

“HOLY SPIRIT’S MINISTRY TO SAINTS” Part 1

John 14:16-18

“I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.”

Just as the Bible teaches plainly about God the Father and God the Son, so it also clearly reveals the Person and work of God the Holy Spirit. In this study it is my desire that we come to a fuller understanding of Who the Holy Spirit is and what He means to us as believers.

In the preceding five studies we have reviewed what the Bible teaches about Jesus’ Promise of the Holy Spirit, Who the Holy Spirit is (two lessons), His Ministry in Salvation and His Ministry to the Sinner. In this lesson, the first of several studies on the subject, we will concentrate upon the Holy Spirit’s Ministry to Saints.

What do the Bible terms: the Indwelling of the Holy Spirit, Sealing, Baptism, Anointing, Filling, Sanctifying, Teaching, Praying, Comforting and Conforming— have in common? They are all ministries of the Holy Spirit to the children of God!

Those terms inform us of what God desires to do for us or is doing for us and in us. If someone is ministering to me I want to know what it is they are going to be doing for me! Yet many believers remain ignorant of the Holy Spirit’s ministry on their behalf.

The Apostle Paul found some untaught believers in Ephesus and he questioned them about the Holy Spirit. They responded, “We have not so much as heard whether there is any Holy Spirit.” (Acts 19:1,2) When we observe some conduct by those who go by the name “Christian” one wonders whether they have heard that there is any Holy Spirit.

It is my sincere prayer that all God’s children know the God Who redeemed and resides within us. Let us all get better acquainted with the Holy Spirit and His ministry on our behalf. What wonderful works He carries on in and for us

We will concentrate upon two of His ministries in this study: His Indwelling and His Filling. There is much confusion about the ministry of the Holy Spirit as a result of *misinformation* and *misinterpretation* which results in *misunderstanding*. A considerable amount of misunderstanding springs from the failure to distinguish between the Spirit’s indwelling and the Spirit’s infilling. Therefore, let us focus on these two ministries.

I. THE HOLY SPIRIT’S INDWELLING – His Presence Giving Us Assurance.

Jesus told the disciples that “He dwells with you and will be in you.” (John 14:18) The “in-fleshing” of the Son of God in a human body is called the Incarnation; The “in-fleshing” of the Spirit of God in human bodies is called the “Indwelling.” Precisely what is the importance of the Holy Spirit’s indwelling the Christian?

A. HE IS IN US WORKING.

Living with other human beings we are aware when there is work going on around us. We see signs along the highway saying, "Men working." But are you aware that we are living with a Diving Being Who is working *in* us? God is at work *in* us! "It is God who works *in* you both to will and to do for *His* good pleasure." (Philippians 2:13) It might help explain to those around us, when they see changes in our lives for the better, if we wore a sign saying, "God at work."

The enemies of the psalmist asked him, "Where is your God?" (Psalm 42:10) If we were to be asked the same question, what would be our reply? Would we say, "Well, God is in His heaven!" Or would we say, "He is in me, working!"

What is the work He is doing? He is transforming, yes, reforming our will "to will and to do for *His* good pleasure." As Paul said, the will of God is "good, and acceptable, and perfect." (Rom. 12:2) The writer of the book of Hebrews closes out his epistle praying that God would: "make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom *be* glory forever and ever. Amen. (Hebrews 13:21)

Knowing and doing the will of God is the sine qua non – that without which we cannot - be victorious in the Christian life. We should say, "Work on mighty God! Perfect that which concerns us, conforming us to the image of your dear Son our Savior!"

B. HE IS IN US WITNESSING.

What does the Bible say? That is always the best question to ask. I John 5:9-11 enlightens us as follows:

"If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater; for this is the witness of God which He has testified of His Son. He who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself; he who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed the testimony that God has given of His Son. And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son."

What does a witness do? He testifies! Notice how the Holy Spirit witnesses:

He Witnesses In Us.

Where is the witness, according to the above passage? "He who believes in the Son Of God has the witness *in himself*." Jesus said, "He dwells with you and will be in you." (John 14:18)

The "*witness*" here referred to is the inward evidence that our soul has found peace by believing in Jesus Christ for salvation.

*He Is Witness **To** Us.*

Hebrews 10:15 “But the Holy Spirit also witnesses to us.” He witnesses that we are children of God. He gives that essential inward assurance so necessary when we go through storms of life.

*He Is Witness **With** Us.*

Romans 8:16 “The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.”

ILLUST. Mr. Wesley, the father of the famous John and Charles Wesley, founders of the Methodist church, was dying. His famous sons were at his bedside. Turning to them he said, “The inward witness, my sons, that is the proof, the strongest proof of Christianity.”

This inward assurance is the result of the Holy Spirit’s witness In, To and With us – testifying that we who have put our trust in Jesus Christ are children of God. What a wonderful truth is that of the work and witnessing of the Spirit!

II. THE HOLY SPIRIT’S FILLING – His Power Giving Us Confidence

“And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit....”
(Ephesians 5:18)

There is a great difference between the *indwelling* of the Holy Spirit and the *infilling* of the Holy Spirit. Understand this: there is only one indwelling, but there may be many infillings. If we will keep the distinction clear between the indwelling of the Spirit and the filling of the Spirit, we will not be confused or led astray by false teaching. Notice with me:

A. THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN INDWELLING AND FILLING.

- The indwelling makes us Christians, while the filling makes us Christ-like;
- The indwelling is eternal, while the filling is conditional;
- The indwelling gives us eternal life, while the filling gives us victorious life;
- With the indwelling we may remain carnal Christians, while with the filling we become Spiritual Christians;
- The indwelling brings union with Christ, while the filling brings communion with Christ;
- The indwelling is preceded by repentance and faith, while the filling is preceded by obedience and faith;
- The indwelling means His presence, the filling means His power;
- By the indwelling we possess God, while by the filling God possesses us;
- The indwelling is the initial inflow, the filling is the conditional overflow.

We can measure the degree to which we have the Spirit’s fullness by the “fruits”, that is, the results which are manifested in our lives: “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control.” (Galatians 5:22) Would those who know you best say that they see the Spirit at work in your life?

B. THE DYNAMIC THAT IS THE RESULT OF HIS FULNESS.

Acts 1:8 - "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me^[a] in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

Rom. 15:13 - "Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."

Acts 4:33 is an exciting verse, "and with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus; and great grace was upon them all."

Notice that the word "*great*" is used twice. The word in the Greek language is "*megos*." That word has come to a new usage in modern times. In our world of awesome destructive forces, we measure the power of the atom bomb by "megatons." One megaton is the equivalent of the explosive force of one million tons of dynamite. With this illustration of power fresh in our minds, let us read the scripture in a literal rendering: "And with a million tons of power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and a million tons of grace was upon them all."

When we are filled with the Holy Spirit we have mega power with which to serve the Lord. Our task is great. For a great task there is great power.

C. THE DEFINITION OF "FILLING".

To understand what the Bible means by the term "be filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:18) we must understand that the Spirit is a person; He is not a fluid! Some think that to be filled with the Holy Spirit means that we get more of the Spirit. Not so! The Holy Spirit is a Person. You cannot get parts of a person. Rather, to be "filled with the Spirit" means that He gets more of us!

If you are God's child you have all of the Person of the Holy Spirit there is. The big question is: Does He have all of you? When He has all of us, we can be assured that we are filled with the Holy Spirit.

ILLUST. Let us compare our bodies to a house with many rooms. The Holy Spirit comes to dwell in us but we shut Him up in some corner of our lives. He desires to fill the whole house, not just the "religious" room! He wants to be in control of our minds, that is the "upstairs" of our life; He wants to control the social area of our life, that is the "Living Room"; He wants to control the appetites of our life, that is the "Dining Room." He wants to fill the entire house with His presence and His power. He wants all of us! That is the "filling" of the Spirit. Let us give him the keys to every area of our lives and He will occupy and permeate them with the fragrance of heaven.

CONCLUSION

The Holy Spirit's indwelling is His presence giving us assurance by His working in and witnessing to us.

The Holy Spirit's filling is his power giving us confidence by empowering us as we yield more and more of our lives to Him.

The Holy Spirit indwells us when we receive Christ; The Holy Spirit fills us when we relinquish control!

Let our prayer be:

"Jesus fill now with thy Spirit hearts that full surrender know,
That the streams of living water from our inner man may flow.
Channels only, blessed Master, but with all Thy wondrous power
Flowing through us, Thou canst use us every day and every hour."

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