

The Circuit Rider

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THE TEACHER'S TEXT

“The Holy Spirit”

“In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with the holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.”

(Eph. 1:13-14)

Scripture teaches that there is One and only One true and living God Who has manifested Himself in three Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. To begin with, we need to understand that the personality of the “Holy Spirit” is equal to, but different from that of the “Father” and the “Son” (Matt. 28:19). The Holy Spirit is no less God than the other two persons of the Trinity. He is called HOLY because He is the very agent of Holiness. He is called “Spirit” because of the manner He exerts His invisible divine influence. The Holy Spirit is a reasonable and emotional Person Who works in the spiritual realm beyond personal physical appearance. He is NOT an “it”, but a Person and is referred to in the New Testament by the pronoun, “He” (Jh. 14:26).

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Promise

The Holy Spirit is God and there never has been a time when He did not exist. He was present and working with God's people in the Old Testament, empowering them for service. However, the role of the Holy Spirit was promised to take on a new intimate meaning after the crucifixion of Christ (Joel 2:28). Joel's prophecy pointed to the outpouring of God's Spirit that will occur before the coming "day of the Lord". Peter stated that Joel's vision began to find fulfillment at Pentecost with the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:16-21). What happened on the day of Pentecost was the beginning of the last era of world history that will find its end with the return of Christ. In His last discourse, Jesus assured His disciples that it was "expedient" for them that He "go away" in order for the "Comforter", Who is the "Spirit of promise" to come upon them (Jh. 16:7).

In speaking of the coming of the "Holy Spirit", Jesus did not refer to some vague spiritual influence, but to a transforming Person (Jh. 14:16-18). To be indwelt with the "Holy Spirit" is to receive "Christ" and is a mark of being a true believer (Rom. 8:9-16). Even though the relationship between "Christ" and the "Holy Spirit" is apparent, they are two distinct Persons of the Godhead. Both are equal parts of the Godhead, but with separate functions. It is the job of the "Holy Spirit" to convict us of "sin" (Jh. 16:8-11), guide us into all "truth" (Jh. 16:13), and "glorify" Christ (Jh. 16:14). To sin against the "Holy Spirit" is not only proof of Him being a Person, but of His deity (Matt. 12:31-32). The seriousness of sinning against the "Holy Spirit" indicates His vital work in the salvation of sinners.

The promise of the coming "Comforter" was fulfilled following the death of Christ and evidenced on the "Day of Pentecost" (Acts 2:1-4). In His last earthly appearance from the Mount Of Olives, Jesus promised His disciples "power" from the "Holy Spirit" (Acts 1:8). They were instructed "not" to "depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father" (Acts 1:4). This they did until the "Day of Pentecost" when they discovered an indwelling "power" which they never knew before. For ten days, they "all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication" (Acts 1:14) and then "a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind ... filled all the house where they were sitting" (Acts 2:2). On this occasion, they experienced the supernatural ability to speak in foreign languages never before known to them. This resulted in multitudes who heard the "gospel" in their own native tongue and believed unto "salvation" (Acts 2:41). Paul has more to say about this gift of tongues, which was apparently being misused in the

Corinthian Church (I Cor.12-14). Scripture never teaches any such thing as an unknown tongue, but rather a known tongue, which was the supernatural ability to speak a foreign language that one had never learned. Although this tongues gift was given during the apostolic era and ceased with that period of time, the Holy Spirit is still in the business of doing the supernatural. In fact, what we need to see happening in the churches today is something beyond the human ability of man that can only be attributed to the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is the Seal of Promise

Being “sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise” signifies a finished transaction of ownership, making something a “purchased possession” (Eph. 1:13-14). “Salvation” from sin is only possible as the Holy Spirit opens our ears to the “word of truth” and grants us faith to believe “the gospel”. Because of the vital part the Holy Spirit plays in our conversion, we are admonished to “grieve not the Holy Spirit of God whereby ye are sealed” (Eph. 4:30).

Apart from the Holy Spirit, spiritual service cannot be acceptability performed, spiritual truth cannot be learned, and a spiritual life pleasing to God cannot be lived. It’s futile for man to attempt to do the work of God in the energy of the “flesh” (Rom. 8:8). Unless the Holy Spirit is doing His work, going where man cannot go, and doing what man cannot do, then all we do for God is meaningless (Zech. 4:6). Therefore, we are totally dependent upon the Holy Spirit from everything to conversion (Jh. 3:8), to praying (Rom. 8:26-27), to receiving our spiritual gifts (I Cor. 12:7), to the very “redemption of our body” (Rom. 8:23) in the resurrection. All that is done by the Holy Spirit is “unto the praise of his glory”.

The Holy Spirit is the Security of Promise

Sinful man is not only unable to save himself, but he is unable to keep himself saved. Therefore, God has secured the eternal state of our salvation by the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. As He indwells the true believer, not only does the believer’s “body” become the “temple of the Holy Spirit” (I Cor. 6:19-20), but He is the very “earnest of our inheritance”.

Earnest money paid in a purchase is a pledge on the part of the buyer that more is yet to come. The “Holy Spirit” within God’s elect is God’s guarantee that what He has begun in us, He will complete (Phil. 1:6). When

Jesus comes to claim His purchased possession, then our “redemption” will be finished.

Closing

“Born again” (Jh. 3:3) believers have been convicted, converted, indwelt, filled, and empowered by the Third Person of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit. This is the same Holy Spirit Who teaches us to “walk by faith, not by sight” (II Cor. 5:7). This is the same Holy Spirit Who produces “fruit” (Gal. 5:22-25) in our lives that can bless others. Every believer receives the “Holy Spirit” at the moment of regeneration (Jh. 14:16-17, I Jh. 2:27). However, many believers are not fully aware of His presence, as they ought to be. Receiving the “Holy Spirit” is not a second work of grace that comes after salvation. It is the work of God in saving, sealing, and securing the believer for all eternity. We are instructed to “quench not the Spirit” (I Thess. 5:19), but “be filled with the Spirit” (Eph. 5:18) and live in yieldedness under His total control. For each believer individually and every church collectively, we need to recognize the Holy Spirit as our Sovereign Administrator. This means to go where He says go and do what He says to do without question or reservation. If we’re open to His leadership, then He will reveal to us the Father’s will and grant us “power” to accomplish it.

A MINISTRY UPDATE

We hope that you have had an opportunity to check out our new website that can be found at www.covenantofgraceministries.com . I’d like to remind you that we are running ahead of schedule, so please bear with us in getting the Bible studies downloaded. Our goal remains to have the first Bible Study series online by the first of 2008. It will be the entire Book of Esther, dealing with the theme of God’s Providence. For those who would like to have this series either on cassette or CD, it will be available upon request. If you would like any of these resources and could help with the cost involved, it would be appreciated, but not required.

As always, thank you for your prayerful and financial support of this ministry. May “the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.”

(I Thess. 5:28)

Because of His Sovereign Grace

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