

The Holy Spirit and the Cross

by Andrew Murray

The Holy Spirit leads us to the cross, and the cross is the indispensable preparation for the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

Scripture: Galatians 3:1

Topics: "The Holy Spirit", "The Cross"

Description

Andrew Murray emphasizes the inseparable relationship between the Holy Spirit and the cross, illustrating how both were central to Christ's mission and the disciples' ministry. He explains that the Holy Spirit leads believers to the cross, enabling them to experience the fullness of God's power and grace. Murray highlights that true spiritual life requires a willingness to embrace the cross, which demands the death of the flesh and the world. He encourages believers to seek the Holy Spirit's guidance in understanding the significance of the cross and to cultivate a deeper relationship with God through prayer and surrender. Ultimately, the message is one of hope, urging the faithful to allow the Spirit to transform their lives through the power of the cross.

Transcript

The Holy Spirit ever leads us to the cross. It was so with Christ. The Spirit taught him and enabled him to offer himself without spot to God.

It was so with the disciples. The Spirit, with whom they were filled, led them to preach Christ as the crucified one. Late on he led them to glory in the fellowship of the cross when they were deemed worthy to suffer for Christ's sake.

And the cross directed them again to the Spirit. When Christ had borne the cross, he received the Spirit from the Father, that he might be poured out. When the three thousand bowed before the crucified one, they received the promise of the Holy Spirit. When the disciples rejoiced in their experience of the fellowship of the cross, they received the Holy Spirit afresh. The union between the Spirit and the cross is indissoluble; they belong inseparably to one another. We see this especially in the epistles of Paul. 'Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you... Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?' (Gal. 3.1, 2).

'Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law ... that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith' (Gal. 3.13, 14). 'God sent forth his Son ... To redeem them that were under the law ... and ...

hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts' (Gal. 4.4-6). 'And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit' (Gal. 5.24, 25). 'Ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ ... that we should serve in newness of spirit' (Rom. 7.4-6). 'For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For ... God ... condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit' (Rom. 8.24).

In everything and always the Spirit and the cross are inseparable. Yes, even in heaven. The Lamb, as it had been slain, standing in the midst of the throne had 'seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth' (Rev. 5.6). Again: 'He shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal [Is this other than the Holy Spirit?] proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb' (Rev. 22. 1). When Moses smote the rock, the water streamed out and Israel drank. When the Rock Christ was actually smitten and he had taken his place as the slain Lamb on the throne of God, there flowed out from under the throne the fullness of the Holy Spirit for the whole world.

How foolish it is to pray for the fullness of the Spirit if we have not first placed ourselves under the full power of the cross! Just think of the one hundred and twenty disciples. The crucifixion of Christ had touched, broken, and taken possession of their entire hearts. They could speak or think of nothing else, and when the crucified one had shown them his hands and his feet, he said unto them: 'Receive ye the Holy Ghost' (John 20.22). And so also, with their hearts full of the crucified Christ, now received up into heaven, they were prepared to be filled with the Spirit. They dared to proclaim to the people: 'Repent and believe in the crucified one'; and they also received the Holy Spirit.

Christ gave himself up entirely to the cross. 'The disciples also did the same. The cross demands this also from us; it would have our entire life. To comply with this demand requires nothing less than a powerful act of the will, for which we are unfit, and a powerful act of God of which he may be assured who casts himself, in helplessness, but unreservedly on God.

The Spirit and the Cross

Why are there not more men and women who can witness, in the joy of their hearts, that the Spirit of God has taken possession of them and given them new power to witness for him? Yet more urgently arises the heartsearching question to which an answer must be given: what is it that hinders? The Father in heaven is more willing than an earthly father to give bread to his child, and yet the cry arises: 'Is the Spirit straitened? Is this his work?'

Many will acknowledge that the hindrance undoubtedly lies in the fact that the Church is too much under the sway of the flesh and the world. They understand too little of the heartpiercing power of the cross of Christ. So it comes to pass that the Spirit has not the vessels into which he can pour his fullness.

Many complain that the subject is too high or too deep for them. This is a proof of how little we have appropriated and brought into practice the teaching of Paul and Christ about the cross. I bring you a message of joy. The Spirit who is in you, in however limited a measure, is prepared to take you under his teaching, to lead you to the cross, and by his heavenly instruction to make you now something of what the crucified Christ wills to do for you and in you.

But then he wants you to take time, so that he may reveal the heavenly mysteries to you. He wants to make you see how the neglect of the inner chamber has hindered fellowship with Christ, the knowledge of

the cross, and the powerful operations of the Spirit. He will teach you what is meant by the denial of self, the taking up of your cross, the losing of your life, and following him.

In spite of all that you have felt of your ignorance, and lack of spiritual insight and fellowship with the cross, he is able and willing to take you under his teaching and to make known to you the secret of the spiritual life above all your expectations.

Begin at the beginning. Be faithful in the inner chamber. Thank him that you can reckon on him to meet you there. Although everything appears cold, and dark, and strained, bow in silence before the loving Lord Jesus, who so longs after you. Thank the Father that he has given you the Spirit. And be assured that all you do not yet know, and still must know - about 'the flesh', and 'the world', and the cross - the Spirit of Christ, who is in you, will surely make known to you. O soul, only believe that this blessing is for you! Christ belongs entirely to you. He longs to obtain full possession of you. He can and will possess you through the Holy Spirit. But for this, time is necessary. Oh, give him time in the inner chamber every day. You can rest assured that he will fulfil his promise in you. 'He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him' (John 14.21).

Persevere, in addition to all that you ask for yourself, in prayer for your congregation, your church, your minister; for all believers; for the whole Church of God, that God may strengthen them with power through his Spirit, so that Christ may dwell in their hearts by faith. Blessed time when the answer comes! Continue in prayer. The Spirit will reveal and glorify Christ and his love, Christ and his cross 'as the Lamb slain standing in the midst of the throne'.

The Cross and the Flesh

These two are deadly enemies. The cross desires to condemn and put to death 'the flesh'. 'The flesh' desires to cast aside and conquer the cross. Many, as they hear of the cross as the indispensable preparation for the fullness of the Holy Spirit, will find out what there is in them which must yet be crucified. We must understand that our entire nature is sentenced to death and must become dead by the cross, so that the new life in Christ may come to rule in us. We must obtain such an insight into the fallen condition of our nature and its enmity against God that we become willing, nay desirous, to be wholly freed from it.

We must learn to say with Paul: 'In me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing' (Rom. 7.18). 'The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be' (Rom. 8.7). It is its very essence to hate God and his holy law. This is the wonder of redemption, that Christ has borne on the cross the judgment and curse of God on 'the flesh', and has forever nailed it to the cursed tree. If a man only believes God's word about this 'cursed mind of the flesh', and then longs to be delivered from it, he learns to love the cross as his deliverer from the power of the enemy.

'Our old man is crucified' with Christ, and our one hope is to receive this by faith and to hold it fast. 'They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh' (Gal. 5.24). They have willingly declared that they will daily regard 'the flesh' which is in them as the enemy of God, the enemy of Christ, the enemy of their soul's salvation, and will treat it as having received its deserved reward in being nailed to the cross.

This is one part of the eternal redemption which Christ has brought to us. It is not something which we can grasp with our understanding or accomplish with our strength. It is something which the Lord Jesus himself will give us if we are willing to abide in his fellowship day by day, and to receive everything from

him. It is something which the Holy Spirit will teach us, and he will impart it to us as an experience, and will show how he can give victory in the power of the cross over all that is of the flesh.

The Cross and the World

What the flesh is in the smallest circle of my own person, that the world is in the larger circle of mankind. 'The flesh' and 'the world' are two manifestations of the same 'god of this world who is served by both. When the cross deals with 'the flesh' as accursed, we at once discover what the nature and power of the world are. 'They ... hated both me and my Father' (John 15.24). The proof of this was that they crucified Christ. But Christ obtained the victory on the cross and freed us from the power of 'the world'. And now we can say: 'God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world' (Gal. 4.14).

The cross was to Paul every day a holy reality, both in what he had to suffer from the world and in the victory which the cross constantly gave. John also writes: 'The whole world lieth in wickedness' (1 John 5.19). 'Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God? This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ ... And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth' (1 John 5.5, 6). Against the two great powers of the god of this world, God has given us two great powers from heaven, namely, the cross and the Spirit. greatest victory with his hands and feet nailed to the cross. We abide in the shadow of the

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