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VF Holy Spirit

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The Indwelling Spirit

by

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THE INDWELLING SPIRIT

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One of the most important, fascinating and illuminating studies of the whole Bible is the Indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the heart of, and daily lives of God's children. It has been said that "the best way to be understood in the presentation of a lesson is not to be misunderstood"; and I don't intend to be misunderstood. In the study of this lesson, we have two persons involved. The individual child of God, or human person, and the indwelling person or the Holy Spirit.

First let us take a look at the individual person (you and me). The apostle Paul describes us as the natural man (Rom. 11:21; 2 Cor. 2:14), and then he tells us that in our natural state, our carnal mind is not subject to the law of God. (Rom. 8:7) Therefore let us humble ourselves (you and me) to our natural state of being and not go beyond our natural self and claim for ourselves powers that belonged to Christ and His apostles and possibly a few of the apostles' co-workers.

The individual person with his carnal mind in his natural state has only five ways to learn and to know anything, these are his natural senses, and since "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him," neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. Now, since man through his natural senses cannot receive the things of the Spirit, then it would be impossible for him to receive any new revelation from God. This being true, then the only revelation we have from God must come through the written word.—AMEN.

Now that the Gospel is our only source of information, let us think for a little while how God has revealed this blessed word to us, and in Hebrews 1:1-2 we have these words, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the Prophets, hath in these last days spoken to us by his Son," and the apostles. John 3:16 tells us that "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." In order for people to believe on Him, Christ taught the multitudes as well as His apostles that He must go back to the Father who sent Him; this "filled their hearts with sorrow," but being human Himself, He knew their sad condition, and He promised them another comforter. John 14:26, "But the comforter which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you." Again in Mark 16:15-16,

"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved: but he that believeth not shall be damned." Throughout the New Testament, from Matthew through Revelation, we have the word of God: "The Gospel of our Salvation," coming to us through Christ and His apostles, by the Holy Spirit. This is the only Gospel we have ever had, or will ever have—note Rev. 22:18-19.

I hope what has been said so far will help everyone who reads this to understand that there is no such thing as a modern or a new revelation from God to man, and there are no more miraculous manifestations of the Spirit. But much significance will come from the above later (no more revelation needed—no more miracles needed).

Now with reference to the Spirit dwelling in the hearts and lives of God's children, we have many scriptures, both in positive and implied language, telling us that the Holy Spirit dwells in us. So let us look at some of these scriptures briefly, before going into a discussion of the "when and why."

In John 14:16-17 Christ says, "And I will pray the Father and he will send you another comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of Truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not. Neither knoweth Him; But you know Him for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." Though these words were spoken to the apostles, part of these words certainly apply to us today, since "that he may abide with you forever." And again in Matt. 28: 19-20, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Again Christ is speaking to his apostles, but the fact that He "will be with them alway, even unto the end of the world" certainly implies that He will be with God's children also, and how can he be with us except by His Spirit?

Again in John 14:23, "If a man love me he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." Since Christ and the Father are both in heaven, how could they take up their abode with God's children except by their Spirit?

Again Acts 2:38. The apostle Peter preached the first Gospel sermon ever preached. The Jews heard and believed what Peter preached, and asked him and the other apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Then Peter said unto them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you and your children all that are afar off, even as many as our God shall call."

These scriptures do not refer to the actual indwelling of the Spirit Himself, but are definite **promises** that a person will receive the Spirit when he becomes obedient to God's will, and after his sins have been remitted. Now, to the scriptures that teach the actual indwelling of the Spirit himself: Acts 5:32, "And we are His witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey Him." From the time the apostle Peter preached the Gospel on Pentecost, till he preached the above sermon (Acts 5:32), more than five thousand souls had obeyed the Gospel. And God had already given them the Holy Spirit. How can any man with common intelligence who professes to be an obedient Child of God, deny the words of the apostle Peter and refuse to accept the Holy Spirit as a gift from God? I am glad I have the Holy Spirit abiding in my heart, and if you will continue to read through the pages to follow, you will understand why it was necessary for the Holy Spirit to be imparted (given) to the believer after he was baptized and received remission of sins.

Next we come to Rom. 8:9, "But ye are not in the flesh but in the Spirit if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." My brother, my sister, my friend, are you a Christian? A child of God? If you are, you have the Spirit within you, and if you don't have the Spirit within you, then you don't belong to Christ.

Next, Rom. 8:11, "But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his spirit that dwelleth in you." All kind of misinterpretations have been put on this verse of scripture, trying to make it mean something it doesn't say. But to take this verse literally, it can mean only one thing, that is if you have been baptized for the remission of sins, and received the Spirit that the apostle Peter speaks of in Acts 5:32, then God will give you a new (make you a new creature) life by the Spirit that you have received. "The Spirit that dwelleth in you." Please memorize this verse of scripture and keep it in your mind, for I will have much more to say on it later.

Again Rom. 8:15, "For ye have not received the Spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." The Spirit of adoption is a capitalized word and can mean only one thing, and that is the name of a person. Therefore these adopted Roman Christians received the person of the Holy Spirit.

Again in 1 Cor. 3:16-17, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple you are." Here the apostle Paul is writing to Christians, "unto the church of God which is at Corinth." "To them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that

in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours." 1 Cor. 1:2. I cannot believe the apostle Paul would write one thing to the church at Corinth and another thing just the opposite to the church in the town where I live. Therefore I dedicate my mortal body as an "habitation of God through the Spirit." The two Corinthian letters were written to the church at Corinth, and may I ask who were the church at Corinth? And where could God through the Spirit take up his abode except in the heart of each member?

Next, Gal. 4:6, "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." This tells us very plainly that God gives the Spirit to his adopted children. It also tells why the Spirit was given.

Now, with all these scriptures before us, confirming the fact that the Holy Spirit dwells in the heart of Christians, the all-important questions are asked: **How, when and why** does the child of God receive the Spirit?

The first question is how does the child of God receive the Spirit? And I am going to let the apostles Peter and Paul answer the question.

Acts 5:32, the apostle Peter says, "And we are his witness to these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him." Therefore we can see that the obedient child of God received the Holy Spirit as a gift from God.

The above quotation was taken from a sermon the apostle Peter preached to the Jews not long after Pentecost, but after more than five thousand souls had been added to the church. They received the gift of the Spirit like Peter said they would. Acts 2:38.

Now, listen to the apostle Paul in Gal. 4:6, "And because you are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts." Here again God's children received the Spirit as a gift from God. And may I say here that the only way any person can receive the Spirit is for that person to become obedient to God's will, and God will give him His Spirit. Therefore, the Spirit comes to a Christian only as a gift from God.

Question 2. When does a Christian receive the Spirit? Again, I refer you to Acts 2:38, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." This verse answers a lot of questions, and the above question in particular.

John 14:17 reads as follows: "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." Again this was directed to the apostles, and is used here to

show that the world (sinners) cannot receive the Spirit. Therefore a person who has not been baptized, has not received remission of sins, cannot receive the gift of the Spirit. The verse also shows that the apostles already had the Spirit with them and would in the future have the Spirit in them. Again I refer the reader to Acts 5:32 where Peter says, "God hath given his Spirit to them that obey him."

Read and study the above scriptures carefully, and prayerfully, and I believe that you will believe that God will give his Spirit to his obedient children, as an ever abiding helper.

We now come to the most important question of all, Why? Why does God give his Spirit to his adopted children? The scriptures, after making it so very clear to a well informed and unbiased person that God does give his Spirit to his children, would not be complete unless they also gave a reason or a purpose for the indwelling Spirit. Here is where and why we enter into the most important part of this study. Why do I or you as a child of God need the Holy Spirit? In Romans 9:9 and 10 we read as follows: "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his, and if Christ be in you the body is dead because of sin: but the Spirit is life because of Righteousness." Now let us continue to read on through verse 11, "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. A great amount of controversy arises from this verse of scripture concerning when the new life is given. Most Bible scholars will say it means in the final resurrection. The apostle Paul says the New Life (Quickenings) will be for your mortal body. Now, who can read 1 Cor. chapter 15 and then say there will be a mortal body in the final resurrection to receive new life? Just who can believe that that dead mortal body which has gone back to dust of the earth can again become flesh and blood and enter into the judgment and final resurrection and receive from God a new life? This is absurd reasoning, beyond comprehension. Then, when does God by his Spirit give a new life to the mortal body? Answer: when a person is 'born again.' Born of water and of the Spirit. When is a person born of water and of the Spirit? Answer: when he is baptized and receives remission of sins. Col. 2:13. It would be impossible for a person to be born of the Spirit while he is still in his sins. A person cannot live a life of righteousness in the kingdom and a life of sin in the world at the same time. How can it be said that a person is born of the Spirit when he hears and believes the Gospel and before he is baptized and receives remission of sins? Christ told Nicodemus (John 3:5), "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." He put the water first and the Spirit next. The apostle Paul said in Titus 3:5 we are saved "by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost." He put the washing (baptism and remission) first, and the renewing (saving) of the Spirit last. We might as well say that a person is renewed (saved) by the Spirit first and then be

washed or cleansed of his sins later, as to say that a person is born of the Spirit by hearing and believing the word and then being baptized for the remission of sins.

Again in Acts 2:38 we hear the apostle Peter say: "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." If we apply the above false teaching of John 3:5 to Acts 2:38 we would be saying: Repent and receive the gift of the Holy Spirit and be baptized for the remission of sins. You don't believe that and neither do I.

Again: If we change the words and meaning of John 3:5 by saying a person is born of the Spirit by hearing and believing the word and then being baptized for remission of sins, then we will have to change the words and meaning of Mark 16:16 to say "He that believeth and is saved shall be baptized."

This kind of reasoning is absurd and indefensible and contrary to the concept of scriptural teaching in regard to the Gospel plan of Salvation.

What Christ said to Nicodemus in John 3:5 is about the same thing Peter said to the Jews on the day of Pentecost; Acts 2:38. It is about the same thing Paul said to the saints at Colossae, Col. 2:12-13, and again to the saints at Rome, Rom. 6:3-6 and 8:11.

Now, I believe it won't be hard for you to understand that for a sinner to be saved he must first hear the Gospel, then believe, repent, confess and be baptized and receive remission of sins and also receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, and when he receives the Spirit he will receive a new life (be born again) in his "mortal body by the Spirit that dwelleth in him." This is just one reason why God gives his Spirit to "them who obey him." Acts 5:32.

Now I believe enough scriptures have been presented to help any open-minded Bible student to understand that before he can become a new creature in Christ Jesus that God has to give him a "new life by the Spirit that dwelleth in him."

The fact that a person receives a new life by the Holy Spirit is not the only thing that the Spirit does. When a person becomes a Christian the Spirit bears witness with his Spirit that he is a child of God. Matt. 6:9, Christ teaches his disciples when they pray to address God as "our Father which art in heaven." Now when we address God as our Father which art in heaven, we are also saying to him, we are your children. If God is our Father, then we are his children. But God is in heaven, and we are here on earth; then how can God know we are his children? Let us read, and read carefully Rom. 8:15-16, "For ye have not received the Spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our Spirit, that we are the children of God." Therefore we have a witness before

the Father in heaven that we are his children. One more verse of scripture will help us to understand how important the Holy Spirit is in our relation to our heavenly Father and especially when we are praying to the Father. Again I say, read, and read carefully with me Eph. 2:18, "For through him (Christ) we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father."

It is easy for us to understand that we have to go through Christ in our prayers to reach our heavenly Father. Now did it ever occur to you how Christ, who is on the right hand of God in heaven, is going to hear our frail voice from here on earth? Again did it ever occur to you how the apostles, who did not know God's will, were able to preach (teach) the words of God to man here on earth? YES, that has occurred to you because you have read in the scriptures how the words of God were given to them by the Spirit. Now if you can understand that, it seems to me that you should also be able to understand how Christ and the Father can hear our words (prayers) by also reading the scriptures. So I plead with you to read, reread and study Rom. 8:15-16 and Eph. 2:18. If you will take just a few moments to study these scriptures, I think you can and will understand why it was necessary for God to "send the Spirit of his Son Jesus Christ into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." Gal. 4:6.

In Rom. 8:15, the apostle tells us why we have received the Spirit, that is, that we can pray (cry) to the Father by the Spirit. But in Gal. 4:6 the same apostle tells us that God has sent the Spirit into our hearts crying Abba, Father. In Rom. 8:15 we cry (pray) Abba, Father; in Gal. 4:6 the Spirit who is in our hearts cries Abba, Father. Therefore our Spirit and the Holy Spirit are both crying to the Father. Now if we have been given the Spirit whereby we cry Abba, Father, and if the Spirit that God has sent into our hearts is crying Abba, Father, then for what purpose are the two Spirits crying Abba, Father? The answer is plain and is spelled out in simple words in the very next verse, Rom. 8:16—"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." What a wonderful blessing it is to have the Spirit as our witness before the Father in heaven that we are his children, and confirming the fact that God is our Father. Just who, my brother, would want to deny the Spirit the privilege of being a witness to the fact before God that we are his children? I am glad I have the Spirit whereby I can cry Abba, Father.

Now that we have the Spirit as our witness before the Father in heaven, let us read a little further in this same eighth chapter and see how the Spirit helps us. Verses 25-26-27 read as follows: "But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will

of God." These three verses are so plain that they need no interpretation. All that is needed is just to believe what they say. There is perfect harmony in all the scriptures that have been mentioned.

* * *

In conclusion: First, I want to thank you for reading this paper. My main purpose for presenting this paper is to help the child of God to better understand his relationship to God and to make it easier for him to pray to the Father in heaven, knowing that he has a witness to the fact that he is a child of God.

