

God's Desire to Possess His Temple

by David Shelby Corlett

God desires to fully possess His temple, but carnality and the flesh limit His fullness, and we must give Him a full dedication of our lives to receive Him in fullness.

Scripture: Exodus 40:34, 1 Kings 8:10, Acts 2:4, Romans 8:13, 1 Corinthians 6:19

Topics: "Holy Spirit", "Sanctification"

Description

David Shelby Corlett preaches on the necessity of full surrender to God for the Holy Spirit to fully possess and fill our lives. Using the analogy of a home with a former resident still present, he explains how God desires to fully possess His temple, but the presence of 'the flesh' hinders this. Just as a homeowner must fully occupy his house after the former resident vacates, believers must put to death the deeds of the flesh and dedicate their entire being to God for the Holy Spirit to baptize and fill them completely.

Transcript

The need for this baptism grows out of the fact that God desires fully to possess His children. He cannot possess them fully as long as there is inbred sin within their hearts. God feels, toward His children much like a mother or wife does toward her home. Recently, because of a condition brought on by the financial depression, it was necessary for several persons not members of the family to live with friends. While outwardly everything seemed congenial, the wife was naturally somewhat dissatisfied. One day she said to her husband, "Dad, I'd like to have all of our home to ourselves. I hope the time soon will come when we may have it thus." That expresses somewhat the attitude of God toward His children who are troubled with the presence of "the flesh." He says, "I would like to have that temple all to myself. I hope the time soon will come when I can have it thus." Yes, that is exactly the way God feels toward every carnal Christian. He wants to have them, to possess them, to fill them with His Spirit. The indwelling Spirit desires fully to possess His temple.

In this connection we might emphasize the personality of the Holy Spirit, especially as this truth relates to His full possession of lives. It is impossible to divide a personality. We cannot receive part of a person at one time, and another part at another time. We receive the Holy Spirit in regeneration and He dwells within our hearts. But He does not and cannot fully possess us, nor can we know Him in His fullness, as long as the carnal condition remains. That which keeps Him from baptizing the born-again Christian is the presence of "the flesh," or carnality. So, in reality, the Spirit fills us to the utmost of our capacity when we are born again; but our capacity for receiving is greatly limited by the presence of this inner foe. What then

remains for us to do? Give Him a full dedication of our lives that He may have us in our fullness, and He will fill us with Himself. "When we receive the Holy Spirit in any measure we receive Him in the entirety of His personality; for He is indivisible. But because He is repressed by a stubborn or ignorant human will He reveals Himself only in some of His offices. When, however, the believer lifts the repressive force of his will by a complete and irreversible self-surrender, giving the Spirit full right of way through the whole being, He reveals Himself in all His offices, and all such believers are said to be filled with the Spirit." -- Baker, in "Living Waters." "If the Holy Spirit is dwelling in you at all, He is there as a Person in all His majesty and glory and strength; in all the infinite resources of His deity. As to His gifts, -- His grace, -- these may be given to you, 'by measure' more or less; but the Holy Spirit himself, inasmuch, as He is a Person, is not with you at all unless He is in you in all the fullness of His divine personality, in all the majesty of His Godhead." -Bishop Webb, quoted from Gospel of the Comforter, pages 352-3.

The illustration is an old one, yet it clearly portrays the truth we are presenting. It is that of an individual who buys a house. This house is to be his home. He pays for it, gets a clear title to it, but the former owner for a time keeps several rooms for his own use. In every legal manner the whole house belongs to the purchaser, but in reality his full possession is limited because of the presence of the former resident. The time comes when the former resident must vacate. He turns the keys to the entire house over to the owner, moves his belongings out and at last the purchaser fully occupies his home. We have mentioned that the carnal Corinthian Christians were the temple of God, that the Holy Spirit was dwelling in them (1 Cor. 3 16). God by right of purchase owned the temple, it was His. But because of the presence of the former resident -- the flesh -- He could not occupy it fully. But there must come a time when the carnal Christian will through the Spirit put to death the deeds of the body and when he will fully dedicate or consecrate the whole temple to God He may fully possess it. It is then that the Holy Spirit fills His temple, or the individual is baptized with the Holy Spirit. God fully possesses His temple. It is like the dedication of the tabernacle in the wilderness; when Moses had turned it over to God in dedication the cloud of glory so filled it that there was no room for Moses. Or, like the dedication of Solomon's temple; the glory of God so filled the place there was no room for the priests. When we are filled with the Holy Spirit there is no room for carnality or for the carnal self. Let us not stop short of a full dedication of the entire self to God. He is never satisfied with our stopping short of His very best for us.

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