

## DOES THE SPIRIT INDWELL CHRISTIANS?

### The Holy Spirit

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I'll share with you once more this evening on the person and the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Especially focusing tonight on the presence of the Spirit. What I really feel prompted in my own spirit to do is just give some foundational teaching on the Holy Spirit. There has been hesitancy on my part to do this. I'm assuming that people have already heard this before. I'm looking for new material that people haven't heard before. Some of the things though I've found that I take for granted I really shouldn't. This foundational study in the Holy Spirit for me has been an awakening in my own heart to who the Holy Spirit is and what he purposes to do.

What I share this evening may be known by some of you. It may be totally unknown by others. It may be the kind of teaching too the kind of areas of which you had some knowledge but not had personal application in your life.

When I looked at the ministry of the Holy Spirit last week the main point is the Holy Spirit is a person. The Holy Spirit is not an *it*. He's not a neuter pronoun. If we think of him as an *it* then he becomes simply something we want to manipulate. When we get *it* we can say, I got *it*!

We have to make sure when we're talking about the Holy Spirit we're talking about a person. In scripture he's referred to as a person – He, Jesus says continually. The personal pronoun. As a person he has mind and will and emotion. The Spirit has intelligence. All the intelligence of God. He has will. He distributes gifts as he wishes. He has emotion. He can be grieved. The Spirit as well is the divine Spirit. He's not simply a human spirit. But he is of God. He is God. And a mystery that we cannot fully fathom how God can be one and yet Father, Son and Holy Spirit yet the Spirit is divine.

I indicated last week that the beautiful work of the Spirit in relationship to God the Father and God the Son is that God the Father gives to us a sense of belonging. All of us because we know who God the Father is can have a sense of belonging. We are his children. Christ the Son, his special ministry is not only to give us salvation but to give us a sense of worth. If we ever doubt how much we are worth then ask yourself why Christ went to the cross. If you are of no account at all why did Christ die for you? The Spirit, it's his special role to give us our sense of confidence. Power. The feeling that we are not somehow a reed drifting along in the water of life down a river and no ability. It is the Spirit that comes and gives the confidence and assurance – first that we are the children of God, the power to live the Christian life. And the power as well to be placed in the realm of the Spirit out of which the dynamic creative power of the Spirit takes place.

The Spirit as the divine one does the acts of God. He is involved in the creation. He is the giver of scripture. He is the giver of life. He has put his Spirit within us.

These are some of the things that we looked at last week in regard to the person of the Spirit. Tonight I want to look especially at the presence of the Spirit. We will focus in on these themes next week as well. I recognize in preparing for this Sunday evening that I could not get through the areas I want to talk about in respect to the presence of the Spirit.

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I want to begin by focusing on the presence of the Spirit in our life even before we came to Christ – prior to our conversion. A specific scripture that relates to this is John 16:8-11. If you watch how the Spirit works in the creation or if you watch how the Spirit works in the issuing of Jesus in the flesh into the world you get a good clue of how the Spirit works in our own life. For example in Genesis 1:2 we're told that the earth was formless and empty. Darkness was over the surface of the deep and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. That is a powerful description of the fact that the Spirit of God wants to bring created order out of chaos. He was hovering over the chaos. Why? Because the Spirit of God as the executive agent of God is going to bring a created order of beauty out of this total darkened void and vast expanse of water.

What's the Spirit doing in our life before we become a Christian? If I reread this in terms of my personal life I might read it "My life was formless and empty. Darkness was over the surface of the deep of my being. Over the depths of my consciousness and unconsciousness. Darkness was upon me. And the Spirit of God was hovering over my being." Why is the Spirit hovering over my being? Because he wants to bring the creative life of God out of the chaos of my life.

Jesus says in John 16:8-11, he's teaching the disciples in the upper room discourse before his crucifixion. "When he [the Spirit] comes he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment." Then the Lord shows what he means, "In regard to sin because men do not believe in me, in regard to righteousness because I am going to the Father where you can see me no longer, and in regard to judgment because the prince of this world now stands condemned." Jesus here announces the role of the Holy Spirit in the world after he has left. This role is focusing on our lives prior to our being a Christian. What is the Spirit wanting to bring us to? Why has God placed the Holy Spirit in our lives as a witness to us even before we are converted? Because it is the Spirit's task to bring us to an awareness of sin, an awakened sense of sin, an affirmation of the righteousness of Jesus and an awareness of judgment completed. Let's look teach of these in turn because we must recognize that even before we come to the Lord the Spirit was hovering over our lives waiting to possess us. An awakened sense of sin.

How does the Spirit bring this? Jesus says the Spirit will convict in regard to sin because men do not believe in me. Here Jesus very simple defines what sin is. Sin is not believing in him – pure and simple. It may involve a lot of things beyond that but the foundation, the root of sin as Jesus defines it is not believing in him. Therefore it is the Spirit's task to bring us to an awakened sense of sin. There is plenty in our conscious that can convict us of being a guilty person. I want to focus on this for a moment.

I think back to a time I wanted to receive the baptism in the Spirit and recollected the fact that years before when I was 10 years of age I over kept a nickel in change from a grocery store. I desperately tried to find out where that grocery store was to return that nickel because I thought that was what was keeping the Spirit out of my life. I'm not so sure that the Holy Spirit was so much at work there as a warped sense of conscience in that moment that would not let go of the fact that I wanted to find an explanation why I hadn't received something. I was dwelling in guilt.

There are things that we can have by virtue of our parental training and background that may condemn us or convict us. But the unique thing which the Holy Spirit does that no one in the world is doing except the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit through our witness, the unique thing the Spirit does, is to convince us to believe in Jesus. If I grew up in a tribe that never had the

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knowledge of scripture I might be convicted of guilt in some areas but the specific mission of the Holy Spirit is to bring me to an understanding of who Jesus is. If you have not believed in the Lord the Spirit is at work every time you come to the word of God, every time you come to other believers. The Spirit is saying Jesus is Lord, Jesus is Lord. If the Spirit isn't doing this how do you account for the fact that 2000 years after he left the earth that people are still believing in the Lord Jesus Christ. Incredible tribute to the work of the Holy Spirit.

The Spirit is not only bringing us to an awareness, an awakened sense of sin, but the Spirit throughout our Christian life is bringing us to an awakened sense of sin. In fact the Spirit is called the sanctifying person in our lives. Sanctified according to the Spirit of truth. When we even as believers err from what the Lord has called us to there the Spirit is bringing his conviction.

The Spirit at well is at work confirming the righteousness of Jesus. The Spirit wants us to make the confession that Jesus is more than mortal. But that Jesus is the son of God. Jesus here specifically in John 16 says "In regard to righteousness because I am going to the Father." What's this mean? There were contemporaries of Jesus who did not believe that he was going to the Father and that he was a righteous person. Mark 3:22 states that there were those who were contemporaries of Jesus who said he was Beelzebub. He did his power in virtue of the devil. In the gospel of John, chapter 9, they say "This man [referring to Jesus] is a sinner." The Holy Spirit would never say Jesus is Beelzebub. The Holy Spirit would never say Jesus is a sinner. In fact when the charge is made against Jesus that he is Beelzebub Jesus turns around and says "Whoever commits blasphemy of the Holy Spirit has committed an eternal sin which he is incapable of repentance over. For which there is no forgiveness." What does he mean here? He means that whoever rejects this witness that the Spirit is making to him, is refusing the Spirit, and therefore making repentance impossible. Blasphemy of the Holy Spirit is simply refusing the Spirit's witness to the identity and person of Jesus. It's refusing the Spirit's attestation to the righteousness of Jesus. That he is God's sinless, perfect Son who died for our sins. The Spirit is causing us to confess in the righteousness of the Lord who died for our sins.

The Spirit also is bringing us to an awareness of the judgment already handed down. That's why Jesus says here "The Spirit in regard to judgment brings us to this conviction because the prince of this world now stands condemned." It doesn't look like in the natural the devil is condemned. The devil is busy in the world. But what cannot be seen by the natural eye is that the prince of this world has already been condemned. At the cross and the resurrection he has been defeated. How do we know that? The Spirit brings us witness. How did the Spirit bring us witness? By leaving us his world through the apostles who were the eyewitnesses. The Spirit is at work in our lives before we ever came to Christ.

The fundamental levels of our Christian life are coming to an awakened sense of sin, affirmation of the righteous of Jesus and an awareness that judgment is already completed. Satan has been bound. The war still goes on but the significant battle has been fought which determines the course of the war. The Spirit gives us the attestation that this indeed has occurred.

We cannot be a believer at all except for the Spirit. The Spirit's role I think of as the prosecuting attorney of God. That's not a scriptural phrase but it's helped me look a little bit at what Jesus is saying. The word for "convict" can be used in two senses. It can be used in the sense to impel

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the heart to make a response. But it also can be sued in a jury sense, a courtroom sense when a person is convicted. What does that word mean? It means they've been judged guilty.

All of us in our court system realize that there are two ways of going about that. You can settle out of court if you're guilty, if you can get an out of court settlement. Or you can go to court and if you are guilty and haven't settled out of court when you had the chance then you've got to face the judgment.

What is the role of the Spirit in this current age is, if you allow this language, to cause us to settle out of court with God. That we might find for us judgment is already past. And there is no further judgment that awaits us. There is no further death that awaits us. No second death for the believer. The Spirit is that attorney of God that friend of ours, and friend of God, the Spirit of God, that brings us to these things in our life – an awakened sense of sin, an affirmation of the righteousness of Jesus, and an awareness of judgment completed. These are elemental roles in our being a Christian.

The presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives in conversion. And look at the role of the Spirit there. The reason why I'm going to dwell a little on this is again I think people come at things from different backgrounds. To the Holy Spirit we must be careful that it's not our background that shapes our understanding of the Holy Spirit but it's the scripture that shapes our understanding of the Spirit. There are people that come at the New Testament from a non Pentecostal background who say at conversion you receive the Spirit and you have all the Spirit that there is. There are those who come from the Pentecostal background who seem to be saying that at conversion you only receive Jesus but you must wait a while to receive the Spirit.

Unfortunately some of that although it probably was never stated so explicitly rubbed off on me as a person growing up in a charismatic or Pentecostal church. That at salvation I had received the Lord Jesus in to my heart. But there was a period of time before I could "get" the Holy Spirit not realizing of course that when we are saved we don't get two thirds of the godhead, Father and Son, and wait around for a while for the Holy Spirit to show up. But that we receive Father, Son and Spirit. The presence of God dwelling in our lives.

How is the Spirit present in our lives in conversion? The list which I'm going to give is certainly not an exhaustive list. But it is a suggestive list from the scripture. One element of the Spirit's presence in our lives in conversion is the fact that we can only be born of the Spirit. The Spirit is the agent, which brings the life of Jesus into us. John 3:5 Jesus says to Nicodemus "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter [cannot see] the kingdom of God." Two elements of birth. I think Ezekiel 36 explains exactly what Jesus meant when he says one must be born of water and the spirit. Ezekiel, the prophet of the exile who talks about the people of God being restored from their dead bones says, verses 25-27, "I will sprinkle clean water on you and you will be clean. I will cleanse you from all of your impurities and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you. I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh and I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws." What is Ezekiel the prophet speaking for God promising to do? To cleanse us and to put God's Spirit within us. Jesus says, He that is born of water, the cleansing which the Lord provides through his atonement and which water baptism represents, and of the Spirit shall enter the kingdom of God. New birth is only possible through being born of God's Spirit.

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We need an analogy or comparison to help us understand how the new birth comes. We receive an analogy in the gospel accounts of the birth of Jesus. How was Jesus, the divine eternal Son of God, how did he become flesh? He became flesh through the power of the Holy Spirit. He was conceived of the Holy Spirit. Matthew 1:20. Joseph is told by the angel “What is conceived in her [Mary] is from the Holy Spirit.” In a miracle that I cannot fathom eternal Son of God came bodily present in the womb in microscopic form. I do not for a moment understand that. But there’s a lot of God I don’t understand. I can’t understand how the eternal one who fills all things could become microscopically present in the flesh. But he does through the Spirit. It is the conceiving work of the Holy Spirit to bring Jesus in the flesh. The angel Gabriel tells Mary in Luke 1:35 “The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the most high will overshadow you so the holy one who will be born will be called the Son of God.” In a spiritual plain the Holy Spirit is seeking to reduplicate in us what he did physically in the womb of Mary. The Spirit is seeking spiritually to do in us what he did physically in the womb of Mary. He is birthing Jesus into our life.” Born of the Spirit.

You don’t get into the kingdom of God except you be born of the Spirit. No one can come to God except the Father draws him. Except the Spirit make it possible to bring Jesus into our lives. Is this some complicated thing, some thing that the Spirit does at whim? We know obviously this is not the case. We must say as Mary did, Be it unto me according to your word. For with man this is impossible but with God nothing shall be impossible. That’s exactly what we say. How can the eternal life of God live in us? How can it be said that God’s Spirit lives in us? How can it be said that we’ve come to faith in Jesus Christ we have from that moment on eternal life? With man it is impossible. But with God it is possible. Whosoever will may come. Drink of the water of life freely. Born of the Spirit of God. As much as a miracle in Mary’s womb as the Spirit of God birthing us into the kingdom of God is a miracle as well. A supernatural event. Our mortal existence through the power of the Spirit is made into immortality. The divine God lives in us. We become his children. No longer according to the species of human but now we belong to a whole new “species.” Spirit births us, births us in the kingdom of God. A monumental act. We never should look at the new birth as a passe experience. It is an incredible act of God in our lives that God has given each one of us if we have believed in him.

The Spirit also in our lives in conversion is there in the sense that may appropriately be described as receiving the Spirit in regeneration. Regeneration is simply taking that which is dead and regenerating it. Causing it to be generated again. Causing it to live again.

John 20:22 is a scripture that bears on this theme of receiving the Spirit in conversion. Jesus appears to his disciples in the first evening of his resurrection. Jesus said, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me I am sending you.” And with that he breathed on them and said ‘Receive the Holy Spirit.’”

Might ask a question that is really foreign to the gospels. When were the disciples saved? Some would say the disciples were first saved when they began to follow Jesus. That marks their moment of salvation. Others will say, They had to be saved sometime in their walk with Christ because the Lord told them when they came back from the mission of the 70 to rejoice their names were written down in the lamb’s book of life. Others will say the disciples really came to

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a saving faith in Christ when at Caesarea-Philippi Peter and the other confessed that Jesus is Messiah! Others will say they didn't become Christians until Acts 2. The bestowal of the Spirit.

The key hinge here is John 20:22. Although it may be appropriate to speak of the disciples as saved prior to this time in a loose sense of the word. The fact is that until Christ's resurrection the faith of the disciples was exactly like the faith of Old Testament saints. It was anticipatory of what the Messiah would do. How could they have the full saving faith yet when the work of Jesus was not finished. He had not yet died for their sins and he had not yet risen from the dead. Saving faith in the New Testament sense is looking back on what the Lord has done and having the benefit that he applies to our life. Saving faith in the Old Testament sense is looking forward prophetically to what Christ will do and believing that Messiah will come. And then his benefits are applied retroactively.

The disciples in that upper room on that evening are in the position for the first time to have the divine light, the resurrected life imputed, implanted into their life. That life comes through the agency of the Spirit of God who is life. So Jesus does something here that is very crucial. In fact it could not have been done up until this time because salvation according to Romans 10:8-9 from the New Testament sense is whoever believes in his heart that Jesus is raised and confesses with his lips shall be saved. They couldn't make that confession up until his moment. They did not know that he was raised for he had only three days ago died.

Now he appears to them. And he does something to them. In fact what he says to them is intricately linked with what he does to them. The scriptures say he breathed on them and says, "Receive ye the Spirit."

I don't know how the Lord breathed on them. Did he do it softly? Did he breathe out of his nostrils? How did he breathe? What was the significance? What is the symbolism that is involved? The Lord is using the very symbol, which means life itself. Breath is the symbol of life. If you don't believe breath is the symbol of life, stand over something that has died that was living and you realize very quickly that the difference between life and death is in the breathing.

You and I have a certain kind of power to give life ourselves. But we cannot give life to something which has died. That's beyond us. What Jesus is doing in breathing upon them is saying, now I have won benefit by virtue of my resurrection. I have a new kind of life, not the old life. I have a new kind of life to give to you. And I will breathe it into you. The new life I give is witnessed in the person of the Spirit. It's the Spirit Jesus is breathing into them. The Spirit which gives life and the Spirit alone which gives life.

Remember in the creation, Genesis 2, it says "And the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living being." Here is God bending over the clay body of man, the dust of the earth, and literally breathing over him. I realize the scripture is speaking, what's called anthropomorphically but at the same time there is a visualization here of God breathing into man. Making him a living being. Before that he was dead.

What is Jesus then doing in his resurrection? He's saying to his disciples go back to day number one of human existence where God breathed into man life. I want you to know that I am breathing into your life on a new order. I am reenacting the activity of God, the life that I breathe

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into you is not a time bound life. It's not an earth bound life. It is a life of a whole different kind. That life is represented by the fact that when Jesus breathed into the disciples he's breathing the very Spirit of God into their being.

Therefore when we look at receiving the Spirit in regeneration we are saying the Lord is re-enacting Genesis 2:7. Breath is the universal symbol of life. It can only be given by God, only God can give us the kind of life that is of the eternal order. Our breath does not revive the dead. Only the Lord's breath does.

You say, We receive the Spirit in regeneration at conversion. How does this relate to receiving the baptism in the Spirit and receiving the Spirit in the Pentecostal empowerment?

We must make a distinction between receiving the spirit in regeneration and receiving the Spirit in Pentecostal empowerment. The term "receive" can be used both of receiving the Spirit in regeneration and also receiving the Spirit in Pentecostal empowerment. Or charismatic enablement. For example, after Jesus has breathed his Spirit, the Holy Spirit, in the disciples and they have become regenerated according to the new order of life, he yet says to them Luke 24:49 "I am going to send you what my Father has promised. But stay in the city until you've been clothed with power from on high." Then he says also after this event of John 20:22, Acts 1:4-5 "Do not leave Jerusalem but wait for the gift my Father promised which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit." Then in a few days they were and Acts 2:4 says they were all filled with the Spirit.

Do a cross-reference for a moment. John 20:22 and Acts 2:4. John 20:22 Jesus breathes on them and they receive in the Spirit. Yet Acts 2:4 they were filled with the Spirit. Does this mean that they had never before received the Spirit? No it doesn't mean that. It just means that the Spirit is coming to them in a new order even yet for different kinds of purposes.

The terms can be use univocally and equivocally. One voice or many voices. Some words you've got to determine what the word means depending on the context it's being used in.

The word "receive the Spirit" is an equivocal usage. That is its context will determine what it mean. John 20:22 it's clear what it means. It's receiving the Spirit in a regenerative sense before the Pentecostal baptism. But in Acts 8:15-17 they've received the regenerative Spirit, yet on that occasion Peter and John come down so that they might receive the Holy Spirit. Receive in the John 20:22 sense? No. Receive in the Acts 2:4 sense. Paul coming to the Ephesians says "Having believed did you receive the Holy Spirit?" Is he talking about regenerative sense or is he talking about Pentecostal baptism sense? He's talking about Pentecostal baptism sense.

It is appropriate therefore for every believer to make a true confession when every believer says, I received the Spirit of God. To not receive the Spirit of God at conversion is to not therefore have the indwelling life of God in us. How can a born again Christian not be indwelt with the Spirit of God?

I remember saying these same kind of things several years ago when I was associate pastor at Central Assembly in Springfield, Missouri. That's regarded as kind of the headquarters church in the Assemblies of God Pentecostal body. There are a lot of people in Central Assembly who are part of the early days of the Pentecostal revival. Coming out of Azusa Street, Hot Springs,

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Arkansas, Topeka, Kansas – other places like this. Strong church. Good church. Good people in the church. One Sunday evening I spoke on the ministry of the Spirit in our lives. I made this distinction that when I'm saved I don't receive God the Father, God the Son and wait around for the Spirit. But in a very real sense in salvation I receive the Spirit and I distinguished that from a later terminology in scripture where we receive the Pentecostal endowment, which is also called "receiving the Spirit." It has different manifestation to it and different purpose. I said this very clearly as I'm attempting to do tonight. Afterwards one of the early pioneers of the Pentecostal movement and instrumental in the formation of the Assemblies of God. He said, "George, I haven't heard a sermon in years in the Pentecostal movement that stressed that fact. I just want you to know that that's what we taught in the beginning." So I'm not a heretic after all.

In conversion also the scriptures describe us as being indwelt of the Spirit of God. 1 Corinthians 3:16 Paul talking to the Corinthians said, "Don't you know that you yourself are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you?" James 4:4-5, James correcting the believers says, "You adulterous people. Don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. Or do you think that scripture says without reason that the Spirit he caused to live in us tends toward envy." What is the Spirit doing when we're attracted to adulterous relationships? I'm not talking about immoral adulterous relationships. That's not the phraseology scripture is attempting to convey. He's talking about a life, which becomes watered down through marriage with false gods and false ideals and false priorities. He says, "The Spirit of God living in you tends toward envy." The Spirit does not like that at all. You know as a Christian if you have walked in sin or if you have put wrong priorities there is something strong within you saying, I don't like this.

The amazing thing I've found the Spirit has never gone out. When I have done something that was clearly in violation of what the Lord has taught us it is almost like the Spirit tries to find some corner in my life where he doesn't have to occupy the rest of it. But I've never had the sense since I've been a Christian that the Spirit has left me. There are some believers who do have that sense of the Spirit has left them. I would suggest that maybe your experience needs to be corrected by scripture. They see the Spirit as sort of an in and out sort of person. The Spirit lives in you and he tends toward envy.

Romans 8:9 says, "You however are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit if the Spirit of God lives in you. If anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ he will not belong to Christ. As the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who lives in you." Time and time again Spirit is described as living in us.

Another work that the Spirit accomplishes in our life in regeneration and the seceding moments and years after regeneration is the fact that the Spirit causes us to continually make true confession. That true confession is a two fold true confession. It is a confession in respect to the Lord and it is a confession in respect to ourselves.

The Spirit is continually at work making true confession in us of Jesus. 1 Corinthians 12:3 "No one can say Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit." And that saying Jesus is Lord does not mean pronouncing his name. Saying he is Lord means accepting what he has taught us about being Lord. There are people who go around calling Jesus Lord but they are not calling him Lord in the scriptural definition. To say he is Lord is to receive the witness about him, which he

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makes of himself. To call him anything other than what he himself has born witness to is not to call him Lord. It's to invent our own definition. We cannot call him Lord except by the Spirit. The Spirit living in us. Pentecostals such as myself have no problems at all accepting the fact the Spirit of God resides in someone who may not have the charismatic or Pentecostal experience because obviously the Spirit is not confined to the charismatic part of the church. I trust that the whole church would become charismatic because I believe that's God's will and expression for his body but be that as it may any person who is born again confesses that Jesus is the Christ only by the power of the Spirit.

The gospel of Luke and the book of Acts – Luke is the theologian of the Holy Spirit – Luke uses pre-Pentecostal terminology to describe the work of the Spirit. It's fascinating to see what Luke does in the birth narratives of the Lord. There are three occasions in the birth narratives in which John the Baptist describes people as being filled with the Spirit. He for example describes John the Baptist as being filled with the Spirit from his mother's womb. He describes Elizabeth as being filled with the Spirit when she meets Mary. Mary is about three months expectant. Luke 1:39 "At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judah where she entered Zachariah's home and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting the baby leaped in her womb and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. In a loud voice she exclaimed 'Blessed are you among women and blessed is the child you will bear for why am I so favored that the mother of my Lord should come to me?'" Nobody can make a confession like that about an unborn baby except by the Holy Spirit. Why is it that John the Baptist is filled with the Spirit from his mother's womb? Because he is the one who's going to announce who Jesus is. Why is it that Elizabeth can meet Mary and Mary is still pregnant with Jesus and Elizabeth can say, The baby leaped in my womb! And why is that the mother of my Lord [this is her cousin coming] would come to me?" No one can say that except by the power of the Spirit. Therefore Luke says she's filled with the Spirit. Obviously filled with the Spirit to recognize Jesus as Lord.

Same way with Zachariah's tongue is unstopped with John is born. He is filled with the Spirit and prophecies. What does he prophesy? He prophesies about the reign of Jesus. The Spirit inevitably breaks through and makes true confession of Jesus as Lord.

But the Spirit also makes true confession about our relationship with God. It is the Spirit who gives us the understanding of sonship. Romans 8:15 tells us that we have the Spirit of adoption or the Spirit of sonship. Romans 8:16 says, "The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children." This by the way, is in contrast with the law of God. Many people get stuck in Romans 7 and 8. They don't understand what's going on in Romans 7. Basically what's going on there is the description of the Christian life as one tries to live by the power of God's law. If the law condemned you when you were a sensitive convicted sinner, it's going to condemn you when you are a sensitive converted Christian. You still come short of the law of God and the law of God is saying to you, "No. You should not have done that!" And the law is condemning.

In contrast to the law of God which condemns Paul says the Christian has the superior principle at work in his life than the law of God and that is the Spirit of God. What's the Spirit of God doing to us when we have broken the law of God? What's the Spirit of God doing for us continually in our life? He is bearing witness that we are the sons and daughters of God. The Spirit causes us to make true confession that we are God's children. The Spirit as well, Galatians

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4:6 says because you are sons God sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts. The Spirit who calls out Abba Father.” When we have familiarity with God and we come into God’s presence in a familiar sense through prayer with ease and not with fright or superstition or misapprehension. It’s only because the Spirit of God is bearing true witness in our heart causing us to make true confession about who we are. So the Spirit causes us to make true confession about who Jesus is and the Spirit causes us to make true confession about who we are in Christ. Without the Spirit’s work we couldn’t make either confession.

The Spirit of God also in regeneration baptizes us into one body. 1 Corinthians 12:13 again a verse that sometimes has been misunderstood. This is especially a focal point of disagreement between Pentecostals and non-Pentecostals. Those who are non Pentecostals would say 1 Corinthians 12:13 means every believer has been baptized in the Spirit. There is therefore not now a Pentecostal experience to be had. So plain for that is this verse which if that is the claim the verse itself has been misread or misinterpreted exegetically. “For we are all baptized by one Spirit.” It’s possible also to read here “in one spirit.” If we use the reading “by one spirit” it means the Spirit is the agent of the baptism. This analogy has been drawn by Pentecostal people. It’s helpful analogy but I’m not sure it’s correct. It all hinges on how you interpret a preposition spelled *en* in the Greek, which is capable of more than one meaning. It’ the equivocal preposition. If we say we’re baptized *by one Spirit* what happens. We think of water baptism. When I baptize someone as pastor I baptize them. They are baptized by me. I am the agent of the baptism. The element in which they are placed is the water. They are the candidates. I take the candidate, I am the agent, and I put them into the element of water.

If we understood *by one Spirit we are baptized into one body* then what is being said here is that the Spirit is the agent of our conversion and he places us into the body of Christ. Then the baptism in the Spirit, which is twice used in the book of Acts Jesus then is the baptizer. He is the agent. He will baptize with the Spirit. He, who? He, Jesus. He is the agent of the baptism, the element into which we are placed is the Spirit and we are still the candidate.

The key interpretation of this verse hinges upon the stronger preposition in the phrase *by one Spirit* or *in one Spirit* we were baptized *into one body*. What is the baptism being described here. Is it the baptism of the Spirit? No. It’s a baptism into the body that’s being described. What happens? The spirit is the agent who baptizes us into the body of Christ. In the Spirit we are baptized into the body. Which is simply foundational. The Spirit of God puts us in the family of God, in the body of Christ – one body.

Jesus himself specifically defines what the baptism in the Spirit is. Acts 1:5 and 11:16. There’s a phrase in 1 Corinthians 12:13 that is often left out. We get to debating the meaning of the first part of the verse. “We were all baptized by one Spirit into one body.” This is baptism into the body not baptism into the Spirit. “By one Spirit we were all baptized into one body whether Jew or Greek and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.” Which describes the ongoing witness and life of the Spirit in our lives. We’re baptized into one body and we’re all given the same Spirit to drink. How thirsty are you? How many compartments of your life do you want filled up? How hungry are you? Or thirsty are you for the water which the Spirit brings? By one Spirit we were all made to drink. One of the things about the filling of the Spirit is the Spirit has a lot more to give us than we are capable of receiving just because the Spirit is greater than us.

## **DOES THE SPIRIT INDWELL CHRISTIANS?**

### **The Holy Spirit**

How much of the Spirit can I drink? All that I'm capable of. But does that exhaust the Spirit? Not at all. There is so much more of Him to give. There is a sense in which in the scripture that I can continue to enlarge my capacity for the reception of the Spirit. That is an area of importance because we must avoid the Pentecostal heresy that says that once you have spoken in tongues you have got all the Spirit you ever need and kind of everything is down hill from that event on. That's just an initiatory thing. From then on our cup is meant to expand. Because we're all made to drink one Spirit. If anything I know about water is that water tastes good and water is refreshing and when you're thirsty you can't ever get enough of it.

What shall we say about the Spirit of God at work and the presence of the Spirit in our lives in conversion. We have said in summary that the Spirit births us into the kingdom of God. The Spirit enters us or indwells us. The Spirit makes true confession in us. The Spirit baptizes us into his body. The body of Christ.

If I were to summarize this I would simply say that in conversion the Spirit of God has been given to us for our benefit. It is to my benefit that I am born of the Spirit. Of course it's to God's benefit since Jesus died for me but basically it's a benefit that I receive. Born of the Spirit. Receiving the Spirit. Regeneration. Indwelling of the Spirit. Making a true confession of the Spirit. And being baptized into the body. These are benefits that accrue to me. But the Spirit is not only made available to us for our benefit. The Spirit is made available to us that we might be of benefit to the world for which Christ died.

The Spirit of God in our life in the regenerative sense ministers to us for our benefit. It brings us the assurance that we are God's people. Brings us assurance that we have made true and proper confession. Is that inner assurance that I have necessarily going to make me an effective witness? Not necessarily. It may not necessarily make me an effective witness. The Pentecostal baptism in Acts 2 is a baptism of empowerment, so that we might more be used at the Spirit's disposal in regeneration. The Spirit is at our disposal. For our benefit.

When Jesus breaths on the disciples in John 20:22 he has not yet ascended to the Father to receive the promise from on high. In those days before Pentecost then the disciples had breathed into them in a regenerative sense, they indeed were born of the Spirit, they had received the Spirit of regeneration, they were indwelled with the Spirit, they made true confession by the Spirit, and they were baptized into the body. They were a body functioning in Acts 1 where the 120 gathered together. But they had not yet begun to shape the world with the message of Christ. When Jesus ascends to the Father he now is in a position not simply in his post resurrection form but now in his post ascension form at the right hand of the Father. He pours forth the Spirit of God. What does this do? This takes a group of people who had the personal assurance of salvation and changes them into dynamos. Into persons who are so empowered of the Spirit of God that a new realm and a new age of power occurs.

It's this purpose yet of the Spirit in our life to come. As gracious as the Spirit is in conversion there yet is a sense in which he wants to come upon us in a deeper way. In a different way.

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