DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Permanent Indwelling of the Spirit

Lesson 14

Starting with the birth of the Church at Pentecost, as recorded in **Acts 2,** every believer, the moment they believe, receives the Holy Spirit. From one perspective, we are placed into the Church and thereby "baptized" into the body of Christ by the Holy Spirit. From another perspective, we individually receive the Holy Spirit. Thus, the Holy Spirit becomes the seal of our future redemption, the pledge of our heavenly inheritance, the anointing from God that we are chosen of God, children of God, a kingdom of priests, and the witness that we are indeed children of God. In this lesson we will examine the permanent indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and its practical application in our lives. We will try not to overlap with subjects already discussed in this series or which will be addressed later.

I. DEFINITION OF THE PERMANENT INDWELLING OF THE SPIRIT

A. *Nelson's New Christian Dictionary:* Belief that the Holy Spirit inhabits his people and has his abode in their spirit. The term was first used by John Wycliffe in his English translation of the Bible.[1]

B. *The Moody Handbook of Theology:* "In John 14:16–17 Jesus indicated that following Pentecost the Holy Spirit would begin a new ministry to believers that was unlike that of the Old Testament. The emphasis of this passage is that the new ministry would be an indwelling (in contrast to the Spirit simply being with them) and it would be permanent. While the promise of John 14 pertains to all believers and the indwelling is permanent, there was indwelling in the Old Testament, however, it was selective and it was temporary."[2]

C. When a believer placed his faith in Christ, at that moment, he is "baptized" into the body of Christ, sealed with the Holy Spirit until the day of redemption, given the Holy Spirit as a pledge of his inheritance, and the Holy Spirit never leaves him. The believer becomes the possession of God and the destiny of that possession is made sure by the down payment, earnest, pledge or seal of ownership of the believer which is the Holy Spirit promised by Christ to His followers. In many respects the baptism of the Holy Spirit is synonymous with the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, however there are differences. The baptism of the Holy Spirit emphasizes our being placed into or submerged into the body of Christ at conversion. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit, on the other hand, emphasizes the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit in a believer's life. If you know Jesus Christ in a saving way, you have the permanent abiding presence of the Holy Spirit in your life to assist you in your Christian walk.

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[1] George Thomas Kurian, *Nelson's New Christian Dictionary: The Authoritative Resource on the Christian World* (Nashville, Tenn.: Thomas Nelson Pubs., 2001).

[2] Paul P. Enns, *The Moody Handbook of Theology* (Chicago, Ill.: Moody Press, 1997, c1989), 260.

II. THOUGHTS TO PONDER ABOUT THE PERMANENT INDWELLING OF THE SPIRIT

A. *The Holy Spirit:* "One of the best illustrations of sealing is a piece of registered mail. When something is registered at the post office, it is sealed until delivered. Actually only two persons can open registered mail – the sender (if it is delivered back to him) and the recipient. In the case of the believer, God is the one who sends him on the way to heaven, and God in heaven is the recipient on his arrival there. Therefore, only God can break the seal of our redemption, and He has promised not to do so; and the guarantee of that promise is the Holy Spirit, who is the One by and in whom we have been sealed by God."[3]

B. *Morning and Evening:* "The Holy Ghost is no temporary gift, he abides with the saints. We have but to seek him aright, and he will be found of us. He is jealous, but he is pitiful; if he leaves in anger, he returns in mercy. Condescending and tender, he does not weary of us, but awaits to be gracious still."[4]

C. *The Moody Handbook of Theology:* "John Walvoord makes three observations concerning Old Testament indwelling. He points out that first, the Spirit's indwelling in the life of a person had no evident relationship to the person's spiritual condition. Second, the Spirit's indwelling was a sovereign working of God in the person to perform a specific task, for example, delivering Israel in warfare or building the tabernacle. Third, the Spirit's indwelling was temporary. The Spirit of the Lord came upon Saul but also departed from him (1 Sam. 10:10; 16:14). David was fearful that the Holy Spirit would leave him (Ps. 51:11)."[3]

D. *A Survey of Bible Doctrine:* "How can a believer know that the Spirit of God is within him? There are two avenues of assuring evidence. One is simply to believe the Word of God which says this is true. The other is to look at one's Christian experience as an evidence of the Spirit's presence and working in one's life. However, experience may not always be convincing since sin may hinder His work, and in the normal process of Christian development one's growth will be slow but steady with no unusual demonstrations of the power of God. This unspectacular kind of progress should never be diagnosed as indicating the absence of the indwelling Spirit. He does abide forever in every believer's life (Jn 14:16–17)."[4]

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[3]Charles Ryrie, *The Holy Spirit,* pg. 121

[4]Charles Spurgeon, *Morning and Evening,* evening February 12th, Logos Bible Software.

[3]Paul P. Enns, *The Moody Handbook of Theology* (Chicago, Ill.: Moody Press, 1997, c1989), 260.

[4]Charles Caldwell Ryrie, *A Survey of Bible Doctrine* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1995, c1972) see "indwelling".

III. SCRIPTURAL PROOF OF THE PERMANENT INDWELLING OF THE SPIRIT

A. **Lk. 11:13**[5] "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?"

B. **Compare Luke 24:44-49 with Acts 1:4-5 and 2:33**[6]

Compare Lk. 24:44-49 with Acts 1:4-5 and 2:33		
Luke 24:44-49 Now He said to them, "These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." 45 Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, 46 and He said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day, 47 and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. 48 "You are witnesses of these things. 49 "And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high."	**Acts 1:4-5** Gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, "Which," He said, "you heard of from Me; 5 for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."	**Acts 2:33** "Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear.

C. **Jn. 7:37-39** Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. 38 "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.' " 39 But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

D. **Jn. 14:16-17** "I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; 17 that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you.

E. **Rom. 8:9-11**[7] However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he

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[5]Here the word **"give"** in **vs. 11,** is a future active indicative verb which means that Christ was promising a gift of the Spirit as the supreme good gift from the Father sometime in the future.

[6]The words **"having received"** (Acts 2:33) in the Greek are one word and it is an aorist active participle which means that the promise of the Father to send the Spirit was fulfilled already as attested by the sound of a rushing wind, the tongues of fire, and each man speaking in an unknown language.

[7]The Greek words translated **"dwell"** and **"indwell"** in this verse mean to inhabit, live, occupy, dwell, or have one's habitation with another. Both are present active verb forms which tell us that the Holy Spirit is continually making His home with us.

does not belong to Him. 10 If Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness. 11 But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

F. **I Cor. 2:12**[8] Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God,

G. **I Cor. 6:19** Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?

H. **II Cor. 1:21-22**[9] Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and anointed us is God, 22 who also sealed us and gave us the Spirit in our hearts as a pledge.

I. **II Cor. 5:5** Now He who prepared us for this very purpose is God, who gave to us the Spirit as a pledge.

J. **Gal. 3:13-14** Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us—for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree"— 14 in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we would receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

K. **Eph. 1:13-14** In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, 14 who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory.

L. **Eph. 4:30** Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

M. **Jude 17-19** But you, beloved, ought to remember the words that were spoken beforehand by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, 18 that they were saying to

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[8]The Greek verb tense of the word translated **"have received"** is an aorist active indicative which means that at some point of time in the past, Paul and his Christian readers received the Holy Spirit.

[9]The word **"sealed"** in this verse means, to set one's seal upon, to authenticate, to confirm, attest, certify, to place beyond a doubt, to place a mark of ownership, or to make something secure so as to guarantee that it arrives at its intended destiny. It is an aorist middle participle which means that at a point in time Christ seals those who are His possession with the Holy Spirit.

you, “In the last time there will be mockers, following after their own ungodly lusts.” 19 These are the ones who cause divisions, worldly-minded, devoid of the Spirit.

IV. ERRORS CONCERNING THE PERMANENT INDWELLING OF THE SPIRIT

A. Error – The Spirit’s presence in a believer’s life is only temporary not permanent. We know this from **Psa. 51:11** where David prays, *“Do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.”*

B. Error – When you lose your salvation you also lose the gift of the Holy Spirit.

C. Error – You can know you have the Holy Spirit permanently dwelling in you when you have an emotional experience.

D. Error – You can know you have the permanent indwelling of the Holy Spirit if you perform miraculous sign gifts.

E. Error – The Holy Spirit is given to those who do certain acts of righteousness. We know this because **Acts 5:32** says, “*And we are witnesses of these things; and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey Him*.”

F. Error – In order to receive the permanent indwelling of the Holy Spirit, apostles or church leaders must lay their hands on you and pray for you to receive the Spirit. We know this from **Acts 8:14-17** where the text says, “*Now when the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent them Peter and John, 15 who came down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit. 16 For He had not yet fallen upon any of them; they had simply been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 17 Then they began laying their hands on them, and they were receiving the Holy Spirit*.”

V. APPLICATION OF THE PERMANENT INDWELLING OF THE SPIRIT

A. We never need to worry about having adequate resources to obey God because we have God’s Spirit dwelling within us.

B. We can be ever confident that God will change us because we have the divine agent of change permanently indwelling us.

C. We never have to worry about losing our salvation because we are sealed with the Holy Spirit until the day of redemption.

D. We never have to worry about receiving the glories and rewards of heaven because the Spirit is a pledge of our inheritance.

E. We can see the degree of God's grace and love toward us in that He has given us His Spirit to permanently indwell us even though we are sinners.

F. When we are tempted to sin, we should remember that sin grieves the Holy Spirit, and that when we sin we take the Holy Spirit along with us into our sin.

G. Another motivation for godly living is that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit dwells in our bodies just as the glory of God dwelt in Solomon's temple. Therefore, we should not bring things into our temple that will dishonor or treat as unholy the Holy Spirit of God.

To the one who remembers the Spirit
There is always a way out,
Even in the wilderness with the devil.[10]

The Holy Spirit can never be the wage of human service: the idea verges upon blasphemy. Can any man deserve that Christ should die for him? Who would dream of such a thing? Can any man deserve that the Holy Spirit should dwell in him, and work holiness in him? The greatness of the blessing lifts it high above the range of merit, and we see that if the Holy Spirit be bestowed, it must be by an act of divine grace – grace infinite in bounty, exceeding all that we could have imagined. "Sovereign grace o'er sin abounding" is here seen in clearest light. "I will put my spirit within you" is a promise which drops with graces as the honeycomb with honey. Listen to the divine music which pours from this word of love. I hear the soft melody of grace, grace, grace, and nothing else but grace. Glory be to God, who gives to sinners the indwelling of His Spirit.[11]

[10]Herbert F. Brokering as quoted by R. C. Sproul in, *The Mystery of the Holy Spirit,* pg. 114.

[11]Charles Spurgeon, *Understanding the Holy Spirit,* pg. 322.