

The Holy Spirit Is the Great Transformer

by Dougan Clark

The inner life of holiness is a state of being characterized by peace, resignation to God's providences, and sanctified judgment, where the heart is detached from earthly things and realizes God as a present Counselor and Friend.

Scripture: Psalm 91:1, Proverbs 3:5, John 14:27, 1 Corinthians 2:15, Philippians 4:7, James 1:5

Topics: "Holy Spirit", "Sanctification"

Description

Dougan Clark preaches about the characteristics of an entirely sanctified believer's inner life, emphasizing the transformation of the heart, hidden life, peace, resignation to God's providences, sanctified judgment, and detachment from earthly things to focus on God as a present Counselor and Friend.

Transcript

The holy heart therefore is a transformed heart. The life of such a heart is a hidden life. The entirely sanctified believer has an inner life which is peculiarly his own. He may have much sorrow, but if sorrowful, he is always rejoicing. "A stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy." He dwelleth in the secret places of the Most High" -he abides "under the shadow of the Almighty" -- he is hidden "in the shadow of His hand," "in His pavilion,," "in the secret of His tabernacle" -- he eats of the hidden manna, and his soul is satisfied.

The first characteristic of this inner life that I mention is peace. The entirely sanctified man or woman is possessed of a spirit that is altogether peaceful and resigned. This is a state of mind that originates from, and coexists with perfect faith. The natural excitability which is so troublesome to most Christians, when they are in the presence of the fretting and vexing cares of life, is in such as I am describing, brought into quietness and subjection. The stormy winds are calmed and the rolling waves subside. Deep within the innermost recesses of the soul, there is rest -- there is "understanding" -- there is a measure, just as much as our human hearts can contain of the "sublime and passionless tranquility of God" Himself.

It must not be supposed, however, that the inner life of the sanctified Christian is devoid of feeling. The quietness and the peace which he experiences are not the quietness and peace of inertia, nor of stupidity, nor of indifference, nor of presumption. Far from it. His rest of soul does not result from want of feeling, but from regulated, subdued and harmonized feeling. His emotions, his desires, his volitions, are brought into subjection to and agreement with the perfect will of God and where there is no rebellion and no self-will, there can be no discord and no unrest. All other feelings are lost and submerged in the one feeling of

supreme love to God and then the blessed Saviour's words are verified. "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you."

The inner life of holiness is characterized in the second place by a complete and unmurmuring resignation to all God's outward providences. These providences are regarded by the wholly sanctified believer as the interpreters of the Divine will. They are one of the important instrumentalities by, which the Holy Spirit guides and directs the willing and obedient believer. How appropriate then that he should "nourish himself with the daily providences of God" -- that in everything that meets him in his daily life he should be on the alert to recognize the hand of his Heavenly Father -- and eager to follow implicitly all its pointings.

And such a condition of mind will be far removed from the eagerness and "self-activity" of nature -- for this is always restless, and therefore unhappy -- but the other is quiet, restful, patient. "My soul wait only upon God for my expectation is from Him. And as the true and patient searching for God in His daily providences is opposed to the "peace of God which passeth all" the "creaturely activity" of nature -- it is also opposed not less to sluggishness and indolence. If we, are really in earnest to know and do all the will of God, we shall have no time for idleness nor for carelessness. We shall be no more ready to lag behind the intimations of our Father's will, than to run before them. Keep always just abreast of the providences which surround thy path, and thou will be enabled by His grace to walk before Him "unto all pleasing," -- and thou wilt be preserved from rashly hastening on before the Guide, or indolently loitering behind Him.

A winding river or a ship gently gliding before the wind is a beautiful object. Such an object gives pleasure to the beholder, as we are told by the philosophers, because it harmonizes with the movements of our own minds. But a river rushing madly down a steep descent, or plunging over a cataract -- whilst it may inspire us with a sense of sublimity, and produce awe and admiration and a half-conscious terror -- yet it ceases to be beautiful because our mental movements cannot keep pace with it. A ship driven fiercely before a gale, dashing the waves into foam in its mad career, while it is majestic and grand, yet as in the other instance, and for the same reason, ceases to be beautiful, because the movement of our minds is too slow to harmonize with it.

And thus it is with the sanctified soul. If it moves just when and where God may direct by His providences -- keeping pace as it were with His heavenly intimations, all will be calm and peaceful within, even if we are engaged in the most arduous labors either of hand or brain -- all will be sweet and beautiful because all will be in order of infinite and unerring wisdom.

But if we allow ourselves to be jostled out of the Divine harmony, if by taking our movements into our own hands -- like a horse that seizes his bit, and runs away without control, or on the other hand like a slowly moving horse that cannot be urged out of its stride -- we go too fast or too slow -- in either case we lose the sense of the Divine presence, and our peace is disturbed by darkness and perplexity.

The inner life of holiness is further characterized by a sanctified judgment. The Holy Spirit operates, no doubt, primarily and chiefly upon the heart. He transforms the sensibilities. He reconstructs the motives and impulses, and especially He adjusts and harmonizes the will. But we must not imagine that He leaves the intellect out of the sphere of His heavenly and Divine operations. By no means. He illuminates the understanding. He communicates new truths to the sanctified mind. He interprets truths learned from the Bible or other sources so as to make them new. He casts a flood of light upon the inspired pages. He guides each holy individual into all the spiritual truth that is required for the needs of his own soul, and also for the work he has to do. To all such he becomes in very truth "the Spirit of wisdom." And, beloved, let us

devoutly pray that God may give us a holy discernment, so that we may detect the real differences between things that often to the unregenerate man and the unanointed Christian look just alike -- that we may distinguish between thing and thing -- "between the precious and the vile" between what is of God and what is of Satan. "He that is spiritual discerneth all things, yet he himself is discerned of no man."

We ought to remark in this connection that the man who is entirely sanctified and filled with the Spirit, does not on that account have less need of carefulness in his perceptions, and a calm and deliberate exercise of his rational faculties. Common sense, which is far too uncommon, is a thing which no Christian in any state of grace should lay aside or lightly esteem. The Holy Ghost -- baptized believer should know better than to surrender himself to impulses, which do not by any means always come from the Holy Ghost -- rather than to be influenced by a rational judgment, sanctified and enlightened by the Holy Spirit. At this very point, too many Holiness people, alas, have fallen into gross delusions, ending in fanaticism and shipwreck of faith. Look at our blessed Lord Jesus Christ. He possessed the Spirit without measure. And yet He was never known to do a thing that was extravagant, or irrational, or absurd. He was calmly contemplative.

He exercises a sound and sanctified judgment. He did some things that were beyond the reason of those with whom He mingled -- but nothing that was contrary to reason. As a man he was eminently level-headed as well as level-hearted.

The inner life of the holy soul is furthermore a life by the moment -- and a life in which the heart is detached from earthly things, and realizes God as a present Counselor and Friend. The past is gone, we can never change it, the future is unknown to us and beyond our control; the present is ours. Give yourself then to the present moment, and give the present moment to God. This state of "inward recollections" as it has been designated by certain devout writers: is just realizing by faith the continual presence of God -- it is cultivating His acquaintance -- it is listening for and to the whispers of His love -- and learning what His will is. Yea, communing with Him as friend with friend. Praise the Lord.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/dougan-clark/the-holy-spirit-is-the-great-transformer/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net