

The Holy Spirit In Our Lives

Matthew 3:16 [NIV] *“As soon as Jesus was baptised, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw **the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him.**”*

Something very wonderful happened when Jesus was baptised.

At that moment Jesus was empowered for the work that God the Father had for Him to do.

Acts 2:1-4 [NIV] *“When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. **All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.**”*

Something very wonderful happened to the disciples as the Holy Spirit came as Jesus promised He would.

Acts 2:41 [NIV] *“Those who accepted his message were baptised, and about **three thousand were added to their number that day.**”*

What a dramatic response to the Spirit-filled message that the disciples gave.

Acts 2:36-39 [NIV] *“Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.” When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?” Peter replied, **“Repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, for all whom the Lord our God will call.”***

Repentance and baptism was followed by the promised gift of the Holy Spirit.

We too can receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 5:32 [NIV] *“We are witnesses of these things, and so is **the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.**”*

Obedience to the words of Jesus Christ is a condition of receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Romans 8:9 [NIV] *“You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, **if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ.**”*

The Holy Spirit is the spirit of Jesus.

John 14:15-18 [NIV] *“If you love me, you will obey what I command. And I will ask the Father, and **he will give you another Counsellor to be with you for ever, the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.**”*

The Holy Spirit is the presence of the risen Jesus Christ living within us.

Notice a very important statement made by Jesus Christ as recorded in this passage of scripture.

The Holy Spirit works with each new Christian on two levels.

“*With you*” – the Holy Spirit was at work on our life even before we became a Christian.

John 16:8 [NIV] “*When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment:*”

It is the work of the Holy Spirit to convict us of sin, understand true righteousness and to remind us of the judgement we all face.

“*In you*” – the Holy Spirit will only come in us by invitation, He will never force His will on us.

Luke 11:13 [NIV] “*If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!*”

We have to ask for the gift of the Holy Spirit, but remember the Holy Spirit is God and God will only enter into our lives on His terms as Lord of our life.

Filled with the Holy Spirit

Ephesians 5:17-18 [NIV] “*Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is. Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit.*”

It is God’s purpose that we are filled and controlled by the Holy Spirit in every part of our lives, every day.

What will prevent this from happening?

All true born-again Christians have the Holy Spirit working with them, but sadly the Holy Spirit is **not** controlling every part of their lives.

Why?

Ephesians 4:30-32 [NIV] “*And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.*”

We can grieve the Holy Spirit by our attitudes and actions so that He cannot work in us and empower us as He desires to do.

1 John 4:12-16 [NIV] “*No-one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us. We know that we live in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Saviour of the world. If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in him and he in God. And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him.*”

The Holy Spirit is God and God is love.

The list of things that grieve the Holy Spirit are all attitudes that are lacking love.

If we are unforgiving, we lack love.

1 Thessalonians 5:19 [NIV] “*Do not put out the Spirit’s fire;*”

The Holy Spirit, if we let Him, will generate in us a burning desire to serve God and other human beings.

This desire can be quenched by certain wrong attitudes which are listed in this passage of scripture.

1 Thessalonians 5:12-22 [NIV] *“Now we ask you, brothers, to respect those who work hard among you, who are over you in the Lord and who admonish you. Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. Live in peace with each other. And we urge you, brothers, warn those who are idle, encourage the timid, help the weak, be patient with everyone. Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always try to be kind to each other and to everyone else. Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus. **Do not put out the Spirit’s fire**; do not treat prophecies with contempt. Test everything. Hold on to the good. Avoid every kind of evil.”*

Read this passage of scripture and meditate on it, seeing if any of these wrong attitudes are ours, or are found in our Christian fellowship.

Are these wrong attitudes ours or those of others in our Christian fellowship?

Either way the work of the Holy Spirit in us and the congregation as a whole will be hindered.

The work of the Holy Spirit in our lives

If we avoid grieving or quenching the Holy Spirit, He will produce in us the “*fruits*” of His character.

Galatians 5:22-23 [NIV] *“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.”*

Character is the result of time spent in the presence of the one whose characteristics we wish to emulate.

Character cannot be created.

It is caught, just like we catch a cold if we are close to a person with a cold.

Because I spent time with my physical father, I have many of his characteristics in my life.

The same will happen if we spend time with our Spiritual Father.

John 14:26 [NIV] *“But the Counsellor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.”*

This teaching and remembering is part of the work of the Holy Spirit in us, when He is joined to the human spirit.

John 16:13-14 [NIV] *“But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you.”*

The Holy Spirit working in us will ensure we don’t drift into error but clearly understand what is true.

Acts 1:8 [NIV] *“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”*

The power that the disciples received from the indwelling of the Holy Spirit was expressed in the work He did in and through them.

This power involved courage, boldness, confidence, insight and authority, all expressed in their words and actions.

We all need this power to fulfil our part in the work Jesus wants to do through us.

Romans 5:5 [NIV] *“And hope does not disappoint us, because **God has poured out his love into** [through] **our hearts by the Holy Spirit**, whom he has given us.”*

The Greek preposition translated “into” is “en” which indicates a presence which is resident but emanating from that person as an influencing force.

John 7:38-39 [NIV] *“Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, **streams of living water will flow from within him.**” **By this he meant the Spirit**, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.”*

Here we see the Holy Spirit is never stagnant in a person He has to flow through that person out to others in expressions of God’s Love.

This is why I believe “through” is a more correct translation than “into”.

The Holy Spirit causes love to become a result of His presence, but this love must flow out to others to be fulfilled.

Stagnant love is self love, selfishness.

God’s love is selfless love, that flows out to others in words and actions.

Romans 8:15-16 [NIV] *“For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, “Abba, Father.” **The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children.**”*

It is the presence of the Holy Spirit in us that causes us to become a child of God.

Romans 8:26-27 [NIV] *“In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. **We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us** with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because **the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God’s will.**”*

When we cannot find words to express the feeling we have within us, the Holy Spirit will intercede before God’s throne on our behalf.

1 Corinthians 2:9-11 [NIV] *“However, as it is written: “No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him”, but **God has revealed it to us by his Spirit**. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man’s spirit within him? In the same way **no-one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.**”*

The Holy Spirit will help us to understand what God has on His mind for the future of His created children.

1 Corinthians 2:12-16 [NIV] *“We have not received the spirit of the world **but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us**. This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words. **The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned**. The spiritual man makes judgments about all things, but he himself is not subject to any man’s judgment: “For who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct him?” But we have the mind of Christ.”*

Only with the Holy Spirit in us can we understand spiritual truths.

1 Corinthians 12:1, 4-7 [NIV] *“Now about spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be ignorant.” ... “There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men. Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the **common good.**”*

It is through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit that we receive special gifts that we can use to serve others in our Christian fellowship.

2 Corinthians 3:18 [NIV] *“And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord’s glory, **are being transformed into his likeness** with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.”*

We gradually are transformed into the “*likeness*” [character] of God by the indwelling Holy Spirit to truly become His created children.

We cannot mature as a Christian without the indwelling of the Holy Spirit

When we meditate on what we have just learnt, what the indwelling of the Holy Spirit can do to our lives, we realise one thing.

Without the indwelling Holy Spirit we can accomplish nothing of lasting value in our lives.

It is impossible to live the full Christian life without the Holy Spirit being in full control of our lives.

John 15:5 [NIV] *“I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; **apart from me you can do nothing.**”*

Without Jesus in our lives through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, all our effort amounts to nothing.

Galatians 3:1-5 [NIV] *“You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? **Before your very eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed as crucified.** I would like to learn just one thing from you: Did you receive the Spirit by observing the law, or by believing what you heard? Are you so foolish? **After beginning with the Spirit, are you now trying to attain your goal by human effort?** Have you suffered so much for nothing, if it really was for nothing? Does God give you his Spirit and work miracles among you because you observe the law, or because you believe what you heard?”*

The church in Galatia started as we all do by accepting our need for the sacrifice of Jesus Christ to cleanse us of all our past sins.

But after a time, and by yielding to Old Covenant teaching about righteousness being produced in us by perfectly keeping a set of laws, they sought to obtain eternal life and favour in God’s eyes by law-keeping **not** faith in what Jesus Christ has done for us.

Galatians 3:6-9 [NIV] *“Consider Abraham: **“He believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.”** Understand, then, that those who believe are children of Abraham. The Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: “All nations will be blessed through you.” **So those who have faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.**”*

The righteousness we receive is that of Jesus Christ living in our lives through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Galatians 3:10-14 [NIV] *“All who rely on observing the law are under a curse, for it is written: “Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law.” **Clearly no-one is justified before God by the law, because, “The righteous will live by faith.”** The law is not*

based on faith; on the contrary, “The man who does these things will live by them.” Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: “Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.” He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit.”

If we seek righteousness through keeping a set of laws we place ourselves under a curse, because the righteous Jesus Christ is **not** dwelling in us.

There is no such person as a D.I.Y. Christian !!

What then do we do?

Depend on the Holy Spirit within us to live the Christian life.

Confess and deal with those things that may be stopping the Holy Spirit from doing His work in us.

2 Corinthians 4:16 [NIV] *“Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day.”*

Ensure each day that the Holy Spirit is empowering our life, physically, mentally and spiritually.

Romans 12:2 [NIV] *“Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but **be transformed by the renewing of your mind**. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is, his good, pleasing and perfect will.”*

Allow the Holy Spirit to re-programme our mind on a daily basis.

The Holy Spirit is God’s complete provision for every part of our journey into the Kingdom of God.

Memory verse:

Ephesians 5:17-18 [NIV] *“Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is. Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit.”*

Becoming a Christian has caused Satan to hate us and he will do all he can to cause us to turn back to our old lifestyle.

Next time we will learn how we can resist this onslaught.