

## INTIMATE KNOWLEDGE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

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*“The Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it sees Him not, neither knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and shall be in you.”*  
*John 14:17.*

THE part of the text on which we shall meditate is this—“The Spirit of Truth, you know Him, for He dwells with you and shall be in you.” Observe that the Holy Spirit is here called the Spirit of Truth. There is much meaning in this expression. He is the Teacher of the Truth of God, unalloyed Truth, practical, divinely effective Truth of God. He never teaches anything but the Truth of God. If it comes from the Spirit of God, we may receive it from Him without any hesitation. It is He that takes of the things of Christ and shows them unto us. And these things are true and He thus proves Himself to be the Spirit of Truth.

He is the very Spirit and soul of Truth, the essence, the life and power of it. Divine Truth, when merely heard, takes no effect upon the mind until the Spirit of God enlivens it, and then it becomes a quickening force. He makes the Truth of God itself, in its reality and substance, to enter the soul and affect the heart. He is the Teacher of Truth and He is Himself the active power that makes Truth to be Truth to us in the assurance of our inmost souls. He is the Spirit of Truth in this sense, too, that He works truthfulness in His people. In those with whom the Holy Spirit works effectually “there is no deceit.”

They are open-hearted, honest, sincere and true. They have an intense affection for the Truth of God and a zeal for it. They are by His truthful influence preserved from deadly error. If it were possible, false teachers would deceive even the elect. But where the Spirit of God dwells, He detects for us the false from the true and He gives us the spirit of a sound mind by which we reject that which is false and cleave only to that which is revealed of God. In this sense He is the Spirit of Truth. And as He works truthfulness in His people, so the work that He does is always true and real work.

You may get up an animal excitement and your converts will, in due time fail—but the Spirit of God works true conversion, sincere repentance and saving faith such as no sun of persecution can dry up and wither. He works deep conviction of sin and simple faith in the Lord Jesus. And these things abide in the heart. The new birth, as He works it, is not after the fancied manner of baptismal regeneration but after an effective spiritual manner so that a Divine life is imparted and the man becomes a child of God. He produces real sanctification—not the pretense of perfection but the reality of holiness. Everything the Spirit of God does is substance and not shadow. The baseless fabric of a vision is the work of man. But the eternal, abiding, everlasting work of Divine Grace is wrought by the Spirit of Truth alone.

As He is the Spirit of Truth, we may be sure that whatever He sets His seal upon, is true. He will only bear witness to the Truth of God. He will not assist in maintaining error. Mark this word—careful observation will show that in proportion as the nominal Church of the present day has departed from the truth of God, the Spirit of God has departed from her. He can never set His seal to a lie. The testimony of His sacred operation in “signs following,” is borne only to the Truth of God. If I preach to you that which is not the Word of the Lord, it will not be followed by the work of the Spirit of Truth. There will be no conversions among sinners and there will be no edification for the people of God.

It is by the Truth of God as His instrument that the Spirit of God works. And we must be very careful that we do not bring forth any other instrument. Let us not talk, as some do, as if Scriptural doctrine were of little or no consequence. For where the doctrine is not of God, the Spirit of Truth is grieved and He will depart from such a ministry. Except we keep close to the Words of the Lord Jesus and the Revelation of the inspired Book, the Spirit of Truth will show His displeasure by refusing to use our utterances. In vain your music, your architecture, your learning and your “bright services” if the Truth of God is given up. Farewell to the witness of the Spirit in the hearts of men when men are taught the inventions of men in the place of the Revelation of God.

If the Holy Spirit is bearing witness in your spirit that you are the children of God, then you are truly born of God. The presence of the Divine Paraclete is the seal of your adoption. If He dwells in you, this is the token of your sonship. For He does not dwell in the unregenerate. If He helps, strengthens, comforts, guides, illuminates and sanctifies you, you have a seal which you need not question—the seal of God upon you—that you are His chosen and shall be His in the day when He makes up His jewels.

This brings me to the doctrine upon which I shall enlarge this morning. This is the distinction between the men of the world and the disciples of Christ. The world knows nothing of the Holy Spirit. But the disciples of Christ know Him. For the Lord Jesus says, “He dwells with you and shall be in you.” There are a great many distinctions in the world of a religious kind—one man wears his phylacteries, another is girt with camel’s hair. One man comes with multiplied ceremonies, another with none at all. You cannot judge who are the people of God by these *external* things.

Forms of Church government and modes of worship may be important in their own place—but before the Lord the infallible test is this—do you bear the fruit of the Spirit of God in you? Does He indwell you? “If any man has not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.” But he that has the Spirit dwelling within his soul, he it is that is a true born heir of Heaven.

We have raised a solemn question to begin with, have we not? But, dear Friends, I do not desire it to remain a question. I pray that it may be no question with anyone of you but that you may know that it is so and may go on to enjoy the blessed privilege of being on intimate terms with the Holy Spirit—“But you know Him, for He dwells with you and shall be in you.”

I. To come close up to my subject, the first head will be BELIEVERS IN JESUS CHRIST KNOW THE HOLY SPIRIT. They know Him, to begin with, by believing what has been taught them concerning the Comforter by the Lord Jesus Christ. When Jesus Christ had taught His people concerning the Holy Spirit and they had received His teaching, He said, “You know Him. For He dwells with you and shall be in you.” If they had refused the sayings of Christ, if they had possessed no love, if they had not kept His Commandments, if they had arrogantly resolved to find out this mystery for themselves by their own thinking, apart from the instruction of their Master, they would not have known the Spirit of God. We must begin our acquaintance with the Spirit by sitting at the feet of Jesus and accepting His testimony as sure.

But more than this—we know the Holy Spirit by knowing our Lord Jesus and by Him knowing the Father. There is such an intimate union between the Holy Spirit, the Father, and the Son, that to know the Holy Spirit we must know the Son of God, and know the Father. If we know the Lord Jesus, we have the Spirit of God. For by no one else could the things of Christ be revealed to us. Beginning then, at the very beginning—do you know the Lord Jesus Christ? You know something about Him—but do you *know* Him? Is He your friend, your acquaintance? Are you on personal terms of fellowship with Him?

If so, then you see the Father in His face. Jesus says, “He that has seen Me has seen the Father.” And He tells His people, “From henceforth you know Him and have seen Him.” You are, therefore, acquainted with God the Father through Jesus Christ the Son. And you have seen the glory of His Grace beaming in your Savior’s face. In this way you have become acquainted with the Holy Spirit who is not divided from the Father and the Son. As you know the Son you know the Father, and in this way you come to know the Holy Spirit. No man comes to the Father but by the Son, and he that comes to the Father receives the Spirit.

We know the Holy Spirit, next, by His operations upon us. We not only know *about* His operations but we have been the subjects of them. All those who are true disciples of Christ have felt a divinely supernatural power working upon them. First, the Holy Spirit operates to our spiritual quickening. There was a time when we were dead in trespasses and in sins—holy feeling was unknown to us and the life of faith was far from us. At that time we did not desire nor even know spiritual things—we were carnally minded and the carnal mind knows not the things which are of God.

The Spirit of God came upon us and we were awakened and made to live. Do you remember that? Many of us can distinctly remember when we passed from death unto life. With others, the visible life may have been made manifest more gradually, but even in them there was a moment when the vital force entered the soul and they can now rejoice that they have been quickened who were once spiritually dead. You know the Spirit in measure when He breathes upon your dead heart and it begins to throb with the heavenly life. In connection with that quickening there was conviction of sin. In what a powerful light does the Holy Spirit set our sin!

In my discourses to you about sin I try to show you how heinous it is and how terrible are its consequences. But when a single beam from the Spirit of Truth shines upon sin, it makes it appear “exceeding sinful.” I remember how Mr. Bunyan said, when under conviction, “I thought none but the devil himself could equal me for inward wickedness and pollution of mind.” When the Spirit of God revealed him to himself he would have willingly changed places with toads and serpents for he esteemed the most loathsome objects to be better than himself. This revelation of darkness is the effect of light—the light of the Spirit of God. And when He convicts us of sin we begin to know Him.

After having convicted us of sin, He leads us to repentance and to faith in Jesus Christ—then we know Him! How many a promise did some of you hear but you could not receive it! How many a comforting discourse did you listen to and yet it did not comfort you! But when the Spirit of God came—in a moment you saw Jesus as the Consolation of Israel, the Friend of sinners, the atoning Sacrifice, the Surety of the Covenant of Grace—and sweet peace came streaming into your soul! At that time you did not only know that the Holy Spirit leads to Jesus Christ but you knew that He was leading you. In that respect you knew Him by an experimental acquaintance which is the best of knowledge.

Since that time, beloved Brethren, we have known the Holy Spirit in many ways—restraining from evil, stimulating to good, instructing, consoling, directing and enlivening. He has been to us the Spirit of reviving—we have grown dull and cold and sleepy, till that verse of the hymn has been verified—

*“In vain we tune our formal songs,  
In vain we strive to rise,  
Hosannas languish on our tongues,  
And our devotion dies.”*

But no sooner has the Spirit visited us than we have felt all alive—bright, cheerful and intense. Then our whole heart has run in the ways of God’s commands and we have rejoiced in His name. How true is that word, “He restores my soul!” Thus have we known the Holy Spirit by His operations within us.

Oftentimes He has acted as an illuminator. A difficult Scripture or mysterious doctrine has been before me—I have looked at the original and I have examined what the best Biblical students have written upon it. And yet, when I have thus used all the helps within reach, the point has remained in the dark. My best aid has ever been to resort to the great Author of the sacred Word—even the Holy Spirit Himself. He can, by blessing the means which we are using, or by directly leading the mind in the right track put an end to all difficulty. He has the clue of every maze, the solution of every riddle. And to whom He wills, He can reveal the secret of the Lord.

Dear young Believers, you who wish to understand the Scriptures, seek this light from above for this is the *true* light. Other lights may mislead but this is clear and sure. To have the Spirit of God lighting up the inner chambers of truth is a great gift. Truth of the deeper sort is comparable to a cavern into which we cannot find our way except by a guide and a light. When the Spirit of Truth is come He pours daylight into the darkness and leads us into all Truth of God. He does not merely show the Truth but He leads us into it so that we stand within it and rejoice in the hidden treasure which it contains. Then we know Him as our sacred Illuminator.

I especially note that we also know Him as the Comforter. Alas for the disturbance of heart which we receive in the world—perhaps even in the family! Few things, it may be, are as we could wish and therefore we are sorely troubled. But when the Spirit of God comes, peace flows to us like a river and Jesus breathes on us and says, “Peace be unto you.” Do you know that peace? Many saints of God have enjoyed a heavenly calm upon their sick beds—when pain should have distracted them. The Spirit of God has rested them in Jesus. I have heard of one saint, near his end, who asked, “Is this dying? Then I should like to keep on dying forever.”

He felt so much comfort—such a flood of joy which the Holy Spirit creates—that death itself had not only lost its sting but had even become a joy to him! The comforts of the Holy Spirit take bitterness out of wormwood and gall and the sting out of the last enemy. May God give us His Grace to know the Holy Spirit as our Comforter! Happy knowledge! I trust that we have oftentimes known the Holy Spirit as guiding us in various ways. I will not speak largely on this for some might not understand it. But I know for sure that the Holy Spirit does give to His favored people hints as to things to come. I say not that any man is inspired to tell the future. But I do say that choice saints have received preparations for the future and foreshadowing of their coming experiences.

When Believers come into difficult circumstances they bow the knee and cry for guidance, even as David said, “Bring here the ephod.” The oracle is not dumb, but in some way, not always to be explained, the Spirit of God guides our steps

through life if we are willing to obey His monitions. Is it not written, “Your ears shall hear a word behind you saying, This is the way, walk you in it”? The Divine communications of the Holy Spirit are the precious heritage of true saints. But they are a peculiar voice to their own souls and are not to be repeated in words.

If you know these Divine workings, as I am sure many of you do, then through His operations you are made to know the Holy Spirit—that deep calm—that peace which only He can give. That exhilaration, that superlative joy as of Heaven begun below which only the Lord can work. That steadfast courage, that holy patience, that fixedness of heart, that gentleness of manner and firmness of purpose which come only from above—these all introduce you to the wonder-working Spirit who takes pleasure thus to operate upon the minds of the heirs of eternal glory. Thus we know the Holy Spirit by His works and gifts and revelations.

But I do not think we have entered the center of the text even yet. “You know Him,” says the text—you know not only His work but Himself. I may know the great achievements of an artist in marble but I may not know the sculptor himself. I may know a man’s paintings and therefore I may guess somewhat of his character but yet I may not know the man himself. “You know *Him*,” says our Lord. And truly we know the Holy Spirit as to His personality. If the Holy Spirit were a mere influence, we should read, “You know *it*.” Let us always shun the mistake of calling the Holy Spirit “it.” *It* cannot do anything. *It* is a dead thing—the Holy Spirit is a living, blessed *Person* and I hope we can say that we know Him as such. Others may doubt His personality. But we believe in the teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ and behold, in the names given to Him, the emotions ascribed to Him and the acts performed by Him, abundant proofs of His sacred personality. In our hearts we know HIM.

As we know His personality so we know also His Divinity because the Holy Spirit work in us effects which none but God could work. Who can give life to the spiritually dead? Who but the Lord and Giver of life? Who can instruct and illuminate as the Holy Spirit does? Only because He is Divine can He guide us into all Truth and purify us unto perfect holiness. There have been things worked in us—in our experience—in which we have beheld not only the finger of God but God Himself working in our hearts to will and to do of His own good pleasure. Oh, worship the Holy Spirit! The greatest crime of sinners is to blaspheme the Holy Spirit—and the greatest fault of saints is to *neglect* the Holy Spirit. Let us adore Him, yield to Him, confide in Him—and pray that we may know Him to the fullest.

So it comes to this—that as we know the Holy Spirit’s personality and Godhead we come to know Him. I mean this—that there is now a personal relationship between the Believer and the Holy Spirit, a conscious and clear fellowship and communion. The communion of the Holy Spirit is one of the three choice blessings of the great Benediction. Do we not enjoy it? We speak with Him and He speaks with us. We trust Him and He puts us in trust with many a precious Truth of God. We are not strangers now. We do not talk of Him as a personage a long way off of whom we have heard—a Divine mystery with which Prophets and Apostles were acquainted in remote ages—but we *know* Him.

Come, let me look into your faces, my Beloved in the Lord, and let me ask you, Is this true or not? If you are obliged to say, “We do not know whether there is any Holy Spirit, for we are utter strangers to Him,” then I pray the Lord to deal graciously with you and manifest His Son Jesus Christ to you by the power of that same Holy Spirit of whom we speak. The Spirit of Truth is to those of us who trust in the Lord Jesus our present help. He is more familiar with us than any other Person. For He enters within, where none else find admission. “You know Him. For He dwells with you and shall be in you.” Thus much upon our first head. Now I will take you to another exceedingly important and interesting. May the Holy Spirit help me.

**II.** The second head is this—BELIEVERS KNOW THE HOLY SPIRIT THROUGH HIMSELF. Let us read the text again—“You know Him, for He dwells with you and shall be in you.” It is not, “You know Him for you have heard gracious preaching.” Nor, “You know Him for you have read about Him in the Scriptures.” No—“You know Him, for He dwells with you and shall be in you.” The moon cannot help us to see the sun nor can man reveal God. God can only be seen in His own light. No one can reveal the Holy Spirit but the Holy Spirit.

I thought this morning, coming along—I have to preach about the Holy Spirit. But what can I do without the Holy Spirit Himself? I can only preach aright concerning Him by His own Presence with me. And if He is not there, I shall only darken counsel by words without knowledge. Why is it that we know the Holy Spirit only by the Holy Spirit? I answer first, on account of the inadequacy of all means. By what methods can you make a man know the Holy Spirit? He is not to be discerned by the senses, nor perceived by eyes or ears. What if the preacher should be as eloquent as an angel—in what

way would that make you know the Holy Spirit? You would probably remember more of the man than of his Subject. Nothing is more to be deplored than a hungering after mere oratory.

It would be infinitely better to speak with a stammer the Truth of God than to pour forth a flood of words in which the Truth is drowned. Words are nothing but air and wind and they cannot possibly reveal the Holy Spirit. No outward ordinances can reach the point any more than human speech. We greatly rejoice in the Baptism of Believers and in the breaking of bread in which the death of the Lord Jesus is set forth before us. But in what symbol could we fully see the Holy Spirit? If He were even to descend upon us as a dove we should see only the visible shape—we would not necessarily discern the Spirit. The Spirit Himself must reveal Himself.

Beloved, there is no chariot in which God can ride to us—the axles of creation itself would break beneath the enormous load of Deity. It is not possible for God to reveal Himself fully by His works—He is seen only by Himself. Therefore the Son of God, Himself, has come to us as “God with us.” In Him we see God. The Holy Spirit must Himself come into the heart to which He would make Himself known.

This is even more clear from the inability of our nature to discover the Holy Spirit. We are dead by nature and how can we know anything until He makes us alive? Our eyes are spiritually blinded—how can we see Him until He opens our eyes? We are altogether without strength by nature—how can we run after Him until He first comes to us and gives us the power to do so? We are unable to perceive the Holy Spirit—the carnal man knows not the things which are of God for they are spiritual and must be spiritually discerned. We must be endowed with a spirit before we can discern the great Spirit. Flesh cannot transform itself into spirit. No, it is the Lord Himself who must come and breathe into us the Spirit of life and then we perceive Him who is the Spirit of Truth.

The Holy Spirit must reveal Himself to us if we are to know Him—this is clear from the nature of the case. How do I know a man but by the man himself appearing to me and speaking to me and manifesting himself to me? You cannot with accuracy judge of a man by his writings. It is a curious circumstance that Mr. Toplady, who wrote very bitterly on behalf of the Truth of God, was, in temper, the sweetest of men. On the other hand, Mr. Romaine, of Blackfriars, who in their writings seem to be the gentlest of beings were by no means free from harshness. You must see a man. No, more—you must *live* with a man in order to *know* him. You must live with the Holy Spirit and He must dwell with you and be in you, before you can speak of knowing Him at all.

The facts of the case prove this. I shall put it to any Believer here who can humbly say, “I know Him, for He dwells with me and is in me.” How do you know the Holy Spirit but by the Holy Spirit? Did you learn your religion from me? Then you have it all to unlearn. Did you learn it out of a book? You have need to begin again. Did you inherit it from your parents or borrow it from your friends? Then you are still ignorant of the vital point—God is only known through Himself. The Holy Spirit by the Holy Spirit. Have you not found it so in your own case? Why, you have sat and heard a sermon which was in itself cheering, comforting and quickening, for your neighbor said, “What a happy time we have enjoyed!” Alas, you thought you had never felt more stupid and lifeless. Have you not gone down the Tabernacle steps and said to yourself, “I am as hard as stone and as cold as a winter’s fog? What shall I do?”

Thus are you without the Spirit of God. But when the Divine Spirit comes upon you, such complaints are at an end. Then does the lame man leap as an hart and the tongue of the dumb is made to sing. Then are you full of living joy in listening to the Gospel—every word you hear seems to be on wheels. And towards you the cherubim fly swiftly bringing live coals from off the altar.

**III.** My third head is BELIEVERS ENJOY A SACRED INTIMACY WITH THE SPIRIT OF GOD. I am not going to withdraw that word intimacy. It is warranted by the language of our Lord. For He says, “You know Him, for He dwells with you and shall be in you.”

First, He says, “He dwells with you.” Is not that a wonderful sentence? The Holy Spirit is God, and therefore the Heaven of heavens cannot contain Him—and yet behold the condescending fact—“He dwells with you.” The Holy Spirit is now upon earth, the vicar and representative of the Lord Jesus Christ who said, “I will send you another Comforter”—that is, another Helper and Advocate like Himself. Consider how our Lord dwelt with His disciples. After the same fashion, the Spirit of Truth dwells with us. Jesus permitted His disciples the most intimate communion with Himself—they ran to Him with their troubles, they told Him their difficulties, they confessed their doubts.

He was their Master and Lord, and yet He washed their feet. He ate and drank with them and permitted the freest conversation. You never find our Lord repelling their approaches or resenting their familiarities. He did not draw a ring round Himself and say, “Keep your distance.” Now, in the same manner, the Spirit of Truth deals with Believers. “He dwells with you.” You may go to Him at any time, you may ask what you will of Him, you may speak to Him as a man speaks with his friend. You cannot see Him, but He sees you, which is much better. You cannot hear His voice, but He hears yours. No, He hears your *thoughts*. He is most near to those who are in Christ. “He dwells with you.”

Dwelling with us, He is in our assemblies. It is He who fulfils the promise of our Lord, “Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.” It is by the Holy Spirit that the Lord Jesus is with us. That we might enjoy that sacred Presence, it was expedient for our Lord to go away. Beloved, what a mercy it is when the Holy Spirit is in our assembly! What a dreary business it is when the Holy Spirit is gone from the congregation! The people come and go and perhaps there may be fine music, splendid millinery, admirable eloquence, a vast crowd, or a wealthy congregation. But what of these things? They are a bag of wind! If the Holy Spirit is not in the congregation, it is gathered together in vain. Behold, the people spend themselves for very vanity if the Lord is not among them. But the Comforter does come into our assemblies. For it is written, “He dwells with you.”

He also comes into our homes—“He dwells with you.” Where do you dwell, O true Believer? Is it in a very poor lodging?—“He dwells with you.” It may be, dear Friend, you live on board ship and are tossed upon the sea—“He dwells with you.” Perhaps you go to work in a mine far beneath the surface of the earth—“He dwells with you.” Many choice saints are bed-ridden but the Spirit dwells with them. I commend to all of you who love the Lord these gracious words—“He dwells with you.” The first disciples said to the Lord Jesus, “Master, where do you dwell?” He answered, “Come and see.” So I bid you note where the Divine Spirit chooses to dwell—behold and wonder—He dwells with His people wherever they are! He does not leave them alone but He abides with them as a shepherd with his flock.

Well may we know Him for He takes up His abode with us. And He does this, not as a latent, inoperative influence but He works in the place where He dwells. He makes our members instruments of His working and sanctifies the faculties of our nature as vessels of a temple wherein He dwells. He perfumes every chamber of the house of manhood and consecrates every corner of our being. O Believer, “He dwells with you” in all the might of His Godhead and you are made strong in the inner man by His strengthening! Fall back upon the Holy Spirit in the moment of your weakness.

Alas, my Brethren, are there any moments when we are not weak? Fall back, therefore, upon the Holy Spirit at all times. Even in the prayer in which you seek strength, ask that the Spirit may help your infirmities. Even for the faith which brings you all Divine Grace ask for the Spirit of God to work faith in you. “He dwells with you,” for you are unable to live without His constant presence and you need not attempt the perilous experiment.

The second sentence runs, “He shall be in you.” This is a greater marvel. “Know you not that your bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit?” Take care of them, never defile them. Let not the idea of drunkenness, gluttony, or lust come near you. For it is written, “If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy.” With what reverence should we look upon the body now that it has been redeemed by the Lord Jesus and is indwelt by the Holy Spirit! The Spirit also dwells within your minds. We possess Him and He possesses us. “He shall be in you,” as a king in his palace, or a soul in its body. I am afraid that many professors know nothing about this. I must be talking nonsense in the esteem of some of you—if it seems nonsense, let that fact condemn you. You cannot be right before God unless the Spirit of God is in you, in your mind, your heart, your desires, your fears, your hopes, your inmost life.

The Spirit must permeate your entire being, filling it full with His floods, even as the waters cover the channels of the deep. “He shall be in you.” It is a wonderful fact. The Spirit shall be in you as the source of your life and the force of your life. What cannot a man do when the Holy Spirit is in him? His weakest endeavor will prosper when the Holy Spirit is pouring His life into him. For he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water that brings forth his fruit in his season. His leaf also shall not wither. And whatsoever he does, shall prosper. But without the Holy Spirit, what barren and withered trees we are! May we never know the awful drought which comes of the absence of the Spirit!

Brethren, when our Lord Jesus Christ came upon the earth and was beheld as God in human flesh, that was to us the pledge of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in us—for as God dwelt in the human Person of the Lord Jesus Christ—even so does the Spirit abide in our humanity. Our Lord’s life on earth was the picture of the Spirit’s indwelling. As He was anointed of the Spirit, even so are we in our measure. “He went about doing good.” He lived consecrated to God, loving the sons of men. And thus will the Spirit of God within us cause us to live—we shall imitate the Christ of God through the Spirit of God.

The death of Christ was the way by which the Spirit was enabled to come to sinful men. By His great sacrifice the stone is rolled away which once blocked the road—

*“It is through the purchase of His death,  
Who hung upon the tree,  
The Spirit is sent down to breathe  
On such dry bones as we.”*

When our Lord rose from the dead, we had the guarantee that even so the Spirit of God would quicken our mortal bodies and renew us into newness of life. But it was when our Lord ascended up on high, leading captivity captive that the Holy Spirit was actually given. When our Redeemer returned to His Father’s Throne, He scattered the largess of Heaven—He gave the Holy Spirit to men of various offices and to His whole Church. Then were the days of refreshing by Divine visitation. Your ascended Lord gives you this token of His love—the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in you—prize it above all things. Do you know it? It seems like an impertinence for me to put this question to some of you who are gray-headed, and yet there is need. I trust you knew the Holy Spirit before I was born. But yet I cannot help pressing the enquiry, for you may not know Him even now.

I have urged the question upon myself and therefore I urge it upon you. Does the Spirit of Truth dwell in you? If not, what will you do?

IV. I come to a conclusion with one more observation. BELIEVERS SHALL HAVE A CONTINUANCE AND AN INCREASE FOR THE SPIRIT’S INTIMACY. “He dwells with you and shall be in you.”

Mark well the increase. Is it not a blessed step from “with” to “in”? “He dwells *with* you”—that is, a Friend in the same house. “And shall be *in* you,” that is, a Spirit within yourself. This is nearer, dearer, more mysterious and more effective by far. The bread yonder is “with” me. I eat it and now it is “in” me. It could not nourish me until it advanced from “with” to “in.” What a distinct advance it is for the child of God when he rises from the Spirit of God being *with* him to the Spirit of God being *in* him! When the Spirit of God helped the Apostles to work miracles, He was with them. But when they came to feel His spiritual work in their own souls and to rejoice in the comfort which He brought to them, then He was in them. Even if you could obtain miraculous gifts, you ought not to be satisfied to speak with tongues, nor to work miracles. But you should press on to know the Spirit *with* yourself—indwelling, communing, quickening you.

“He shall be in you.” Notice that in consequence of this, we know Him. If a person dwells with us, we begin to know him. But if he dwells within us and has become intertwined with our being, then we know him, indeed. “He shall be in you” is a high degree of intimacy. As we have noticed the increase, so remark the continuance—“He shall be in you.” There is no period in which the Holy Spirit will have finished His work so as to go away and leave the Believer to himself. Our Savior says of the Comforter, that He “shall abide with you forever.” Grieve not the Spirit of God, I pray you—quench Him not, resist Him not—but carefully cherish in your hearts this Divine word, “He shall be in you.” What comfort is here!

You dread the days of age and infirmity, but “He shall be in you.” You tremble before that trial which threatens you, but “He shall be in you.” You do not know how you will answer the gainsayer—take no thought what you shall speak—it shall be given you in the same hour what you shall speak, for He shall be in you. And when the last moment approaches, when you must breathe out your soul to God—the living Spirit who dwells with you, even as the nurse sits at your bedside—shall then be in you and by His living power within shall transform death into the gate of endless life. “He dwells with you and shall be in you.” O child of God, your Comforter will not leave you! He will continue still to take up His residence within you until you shall be taken up to dwell where Jesus is forever and ever.

This is our great reliance for the future upholding of the Church as a whole and of each individual Believer—the Spirit of God dwells with us and shall be in us. The Church of God will never be destroyed. The gates of Hell shall not prevail against her. For the Holy Spirit dwells *with* us and shall be *in* us to the end of the world. This is the reliance of the child of God personally for his perseverance in Divine Grace. He knows that Jesus lives and therefore he shall live. And the Holy Spirit is within him, as the life of Christ, which can never die. The Believer pushes on despite a thousand obstacles, knowing that God gives him the victory through the Lord Jesus Christ—out of whose hand none can pluck him.

I have done. And yet I have done nothing unless the Spirit of God shall bless the word spoken. Oh, that some of you who have never known the Spirit of God may feel His power coming upon you at this moment! You may be sitting in the pew very careless, even now, and yet before you leave He may descend and soften your hard heart. The other day the ground was hard as iron and the water was turned to ice. But there came a breath from the south and soon a thaw set in, the snow vanished and the ice was gone—even so the Holy Spirit breathes on us and our inward frost disappears at once.

Come, Holy Spirit. Come even now. Let us implore His Presence and power. Pray for a closer, clearer knowledge of Him, O Children of God! Pray that sinners may be met with by His Grace. The first token of the Spirit's work will be that they will begin to feel their sin and cry for mercy—and when that is done, the glad tidings of pardon are for them. To them we say, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved and your house.” The Lord make the word effectual, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

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