

The Holy Spirit a Person

by Roy Hession

The Holy Spirit is a Person, the third Person of the Trinity, who is the agent of our new birth and the seal of our salvation, and we are to yield to His lordship to be filled with Him.

Scripture: John 3:8, John 14:16, Romans 8:9, Ephesians 1:13

Topics: "Spiritual Empowerment", "The Person of the Holy Spirit"

Description

Roy Hession emphasizes that the Holy Spirit is not merely an influence but a distinct Person of the Trinity, equal to God the Father and God the Son. He highlights the Holy Spirit's role as the agent of new birth for believers, sealing them as children of God and empowering them for a life in Christ. Hession explains that while every believer receives the Holy Spirit at conversion, being filled with the Spirit involves yielding to His control and allowing Him to fully inhabit our lives. The sermon encourages Christians to recognize the Holy Spirit's presence and authority in their lives, leading to a deeper relationship with God. Ultimately, Hession calls for worship and reverence for the Holy Spirit, who dwells within believers as their guide and strength.

Transcript

THIS chapter-will be a short one and will cover ground which every instructed Christian should know. But it is necessary for us to lay the foundation first of all, so that we can begin together.

The Holy Spirit is not to be regarded merely as an influence. He is a Person, the third Person of the Trinity, as much a Person as God the Father and God the Son. He is consistently referred to in the New Testament not as it, but as He. The one place where the Authorised Version refers to 'the Spirit itself, Rom. 8. 16), the Revised Version rightly changes, in the interests of greater accuracy of translation, to 'The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit that we are children of God'. In another place the writer violates the normal principles of grammar to make sure that the Spirit is referred to as a Person. The passage is John 16. 13, where we have the words, 'When he, the Spirit of truth, is come. The Greek word translated Spirit is pneuma; which is a neuter word, and yet, contrary to what one would expect grammatically, the personal pronoun, He, is linked with it.

Thus at the outset we would bow in worship before this august member of the Godhead. To Him is committed the carrying out of all the designs of heaven with regard to earth. The Father has given all authority to the Son (Matt. 28. 18), but the actual implementing of that authority on earth is the work of the Holy Spirit. He is the executive of the Godhead and in that capacity we see Him moving and acting right

through the Book of Acts, which could be more accurately termed the Acts of the Holy Spirit rather than the Acts of the Apostles.

We have spoken of the designs of heaven with regard to earth. The first great design is that every man who has repented of his sins and put his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ should be given a second birth and be made a new creature. This is the special sphere of the Holy Spirit, for He is the agent of our new birth (John 3. 8). He does this by coming personally to take up residence in the heart of the one who ventures his faith on Christ, and to abide there for ever (John 14. 16).

Soon as my all I ventured

On the atoning Blood,

The Holy Spirit entered,

And I was born of God.

This is the one thing that distinguishes the child of God from everybody else—he has 'received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God' (1 Cor. 2. 12).

It cannot be too clearly stated, then, that every man who has been born anew through faith in Christ has received the Holy Spirit. Indeed, the Spirit's presence in our hearts is said in Ephesians 1 to be the seal that we are Christ's. 'In whom also after that ye believe, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise.' Without this seal, Romans 8. 9 tells us, we are 'none of his'. But the Ephesians passage tells us that the Holy Spirit is not only the seal, but also 'the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession'. An earnest simply means a down-payment, (for thus the Amplified New Testament translates this word). So the Holy Spirit in our hearts is the seal of what is Christ's and the down-payment of what will be ours one day in glory. If the down-payment means 'joy unspeakable and full of glory', what will the final instalment be?

Quite clearly then, the further experiences of fullness and empowerment there are for us through the Holy Spirit cannot properly be called a receiving of the Holy Spirit, for how can we receive Him whom we have already received? The references in the New Testament to receiving the Holy Spirit (such as Gal. 3. 2) can therefore only refer to that initial receiving of the Spirit at our new birth.

What then is to be filled with the Holy Spirit? It is simply to be filled with One who is already there, in our hearts. Let me give an illustration of the difference between the Holy Spirit being initially in the believer, and the same Holy Spirit filling him. Take up a sponge and while it is in your hand squeeze it. In that condition, plunge it in water and submerge it, keeping it there. It is now in the water and the water is in it, though only in a small degree. As you hold it in the water, you open your hand; and as you do so the water fills all the pores which you release in this way. It is now filled with the water. In the same way when we come to know Jesus Christ as Saviour and are born anew we are put into that sphere where the Holy Spirit is operating and the Holy Spirit comes to reside within us. That is what Paul means when he says, 'Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you' (Rom. 8. 9). Yes, we are in the Spirit, and the Spirit is in us. But that Holy Spirit may not be in full control of us. We may yet need to be filled with the Spirit in whom we have been placed. We are therefore to open up every part of our being to Him, giving in to His conviction and yielding to His lordship. And as we do so, we are filled with the Spirit. We are not only in the Spirit, but now the Spirit is very fully in us.

This is, however, anticipating an aspect of our theme to which we shall come later more fully. At this point let us pause in wonder at the glorious fact that, if we have come in repentance and faith to the Lord Jesus, the august Holy Spirit Himself is in us by His Spirit, making our bodies His own temples.

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