

Indwelling of the Holy Ghost

by John Nelson Darby

The indwelling of the Holy Ghost enables us to know and love God, and to walk in the Spirit by following the example of Christ and being conformed to the image of God.

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 6:19

Topics: "Identity in Christ", "Indwelling of the Holy Spirit"

Description

John Nelson Darby emphasizes the profound relationship between believers and the Holy Ghost, highlighting that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, which signifies God's intimate presence within us. He explains that this indwelling allows us to experience divine love and knowledge, transforming our lives to reflect Christ's character. Darby stresses that being filled with the Spirit is essential for living a life that glorifies God, as we are not our own but have been bought with a price. The sermon calls for believers to recognize their identity in Christ and to walk in a manner worthy of their calling, empowered by the Holy Spirit. Ultimately, Darby encourages a life of reverence and intimacy with God, rooted in the understanding of His love and the significance of the Holy Spirit's presence.

Transcript

There is nothing, perhaps, more striking in reading either the Gospels, or the Epistles, the sayings of the Lord Jesus Himself, or what, in some respects, are more wonderful, the statements of the apostles, than the entire familiarity that appears in them, with the highest divine things. It is never, of course, nor could it be, that familiarity which, in human things, because of their imperfection, takes away reverence. But the nearer we are to God, the more we see His blessedness, while there will be the reverence that becomes His presence; at the same time there is perfect familiarity with the highest divine things. It stamps the one born of God; it stamps the divine revelation that we have. I can tell that the Father loves the Son - nothing can be simpler than the expression; but what a thing to know His divine affections in themselves! It is not merely that He loves me, as is very true; but the Father loves the Son. So with the divine counsels. He hath "made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself." It is all brought out; as it is expressed in that word, "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things."

It is not that simply certain testimonies have come out; this was the case with the prophets; or that certain commandments have been given which are the most perfect expression of what man ought to be, as in the law; but God has revealed Himself, and that in the perfectness of His own love, that He might be

known. Along with this, and especially characterising Christianity, there is not only the perfect revelation of Himself in His own nature as God, as light and love, revealing the Father, Son, and Spirit; but He has given us the Spirit. Having made us "partakers of the divine nature," that we might be capable of enjoying what He is; He has also given us the Holy Ghost, that we might know what He is. You get, first, our being set before God in perfect acceptance, "accepted in the Beloved." And then, beyond that, the truth that God has not only revealed Himself to us, that we might have confidence in coming to Him in Christ, but that He reveals Himself in us after having set us in Christ there, that the conscience should be placed in His presence.

216 At the same time we read in Ephesians of being "strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man"; it is also said in the same Epistle, "that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith." So that He who is the centre of all the thoughts and counsels of God, of all His glory as revealed, the Son Himself dwells in us, and sets us thus in the centre of all this glory, that we should comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height. It is not only that there has been a revelation to us of the Father and Son and the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, but that He has so associated us with Christ as dwelling in us, and that by the power of the Holy Ghost, that He sets our souls in the centre of all these affections, and of all this knowledge and glory.

Therefore the apostle cannot exactly say what it is, but only says "what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height," and adds, "and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God." He has been a man, and dwelt among us, yet He dwells in us, and His love passes knowledge. This brings us into such blessed intimacy, though ever more adoringly; for the more we know Him, the more we shall see that He is God. So even with Christ Himself. We are there in the same glory with Himself; but this only brings us into the capacity to know the infinite blessedness of His Person. We see this in the scene of the transfiguration. The moment there was the thought in the heart, "Let us make three tabernacles, one for thee, one for Moses, and one for Elias," the Father says, "This is my beloved Son: hear him." Christ stands alone. Yet we now by the grace which associates us with Him, are brought into that which is divinely blessed and perfect; such is the peculiar blessedness of Christianity.

It is not now merely sending out a law to shew what man ought to be, but it is eternal life given, in the true knowledge of the Father and Son, and this in the power of the Holy Ghost. Therefore the affections of the heart are of the Spirit, and are filled with the Spirit, and they have their play in all true Christian affection. Being brought into such a place, all our ways, the condition of our soul and our conduct of course are looked for to be conformed to that of which Christ Himself is the perfect expression. It is not merely that there is a certain rule of conduct, as in the law, but it is Christ dwelling in our hearts by faith; so that our thoughts, and feelings, and affections should flow from that source through the Holy Ghost. That is what is meant by being "filled with the Spirit." We all have the Spirit, but we are not all "filled with the Spirit." He is the one source of everything where the heart is filled with Him.

217 That which is here brought before us is not only the blessedness of the place we are put in, but the conduct of the Christian suitable to it in every respect. And it is that which suits the presence of the Holy Ghost dwelling in him. Whatever is not fit for His presence is not fit for the Christian. It will come down to the most ordinary things of life, because there is a path which is pleasing to God in this world - there is one way for a person to walk, and no other. Supposing a son has left his father's house, and has gone off to a strange country; he may not be outwardly given up to what shocks the conscience, but he cannot, as long as he is there, do right; he must go back in order to do what is right; until he does this, in all he does there

is not one thing that is right. This is the way with man in the world. He has left God, and cannot do anything right, never can do anything positively right, till he gets back.

If we are in our right place, we do not want a way. Adam wanted no way in the garden of Eden; his business was to stay where he was. In the world, where wickedness is, we want a way; but there is no way really, because we have departed from God. But when the Spirit of God has come into it, He has created a path for him that believes. For the Jews in the wilderness, where the cloud went, there was a way directly. God can make a way for Himself, no matter how wicked the world. If I injure a man, it is wrong; and if he revenges himself, it is wrong; but Christ can make a way through it all. He can give me to walk with wisdom and patience in all circumstances. He can bring in motives and principles for every difficulty of this world; and that is where the Christian has to walk. "He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk even as he walked."

The life of Jesus should be manifested in us. Our life ought to be the expression of this new thing - that is, divine life in the midst of a world that is away from God. Nothing but Christ can do that, and it is Christ in us. The power of it is by the presence of the Holy Ghost acting upon "the new man which after God is created in righteousness and in true holiness." It is not the old thing corrected at all, because the old man never can have the divine motives, but its own motives. It may be corrected in an outward thing, for people are not all thieves and robbers; but it never can have the motives that belong to the divine nature, and therefore, though it may be decent and respectable, it never can be right. It is the nature that has departed from God, and it cannot be right before Him. We read that that which we have (the new man) is "after God, created in righteousness and in true holiness." And in another part it is said that it is "renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him." The measure of spiritual knowledge, as to the walk and affections, is the image of Him who created us; and where do I see this perfectly? In Christ. He is "the image of the invisible God." The power of that life was shewn in the resurrection; the character of that life was shewn in all His path on earth. He was "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." The declaration of the power of the life was in resurrection; the character of it we see in the Son of God walking in this world; and Christ is our life.

218 "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own." It is redeemed. "Ye are bought with a price." Being redeemed by God, the body, which is our servant and vessel of working, is the temple of the Holy Ghost. There I get power, and power by One dwelling in me, whose presence is that which must measure everything I do. Therefore He says, "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." Such is the measure He furnishes us. He gives us intelligence, and affections, and objects, which the law could not do, but Christ does. He gives us a blessed hope too; but He dwells in us now. Our bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost: and we are called upon so to walk, that in nothing, in word or thought or act, we should grieve the Spirit of God. It is a wonderful measure in this case. The Spirit has these thoughts and feelings, and He produces them in us.

Mark then how Christ is connected with this: "Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ?" What sweetness there is in that! But it is not merely a fact; it is the principle by which I measure all conduct in His presence. How do I come there? I have it all of God. "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God?" What a feeling God must have about me - to make a poor creature like me His temple - the dwelling-place of the Holy Ghost! To think that God's mind about such poor creatures should be that He would make me a temple of the Holy Ghost! that He has given me the Holy Ghost to dwell in me! For this there is absolute cleansing; for He could not dwell in a defiled

tabernacle, and thus He seals till the day of redemption. God has given me the Holy Ghost to dwell in me in virtue of having cleansed me, the seal of redemption and earnest of glory. God's mind has been, having cleansed me, to give me the perfect witness and testimony of His own infinite love. "He that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him." He gives us the Holy Ghost to dwell in us, the seal of His love and of the redemption that He has accomplished. He makes our bodies the temple of the Holy Ghost; and while this is the measure and test of all that is according to God by His own presence, that presence is the expression of God's perfect love; for His love is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost given unto us.

219 And here he appeals to them as to not sinning. How can you go and sin with a body that is the temple of the Holy Ghost? It is not merely breaking such a command, or the like; but the motive here is, "What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost?" And you are going to commit sin with it? All exhortations are founded upon the blessed place into which He has brought us. "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God?" God Himself has given it, to put you in connection with Himself, and are you going into connection with sin and vileness? It is applied to purity of life. The body is the vessel of the presence and action of God by the Holy Ghost. We do fail; but that is the power; and we are renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him. What a place we are set in! It makes us feel our wretchedly low ways and shortcomings - and so much the better. If we are humble, we do not need to be humbled. If a man is not humble, he needs to be humbled: if he is humble, he is the recipient of grace; "for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace unto the humble." And wherever a person is really humble, he may have a great deal to learn, but at any rate he is in his right place with God. Instead of His having to contend with us, we are the objects of His blessing. If it is not so, humbling must come in. "What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God?"

220 Then comes the second motive. "And ye are not your own; for ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body." It is a motive - not simply power in the presence of God, but a positive motive from the perfect work of Christ; we are not our own. If we were, we were lost. If we are to have blessing, to be a blessing, it is in this - that we are not our own at all. Wherever I act in my own will in anything, I am wronging God of His own title through the blood of Christ. We are not our own. Christ is ours: but there is a second thing - not only that Christ is mine, but that I am His; and the heart delights to be His, and not its own, because it has learnt His love to us, who has loved us, and given Himself for us.

Therefore, in the knowledge of this eternal love, our delight is to belong to Him, and this too as to practice. "Ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body." It is not merely saying, Do right; but He puts us at once in connection with God. Think of our glorifying God! Christ could do it as a man; but can I, wretched as I am, glorify God? Yes. If I am walking in His Spirit, and having no motive but Christ, it brings in the power of God, which the world knows nothing about. We are called to glorify God in our body: it belongs to Him - it is God's; and what a relief it is when I think that this body, which was the wretched slave of sin, now belongs to God! It is His property. It has been taken out of its old condition entirely, and it does not belong to my corrupt will at all. I am not a debtor to the body, but it belongs to God. This is an immense joy, and it shews that everything has been done for one; for even this poor wretched body belongs to God, and I am to use it thus - to glorify God.

There we have the two great leading motives and springs of conduct which the apostle sets before us here as to our faith and conduct; namely, that our body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which we have of God; and that we are bought with a price, and belong to God. The power, intelligence, and all, is that which we

have of God; it is the Holy Ghost, of which our body is made the temple; and when I look at the body in itself, it now, through the work of Christ, belongs to God. The Holy Ghost dwells in me in power and intelligence; my body is made His temple, and I must use it according to that presence which I thus have of God. I am not my own at all - I am bought with a price - I belong to God.

221 The Lord give us in joy of heart, in unfailing, deep thankfulness of spirit, to know that, on the one side, our bodies are the temple of the Holy Ghost; and, on the other, that these bodies are bought with a price, and that they belong to God!

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