

The Personal Relationships of the Holy Spirit

by C.I. Scofield

C.I. Scofield discusses the personal relationships of the Holy Spirit with believers, emphasizing His indwelling presence and transformative power in their lives.

Scripture: Luke 24:49, John 7:37, John 14:16, John 20:21, Romans 8:9, 1 Corinthians 6:19, 1 Corinthians 12:13, Ephesians 5:18

Topics: "Holy Spirit", "Spiritual Growth"

Description

C.I. Scofield preaches on the importance of understanding the personal relationships of the Holy Spirit, emphasizing that the Spirit is a real person and our relationships with Him are personal. He delves into the relationships of the Holy Spirit with believers - 'with,' 'in,' and 'upon.' Scofield explains the progression of these relationships in the lives of the disciples and how the Spirit indwells, fills, and empowers believers. He challenges the common notion of seeking the baptism of the Spirit, highlighting that every believer already has the Spirit with them, within them, and upon them, leading to a transformation in their lives.

Transcript

I am to speak to you, during this conference, if God gives strength, upon the Holy Spirit. I am glad to be permitted to speak on this very important subject, but I do want, at the outset, to say that I think we can very easily be too much occupied with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit in this dispensation is not in the world to occupy us with Himself, but with the Lord Jesus Christ, and I believe the chief characteristic of the Spirit-filled life is the heart occupation and exaltation of our ever blessed Saviour-Lord. Nevertheless there is in the New Testament a very important body of revelation concerning the Spirit, and surely it is there for our learning, and therefore we may, with glad hearts, give attention to it.

I want to speak, first of all, as clearing the ground, upon the personal relationships of the Holy Spirit, and if you will turn with me to the fourteenth chapter of John and the sixteenth and seventeenth verses you will find indicated in two short words from our Lord's lips, words which may easily be fixed in the memory, two of these relationships.

You see that I am assuming something. I am assuming that you all believe that when we speak of the Holy Spirit we are speaking of a person, just as really as when we speak of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God. That we are not speaking of an emanation from God, or an influence proceeding from God, nor a state of being, but we are speaking of the third person of the adorable and blessed Trinity. Our relationships with Him, therefore, are personal relationships. He is a real person, and just as we enter into

various personal relationships here in the world, so is it with the Holy Spirit. He is a person, and His relationships with us are personal.

Now I ask you to turn with me to the fourteenth chapter of John, sixteenth and seventeenth verses, which I will read:

"I will pray the Father and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever. Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him, but ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."

Just for the present I want you to hold in your minds those two little words, with and in. "He dwelleth with you." That was a present fact. "He shall be in you." A future promise. With and in.

Now stop for a moment and ask what was the condition of these disciples of our Lord with reference to eternal life, regeneration, relationship to God? We know what it was. Answering for the others Peter had said, you know, in his great confession, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God." And our Lord, turning to Peter, said, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is heaven."

They had real, actual, personal faith in Jesus as the Son of God, and they were receiving Him as their Saviour, and therefore they were born again. The Holy Spirit was not yet in them, but He was with them, and they were, by the new birth, children of God.

Turn now for a moment to the last chapter of Luke, the 49th verse, "And behold I send the promise of my Father upon you, but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high."

And now you have the third of the little words which indicate the personal relationships of the Holy Spirit. They are, "with;" "in;" and "upon!"

The Holy Spirit was "with" the disciples when our Lord was speaking to them in the upper chamber these wonderful words which we have recorded by John in the twelfth, thirteenth, fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth chapters.

If you will turn with me to the twentieth chapter of John's gospel, nineteenth verse, you will see the fulfillment, for those disciples, of that promise, "He shall be in you."

"Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst and saith unto them. Peace be unto you. And when He had so said. He shewed unto them His hands and His side. Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord. Then said Jesus to them again. Peace be unto you; as my Father hath sent Me, even so send I you. And when He had said this He breathed on them, and saith unto them. Receive ye the Holy Ghost."

I know very well there are brethren whom I honor and at whose feet as a learner I am, in most things, glad to sit, who teach concerning this act of our Lord's that it was simply symbolical; that it pre-figured Pentecost; that nothing really was done. When He breathed on them and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," He did not impart to them the Holy Spirit and they did not receive the Holy Spirit to indwell them. I cannot believe it. I know of no Scripture which requires me to believe it.

I venture in all tenderness to suggest that the difficulty in the minds of the brethren who so teach, which compels them to make a mere symbol of our Lord's words and action on the evening of His resurrection arise from their failure to distinguish between the "in" and "upon" relationships-- between, that is to say, the Spirit as indwelling the believer and the Spirit as baptising the believer.

The great passage, John vii:37-39: "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying. If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake He of the Spirit which they that believe on Him should receive: for the Holy Spirit was not yet; because that Jesus was not yet glorified," refers exclusively to the "upon," or Pentecostal relationship. In John iv:14 our Lord spoke of the indwelling Spirit as an upspringing fountain, "The water that I shall give him shall be in him, a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life"; in John vii:38 He spoke of the effect of the baptism with the Spirit as outflowing rivers. One is inner, and stands related to the believer's inner life, as we shall see later; the other has to do with his union to Christ in the one body, and to his outward life of service. "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses," etc. (Acts i:8).

The Bible is the most exquisitely accurate of books, because it is verbally inspired, and neither in Greek nor in English do the words "in" and "upon" mean the same thing. One might with equal propriety contend that church and kingdom mean the same thing.

Certainly the baptism with the Spirit could not be until the Head of the body should be in glory, for the first effect of the baptism with the Spirit was to unite the believers to Christ in the body, the church, and Eph. i:22 expressly teaches that our Lord was not given to be head over the body till He had been raised from the dead and seated in glory. The word used of our Lord in the impartation of the indwelling Spirit (John xx:22) is very intense. Darby renders: "He breathed into them."

It will be remembered, also, that the risen Lord had before Him a forty-days' ministry to these very men (Acts i:3), and surely it was of necessity that they should be able to spiritually discern the truth "pertaining to the kingdom of God."

Now then we have these three simple ways in which the Holy Spirit stands related to the believer; with the believer; within the believer; upon the believer. And you observe that in the case of these personal disciples of our Lord we see these relationships assumed by the Holy Spirit with an interval between. That is, He was with them before He was within them, and He was within them before He was upon them.

And so long as the Gospel was preached to Jews only-- that is during the period of which Acts i:9 gives the record --an interval of time elapsed between the act of faith and the receiving of the Spirit. For Israel the mediation of the Apostles was necessary, but, from the preaching of Peter in the house of the Gentile Cornelius to this hour, no interval intervenes between the moment when faith is exercised, and the receiving of the Spirit as indwelling and baptising the believer. It is wholly unscriptural to tell believers to "seek the baptism" with the Spirit. Not one such injunction or exhortation can be found in the Apostolic writings. On the contrary, we are taught that "by one Spirit are we all baptised into one body." (1 Cor. xii:13.)

Every believer on the Lord Jesus Christ has the Spirit with him, within him, and upon him.

Now I am afraid that I shall not carry you all with me just at once when I make that last statement. We are so constantly exhorted, all over the country, and by eminent brethren, too, and brethren greatly beloved in

the Lord, to seek the baptism with the Spirit (the "upon" relationship), that the notion has come to be very widespread that one of the first duties of the Christian is to seek the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The believer is, indeed, commanded to be filled with the Spirit (Eph. v:i8), which is quite another matter, as we shall see.

The first thing with which faith has to deal is the fact that the Spirit does indwell the believer. I remember very well a dear old man in the South, a very sweet and lovely Christian, who was manifesting continually the fruit of the Spirit, and yet I never heard him pray that he did not ask the Father to give him the Spirit, and I finally said to him: "Brother, I have heard you pray many times to the Father to give you the Holy Spirit. When do you expect your prayer to be answered? Why is it not answered?"

"Well," he said, "that is a great puzzle to me; I can't understand it. I have been praying for these years to the Father to give me the Spirit, and I have not had an answer."

"Well," I said, "brother, you have been praying for something you have already, and instead of praying the Father to give you the Spirit you should be thanking the Father that He has given you the Spirit." And so we went to the Word to see about that.

And now let us, you and I, see whether the Scripture justifies my statement that if we are believers on the Lord Jesus Christ the Spirit does indwell our bodies.

I take you, first of all, to 1 Corinthians, the sixth chapter and nineteenth verse: "What! 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?"

But you will say, perhaps, that this was addressed to believers of the Apostolic day, to a superlative kind of thoroughly sanctified believers. No, indeed. The Apostle blames these Corinthian saints for everything that could be faulty in the life of a Christian. They are carnal, and walk as men; they are running after human leaders, Paul, Apollos, Cephas. They are going to law with one another before the world, and they are permitting a shocking condition of immorality in their assembly. And yet they were Christians. They were believers, but they were carnal believers, and to these the Apostle addressed this question: "What! 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 our own?"

They were living on a very low level indeed, but they were real believers on the Lord Jesus Christ, and therefore the Spirit of God dwelt in their bodies, making them temples.

That is a tremendous and transforming fact--the Holy Spirit indwells us. He is not going away. He is there to stay. I say it is a transforming fact, but we must begin by believing it. If, upon the alone testimony of the word of God, you will simply believe that the Spirit has already taken up His abode in your mortal bodies, you will find a transformation beginning, and very possibly some things that you now allow will no longer be allowed if that is really believed.

We must take things from the Word of God first, and then when we believe them we have an answering experience. I turn again to the eighth of Romans, and ninth verse: "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ's, he is none of His."

The word rendered "have" here is over and over again rendered "possess." If any man possesses not the Spirit of Christ he is none of His. The words "Spirit of Christ" do not mean to be like-minded with Christ. It is the Holy Spirit who is spoken of here. Therefore, if we are believers at all, dear friends, I repeat it, we have the Spirit.

But what a difference it makes when we come really to believe that within this wonderful temple of the body the mighty Spirit of God dwells, the Holy Spirit. Did you ever think why He is so constantly called holy? Surely He is no more holy than the Father or the Son. There is no preeminence of holiness in any one of the persons of the adorable Trinity. I have thought that perhaps it is because He enters so intimately into relationships with us as indwelling us. Perhaps God would remind us that He who dwells within us is, first of all, holy. Well, now if we come to believe that, dear friends, I repeat, there will come a change of life. I have seen it again and again.

I remember when I was a young man I was one of a house party at a country house, the home of a young friend of ours; and we were having what we called a good time, playing cards, and dancing, and all worldly amusements of that kind, when at dinner one evening the butler handed our host a telegram.

The face of our host, as he read the telegram, was a study. He appeared glad and he appeared confused, and presently he said, "My dear old mother will be here in an hour, on the next train, and all this dancing and card playing has got to stop. Why," he said, "I would not have her grieved by our doing any of these things in this house where she has lived for so many years for anything." And he told the butler to get every card in the house and bum it up. Presently she came; a dear, sweet-faced old saint, and we all fell in love with her at once, and as the evening drew to its close she told her son to bring the family Bible, and she said, "You read and I will pray." I noticed it took him a long time to find the place, but at last he did find it, and then she knelt down and prayed. Well, we remained there about a week after that, and the whole life of that house from that moment was keyed to the fact that this Godly old saint had come among us. Everything took color from her presence.

My friends, if we really believed that the Holy Spirit dwelt within these bodies of ours, how long do you think we could allow many things about which we are so careless to-day?

Here for the present we leave this most important subject. The Holy Spirit has taken up His abode in our mortal bodies! That is quite enough for us to meditate upon now. Just as God turned the house which Solomon built into a temple by filling it with the shekinah glory, so that it became sacred for Jehovah's abode in the midst of Israel, so the Spirit's indwelling should make unholiness of thought or word a horror and a shame to us.

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