in our midst and in our lives, we have to move away from that place where we think that come to church to experience God when the "professionals" do their thing
5. Many think that God is "out there" and if we do certain things we will be blessed
6. But God is here this morning and He wants to meet you at your point of need
7. Charles Spurgeon said this *"I looked to Christ and the Dove flew in. I looked to the Dove, and He disappeared"*

Image Bearers:

1. God has given us the highest privilege of being His image bearers
2. Therefore, the goal of Christian growth must be to achieve righteousness
3. Christ sets the priority of the Christian life ***"seek first His Kingdom of and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well"* (Matt 6:33)**
4. The Holy Spirit, depicted as a dove in each four of the gospels is a thousand times more sensitive than the doves or pigeons we see flying around
5. Why did God choose to represent His Spirit with a dove?
6. In biblical theology, we often consider a concept known as *the law of first mention*.
7. It teaches that when a person, animal, color, metal or number is first mentioned in Scripture, it often sets the theme of that particular item throughout Scripture.
8. This is why the serpent that appeared in **Genesis 3** as the tempter of Eve became the symbol of Satan or sin throughout the Bible
9. It's why the symbol of a lamb, based on the Passover narrative in **Exodus 12**, in the New Testament becomes the symbol of Christ, who is identified as the **"Lamb of God"** (**John 1:29**) and referred to as such 26 out of 27 times in the book of Revelation.

The First Appearance:

1. In the law of first mention, the dove is one of the two birds mentioned in the story of Noah's flood, which begins in **Genesis 6**.
2. As the waters began to slowly recede, Noah sent two birds out of the ark: a raven and a dove. Eventually the dove brought an olive leaf back to the ark (**v. 11**).
3. This is significant because the olive became a sacred fruit for the priestly ministry.

Jesus and the Dove:

1. **Matthew 3:16 "When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him" (Matt. 3:16).**
2. The dove is a gentle creature and never retaliates against its enemies,
3. As believers, we are told to turn the other cheek, to pray for our enemies (**Matt. 5:39-44**)
4. When the Holy Spirit is purposely offended, He can eventually depart from a person, as He did with King Saul and as demonstrated with Samson
5. When the king or priest was anointed using olive oil it was poured in the form of a Hebrew letter *kuf*, (KOOF) whose shape is similar to a dove's wings when it is hovering and its wings are opened.

A Code in the Covering:

1. The ark is a picture for us of safety and security in a time of distress and trouble.
2. In the ark, there was a special upper window – two different times it is mentioned
3. Man-made barriers need to be opened to let the Holy Spirit in
4. **2 Cor 3:17** *“where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty”*

Time to free the Dove:

1. Money-changers in the Court of the Gentiles
2. On a particular day Christ entered the temple, He would have first have had to pass by the court of the Gentiles, where the tables of the money-changers were.
3. **“Then Jesus went into the temple of God and drove out all those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. And He said to them, ‘It is written, “My house shall be called a house of prayer,” but you have made it a “den of thieves”” (Matt. 21:12-13).**
4. Look at the very next verse - **“Then the blind and the lame came to Him in the temple, and He healed them” (v. 14).**
5. When the house of God is cleansed from selfish, greedy, and carnal leaders and the church no longer attempts to control the movement of the Dove, then we see sinners converted, the depressed released, the sick cured and the people rejoice.

An Anointing of the Mouth:

1. Out of the flood waters, the dove returned to the ark with an olive leaf in its mouth.
2. The symbolism is there - the dove represents the Holy Spirit and the olive leaf the anointing that flows through the spoken word He gives.
3. When Jesus was baptized, the Spirit came on Him like a dove and He remained
4. **John 1:32-33** *“And John bore witness: “I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. ³³ I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.”*
5. There is nothing that can compare with the experience of the Presence of the Holy Spirit

Grieving the Holy Spirit:

1. **Ephesians 4:30** *“do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption”*
2. The Holy Spirit will never leave us but the anointing or sense of the Holy Spirit can dim
3. **Ephesians 4:31** *“let all bitterness (resentment, unpleasantness, cynicism) and wrath (rage, fury) and anger and clamor (outrage, agitation, demanding) and slander (insult, defamation, defame, gossip) be put away from you along with all malice (spite, meanness, causing mischief by speaking i.e. gossip, or false rumors)”*
4. The reason for the connection between the Holy Spirit who is not grieved and the bible

MY WAYS:

1. In **Hebrews 3:10** God lamented of ancient Israel – **“they have not known my ways”**
2. **Ps 103:7** **“He made known his ways to Moses, his acts to the people of Israel.”**
3. **John 14:22** Judas (not Iscariot) asked Jesus this, **“Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us, and not to the world?”**
4. **Phil 3:10** **“that I may know Him and the power that raised Christ from the dead”**

Closing:

1. If you want to have a lively, real, unfeigned, and constant relationship with God, His Son, and the Holy Spirit, you must get to know God’s ways.
2. Imagine what it can be when a congregation like ours could are all be walking in the same ungrieved Holy Spirit