



Articles and Sermons :: The Person of the Holy Spirit

The Person of the Holy Spirit - posted by HeartSong, on: 2008/12/19 17:18

The Person of the Holy Spirit
by Eli Brayley

"Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" - Amos 3:3

Many Christians today haven't a clue who the Holy Spirit is. This is simply because they have never been introduced. I am not suggesting they have never come in contact with the Holy Spirit, or else they would surely not be Christians at all! But, just as you have never met the maker and designer of the shirt you wear, so many believers, though having come to Christ by the working of the Spirit of God, have never had a personal acquaintance. It is my goal in this article to arrange a meeting in the most simplest way.

The first thing to understand is the fact that just as you had need to receive the Son of God, so you have need to receive the Spirit of God. "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" A common reason for having not received is their reply: "We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost." (Acts 19:2) Believers as they were, they had experienced the working of the Spirit in their lives but not the Worker Himself.

WHAT THE HOLY SPIRIT IS NOT

Though not said outright, many people have a misconstrued idea of this Third Person of the Trinity. He is more often than not confused with emotion. Soft music, cushy prayer, liquid sermons... it's no wonder so many people are overcome with feeling during these services. There are many times I am filled with emotion when I sing "Amazing love, how can it be, that Thou my God shouldst die for me!" This is not wrong, and even encouraged (for worship very well leads to be filled; see Acts 16:25 and Ephesians 5:18-20), but confusing emotion for the power of the Spirit is certainly an error that must be corrected. Because of the lack of the Spirit in our lives, we actually try and conjure up emotion to make up for the deficit. This is a sad thing to behold.

Another misconception which is not uncommon is the fault of thinking the Holy Spirit to be a mere influence or intuition. A person may say to another: "I believe the Holy Spirit is telling me to get more sleep." Now this may very well be the voice of God stirring this word in a person, but we cannot and should not deny the natural features placed in us by our good and wise Creator: conscience, instinct, reason and sensibility. The Lord may very well want you to sleep, dear brother or sister, and in such cases He usually speaks clearly to us through these institutions of our design, though I am not eliminating this possibility! What I am getting at is this: the business of the Holy Spirit is to make witnesses for Jesus: teaching us and bringing to remembrance all things pertaining to the Word of God (John 14:26), enabling us to speak before men (Mark 13:11), convicting the world of righteousness, sin and judgment (John 16:8), comforting us in our persecutions (John 14:6), and empowering us to do the impossible (Luke 24:49). But I am getting ahead of myself.

WHAT THE HOLY SPIRIT IS

All of that being said, the Holy Spirit is a PERSON; an actual Being who is the Third member of God. And this is the most important truth about Him that I can relate to you: that He is the most sensitive Person in all the universe; that there is no one else more fastidious than He in Heaven and Earth combined. The Bible teaches us that "anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come." (Matthew 12:32) Any sin against the Son of God can be forgiven, but to sin against the Holy Spirit is unforgivable. The Bible does not say, "grieve not the Father"; for the Father is daily grieved and yet is patient to forbear. Nor does the Bible say, "quench not the Son"; for our blessed Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, constantly intercedes for His people regardless of difficulty, and His gracious gospel is violently advancing even among the heathen. But of the Spirit the Bible declares: "Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God" (Ephesians 4:30) and "Quench not the Spirit" (1 Thessalonians 5:19), two undeniable admonishments toward a tender and delicate Deity.

As mentioned before, the work of the Spirit is to bear witness before the world of the truth that is in Christ. This is His every intent. If you want to meet the Holy Spirit of God then make this business your own. As you begin purposing yourself to save souls and spread the gospel you will find instantly the presence of the Spirit at work in your life. Too many Christians are not filled with the promise of the Spirit because too many Christians are uninterested in soulwinning. Unless you repent of this He will never come to you; He will only walk with those who are walking the same direction.

The Holy Spirit is the author of the Bible. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3:16), and this is confirmed in 2 Peter 1:21: "...but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." The Word of God and the Spirit of God are one, they cannot be separated. What I mean is this: the Spirit will never say anything contrary to the Word and the Word will never say anything contrary to the Spirit. Thus comes the simple truth: If you want to be filled with the Spirit you must get your life in line with the Word of God. This is the way you test the spirits as the Bible commands us to do in 1 Thessalonians 5:21. I am continually amazed at the amount of Christians who claim to be Spirit-filled yet do not abide in the teachings of the Word. Now I do not mean to suppose a person must be perfect (in understanding and maturity) in order to be filled, but I do mean that a life must be in order with the knowledge of truth attained. In this point the Spirit of God is extremely sensitive. The inspired Word of God is unmistakably clear on the believers relationship with the world and will not compromise to satisfy your fleshly appetites. It is either death to self or death to the Spirit in your life. "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?" (James 4:4-5) You can only walk with Him if you walk in His ways.

The Holy Spirit is gentle and humble. "And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him." (Matthew 3:16) Just as a dove is easily frightened and will fly away at any quick or boisterous movement, so the Spirit will depart at any haughty or brash personality. There is NO place for pride in Heaven, neither is there any place for it in the Christian, the heavenly pilgrim. God has always resisted the proud but given grace to the humble. When a man lowers himself in humility, becoming a servant to all as Jesus, the King of Glory did, having put on the mind of Christ, then he has made a comfortable dwelling for the Spirit to abide. When a man cultivates gentleness in his life, and puts aside carnal anger, wrath, arrogance and aggressiveness, then the Spirit is happy to reside in the person, not being grieved by an offensive environment. He will not walk with a contentious traveller.

Lastly, the Holy Spirit loves prayer. He desires to do it as much as He can through us: "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints." (Ephesians 6:18) He helps us pray and intercedes for us and for all the saints: "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." (Romans 8:26-27) It is the will of God that we pray! A prayerless person is incompatible with the Spirit.

It is interesting to note that when God's people pray the Holy Spirit comes. The disciples at Pentecost (Acts 1:14), the apostles evangelistic prayer (Acts 4:31), prayer and the laying on of hands (Acts 8:15), and even Jesus' baptism: "Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased." (Luke 3:21-22) If you desire to walk with the Spirit you must resolve to be a person of prayer, "...praying in the Holy Ghost." (Jude 1:20)

THE END OF THE MATTER

"This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another." (Galatians 5:16-26)

Source