

The Holy Spirit and You

Understanding and Releasing the Holy Spirit in Your Life

Introduction:

One of the greatest problems among God's people today is that they do not have a proper understanding of the person and work of the Holy Spirit. An incomplete relationship with Him results in a subnormal Christian experience. It renders us unable to appreciate the extent of His involvement and influence in our life. It causes us to confuse His leadings with our own thoughts and inclinations. We find ourselves unable to move in the power that God has made available to us. We may substitute a vital dynamic Christian experience for one overly weighted toward principle and program.

On the other hand, understanding and receiving the ministry of the Holy Spirit in our lives is liberating and transforming. Our daily mundane human experience is brought into contact with the spiritual realm. We walk in a consciousness that God is with us, even in us, providing constant care, comfort, conviction and guidance. In time, our sensitivity and obedience to the Holy Spirit will provide us with a personal history of spiritual progress manifested in Christian maturity, spiritual gifting, and fruitfulness.

The purpose of this teaching is to introduce the wonderful person and dynamic ministry of the Holy Spirit to the believer. His ministry in our lives is both deep and multifaceted. He "dwells within us", "comes upon us" and "moves through us". Our challenge is to both understand His mission doctrinally and to be able to identify His ministry experientially in our lives.

This teaching will help us do both of these. If we will carefully meditate upon the truth, insights and guidelines presented in the following pages and examine them in reference to our own experience, our appreciation and relationship with the Holy Spirit will increase significantly.

Who is the Holy Spirit?

The Holy Spirit is a person—the third person of the triune God who is revealed in the Bible. He is not merely a force influence or power, although He exerts all of these. He has personality, though not a body of flesh. In order for someone to have personality, the characteristics, proper ties and qualities of personality must be present. The following are some of the distinctive characteristics of personality attributed to the Holy Spirit: knowledge (I Cor. 2:11); will (I Cor. 12:11) mind (Rom. 8:27); love (Rom. 15:30); grief (Eph. 4:30); prayer (Rom. 8:26); teaching (Jn. 14:26); ability to speak (Jn. 16:13); ability to guide (Jn. 16:13); comforter (Jn. 14:16,17 KJV); intelligence (Neh. 9:20).

The idea of personality takes on new meaning when we are speaking of divine beings. We must in effect, relate to super-personalities: persons whose presence and being transcend all natural limitations. The Holy Spirit, like the Father and Son, is also omniscient (Ps. 139:1-6), omnipresent (Ps.7-12), all-powerful (Lk. 1:35), and eternal (Heb. 9:14).

The Scriptures reveal that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit coexist in absolute unity and equality, with one nature, but that each has a distinct personality and separate functions. The trinity is an incomprehensible mystery. Our attempts to understand it or simplify it through our own reasoning commits the error of reducing the infinite and eternal to the level of our finite understanding. We do well, instead, to embrace the revelation of God given in the Bible and to cultivate the simple personal relationship He desires with us.

The Holy Spirit is also referred to by such names as the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ, the Comforter, the Spirit of life, the Spirit of adoption, and the Spirit of holiness. He is illustrated with such symbols as fire (Acts 2:3), wind (Acts 2:2), water (Jn. 7:38), a seal (Eph. 1:13), oil (Jms. 5:14) and a dove (Jn. 1:32).

Why is He here?

The Holy Spirit is God's agent of restoration in the earth today! Adam and Eve were created in God's image and were under His mandate to reproduce and have dominion over all the earth (Gen. 1:27,28). Adam's disobedience caused the fall of mankind, bringing us under the power of sin and Satan. God immediately promised a Deliverer and instituted a plan of restoration. In the fullness of time Christ came as the last Adam (I Cor. 15:45), lived a perfect, sinless life, demonstrated the power of the kingdom of God through miracles, signs and wonders; and then gave His sinless life as a sacrifice to break the power of sin and Satan over mankind.

In His final days, He began to introduce the Holy Spirit to His disciples. In John 14:16, after speaking about His soon departure from them, He made this promise, "And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever." He was referring to the Holy Spirit. The word "Helper" (gr. Parakletos) signifies an intercessor, comforter, helper, advocate and counselor.

The Holy Spirit is all of these things to us and more. He is the manifest presence of Christ both in, upon and through our lives. Christ's personal presence was limited while in a natural body. Now, through the Holy Spirit, He can dwell in us and reveal Himself personally to every believer simultaneously around the world. This is why He told His disciples that it was absolutely necessary that He leave this earth (Jn. 16:7).

The Holy Spirit is working constantly, carefully and jealously to restore each of us to the image of Jesus Christ (Rom. 8:29). Mankind was originally created in the image of God, and meant to enjoy life in a state of spiritual harmony and personal integration. The Holy Spirit has birthed the life of Christ within us allowing its transforming power to prevail over the effects of our sin nature.

The focal point of the ministry of the Holy Spirit is to introduce us to Jesus Christ (Jn. 15:26). He is continually attempting to direct our attention to Him, using life situations and challenges to bring us to a greater revelation and relationship with Him. At the same time, the Holy Spirit is anointing, empowering and directing us as members of the Body of Christ, to carry out Christ's mission of redemption and restoration in the earth.

The Holy Spirit Lives with in Us:

After Christ's ascension to the Father (Acts 1:10), He sent the Holy Spirit to the earth to reside within the life of every person who would receive Jesus Christ as their Savior. John 1:12 tells us, "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God." Jesus Christ purchased our right to become children of God by paying the penalty for our sin, thus making it possible to be reconciled to the Father.

When the Holy Spirit enters our life we are born again (Jn. 3:3). Just as our physical birth brings us into contact and relationship with the natural, material world, so our spiritual birth introduces us to the spiritual world. Jesus said, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (Jn. 3:6). We immediately receive the capacity to know the spiritual realities of the kingdom of God: "Unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (Jn. 3: 3).

The sense of distance and alienation that we used to feel with God is removed. The Holy Spirit, within us, communicates an assurance of our adoption into the divine family (Rom. 8:15). He comes to fill our heart with the comfort and certainty that God is now our loving and eternal Father (Gal. 4:6). He witnesses to the fact that we have been made one with the Father and the Son: "At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you" (Jn. 14:20). Our bodies now become the temple of the Holy Spirit: "...your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own" (I Cor. 6:19). We have been sealed by the Spirit until "the redemption of purchased possession" (Eph. 1:14). He remains in us permanently based upon our faith and relationship to Jesus Christ (I Jn. 2:24).

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