

**THD-035 and 036
Galatians 5:16
The Holy Spirit and the Christian
Part 3:
Regeneration and Indwelling**

*“Blessed [happy] are they
that hear the word of God,
and keep it.” (Luke 11:28)*

Ephesians 2:8 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; 9 not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.

Rom. 11:6, "But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works, otherwise grace is no longer grace."

Gal. 2:21, "I do not nullify the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the Law, then Christ died needlessly."

Gal. 3:24, "Therefore the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, that we may be justified by faith."

1 Corinthians 3:11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.'

John 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life."

Peter 1:2-3 Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that [pertain] unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue...

*I am come that they might
have life, and that they might have it more
abundantly. John 10:10*

“As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in His love. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.” – John 15:9-11 ESV

Galatians 4:15
*What has happened to all your
happiness?*

The Galatians had lost their happiness because of their submission to the Law, as promulgated by the Judaizers. The answer, for the Christian, lies herein:

16 But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh...

18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

The Galatians 5:16 Formulas

Spirit Walk \neq Gratification of
Fleshly Desires

Spirit Led \neq *Under the Law*

If The... Spirit Walk \neq Gratification of
 Then... Gratification of
 Fleshly Desires \neq Spirit Walk
 And, If... *Spirit Led* \neq *Under the Law*
 Then... *Under the Law* \neq *Spirit Led*

And, we know this is true,
because Verse 17 says:

17 For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other

Opposed is the same as \neq

The Galatian Christians had lost their joy, because the Judaizers had meddled in their Christian Lives and introduced the Law. Paul introduces, here, a clear delineation between the Law and the Spiritual Life. Previously we have looked at the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit as a Person and as Deity, and are currently studying the Role of the Holy Spirit in Relation to The Christian
From L.S. Chafer

Introduction to the Work of the Holy Spirit in the Believer - Chafer

"When considering the amount of Scripture pertaining to it, the Spirit's relation to the Christian is seen to be the major feature of the entire doctrine respecting the Holy Spirit. In the New Testament alone, where the truth regarding the Holy Spirit is given its fullest presentation, there is set forth, as noted above, both the fact that the Spirit restrains the world (which is largely disclosed in one passage) and the fact that He enlightens the unsaved (also a limited body of truth); but the whole unfolding revelation of the New Testament regarding the Holy Spirit occupies a great portion of the New Testament, insomuch that this age of the Church is also properly styled the dispensation of the Holy Spirit.

In addition to the two ministries of the Holy Spirit already attended [1. He restrains the world and 2. the fact that He enlightens the unsaved], there are still five more and they constitute the Spirit's relation to the Christian, these with the two presented above making a total of seven ministries of the Holy Spirit in this age. Of the five now in view, the first four may be classed in one group ... since they represent the Spirit's undertakings in behalf of all who are saved. These are vital features of salvation, being wrought to infinite perfection for each believer at the moment he is saved. Likewise, these four ministries represent aspects of the Spirit's work which are never repeated, being accomplished once for all.

The divisions of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit as related to Christians contemplate two general features, namely,

- (a) the Holy Spirit's work in and through the believer and
- (b) the believer's corresponding responsibility.

The five distinctive ministries of the Holy Spirit to the believer are now to be considered in the following order:

- (a) regeneration,
- (b) the indwelling of the Holy Spirit,
- (c) the baptism with the Holy Spirit,
- (d) the sealing of the Holy Spirit, and
- (e) the filling with the Holy Spirit.

a) Regeneration and the Holy Spirit

In the incomparable purpose of God by which He is bringing “*many sons unto glory*” (Heb. 2:10) and to the end that Christ may be the first-born among many brethren (Rom. 8:29)—no less an undertaking than that of populating the third and highest heaven (hitherto the abode only of the triune God) with beings suited to that holy and exalted sphere and, indeed, sufficiently perfected to be the all-satisfying Bride of the Second Person—one vital step is that of constituting these beings partakers of the very nature of God...

The human mind cannot approach the comprehension of that which is involved in the immeasurable realities of an actual sonship relation to God, which makes the Christian an heir of God and a joint heir with Jesus Christ (Rom. 8:17).

I. The Necessity

Such a birth is specifically indicated by Christ in His words to Nicodemus: *“That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit”* (John 3:6)

II. The Impartation of Life

...the partaking of the divine nature by the impartation of the very life of God is one of the most important features of the whole transforming undertaking.

The receiving of the divine nature means that the individual thus blessed has been born of God.

This is a change so radical and so complete that there is thus achieved a passing from one order of being into another.

2 Corinthians 5:17 (NKJV) *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.*

1. A Knowledge of God.

“All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him. Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matt. 11:27–28).

2. A New Reality in Prayer.

Prayer is communion with God that has been based on confidence born of the knowledge of God.

It is not natural to speak to one who is unknown and unknowable as is the case with the unsaved trying to pray; but when God is recognized and real to the heart, there is definiteness in every form of prayer and then, as at no other time or under no other conditions, the praying soul finds rest.

3. A New Reality in the Reading of God's Word.

The Word of God is food only to those who have received the nature of God.

As a newborn child cries for food, so will a normal Christian desire the Word of God.

That Word is milk to such as are "babes" and "strong meat" to those prepared in heart to receive it.

4. A Recognition of God's Family.

John places this to the front as a very dependable test of whether an individual is a child of God.

He writes: "*We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren*" (1 John 3:14).

5. A Divine Compassion for a Lost World.

Above all, the love of God for a lost world—that love which spared not His Son in consequence—will be wrought in the child of God as an unceasing burden for those who are unsaved.

All of these experiences which have been indicated are naturally the expression of the new divine nature; but, like all Christian experience, it may be hindered and all but unobserved owing to some unspiritual condition that is allowed to exist in the heart of the believer.

If the indwelling Holy Spirit who is the Reproducer of Christ in the believer is grieved, the power of His presence will not be made manifest.

At this point, the danger should be recognized of judging anyone according to that one's experience or conduct.

III. Acquisition of the Nature of God

The basic fact of having a new divine nature imparted is of such a character that it must be recognized at once as a change that God alone may effect.

Human effort is utterly foreign to the entire undertaking. That alone which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

IV. Induction into the Family and Household of God

Both the fact of father and son relationship and the fact of brotherhood appear.

As indicated above, the Fatherhood of God is due to an absolute divine generation: though, as in the case of the birth of Christ, the generating is wrought by the Third Person, still the First Person is universally addressed as the Father of all who believe.

The placing of an individual into the family and household of God is no mere adoption, though a believer is adopted in the sense that when born of God as His child he is at once advanced to the position of an adult son with all the privileges and responsibilities attendant on full maturity.

The human practice of adoption, which merely establishes legal responsibility over an otherwise unrelated child, imparts no parental nature and creates no actual oneness with the new parent.

V. Inheritance of a Son's Portion

Based on the actuality of sonship through the generating power of the Holy Spirit is the unavoidable fact of possession of a son's portion.

The extent of that portion is indicated by the Apostle when he avers: *"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ"* (Rom. 8:16–17).

VI. God's Own Purpose to His Eternal Glory

Most arresting and encouraging is the revealed truth that all that enters into constituting a Christian what he is and what he will be in glory is wrought of God.

The Apostle declares: *"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them"* (Eph. 2:10).

Great significance is to be seen in the description of a believer as one “called according to his purpose” (Rom. 8:28).

That purpose of God is immediately defined in the context, which reads: *“For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified”* (vss. 29–30).

“For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified”

To be “conformed to the image of his Son” indicates that divine sonship is to be realized on the part of the one who is saved—a sonship patterned after the very *image* of the Son of God.

No word of God ever disclosed a higher estate and destiny than this; but it is yet added, “that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.”

VII. The Basis in Faith

Reason alone would dictate the truth that, since salvation is altogether wrought of God, the individual who cares to be saved can sustain no other relation to it than to receive it in simple faith.

Every aspect of salvation in its completed, past tense—release from sin's penalty, in its present tense—release from sin's power, and in its future tense—release from sin's presence, calls for dependence upon God.

The great realities, namely, *forgiveness*, the *gift of eternal life*, and the *gift of righteousness* which is the ground of justification (Rom. 3:22, 26; 4:5; 10:4), are the portion of those who do no more than to believe in Jesus as Savior.

Two passages bearing upon this essential truth will suffice here:

(a) John 1:12–13: *“But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”*

It is to them that receive Christ, or believe on Him, that right both to become and to be the sons of God is accorded.

This means that God’s answer to an individual’s faith in Christ is such that by the power of God he is born of God and thus becomes an actual son of His.

The knowledge of the Savior upon whom faith must rest is gained from the word of God through the Spirit, hence Christ said that such are born of the Word which is symbolized by water and the Spirit (John 3:5) and the Apostle declares: *“Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost”* (Titus 3:5).

(b) John 3:16: *“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”*

What statement could be more direct or conclusive than this?

It is asserted that “*whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*”

Thus without exception all that enters into salvation, including the gift of eternal life, depends only on the one human requirement of believing on the Savior.

An excellent treatment of the doctrine of regeneration is included in Dr. John F. Walvoord’s book cited previously.

Since this is so well stated and since the theme is so vitally important, these pages, though extended, are reproduced here.

In his introduction Dr. Walvoord states: “Few doctrines are more fundamental to effective preaching than the doctrine of regeneration.

Failure to comprehend its nature and to understand clearly its necessity will cripple the efficacy of Gospel preaching.

Both for the Bible teacher and the evangelist an accurate knowledge of the doctrine of regeneration is indispensable.

On the meaning of regeneration Dr. Walvoord writes: The word *regeneration* is found only twice in the New Testament (Mt. 19:28; Tit. 3:5), but it has been appropriated as the general term designating the impartation of eternal life. Only one of the two instances in the New Testament is used in this sense (Tit. 3:5), where reference is made to “the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.” The Greek word παλιγγενεσία is properly translated “*new birth, reproduction, renewal, re-creation*” (Thayer).

It is applied not only to human beings but also to the renewed heaven and earth of the millennium (Mt. 19:28). In relation to the nature of man, it includes the various expressions used for eternal life such as *new life, new birth, spiritual resurrection, new creation, new mind, "made alive," sons of God, and translation into the kingdom*. In simple language, regeneration consists of all that is represented by eternal life in a human being. Theological usage of the word *regeneration* has tended to confuse rather than enrich the word.

Dr. Walvoord declares:
Regeneration by its nature is solely a work of God. While sometimes considered as a result, every instance presumes or states that the act of regeneration was an act of God. A number of important Scriptures bear on the subject of regeneration (John 1:13; 3:3–7; 5:21; Rom. 6:13; 2 Cor. 5:17; Eph. 2:5, 10; 4:24; Tit. 3:5; Jas. 1:18; 1 Pet. 2:9). It is explicitly stated that the one regenerated is “born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God” (John 1:13).

Regeneration is likened unto resurrection, which by its nature is wholly of God (John 5:21; Rom. 6:13; Eph. 2:5). In other instances regeneration is declared to be a creative act, the nature of which assumes it to be the act of God (Eph. 2:10; 4:24; 2 Cor. 5:17). It may be seen clearly, then, that regeneration is always revealed as an act of God accomplished by His own supernatural power apart from all other agencies. The work of regeneration is properly ascribed to the Holy Spirit.

As in the birth of Christ, where all the Persons of the Godhead were related to the conception of Christ, so in the new birth of the Christian the First Person becomes the Father of the believer, the Second Person imparts His own eternal life (1 John 5:12), and the Holy Spirit, the Third Person, acts as the efficient agent of regeneration. The work of regeneration can be assigned to the Holy Spirit as definitely as the work of salvation can be assigned to Christ.— *Ibid.*, pp. 143–44.

On the important truth that eternal life is imparted by regeneration, the same writer asserts:
As the word itself implies, the central thought in the doctrine of regeneration is that eternal life is imparted. Regeneration meets the need created by the presence of spiritual death.
The method of impartation is, of course, inscrutable. There is no visible method or process discernible. By its nature it is supernatural and therefore its explanation is beyond human understanding.

The Scriptures in presenting the impartation of eternal life use three figures to describe it.

[1] Regeneration is sometimes presented in the figure of new birth. As Christ told Nicodemus, “Ye must be born again” (John 3:7).

[2] Frequently in Scripture, regeneration is portrayed as spiritual resurrection. The Christian is revealed to be “alive from the dead” (Rom. 6:13), and God “even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ” (Eph. 2:5).

[3] Regeneration is also presented in the figure of creation or re-creation. We are “created in Christ Jesus unto good works” (Eph. 2:10), and exhorted to “put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness” (Eph. 4:24).

The new life given to the Christian is manifested in the new capacities and activities found only in those regenerated, forming the source and foundation of all other divine ministry to the saved.

The important fact, never to be forgotten in the doctrine of regeneration, is that the believer in Christ has received eternal life.

This fact must be kept free from all confusion of thought arising from the concept of regeneration which makes it merely an antecedent of salvation, or a preliminary quickening to enable the soul to believe.

It is rather the very heart of salvation.

It reaches the essential problem of absence of eternal life without which no soul can spend eternity in the presence of God.

Regeneration supplies this lack of eternal life as justification and sanctification deal with the problem of sin specifically.

It is a smashing blow to all philosophies which hold that man has inherent capacities of saving himself.

Regeneration is wholly of God.

No possible human effort however noble can supply eternal life.

The proper doctrine of regeneration gives to God all glory and power due His name, and at the same time it displays His abundant provision for a race dead in sin.

—*Ibid.*, pp. 144–45

Of great import, especially to all evangelistic effort, is the word by Dr. Walvoord respecting the nonexperimental character of regeneration, which reads:

Until the matter has been considered carefully, it is a striking thought that regeneration is not experimental. In Christian testimony, much has been said of the experience of regeneration.

If regeneration is instantaneous and an act of divine will, it follows that regeneration in itself is not experimental.

It may be conceded freely that abundant experimental phenomena follow the act of new birth.

The experiences of a normal Spirit-filled Christian may immediately ensue upon new birth.

This fact does not alter the non-experimental character of regeneration.

If it be admitted that regeneration is an instantaneous act of God, it is logically impossible for it to be experimental, in that experience involves time and sequence of experience.

It may be concluded, therefore, that no sensation attends the act of new birth, all experience proceeding rather from the accomplished regeneration and springing from the new life as its source.

In the nature of the case, we cannot experience what is not true, and regeneration must be entirely wrought before experience can be found.

While the regenerated soul may become immediately conscious of new life, the act of regeneration itself is not subject to experience or analysis, being the supernatural instantaneous act of God.

The non-experimental nature of regeneration if comprehended would do much to deliver the unsaved from the notion that an experience of some sort is antecedent to salvation, and, in turn, it would prevent those seeking to win souls of expecting in partial form the fruits of salvation before regeneration takes place.

The normal pattern for regeneration is that it occurs at the moment of saving faith.

No appeal is ever addressed to men that they should believe because they are already regenerated.

It is rather that they should believe and receive eternal life.

Christians are definitely told that before they accepted Christ they were “dead in trespasses and sins” (Eph. 2:1).

In concluding his thesis on regeneration, Dr. Walvoord writes of the *effect* of regeneration and indicates truth respecting a new nature, a new experience, and a new security. Of all this he says:

The work of regeneration is tremendous in its implications. A soul once dead has received the eternal life which characterizes the being of God. The effect of regeneration is summed up in the fact of possession of eternal life. All other results of regeneration are actually an enlargement of the fact of eternal life. While life itself is difficult to define, and eternal life is immaterial, certain qualities belong to anyone who is regenerated in virtue of the fact that eternal life abides in him.

In the nature of eternal life, it involves first of all the creation of a divine nature in the regenerated person. Without eradicating the old nature with its capacity and will for sin, the new nature has in it the longing for God and His will that we could expect would ensue from eternal life.

The presence of the new nature constitutes a fundamental change in the person which is denominated “creation” (2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15) and “new man” (Eph. 4:24).

A drastic change in manner of life, attitude toward God and to the things of God, and in the desires of the human heart may be expected in one receiving the new nature.

The new nature which is a part of regeneration should not be confused with the sinless nature of Adam before the fall. Adam's nature was a human nature untried and innocent of sin.

It did not have as its source and determining its nature the eternal life which is bestowed on a regenerated person.

The human nature of Adam was open to sin and temptation and was peccable.

It is doubtful whether the divine nature bestowed in connection with regeneration is ever involved directly in sin. While the Scriptures are clear that a regenerated person can sin, and does sin, the lapse is traced to the sin nature, even though the act is that of the whole person.

This must not be confused with various statements to the effect that a Christian can be sinless or unable to sin.

The state of sinless perfection can never be reached until the sin nature is cast out, and this is accomplished only through the death of the physical body or the transformation of the body without death at the rapture. Even the new nature, though never the origin of sin, does not have the ability sufficient to conquer the old nature.

The power for victory lies in the indwelling presence of God.

The new nature provides a will to do the will of God, and the power of God provides the enablement to accomplish this end in spite of the innate sinfulness of the sin nature.

The state of being in the will of God is reached when the will of the new nature is fully realized.

Eternal life and the new nature are inseparably united, the nature corresponding to the life which brings it into being.

While regeneration in itself is not experimental, it is the fountain of experience.

The act of impartation of eternal life being instantaneous cannot be experienced, but the presence of eternal life after regeneration is the source of the new spiritual experience which might be expected.

New life brings with it new capacity.

The person who before regeneration was dead spiritually and blind to spiritual truth now becomes alive to a new world of reality.

As a blind man for the first time contemplates the beauties of color and perspective when sight is restored, so the new-born soul contemplates new revelation of spiritual truth.

For the first time he is able to understand the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit.

He is able now to enjoy the intimacies of fellowship with God and freedom in prayer.

As his life is under the control of the Holy Spirit, he is able to manifest the fruit of the Spirit, utterly foreign to the natural man.

His whole being has new capacities for joy and sorrow, love, peace, guidance, and all the host of realities in the spiritual world.

While regeneration is not an experience, it is the foundation for all Christian experience.

This at once demands that regeneration be inseparable from salvation, and that regeneration manifest itself in the normal experiences of a yielded Christian life.

Regeneration that does not issue into Christian experience may be questioned.

One of the many reasons for confusion in the doctrine of regeneration is the attempt to avoid the inevitable conclusion that a soul once genuinely regenerated is saved forever.

The bestowal of eternal life cannot be revoked.

It declares the unchangeable purpose of God to bring the regenerated person to glory.

Never in the Scriptures do we find anyone regenerated a second time.

While Christians may lose much of a normal spiritual experience through sin, and desperately need confession and restoration, the fact of regeneration does not change.

In the last analysis, the experiences of this life are only antecedent to the larger experiences the regenerated person will have after deliverance from the presence and temptation of sin.

Regeneration will have its ultimate display when the person regenerated is completely sanctified and glorified.

Our present experiences, limited as they are by the presence of a sinful nature and sinful body, are only a partial portrayal of the glories of eternal life.

Through the experiences of life, however, the fact of regeneration should be a source of constant hope and abiding confidence “that he which hath begun a good work ... will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ” (Phil. 1:16).—*Ibid.*, pp. 149–51

Conclusion

Regeneration is a most essential step in that preparation which must be made if individuals from this fallen race are to be constituted worthy dwellers within that highest of all spheres and made associates there with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

It becomes one of the greatest facts in the whole universe.

Its full extent and value will be seen not on earth or in time, but in glory and for all eternity.

The five distinctive ministries of the Holy Spirit to the believer are being considered in the following order:

(a) regeneration [Completed]

(b) the indwelling of the Holy Spirit [Next]

(c) the baptism with the Holy Spirit

(d) the sealing of the Holy Spirit

(e) the filling with the Holy Spirit.

The Indwelling of the Holy Spirit

From the doctrinal viewpoint or as a foundation for all truth respecting the relation between the Holy Spirit and the believer in the present age, there is no more characterizing or determining fact than that the Holy Spirit indwells every regenerated person. To fail to recognize the body of Scripture upon which this distinction in doctrine rests is to misapprehend one of the most essential factors in the Christian's being, to conceive of the Christian as totally unprepared for the high and holy requirements which are laid upon him, to open the door for the promotion of unscriptural assumptions relative to personal holiness, and to create unwarranted divisions in the Body of Christ.

No student should pass over this aspect of truth lightly. No progress can be made in the knowledge of the Holy Spirit's relation to the believer until this feature in the doctrine of the Spirit is recognized and accepted as declared by the Sacred Text.

The failure to discern that the Holy Spirit indwells every believer was the common and all but universal error of men two generations ago.

That error was promoted in the early Keswick conferences and received and taught generally throughout Great Britain and America.

However, American expositors of the last two generations have done much to recover this important doctrine from this and other similar misconceptions.

The notion that the Holy Spirit is received as a second work of grace is now defended only by extreme holiness groups.

In other words, it is more clearly understood than it was earlier that there can be no such a thing as a Christian who is not indwelt by the Holy Spirit.

This truth is so emphatically declared in the New Testament that it seems almost impossible that any other view could ever have been entertained.

It will be remembered that the ministry of the Spirit as One who indwells is but one of His present benefits and is not to be confused with His baptism, His sealing, or His filling.

Of these other works, more will yet be presented.

Though, as has been observed, the presence of the Holy Spirit in the believer may not be indicated by any corresponding revolutionary experience, His indwelling is nonetheless one of the most characterizing of all the features which constitute a Christian what he is (cf. Rom. 8:8–9).

The same indwelling of the Holy Spirit becomes, as well, an age-characterization.

This is a dispensation of the Spirit, a period of time in which the Holy Spirit is the believer's all-sufficient Resource both for power and guidance.

In this age the Christian is appointed to live by a new life-principle (cf. Rom. 6:4).

The realization of the Spirit's presence, power, and guidance constitutes a wholly new method of daily living and is in contrast to that dominance and authority which the Mosaic Law exercised over Israel in the age that is past.

In Romans 7:6 it is written: *“But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.”*

The phrase *newness of Spirit* is in contrast to the phrase *oldness of the letter*.

These do not refer to spiritualizing and literal methods for interpretation of the truth; they rather indicate different divine economies which characterize **two different dispensations**. [Emphasis mine]

“But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.”

Being dead *we were held in the law*
(the oldness of the letter)

But now we are delivered from the law that we should serve in newness of spirit

The age now past is marked off by the letter of the law, in which age no provision for enablement was ever made.

The present age is distinguished as a period of the indwelling Spirit, whose presence provides every resource for the realization of a God-honoring daily life. The same distinction is presented in 2 Corinthians 3:6, which reads:

“Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.”

the letter \neq the spirit

"The letter kills, the spirit gives life."

How does the "Letter kill?"

How does the "Spirit give life?"

So far from enabling, the law was a ministry of condemnation and death (cf. Rom. 7:4, 6, 10–11). Over against this, the indwelling Spirit is now an unlimited Resource who sustains in every aspect of human life. Recognizing the same contrast in principles by which men's lives in two different dispensations have been guided, the Apostle avers in Galatians 5:18: "*But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.*" Thus it is to be seen that because of the new provision made available every Christian from the least unto the greatest has been equipped with the needed sufficiency whereby every supernatural responsibility may be fully discharged to the glory of God.

The Christian does face problems of adjustment, but his is never the problem of acquiring the Spirit or enablement.

To walk by means of the Holy Spirit is a wholly new technique; since every child of God is charged with a life which is superhuman, however, each one without exception has received the Spirit and each one is therefore confronted with the necessity, if he would fulfill the divine ideal, of living his life in the enabling power of the Spirit, new technique though it is.

The fact of the Holy Spirit's indwelling should be recognized in its own uncomplicated features. This ministry must be distinguished from other ministries which are His, regardless of the dependence which other ministries sustain to this one.

Confusion arises more often than otherwise between the truth respecting the indwelling of the Spirit and that respecting His filling.

The filling depends upon personal adjustments, which adjustments will be set forth in a later chapter of this volume; and because of this dependence upon adjustments human weakness may be manifested and thus the experience of the filling with the Spirit may not be secured at all, while in other cases the filling may be characterized as partial, variable, or complete.

No imperfect filling with the Spirit is satisfactory to God, for He commands all Christians without any allowances to be filled with the Spirit (Eph. 5:18).

The indwelling, being a feature of salvation and secured by saving faith, is common to all regenerate persons alike.

The Holy Spirit is received but once and He never departs; but there are many fillings as need for them arise.

The Spirit indwells without necessarily engendering an experience; but the filling is directed unto love, joy, peace, and the full measure of life and service.

That the Spirit indwells every Christian is asserted by revelation and is demanded by reason. Consideration of these two widely different approaches to this truth is now in order, besides which there must be notice in due course of two related ministries of the Spirit, namely, anointing and sealing.

I. According to Revelation

The contemplation of the truth relative to the Holy Spirit's indwelling should be with due recognition of His other ministries to the believer, for not one of them is complete within itself, but hinges of course upon the Spirit's presence.

However, in the interest of a true evaluation, an analysis of each ministry is required separately. Each must be considered in its own peculiar and individual character.

The Scriptures abundantly sustain the truth of the Spirit's indwelling, which ministry is to be examined here.

The major passages are now to be taken up in their order by books, every one in its context.

John 7:37–39. “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 Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)”

This prediction spoken by Christ before His death anticipates the present age and asserts that in this age all who *believe* receive the Holy Spirit when they believe. In other words, the Spirit is received on precisely the same condition and at the same moment as salvation is achieved.

Two operations of faith are not implied; the sole human instrumentality in salvation is believing and that complete salvation which is thus secured includes the coming of the Spirit to indwell the one who is saved.

Being an essential feature of salvation, the human condition for indwelling, when that aspect of soteriological truth is considered separately, is believing and only believing.

It therefore follows from this passage that the Holy Spirit is given to all who believe and when they believe. The Spirit was not yet given when Christ spoke, nor could He be given until Christ was glorified (cf. John 16:7).

Incidentally, a very clear distinction is drawn here between the saints of the former dispensation and those of the present.

New and far-reaching realities certainly belong to those who are identified with the glorified Christ.

John 14:16–17; 1 John 2:27. “And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; 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 ... But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.”

Here the same implication, which under due consideration cannot be misconstrued, is present, to the effect that each Christian has received the Holy Spirit; but an added truth is advanced which is of immeasurable import to doctrine of the Spirit's indwelling, namely, that, having taken up His abode in the believer, His presence is never removed.

He abides there forever.

As important as it is in itself, a correct manner of life does not enter into the terms upon which the Spirit indwells, any more than it enters into the terms of salvation.

However, a holy life does enter into the terms upon which the child of God may be filled with the Spirit. It is the very presence of the Holy Spirit, to be sure, which calls for a holy life.

When correcting the Corinthian believers respecting their unspiritual practices, the Apostle said:

“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? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s” (1 Cor. 6:19–20).

The dread lest the Holy Spirit might depart from the heart has been a deep sorrow to multitudes in past generations.

Their unwarranted exercise of soul was well expressed in a verse of a hymn by William Cowper often sung:

*Return, O Holy Dove, return,
Sweet Messenger of rest:
I hate the sins that made Thee mourn,
And drove Thee from my breast.*

It is doubtful whether the passages under consideration could be more positively denied than they are by this bit of poetry.

Acts 11:17. "Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God?"

This passage records Peter's account of the first preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles.

That which arrested the Apostle's attention on that memorable occasion of which he speaks is that the Gentiles, as had the Jews at Pentecost, received the Holy Spirit when they believed on Christ.

That reception was and is a part of salvation itself.

The indwelling presence of the Spirit is God's gift to those who believe.

Romans 5:5. “And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.”

A more literal rendering of this Scripture is to the effect that the love of God gushes forth from the believer’s heart, and that divine love proceeds from the Holy Spirit who is given unto him to dwell within.

This text is the first in order out of several which declare specifically that the Spirit is given alike to all who are saved.

The universality of the gift of the Spirit is asserted here in the use of the pronoun *us*, which word cannot by any right interpretation be made to represent a select or particular group of Christians.

If it be contended, as too often it is, that there are saved ones who have not received the Holy Spirit, the answer found here, as likewise in other passages yet to be considered, is that the pronoun *us* cannot be limited, for it represents *all* who are saved.

Romans 8:9. "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, he is none of his."

This declaration is dogmatic and final.

If any man have not, which means as an indwelling presence, the Spirit of Christ — distinctly a title of the Holy Spirit, as the Spirit come from Christ and sent into the world (cf. John 16:7)—he is none of His.

The ground of this statement is most reasonable.

Among other things and quite above many things, the Christian is characterized by the fact that he has received the divine nature.

No such being could exist as a Christian who does not possess the divine life which is essential to his newly created self.

That new life is often declared to be none other than the Holy Spirit.

Romans 8:23. “And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.”

Again a universal meaning inheres in the word *ourselves*.

This term can refer to no class or group within the Christian fellowship; it reaches to all.

And the positive averment is that all have the first-fruits which only the presence of the Holy Spirit secures.

1 Corinthians 2:12. “Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.”

Similarly, as above, the pronoun *we* attests an all-inclusive company of believers.

It is God’s purpose that everyone of all who are saved shall be instructed relative to those truths which can enter the human understanding only by divine revelation.

No consideration could be given even for a moment to the assumption that the Spirit’s ministry of teaching, which is set forth in this context (cf. vss. 9–16), is intended only for a restricted company within all those who are saved.

It follows that, if it is God's purpose for all His children alike to know the glorious revelations He has in store for them, they must alike be in close and vital relation to the Holy Spirit their Teacher.

God could not expect any believer to make progress in the knowledge of Himself or to be informed about His will for them if, perchance, that believer were not in possession of the Spirit, the divine Teacher who alone reveals the things of God.

This great provision and necessity is declared in no uncertain terms when it is said: "*Now we have received ... the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.*"

1 Corinthians 6:19–20. “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? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.”

This passage serves again to answer completely those who contend that the Spirit is given only to a favored group, and especially does it answer the claim that He is given only to those who are yielded and faithful in their lives.

This appeal, cited above, is to believers in criticism of whom the Apostle has declared that they are carnal (cf. 3:1–4), fornicators (cf. 5:1), disregarding their right relation to God and to each other (cf. 6:1–8); yet they are, all the same, intreated to turn from these unholy ways on the ground of the fact that their bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit.

It will not do to reverse this appeal, as some do, and assert that Christians like the Corinthians, if they turned from their sins, would be rewarded by the presence of the indwelling Holy Spirit.

The direct reason for invoking a holy life is that believers are already temples of the Spirit.

Therefore, it is not a question of securing the Spirit by a holy life, but rather of a holy life being expected from one who has received the Spirit.

This is the fundamental order of the grace relationship to God.

The Mosaic merit system would say, "Be good so that ye may become the temples of the Holy Spirit"; grace says, "Ye are the temples of the Holy Spirit, therefore be good."

1 Corinthians 12:13. "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit."

The same unworthy Corinthians are again said to have all been "made to drink into one Spirit" — not some of them, but *all* of them.

In this same verse it is also declared that these same carnal believers have, every one, been joined to the Lord by the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

It is not more difficult to believe that all believers are indwelt by the Spirit than it is to believe that all have been baptized by the Spirit into the Body of Christ. Both truths are clearly taught in the New Testament and in neither case is the work wrought because of personal worthiness in the child of God, but simply in answer to the faith which results in salvation—that gracious work of which both the indwelling and the baptism of the Spirit are integral parts.

2 Corinthians 5:5. "Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit."

An earnest is a partial payment which is given in advance and which guarantees the final payment of the whole.

The divine blessing which the presence and power of the indwelling Spirit secures, being an earnest, guarantees the full and final realization of all God's measureless provisions for the believer in glory. In business transactions, similarly, a down payment binds the whole with assurance that it will be paid in full and that it will be paid in the same kind.

Not only does the gift of the Spirit assure the fulfillment of every promise which God has made, but it indicates the character of that which is yet to come.

The Spirit is designated an *earnest* in three New Testament passages—2 Corinthians 1:22; 5:5; Ephesians 1:14—and it would be unwarranted indeed to assume that this foretaste of all of heaven's glories is withheld from even one of the least of all saints. His abiding presence is assured the Christian, since He Himself must indwell to be the Earnest which He is.

Galatians 3:2. "This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?"

The assurance given in this text is that the Galatians had received the Spirit in answer to saving faith, that is, as a feature of their salvation.

Thus it is taught again that the Spirit becomes the indwelling presence in every individual who is saved and at the moment he is saved.

Galatians 4:6. "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father."

This determining Scripture is wholly contradicted by the theory that the Spirit is given in answer to personal sanctification.

Rather it is because of the fact that believers are *sons* that the Spirit is given unto them, and this procedure of necessity must include every son.

1 John 3:24; 4:13. “And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us ... Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.”

These passages serve to seal and confirm the truth that the Holy Spirit being given unto *us* is given to all who are saved.

Not a single one born of God could be excluded.

The conclusion to be drawn from this clear and extended body of Scripture is that the Holy Spirit is a living presence in every Christian; on the basis of this determining fact other relationships between the Spirit and the believer are built.

It is evident that once a misinterpretation of this basic truth arises there will also come misconceptions of those other ministries of the Spirit which are built thereon.

Certain passages, because of their dispensational setting or because of their wording, have been assumed by some to contradict the body of Scripture which declares that the Holy Spirit indwells and is a permanent presence in every Christian.

A discussion of the doctrine of the indwelling of the Spirit would be incomplete apart from a consideration of these passages.

1 Samuel 16:14. "But the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him."

In an age when the Holy Spirit did not indwell the saints universally and when He exercised sovereign freedom in entering and leaving those upon whom He came, it was wholly in order for the Spirit to leave King Saul and especially as a judgment upon him.

Psalm 51:11. “Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me.”

Thus within the same dispensation as that of King Saul and doubtless remembering God’s judgments upon the former king, David prays that he may be spared the same judgment.

He knows that the Spirit might in complete freedom—so far as any promise to the contrary was concerned—leave him never to return.

Evidently, David was conscious to some extent of the advantage and blessing which the presence of the Spirit meant to him.

Luke 11:13. "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?"

Because it is located in the New Testament and because it was spoken by Christ, many have concluded that this passage must be incorporated into the general doctrine of the Spirit's relation to the Christian.

Great error and misunderstanding have thus been engendered.

The passage under consideration conditions reception of the Holy Spirit upon asking [OT], whereas the Christian, as has been seen, receives the Holy Spirit without any asking as a part of his salvation and when he believes [NT].

The Spirit, consequently, is now given to those who do no more than believe.

In the dispensational divisions of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, which were declared at the beginning of this volume, it was pointed out that the period between the baptism of Christ and the Day of Pentecost was characterized by transition, and in that period Christ offered the Spirit to those who would ask for Him.

This provision of His was so in advance of the relation which the Spirit sustained to the saints in Old Testament times, to which relationship the apostles were in some measure adjusted, that there is no record they ever ventured on to this new ground; accordingly at the end of His earth-ministry, Christ said: *“I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever”* (John 14:16).

This introduces an entirely different relationship to the Spirit.

The disciples were not now to receive the Holy Spirit in answer to their own petition, but in answer to the petition of Christ.

Thus it is indicated that the Holy Spirit has now been given because of Christ's prayer and to all who believe. As 1 Samuel 16:14 and Psalm 51:11 serve to demonstrate that the experience of the Old Testament saints cannot be made the norm of Christian experience, in like manner Luke 11:13, which was for the disciples between Christ's baptism and the Day of Pentecost, cannot be made the norm of present experience.

Four passages yet remain to be considered which are often supposed to teach that the Spirit is received as a step or experience subsequent to salvation.

These Scriptures fall within the present divine relationship of the Spirit.

They are:

Acts 5:32. "And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him."

The use of this text to prove the Holy Spirit is given only to those who are obedient to the will of God in their daily lives is possible only when there is failure to recognize that the adherence here indicated is that of the unsaved to the gospel of their salvation.

The context clearly sustains that interpretation and, besides, obedience to the gospel as a requirement for salvation is enjoined in other New Testament passages. The Apostle writes of the vengeance that shall fall on them that know not God and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Thess. 1:8).

To make the reception of the Holy Spirit to depend on obedience in daily life is to ignore the whole body of Scripture already presented in which He is seen to be present in every believer, and then to assign to the Christian the ability to be obedient within his own strength, whereas the faithful life is lived only through the power that the indwelling Spirit provides.

Acts 8:14–20. “Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: (for as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.

There is introduced by this passage what would seem to be an exception to all other direct teachings by which it is established that the Holy Spirit is bestowed in this age as a gift upon all who believe and when they believe.

An exception of such a character would, because of its contradictory nature, be most serious.

That the passage records an exception to the present order, indeed, is freely admitted.

It is well to note, however, that, as before indicated, the final order for this age and for people other than the Jews was not established until the experience in Cornelius' house as recorded in Acts 10:44–46.

The introduction of the Spirit's relation to Jews who received Christ was accomplished on the Day of Pentecost, and intimations in various passages suggest the importance which the Spirit assigns to this event. As certainly as the Spirit was to be given in due time to Samaritans and to Gentiles, as certainly as they had no part in Pentecost, and as surely as it was important in the gift of the Spirit to avoid a superior attitude on the part of Jews over Samaritans and Gentiles, it was necessary to mark the initial reception of the gospel by each of these groups with a distinctive emphasis on the ministry of the Spirit in their behalf.

There is no claim made whatever that here in Samaria was a repetition of Pentecost; it is merely to point out that no ground was allowed believing Jews—altogether prone to look askance at Gentiles—for the assumption that they, having had the experience of Pentecost, were superior to all others.

It is of significance when Peter declares that the manifestation of the Spirit in Cornelius' house was a reminder to him of Pentecost (Acts 11:15).

The record respecting Samaria as given in the above passage, then, is of a special demonstration of the Holy Spirit and to the end that the gospel might be sealed to the Samaritans with undiminished power.

A notable and much needed exception to the order of this age was thereby introduced.

Acts 19:1–6. “And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, he said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John’s baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.”

In the first place, the term *disciple* is not synonymous with the term *Christian*.

A disciple is a follower or learner, and furthermore to be a disciple of John the Baptist was far removed from being saved through faith in Christ, crucified and risen. The Apostle, having missed certain realities in these twelve men, which realities belong to regenerated persons, inquired, *Upon believing did ye receive the Holy Spirit?*

This is a more accurate rendering (cf. R.V.; also Eph. 1:13), and this question drew out the answer which at once revealed their unsaved condition.

Thereupon the Apostle turned their attention to Christ as the one to trust, and having believed they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, signs following this exceptional case too as in the previous ones cited and for the same reasons.

Ephesians 1:13. “In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise.”

All the difficulty which this passage seems to present is due to a misleading translation.

The passage can be read, *Upon believing ye were sealed* (cf. R.V.).

Believing is the logical, but not the chronological, cause of the sealing.

Believers are sealed when they believe and because they believe.

**Next week, we will look at the second part of the doctrine of the Indwelling of the Holy Spirit:
II. In Relation to Anointing**