

MORE ABOUT THE SPIRIT'S WORKS IN ALL BELIEVERS

Assorted Passages of Scripture

Intro: I hope that we all understand that there are Three Persons in the Godhead - God, the Father, God, the Son, and God, the Holy Spirit. This is what we might call Lesson 1 in Theology 101. This is the basic teaching regarding God in the Bible. All three Persons are present in the OT as well as in the NT. They are identical in Their Deity, and yet distinct as Persons. The Bible begins with the words, “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” The Hebrew word for God is Elohim, and the -im ending of Elohim is the equivalent of our -s or -es ending. It suggests at least that there is more than one Person in the Godhead. As we go on in the Bible we learn that there are Three Persons in the Godhead. In Genesis 1:2 we are introduced to the Holy Spirit because it tells us, in the latter part of the verse, that “the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.” So the Spirit of God was active in creation.

In the Gospel of John which we are going to be studying in our Tuesday Bible Class, the Apostle John was speaking about the Lord Jesus Christ when he wrote, “All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made” (John 1:3).

Today we speak of the One Whom we recognize as the first Person of the Godhead, as God the Father, but He is only referred as the Father a few times in the OT, and yet God is mentioned repeatedly throughout the OT where the emphasis clearly is upon Him.

When we come to the New Testament in the four Gospels, the focus is upon the Lord Jesus Christ. But when He finished His work on earth, He went back to heaven and to the Father after promising that He would send the Holy Spirit to abide in His people forever. That is what we read about in John 14:16 and 17 where our Lord referred to Himself, to the Father, and to the “Comforter” which is another title for the Holy Spirit, Whom our Lord called, “the Spirit of truth.” Let me read those verses to you, and you can follow in your Bible if you would like to: **John 14:16-17:**

16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

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These words, and the other passages in our Lord's Upper Room Discourse, clearly show that we are living in a period of time in which the ministry of the Holy Spirit is extremely important. We can even speak of the time between our Lord's ascension and His return for us at the Rapture, as *the period of the Holy Spirit's ministry*. I do not mean that the Father and the Lord Jesus are not involved with us at the present time, because They are –very involved! And yet it is important that we understand the ministry of the Spirit in our day which in some respects is different from OT times, or different even from the time of our Lord's ministry here on earth.

We can certainly say that whenever people were saved in OT times, or during our Lord's ministry here on earth, the Holy Spirit was involved. When the Lord was speaking to the Pharisee, Nicodemus, which we read about in John, chapter 3, and the Lord spoke to him about being born again, or born from above, or born of the Spirit, and Nicodemus manifested that he did not know what the Lord was talking about, the Lord said to him as we read in John 3:10, "Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?" Nicodemus should have understood the new birth from the OT, is what the Lord was saying. But obviously, although Nicodemus was a teacher of the OT, his mind and heart had not been opened by the Spirit of God to the truth of the Gospel.

So we all need to understand that although all Three Persons of the Godhead are active throughout time, there is a special emphasis upon the work, or works, of the Holy Spirit, in our day today. Our Lord made it very clear in his teaching, and we have it also in the OT, that no one can be saved apart from the work of the Holy Spirit. Salvation in the OT is exactly what it is in the NT, but the Holy Spirit is doing some things today that He did not do in OT times.

Now for a minute or two let us look at some basic truths regarding the doctrine of salvation. Salvation is a work of God. It is not a joint undertaking between God and man, so that God does part, even most of it, but leaves it up to man to do his part. Salvation was ordained by God before the foundation of the world. It was determined in the counsel of the Godhead that there would be salvation for sinners. God sovereignly chose those who would be saved. It was foreordained by the Godhead before the foundation of the world that the Lord Jesus would be the One Who would shed His precious blood for those the Father had chosen for salvation. Peter spoke of this in his first epistle, chapter 1, verses 18-20. And

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we have seen from our past studies that the Holy Spirit is the One who convicts sinners, and he draws them to Christ. The Lord Jesus said on one occasion, and perhaps on many others, that “no man can come to Me except the Father which sent me draw him” (John 6:44). Man cannot come because he is naturally deaf to the Gospel. Satan has blinded his eyes so that he cannot see, or understand the Gospel. But to make evangelism even more impossible, all of us are “dead in trespasses and in sins” (Eph. 2:1). Going to people in the world is like going to blind people who cannot see, going to deaf people who cannot hear, and to make our task even more impossible, it is like trying to communicate with a corpse.

So what is needed? We need for God to give them life so that they can see and hear as by a work of God they are drawn to Christ. The very fact that Nicodemus came to Christ turned out to be evidence that the Spirit of God was working in his heart. In John 6 our Lord also said in verse 37, “All that the Father giveth Me, shall come unto Me, and him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out.” The reason all of us who are saved, were saved, is because in eternity past God chose us for salvation. In time the Holy Spirit may have used some person to give us the Gospel. God opened our hearts to the truth, gave us faith, and we now rejoice that by the grace of God we have passed from death unto life. We were convicted by the Holy Spirit that we were sinner, and by the miraculous work of the Holy Spirit we were born again. Probably no two of us has been saved in exactly the same way, but we have all been saved by the same Savior because there is no salvation except in Christ.

We have been convicted by the Holy Spirit. He has drawn us to Christ, and we have been born again. We are children of God. And, as the Apostle Paul said in writing his letter to the church at Ephesus, “God hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ” (Eph. 1:3). We all have them all. I don’t have any more in Christ than you do, and you don’t have any more than I do. But it is in the Bible that we learn what those spiritual blessings are. They are not all listed in one book of the Bible. You have to read the Bible, and read it over and over, to learn what those blessings are. They all are classified under one great heading: S-A-L-V-A-T-I-O-N – salvation! You know what some of those blessings are. One is eternal life. Another is the forgiveness of all of our sins. Still another is that we have been brought into the family of God. And then we have heaven to look forward to. And there are many others. But I want to spend the rest of the time this morning talking about three gift,

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one I have already mentioned. Today I want to mention two more. And they all have to do with the Holy Spirit. You may or may not know the blessings I am going to mention, but if you truly know Jesus Christ as your Savior, you have all three of these gifts.

The first I have mentioned before, but I am happy to mention it again. It is a gift that I love to talk about, and I love to meditate on it. It is:

I. THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT HIMSELF.

Please turn again with me to John 14:16-17. From the moment you and I were saved, the Holy Spirit has been living in us. You may not have known it for a long time after you were saved, but He has been there. The Apostle Paul wrote in Romans 8:9, the latter part of the verse, “Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.”

The knowledge of this amazing fact, and the remembrance of it, is to have a tremendous effect upon us and the way we live. The church at Corinth in Bible times was a church which had practically every kind of a problem that a church could have. And Paul, in writing to them, asked them, “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?” (1 Cor. 3:16). And then Paul came back to this theme again in chapter 6 where he wrote in 1 Corinthians 6:19-20,

19 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

The presence of the Holy Spirit in us is evidence that we no longer belong to ourselves. We belong to God, and we are to live for Him!

In 2 Timothy 1:14 Paul told Timothy, “That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Spirit which dwelleth in us.”

According to our Lord's words in John 14, the Holy Spirit has been given to us at salvation, and He will be with us forever. We need to meditate on this great truth. And don't let anyone tell you that you need to pray for the Holy Spirit to come to you. This is a mark of a true child of God. If you are saved you don't need to ask Him to come; *He is already there! And He is there to stay! And He is there to make us like the Lord Jesus.* We did not ask for Him. The Lord prayed, and the Father answered. All

of this began on the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2.

But now let me mention another work of the Spirit that has been done in every child of God.

II. THE SEALING OF THE SPIRIT.

Paul mentioned this in Ephesians 4:30 where we read, “And grieve not the Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.” Paul wrote this to the whole church because it is a work of the Spirit which He has done in every child of God. This is not an experience we have, anymore than we experienced the coming of the Holy Spirit to indwell us. These are truths for us to believe, not experiences that we are to feel.

Paul mentioned this work of the Spirit in 2 Corinthians 1:21-22:

21 Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God;

22 Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.

And then look with me at Paul’s words in Ephesians 1:13-14:

13 In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,

14 Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

What does this sealing mean? This is a legal term which God has used to indicate two things:

1) Ownership. We belong to God. The Holy Spirit is the seal. We have been purchased at the infinite price of the blood of Christ.

2) Assurance. The Holy Spirit dwells within us as a guarantee, that, in the words of Scripture, “He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ” (Phil. 1:6). Our inheritance in Christ is the most secure, the most certain, possession that we have. We are saved, and saved forever. God has set His seal upon our redemption.

Remember: We did not ask for this. God has given us, not just a promise (which would be just as certain as what He has done), but the Holy Spirit has been given as the guarantee that once saved, always saved.

But now let us look at a third great blessing that the Holy Spirit has given us.

III. THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

The key passage on the baptism of the Holy Spirit is 1 Corinthians 12:13. Again, it is not an experience we are to seek, it is a statement of what has been done to us by the Holy Spirit whereby we are made members of the body of Christ. See 1 Cor. 12:12-13:

12 For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.

13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

Some Bible teachers believe that the baptism of the Spirit took place on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2, and that *provisionally* it was for all who would trust in Christ in the future. Others believe that it takes place with every believer as he or she accepts Christ during this present age. There is no way to tell which is true, but it really does not make a difference; the effect of this work of the Spirit would be the same.

Every mention of the baptism of the Spirit in the Gospel speaks of it as a future act, and it seems that first took place on the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2. In Acts 1:4 and 5 we have these words which are related to the baptism of the Spirit:

4 And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me.

5 For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

But there is a difficulty when we read what happened on the day of Pentecost. It says, not that they were baptized with the Holy Spirit, but that “they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues” (or languages). See Acts 2:4. How do we answer this apparent joining of these two terms?

First, the baptism of the Spirit is not an experience that we need to have, any more than the indwelling and the sealing are. The baptism does not have to do with service, but with our relationship to Christ and to each other as members of the body of Christ. The filling of the Spirit does

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have to do with life and service. I will take up the filling of the Spirit in a future message. The baptism of the Spirit bring us into the Church, the body of Christ, which came into being for the first time in Acts 2. The church was born then. From that time on until the Lord comes, those who trust in Christ are joined to His body. We were joined with Him in His death, and in His resurrection. By the baptism of the Spirit we are member of Christ's body, so vital is the union established by the Holy Spirit for all of us.

Concl: So I trust that we will all remember that if Christ is really our Savior, the Holy Spirit dwells in us, and will never leave us; the Holy Spirit has sealed us, guaranteeing our security; and the Holy Spirit has baptized us, making all of us member of Christ and His body. We all stand on equal ground as far as our salvation is concerned. Where the differences come in are where we are our daily walk in the Spirit. May we rejoice in the blessings that we have in Christ, praise the Lord that what we have we can never live. It is by knowing what we have in Christ, that we are stabilized in our walk with Him.