

Lesson for September 20, 2009

Review of Our Spiritual Assets

Indwelling of God the Father, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit

Indwelling of God the Father

Many Christians know that when they trusted Christ as their Savior that God the Holy Spirit came to indwell them. Most Christians *do not* realize that at the same time, God the Father and God the Son came to indwell them. Each member of the Trinity has a specific purpose for indwelling the believer.

God the Father indwells us for a purpose. There are no direct statements in Scripture to tell us exactly what this purpose encompasses. Therefore, we will need to examine the role of the Father in relation to the Son, the Holy Spirit and the believer. (John 14:23; Ephesians 4:6; II John 9)

Why the Father Indwells the Believer

Everything that we possess as believers is provided by the Father through the agency of His Son, Jesus Christ. As a guarantee to us of the Father's eternal provision, God the Father indwells every believer. The Father is with us constantly to grant blessings beyond compare and above our imaginations. He constantly pours out divine blessings to His children and bestows gifts of grace without measure. These blessings include such things as salvation, promises, doctrine, family, friends, and even physical needs. The Father is indwelling us in order to watch over and protect us, as any good father would do. (James 1:17-18)

God the Father is with us to assure us of His love and care. As a loving Father, He is concerned with our welfare and continually shows His love for us by guiding and directing our paths through life. Like a good father, He occasionally has to discipline His children in order to help them stay within His will. The Father's correction is always for our good. (John 14:21; 15:8-10; 17:26; Hebrews 12:5-11)

God the Father indwells the believer to guard him from the world system and to glorify Jesus Christ in the believer's life. This was Christ's prayer for you and me. Christ did not pray that the believer would be taken out of this world, but that the Father would safe-guard him while he was in the world. (John 17)

Jesus also prayed that He would be glorified through the believer and that the believer would share His joy. It is the Father Who provides all of this for the believer through experiential sanctification. Jesus prayed that the believer would be sanctified through the truth, which is Bible doctrine.

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And finally, Jesus prayed that the believers would be one as the Father and the Son are one. Unity of the believers is accomplished in only one way - truth. It is the truth of the Word of God that brings us together as Christians. False doctrine divides but truth unites.

Indwelling of Jesus Christ

At the moment of salvation, every believer becomes indwelt by the second Person of the Trinity, Jesus Christ, for a specific purpose. Christ indwells the believer in order to make evident His glory in us. This is accomplished in the life of the maturing believer as he exhibits the character of Jesus Christ. Our objective as Christians is to allow God the Father to glorify His Son by pouring out fantastic blessings on us. As we move through the spiritual life on our way to maturity, our capacity to receive blessing from God increases. This increase in capacity sets up the potential for glorifying Christ. As the indwelling Christ, He provides encouragement, motivation and confidence. (John 14:18-21; Ephesians 3:14-21; Colossians 1:27)

During the Church Age, the Shekinah Glory of God (Jesus Christ) indwells the believer guaranteeing temporal and eternal blessings. It is no longer necessary for Christ to appear in a cloud or as a pillar of fire, since He has revealed Himself in the Person of Jesus. The Shekinah Glory of God “became flesh and dwelt among men.” (John 1:1-3; 14:18-21; II Corinthians 6:16; Ephesians 3:17; Colossians 3:17)

The Lord Jesus Christ indwells the believer in order to glorify Himself in the life of the believer. As with the indwelling of the Father and the Holy Spirit, we must allow Christ to glorify Himself through our lives. We do this as we abide in Him (fellowship) and His Word abides in us. The word for abide in Greek is “meno” and means to dwell, to remain, to continue in, or to tarry. Abide means “to be at home with.” When Bible doctrine is dwelling in you and you are in fellowship with Christ, the potential exists to glorify Him through your life. (John 15:1-14)

The indwelling of Christ also provides motivation for the execution of the Christian Way of Life. Our personal love for Jesus Christ should motivate each of us to do our best to bring glory to Him. The unmotivated life dishonors our Savior and brings shame to us at the Judgment Seat of Christ. (II Corinthians 10:17)

For human beings there is no greater motivation than love. It was love that motivated the humanity of Jesus Christ to die in our place, paying the penalty for our sin. It was love that motivated God the Father to send Christ. It is love for God that should be our motivation for wanting to please Him. (John 3:16, 15:13; II Corinthians 5:14-15)

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The indwelling Christ “pours out” His love in our souls as we advance in our spiritual lives. Knowing and understanding the love of God by means of study and application of Bible doctrine is our motivation for serving Him. Spiritual advance reflects the glory that dwells in us. (Romans 5:5; II Corinthians 3:17-18)

Indwelling of the Holy Spirit

The indwelling of God the Holy Spirit begins immediately at salvation and is permanent, as is the indwelling of God the Father and God the Son. This ministry is unique to the Church Age in which we live. It is this ministry that assures our royal status, since all believers regardless of their spiritual health, are equally indwelt by the Holy Spirit. This ministry also creates a temple in the body of each believer for the indwelling of Christ, the Shekinah Glory. “Shekinah” literally means “dwelling.”

It is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit that sets up *the potential* for the believer to understand spiritual truth, to glorify Christ, to be comforted, to be guided through life and to witness for Christ. It is still up to the individual believer to use his volition (free will) to *choose* to allow God the Holy Spirit to control his life. (Galatians 3:2-3; 4:6; Acts 1:8; Romans 8:9; I Corinthians 2:12; 3:16-17; 6:19-20; John 14:16-20; Colossians 1:27)

The indwelling of the Holy Spirit sets up a potential for the believer to understand spiritual truth. Since God does not force truth upon us, we must make the choice to learn, believe and apply spiritual truth. Under the control of the Holy Spirit, the believer is able to convert academic understanding of God’s Word into spiritual understanding. (I Corinthians 2:10-16; II Peter 1:20-21)

In the time in which we live there is much being said about the Holy Spirit, to the point of glorifying Him in the name of Christ. Anytime the Holy Spirit is glorified, a “red flag” should immediately go up for the believer. Jesus made it perfectly clear that when the Holy Spirit came to earth that He (the Holy Spirit) would NOT speak of Himself, but would testify of Christ. This is not to say that the Holy Spirit, as God, is any less deity than Jesus Christ. He is co-equal and co-eternal with the Father and the Son. However, in function He never seeks to glorify Himself, only Christ. We must remember that it is Christ Who is the focal point of all that God is doing on behalf of mankind. Therefore, all glory has been given to Christ. (John 16:13-14, 17:1-5; II Peter 1:16-18)

The word in Greek for comforter is “parakletos” and means to call to one’s aid. It is the ministry of God the Holy Spirit to bring comfort to the believer in time of distress. Originally a legal term for an advocate or defense attorney, the word for comforter came to mean much more. Its meaning was expanded to include consolation, encouragement, alleviation of grief, a soothing solace or giving

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comfort; things perhaps an advocate would do for a client. It is this word that the Holy Spirit inspired the writers of Scripture to use to describe His ministry. (John 14:16,26, 15:26; 16:7; Philippians 2:1-2; II Thessalonians 2:15-16; I John 2:1)

How does the Holy Spirit comfort the believer? Since in this age God does not speak directly to human beings, there must be a way in which He communicates this comfort. It is very clear from Scripture that God the Holy Spirit uses the Bible doctrine that we have stored in our souls to bring comfort, encouragement, alleviation of grief and solace. The Holy Spirit guides us to the truth that we need at a particular moment in order to accomplish His ministry of comfort. The key, of course, is to have this information stored so that we have a frame of reference for the purpose of using the faith-rest drill, which involves reaching a doctrinal conclusion and application. (John 14:26, 16:12-13; Galatians 4:6; Hebrews 1:1-2)

Guidance of the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit indwells the believer as our guide. The Bible teaches that the Holy Spirit guides the believer to truth and it is this truth, when inculcated and metabolized that becomes the source for all guidance. Without spiritual truth resident in your soul, you cannot be properly guided by the Holy Spirit. You must first learn and believe accurate Bible doctrine before you can apply it under the control of the Holy Spirit. God the Holy Spirit may guide you to a person, a place or a circumstance, but He will not force you to make the right decision. You must make that decision...hopefully it will be based on the accurate Bible doctrine you have stored in your soul. This process, of course, is always based on grace, since it is God Who is guiding you; first to truth and then to the proper application of truth. (I Corinthians 3:1-2)

We are told that the Holy Spirit is the Person Who not only teaches us truth, but also brings truth to our remembrance. It is this recall of truth that allows us the opportunity to make good decisions from a position of strength while we are in fellowship with God and controlled by the Holy Spirit. The key to proper guidance for the believer is spiritual growth. Spiritually maturing Christians have greater potential for making right decisions than spiritually immature Christians. (John 14:26; Ephesians 4:13-16; Hebrews 5:11-14)

Power to Witness for Christ

One of the many privileges that we have as believers is to share the good news of the Gospel with others. One of the ministries of the Holy Spirit is to empower us to carry out our responsibility to be witnesses. Acts 1:8 tells us that when the Holy Spirit was permanently given to the early apostles they also received the accompanying power to be effective witnesses for Christ. The same is true for us today.