

"The Spirit Himself"

T. Austin-Sparks:

"The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirits" (Rom 8:16).

We have said many things about man's spirit, but, when we have said all that can be said, we really get nowhere until we give the full place to the Holy Spirit. The most perfectly articulated and adjusted man would be no more than a fine piece of machinery without power, but for the Spirit of God. He is the "Spirit of life", "light", "truth", "wisdom", "grace", "supplication", "power", and "understanding"; and indeed of all that God is for us in Christ Jesus. While it is necessary that he has an organ (spirit) in man of the same order as Himself, that organ cannot function in relation to Divine things without Him one whit more than the body can function without its animal life. When we have fully recognized the nature and faculties of the human spirit, we must ever be watchful against making our spirit the governing factor in our lives. We do not keep our ears open to our spirit. Such procedure would lead us into serious dangers. We must "abide in Christ", not live in our own spirit. For the child of God the Holy Spirit is the Divine indweller of the human spirit, and He has the direction and government of our lives. We shall not escape confusion and confounding if we make anything apart from the Lord Himself our court of appeal or sphere of life. There are several matters in relation to the Holy Spirit which are very vital to a life in any real measure of fullness. One such matter is that of the corporate nature of the anointing and operation of the Spirit. We have dealt with this in other writings, so will do no more than refer to it here. But one far-reaching, and, we might say, all-inclusive consideration is that of the Holy Spirit's supreme object in this dispensation. This is—**to make Christ all-in-all.**

Pentecost was a movement from heaven to make real and true in men and women here (as the Church) what had taken place in heaven. There Christ had been exalted at the right hand of God. He had been "crowned with glory and honour". "All things" had been put, "under his feet", etc. He had been installed as the pattern of man in full accordance with God's thought and intention. This exaltation and installing was to be a governing reality in all God's dealings with man. Conformity to the image of God's Son was to motivate all God's practical relationships with believers. Everything, from new birth to glorification, was to have Christ as its power, its nature, and its goal. He, and He alone, was to be the resource for living, being, and serving. What had been true in principle as to His own life on earth in relation to God had to become true in the case of all related to Him after His exaltation. "Nothing of (out from, Gk.) himself" (John 5:19) was a rigid law of all His movements, works, words, times, ways. He would commit Himself in no way that would make it impossible for Him to quickly change His course if the Father intimated the desire. He would care nothing for publicity or public opinion. In everything and everywhere the Father's will and way ruled His life. This was the great "even as" which embraced both Himself and His Own afterward (John 15:10; 17:16 etc.).

For all this—the setting aside of all of self in every way and consideration, and, the enthroning of Christ as absolute Lord—the Holy Spirit came. The soul is the seat of the human ego, the spirit is the sanctuary of the risen and exalted Christ, and there He has to rule all that is personal in us, so that in all things He may have the pre-eminence. This is the all-embracing work of the Holy Spirit.

"For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father... that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, that ye may be strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inward man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; to the end that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be strong to apprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye may be filled unto all the fullness of God" (Eph 3:14-19).