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Marks of Ownership!

3rd in a series of 3

Slide #1

Open up the heavens

We want to see you

Open up the floodgates

A mighty river

Flowing from your heart

Filling every part of our praise

Slide #2 As I told you last week, my hope this morning is that this message will 'Generate New Desires!'

The Holy Spirit is a person. He is not a 'thing' or an 'it' or a 'power' or 'spook' or a 'ghost'. He is the 3rd person of the Trinity and he needs to be treated as such.

Slide #3 The Holy Spirit is... God come beside us, to work in us, in ways that will bring through us... things that could never be otherwise.

How many of you have at least on stick shift car in your family?

This is the last week you will need to look at this clutch assembly from a 1995 high performance 5.7 LT1 Corvette engine. The beauty of a stick shift is that it has a clutch and when the clutch is out, or engaged, the fly wheel, the pressure plate and the clutch plate are all locked together... so that when the engine spins everything spins... including the tires.

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The key to driving a stick shift car is learning how to let the clutch out as fast as possible... so you don't burn up the clutch and yet not too fast so that you don't jolt everyone out of their seats. The key is locking it in... not burning it up!

Slide #4 So we have titled these messages 'Locked In', because we want to learn how to get locked into the Holy Spirit of God... so we can become fully engaged with and completely connected to the Spirit of God... so that when the Holy Spirit moves, we move and when the Holy Spirit stops, we stop.

The weekend after Christmas our family went to the mountains for several days and part of the tradition of going to the mountains is a certain amount of talk about what animals we might happen to see while at the cabin. I'm not sure how reliable the stories are that get passed down from family to family... but this year the discussion was about bears.

It seems like everyone has a bear story to tell.

One year while we were at the cabin everyone was away school shopping except Laura Lee and I... we were watching a video of Yanni and suddenly... there was a bear... right on the deck at the back of the cabin. He was so close we could have literally opened the sliding glass door and reached out and grabbed him... we didn't... in fact I ran to the front door and made sure it was closed... but it was an awesome experience.

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Another time, during our camping days, we were at a camp site in Gatlinburg Tennessee and in the middle of the night something woke me up. So I looked out and there was a bear, cleaning off our table, which was right up against our camper, and he was just swatting things around. And once again he was so close that I could have reached out and grabbed him and I remember waking up Lisa... very quietly and saying... Lisa, there is a bear out there...and we barely breathed because our only protection was canvas and about that time he stood up to full height and he was huge, at least as tall as our awning... and we about freaked out

So this year at the cabin we learned that a Game Warden had happened by and he had pointed out a telephone pole in the parking lot that had bear claw marks on it. And so we checked it out and sure enough there were some claw marks on the pole and there were still some bear hairs sticking to the pole.

Now... why would a bear do this? Why would a bear claw on a pole? I found this explanation from the 'North American Bear Center'. Did you know there is a North American Bear Center?

'Black bears of all ages and both sexes rub their scent on marking trees, including wooden sign posts and utility poles, but the majority of this marking is by mature males during the mating season. They rub

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their shoulders, neck and crown and may also claw and bite the tree.'

Bottom line... they are marking out their territory... to let every other bear know... this is my area... don't mess with it. Here are some examples:

Slide #5 Here is a utility pole has been heavily marked by black bears. I learned that bears seem to prefer poles and trees that lean slightly and then they rub into the lean. How many of you knew this?

Slide #6 Here is another pole that has been bitten repeatedly by a male bear.

Slide #7 Here is a picture of bear hair on a pole. Did you know that bear hair bleaches when it is exposed to sunlight?

Bears... claw and bite... trees and poles... to mark out their territory to symbolize their ownership.

Remember, a symbol is a sign or a representation of the real thing. It's not the real thing. The markings on the tree is not the real thing... it is not their ownership... but rather it is a symbol of their ownership.

Slide #8 The title of the message this morning is 'Marks of Ownership'.

Slide #9 Bucket Offering: Our Bucket Offering will be going to World Vision to provided clean water for areas of extreme poverty. This is one way we can sacrifice and eat less so that others can eat period.

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Bears bite and scratch poles and trees to symbolize their ownership. What does the Holy Spirit do to symbolize his ownership in our lives?

This morning we are going to look at the 5th and 6th symbols of the Holy Spirit from the scriptures. So let's go to our notes.

Slide #10 Symbol #5 The Holy Spirit will come to us as a dove.

(A special thank you to Sarah Armstrong for providing this symbol of the Holy Spirit)

Slide #11 Mark 1:9-11 At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. As Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased."

Why a dove? Why not a hoot owl or a bald eagle or a cardinal? Because the dove is a symbol of peace and gentleness. Not only does the Holy Spirit bring peace and gentleness to us... but the Holy will do to us what the dove did to Jesus. He will come to us personally and rest on us and provide this symbol of ownership... that so many of us long to hear.... "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased."

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Jesus is the Savior of the world, the light of the world, the lamb of God, the baptizer with fire and when he was baptized with water... the heavens, which are the invisible, was torn open and the Holy Spirit in the visible form of a dove entered into a visible realm, planet earth.

So the invisible invades the visible... so that the glory of God becomes visible in me and the Spirit comes to do visible things. He empowers us to love, to speak the truth, to serve others, to bring healing and hope to a hurting world... all in a tangible, visible way because he has ownership.

It's all about ownership. It's not so much a question of how much of the Holy Spirit do we have... but rather how much of us does the Spirit of God own? Let's go to our notes.

Slide #12 Symbol #6 The Holy Spirit will anoint us with his seal of ownership. (Thanks again Sarah)

Slide #13 2 Corinthians 1:21-22 Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.

When I read that verse it brings to mind a bear clawing the tree and saying... this is mine... this is my territory!

Slide #14 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in

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you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.

This is all about ownership!

In the OT prophets, priests and kings were anointed with oil.

Slide #15 Psalm 133:1-2 How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity! It is like precious oil poured on the head, running down on the beard, running down on Aaron's beard, down upon the collar of his robes.

In the NT we are told to request anointing when we are in need of healing.

Slide #16 James 5:14-15 Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven.

We do this at TL... all you need to do is ask.

But the anointing I'm talking about this morning is his seal of ownership. It's not about leadership... it's not about healing... it's about ownership! What does it mean to receive his anointing so that his seal of

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ownership is on us, so that he is our deposit, guaranteeing what is to come. What does it mean for the Holy Spirit to mark us like a tree and say this is my territory?

I want to tell you a story this morning and it's a personal story and I don't think I have ever shared this on a Sunday morning. I realize that this could be a sensitive subject for some... but I feel lead to share it. In the early 70's there was an explosion in the Church on the teaching of the Holy Spirit. Some of you may remember that period of time because it crossed many denominational lines. There was a lot of emphasis on the baptism of the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues and it was referred to as the 2nd experience. The 1st experience obviously was becoming a Christian and this 2nd experience was the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

I knew very little about this at the time because I grew up in a home where this was not emphasized. Some of these teachers were still finding their way and were incredibly dogmatic... claiming that every Christian needed to ask for this 2nd experience and to not do so was disobedience. And as I became exposed to this teaching, it created a lot of confusion in my life and much controversy in the Church in general. As you can image it began to divide people into different camps... those who spoke in tongues and those who didn't speak in tongues and those who were baptized in the Holy Spirit and those who only knew water baptism and then there were people like me who didn't know which camp to jump into.

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So I was conflicted... and maybe some of you that are my age or older may have experienced similar confusion. One day while I was traveling with the band, Daybreak, I had a conversation with my cousin who was living in Texas at the time and she explained to me... that not only was the Holy Spirit a person but he was a Gentleman. And she began to paint a picture of the Holy Spirit that I had not yet seen. A picture that was consistent with the dove that came to rest on Jesus and she began to help me see how I had constructed this image of the Holy Spirit that was demanding and divisive, one that created confusion instead of peace. And she really helped me to open my heart to the Holy Spirit and trust that whatever he would do in my life would be a good thing.

And I came to understand that the Holy Spirit anoints with sensitivity. He doesn't club us... he whispers to us. And it was interesting that as I was preparing to tell this story... someone from TL sent me an e-mail that went like this.

Slide #17 The Holy Spirit is 'such a Gentleman, He will not push Himself into any part of our heart, to really work, until we've opened up to Him.'

And they were responding to last week's sermon... but little did they realize... they were affirming exactly what my cousin was telling me 40 years ago. He's a Gentleman, he's not pushy. It's not a matter of figuring him out or wording our prayers right. It's a

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matter or yielding to him and recognizing his ownership in our lives.

And so I gave myself over to the Holy Spirit in a new way and invited him to do in my life whatever he wanted to do. If he wanted me to speak in tongues or work in the supernatural or whatever... I made a conscious decision to trust him for it. And when I did this... nothing happened! At least it appeared that way! I didn't speak in tongues, I wasn't slain in the spirit, I wasn't filled with holy laughter or anything miraculous or supernatural... but I did gain this sense of peace,

One night after that decision I was fast asleep and I had a vision... and the ceiling of the room, where I was lying, parted and the presence of the Holy Spirit descended into the room and I experienced the anointing of the Spirit in a way that I had never experienced before. I felt the power of God come over me, but even more importantly, I felt the peace of God wash over me.

I have no idea how long it lasted but when I woke up I was like this... and I knew that I had an encounter with the Spirit of God!

You could call it the baptism of the Holy Spirit, the filling of the Holy Spirit or the anointing of the Holy Spirit.... I don't care how you might label it. But I know it was real... even though as of today... I have never spoken in tongues or had any other supernatural manifestations. The critical step in this process

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became very clear to me... and I have never forgotten it over the years. It is this... ownership. I needed to give the ownership of my life over to the Holy Spirit of God.

How do we do this? How do we let go of our ownership? All of us like to control things... at least a little. How do we get locked into the Holy Spirit?

Matthew 14 Story about Jesus illustrating how to relinquish ownership.

Let's go to our notes:

Slide #18 How do we get locked into the Holy Spirit? Let's go to our notes.

1. Listen to Jesus – Jesus said 'come'. Sometimes this means stepping from the place of safety to the place of uncertainty. Sometimes we won't find that miracle or that purpose in life or that answer we are searching for until we step out.

2. Step out in faith – It took that first step... it took a commitment. Skiing!

3. Resist fear – Peter was afraid! Jesus appears in unexpected places and he invites us to join him and we can't join him unless we resist fear.

4. Look to Jesus – When Peter's eyes left Jesus and he focused on the miracle and focused on the water... he began to sink. Jesus is the one who fills us with

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the Holy Spirit and fear subsides when we can see who we are dealing with.

This is how we get locked in.

Folks, Laura Lee is going to come up at this time and sing for us and I want you to listen to this song because it is a song about ownership. It is a song of invitation. It is an invitation to step out in faith.

Slide #19 Prayer & Reflection: Laura Lee

Love came down and rescued me

Love came down and set me free

I am Yours

Lord I'm forever Yours

Mountains high or valley low

I sing out and remind my soul

I am Yours

I am forever Yours

It's a matter of ownership and this is the reason that I plan to fast (liquids only) starting tomorrow, that's just the way it works with my schedule, until next Sunday and I invite all of you to join me as long or short as the Lord leads you.

I believe Timberline is desperately in need of a touch by the Holy Spirit. I believe we need to learn what ownership is all about. I believe we struggle with this. So I will be praying for revival, that God will generate new desires within us...please join me in some way

Invite Prayer Team Up: marlin

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9:00 Lydia and Bob Reeser 10:30 Jim and Lorrie

This morning after the benediction I want to once again ask you to leave the auditorium without talking. If any of you would like prayer, or if any of you would like to invite the Holy Spirit to fill you, anoint you or baptize you, come on up and we will pray with you.

Benediction:

The Spirit anoints.

The Spirit alights.

The Spirit seals.

The Spirit inspires.

So it is that those, who bear the mark of the Spirit, are blessed with the deepest brand ever given.

They have absolute surety and confidence; they will never be forsaken.

It is our privilege to live in these days.

Go and fly the colors of the Spirit ever before you.