

Indwelling of the Holy Spirit

By Julius Hovan

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To speak about the subject of the Holy Spirit is a very sobering and serious experience, as you well know. I was sitting in a restaurant having supper one evening and this man came over to me and he said, "I understand you're a preacher." I said, "Well, yes I am." He said, "I have some trouble about my hearing and I'm wondering if you would pray with me." I thought boy, here is my chance. I'm going to perform a miracle. This man has got a hearing problem and I'm going to pray with him and he's gonna get healed, and word is gonna get out what a great preacher I am. So I invited him to sit down and I put my hands on both sides of his head on his ears and in all of my theological jargon and preacher voice, I prayed for him. When I said amen, I said, "Well, how about your hearing?" He said, "I don't know, it's not until Tuesday!"

This is year number 70. Seventy years ago, north of Jacksonville, Florida in a little country community on a chicken farm there was a 10-year-old bare-footed, towheaded boy who was part of a family of 10 children born to a couple from the country of Czechoslovakia. Today that little boy is speaking here. If you want to know about the grace of God, take a look. I need not tell you about a non-Christian home and a father who left home and all of those things that happen. I would tell you someone came and took us to church, like you young people have come. Someone prayed for me and someone loved me, and the Lord saved me and has called me into ministry.

This is a serious subject that we address this evening. I would ask us a few questions in the beginning this evening. Is it because we have not listened to and followed the leading of the Holy Spirit that we are closing too many church doors instead of filling the many empty pews? Has it been that in the churches, our preachers included, and elders and deacons have said, "I'll do it my way," or "we've always done it this way, we've been doing it for 100 years? We don't really care what the Spirit says or where He is trying to lead us, just let us alone and do our thing." Someone said the 'status quo' is Greek for the mess we're in. The Holy Spirit is the solution to that.

How acquainted are you with what the scripture says about this being called the Holy Spirit and His indwelling of the believer? I started going to church when I was probably the age of some of these youngsters right here and went rather regularly, thanks to the neighbors that took us. But, I don't remember hearing a great deal about the Holy Spirit. And then I went away to Bible college, and spent two years and I guess I heard a little bit about it, but then I entered the Bible study part of that and in Systematic Theology, we studied Pneumatology. Pneuma – spirit, Pneumatology - the study of the Holy Spirit. And here is this book about yay-thick about the Holy Spirit and I began to learn things that I had never imagined about this being, the Holy Spirit.

I find it interesting that we are introduced to Him in the second verse of Holy Scripture, Genesis 1:2, for it was that Spirit that brooded over the waters and helped in the creation of the world. So, what is the indwelling of the Spirit. I believe we can say it is a relationship that we as people have with God. Someone said this, "This mysterious third person of the Godhead, the Trinity, these three whom God acts to reveal His will, to empower individuals and He discloses His presence in God's people."

We have heard three lessons already this morning, those who were present, on the subject of the Spirit and the gifts of the Spirit, and those types of things, much of what I might need to say has been covered by those brethren. The well-known evangelist, Jonathan Edwards says, "The saints have their spiritual excellency and breathedness by the gift of the Holy Ghost, or Spirit of God, and his dwelling in them. He acting in, acting upon and with the soul becomes a fount of truth, holiness and joy." The indwelling Spirit speaks to the saved. He was and is the catalyst that brought the lost to salvation to begin with. And thankfully He sticks around to help us be the people that God would have us to be. George Whitfield put it this way, "Walking with God implies a settled abiding, a communication and fellowship with God are what in scripture is the Holy Ghost dwelling in us. Only this presence can help us make God's will our will. Our constant dependence on His power and His promise, the

dedication of all to His glory.”

Thus, the indwelling is his presence within and there is a spiritual union with us human beings by this Spirit being. We will see in this lesson this evening how His presence is one of the most personal and intimate and powerful ways for us to manifest God-likeness. At our conversion, would you think about it, at our conversion we became worthy vessels for the presence of God in us, how unworthy we were. Divinity placed in jars of clay, and as the Corinthian letter says, our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. The Apostle Paul in the eighth chapter of his great epistle that we have referred to so much this week already, in chapter eight says this in verses 9, 10, and 11, “but you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit if so be that the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if any man does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His and if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life, because of righteousness”. He is telling us we have spiritual life now and a physical future resurrection by the glory and power of God. Through the filling and indwelling, the believer is empowered to perform the works that God approves and assigns him to do. We are able to war rightly instead of just singing about the great victory that we just sang about it, we're able to have that victory.

We approach God with a genuine submission and obedience. It is in this intimate relationship that the spirit grants us insight into God's personal revelation of himself. In the Corinthian letter, Paul says in the second chapter, so we can know the things of God which then natural man cannot know. You will never understand spiritual truth unless it is the Holy Spirit that reveals it to you. Well, you can know some facts, you can quote some scripture, you can know who Noah was and know about the ark, but the spiritual truth that comes from that, you will never gain without the leading and teaching of the Spirit of God. It is he who provides the illumination and understanding. Robert William Dale put it this way, “Intelligent power, learning, and eloquence are worthless when we have done our utmost, everything will be in vain apart from the power of God, especially regarding saving the lost.”

How about your baptistry water? I can tell you about a church and one of their main problems was the stuff that accumulates on the top of the water called algae. Why? They never had a baptism in months and months and months. When did your church have the last one? When was the last soul saved from your ministry, either personally or in your church. The Holy Spirit can help take the slack up there.

And so the indwelling of the Spirit, if we need this Spirit, we turn to the promise of the Spirit promised by Jesus in John 14, 15, and 16, and also in a Luke chapter 24. Promised, as you well know, by the apostles in Acts 2:38, for when we repent and turn to Jesus in faith and are baptized into Christ, we receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. I don't believe there needs to be a repetition of Pentecost. Pentecost has occurred, the Spirit has come, but then on each individual there is the incoming and indwelling of the Spirit.

We refer to the book of Acts as the acts of the apostles. Someone else has suggested, and I think in a good idea, it can be rightly called the acts of the Holy Spirit for it is He who worked through those men and women of the first century. Just something to whet your appetite and you can get your concordance and look it up.

Let me point out to you just very briefly regarding the names of this Spirit that will help us know something about Him. The Holy Spirit, he is a spirit, Holy Spirit, so he is a spirit being. He is holy because indeed, He is holy to the measure of infinity beyond our comprehension. He is called the Spirit of God because he belongs to the Godhead. He is called the Spirit of Christ because he has been sent into the world to bring Glory to Christ. There are 60 names and titles revealing his relationship to the other persons of the Trinity. You look them up and read about them, I don't have time to give them to you. Eleven of those relate Him to God and five of them to Jesus, the Son. An interesting study if you would like to undertake it: The promise of the Spirit, the names of the Spirit, the indwelling of the Spirit. I say to you this evening on the authority of the word of God, it is an absolute necessity. If we have not the Spirit, Paul tells us, we are none of His. That is pretty plain to this old country boy.

It is not a second work of grace that some folks talk about, but it is that coming of the Spirit to indwell us. He is the believers all sufficient resource of power and guidance. The success of this relationship then, this Spirit that I have and that you have as believing Christians, depends on, listen carefully, adjusting my will to the will of the Spirit. I have to learn to get self out of the way for the

Spirit to operate in me. It is part of a process of maturing. What a struggle these precious young teenagers down here are going to go through in life. Kiddos it's going to be tough! The devil wants you more than anything else in the world and he's coming after you. If you will come to Christ and you will begin the maturing process, then you can become a mature leader in the church of the Lord Jesus. It is the maturing process all of us are going through. I cannot get any more of the Spirit, he's not divided up in ounces or quarts or pints. He is not that type of thing. He is a being and I cannot get more of him, but he can get more of me as I do, like Paul, die daily to my flesh nature.

I suggest to you there are two things that assert this indwelling Spirit. The first one is the very fact of Revelation. We have read a little bit about it, let me read one other passage from the gospel of John, chapter seven, beginning with verse 37. "Now on the last day the great day of the Jesus stood and cried saying, 'If any man thirst, let him come to me and drink. He that believes on me as the scripture has said, from within him shall flow rivers of living water.'" Now listen to the next verse. "But this spake he of the Spirit which they that believed on him were to receive." Here is the Spirit likened to a spring of fresh living water. If you've ever worked in the field, if you have ever cut a long tobacco row, if you've ever had to hoe, if you've ever had to harvest corn or anything else, and you get to the end and the sweat is pouring off of you, and you are just worn out and you get that cold drink of water, you get an idea of what Jesus is talking about here.

In John 14, Jesus refers to that spirit of truth that abides with us and shall be in us. Acts 5:32 says this spirit is given to those who obey God. This is not for everybody. The man of the world does not get the Spirit, probably doesn't want the Spirit, but the child of God does and it is given to him. Revelation asserts and demands the end indwelling of the Spirit.

But I suggest to you secondly that so does reason. It is reasonable to assume if we who are weak, sinful human beings are to live a supernatural victorious life, we need supernatural power and God has provided it. Every believer demands this indwelling for spiritual success. Listen, the resident spirit needs to become the president spirit. Do you understand what that means? He is there, but am I letting him rule in my life as we expect a ruler to do for us. Has he been in your life evidenced, elders, preachers. Can you speak of His evidence, can you specifically name His working in your life and in your church. Would we not be ashamed before God to say Lord I can't tell you much about the working of the spirit. And so reason and revelation both assert this indwelling spirit.

There's a Greek called pleroma and it is a word that is translated fullness, the fullness of the Spirit. The word is an interesting word because it refers in essence to Greek warship. This Greek warship has three tiers of the rowers on it and it has a boatswain that tells the men at what speed to row. It is that complete package of those men aboard that ship, the Greeks say they are the pleroma. They are the complete package that makes that ship do what that ship ought to do. And so it is this Spirit that is the fullness, the complete package for us. It is essential because Jesus commanded it that you wait until the Spirit comes. That's why Pentecost was successful. They waited and the Spirit came.

I suggest to you church work demands it. We cannot be successful against the onslaught of evil that is ravaging in this nation and world today without the power of the Spirit to make it work. The early church proves it. It was the Spirit that allowed them to take the gospel to the then known world and they were referred to as the people that turned the world upside down. I imagine what most of us have turned lately was our cup of coffee or tea, I don't know, but we are not turning the world, or our communities upside down. Evil is rampant and it is essential that this Spirit helps us face this dilemma.

The Spirit recognized in the New Testament who was to be called as a leader. A missionary like Paul and Silas, or elders and deacons, or whomever it might be, it was the Spirit that worked and pointed them out and called them into ministry. He utilized and empowered those workers as they preached the Word, as they witnessed the Gospel, as they gained victory, as they granted the harvest of souls that came through the power of the Spirit. Go back to that gospel of John, if you will, in chapter ten and there in verses nine and ten we find these words of the Lord Jesus as an encouragement to us, "I am the door. By me, if any man enters in, he'll be saved. He will go in and out and he will find pasture. The thief comes not but that he may steal and kill and destroy. I came that they might have life and have it abundantly.

Preachers, let me give you a sermon outline for Sunday morning, it is there in verse nine. I love these kinds of things that come out of the scriptures. Three simple points, we come to Jesus and what is the first thing that happens to us? We have salvation. Then what does he say? He says we go in and we go out. That sounds like business to me. That sounds like I'm going to be in service for the Lord. And then He says we find satisfaction. The pasture that a sheep needs and so for the Christian, the satisfaction that we need. That tenth verse points out to us how appealing it is for this Holy Spirit to work in the life of a believer and this life is overseen by the Good Shepherd. It is an abounding overflow, that spring of water Jesus talked about, appealing and abounding, and abiding to offer eternal life through us to others.

What is the result then and the evidence of this fullness? G. Campbell Morgan said, and I quote, "When we, by faith, consent to the will and the Word of God, what's going to happen? There is a cleansing of my nature, remember we have an evil nature, there is a cleansing of my nature by the Holy Spirit and the correction and consecration of my personality to Him, the type of person I am, my character (now there are some characters and then there's character, we all have character and we want to have the right character) and let the Holy Spirit consecrate that personality that we have. Then His spirit will possess it, He will illuminate it, He will empower it, He will fill it with a new and tender the emotion.

There's a scary word. We got into that just a little bit in one of the messages this morning as those men talked about the Spirit. Where is our emotion today? Our compassion today? We're scared to death if somebody praises God. We can go to a ballgame and make an absolute fool of ourselves. I do it all the time, I'm afraid to say. Of course, it is not hard for some of us to make fools of ourselves, Brother Clark, but we don't think anything about a person getting excited about a ballgame. But getting excited about salvation, and saving the lost, and church, and Jesus, and the Word of God, where is our emotion? Christians are safely under the blood. We were made strong by the bread of the word, but we still need the Holy Spirit's power to fulfill the will of God in our lives.

That brings us then to the guidance of the Spirit. We are commanded to walk in the light. He becomes our spiritual, what did somebody say this morning, Brother Graham, he got his cell phone out and he said this is my UPS. He meant to say GPS. The Holy Spirit becomes our GPS. He guides us and directs us. Someone said this, "It is easy to see that planes approaching the airport follow the same pattern. They actually cruise an invisible path as real as a superhighway. Talk to Captain Sanders back there, he can tell you. Instruments tell the pilot exactly where the aircraft is in relation to the center line.

Every Christian has a built-in guidance system, the Holy Spirit of God and a map to show the way, the word of God as well as, and don't sell this one short, sanctified human judgment. Human judgment that is under the direction of the Spirit. Similarly, God guides people by the freedom of the Spirit, heaven's radar. The faithfulness of the Spirit, the flight map that we have and the fellowship of the saints, the consensus of sanctified judgment when we get together and learn the will of God. We bring all of this in the right decision to the plan of God. The guidance of the Spirit. He has freedom in our lives to direct and to lead us. Think of Philip in Acts chapter eight and that successful revival and he is called by the Spirit from there to go out in the desert and preach the gospel to one man. He followed the guidance successfully. That Spirit is free to direct and lead and that Spirit that guides us is always faithful to scripture. He guides us into all the truth, never in contradiction to the word of God. He leads us and guides us into the fellowship of the saints.

Oh my goodness, don't you think God smiled a while ago when we raised all our voices together in praise to God and He heard us rejoice together. The fellowship of the Spirit. Remember the subject in Acts 15:28 when it said, "It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us." Who is us? It is us. It's you and your church. It is you elder, it is you preacher, it is you deacon, it is you member, it is you young people, it is you older folks. We are the "us." We need to get together.

Where are we gonna go from this week's meeting here. What's gonna happen if we don't get a committee together that can plan next year's meeting? Are you interested in that, would you see Brother Ron. What about us from here in going and meeting together for the kingdom of God.

And so the guidance of the Spirit and along with that the control of the Spirit. In that chapter 16 in

the book of Acts, the Apostle Paul is on a missionary journey and verses six and seven tells us they were prevented from going to Asia. There is the restraint of the Spirit, keeps us from doing what we ought not do.

Then there is the constraint of the Spirit for in Acts 10, the Spirit says you go into Macedonia. How did they know which to not do and which to do. We husbands and wives can relate to that. We look at each other and we know what we're thinking, we can finish each others sentences. Why? Because we have grown together in love and when you do that with the Spirit, He can do you the same way.

Someone wrote often divine restraint has changed the course of God's servants. We are told that Livingston planned to go into China, but God sent him instead to Africa to be its missionary general statesman and explorer. Prior to that Carey had purpose to go to the south sea islands and Polynesia, but God changed his course, guiding him to India where he laid the foundations for giving a vernacular Bible to one-sixth of the world. Judges on did go to India, but was later driven to Burma where he built up an apostolic church for the ages. The guidance, the control of the Holy Spirit and for that to happen I must be willing to be obedient to that leading that He gives. Remember Stephen in Acts chapter six, what does it say? Stephen, full of faith, that's when he rested completely Brother Mike, and put his whole weight on the Lord Jesus. Full of faith and what else? The Holy Spirit that caused him to take the step even to martyrdom full of the Holy Spirit. Evan Hopkins said God seldom guides a soul from afar. If you are not close to God, you are not going to hear His guidance. There's an African proverb, truly to hear, you must be near.

Are we drawing closer to God. The guidance of the Spirit, the control of the Spirit, the conditions that are demanded for that guidance. Then that comforter Jesus referred to in John 14. He tells us that He will reside and abide. He will be with you, this Spirit of truth. In the 26th verse he tells us He will reveal to you, He will teach you what you need to know. Residing, revealing, and reminding. He will bring to your remembrance the things that we too oftentimes forget. And then you remember the serious word about the coming of the Spirit that will reprove the world and will cause that world to come to a place of repentance. The starting place for one is to be filled as we come to the Spirit in conviction. I love this sentence, listen to it, He convicts the world of it's curse which is sin and of its cure, which is righteousness, and of its condemnation which is judgment. For if we do not get the salvation, we are only facing the judgment of God. Only the Holy Spirit can accomplish that. He has a hand in revealing sin, in reproving sin and removing sin. Do you by now have the idea we are talking about something awfully important in the life of a church and a Christian? I hope you do. We must bring things to their conclusion, but before we do, the Spirit is referred to as a comforter. So he resides, and reveals, and reminds, and reproves, and he refreshes us. Preachers get discouraged, not much happening, things get hard and we need refreshing and God knows how to take care of that. The scripture says in Acts chapter nine and verse 31, "So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee, and Samaria had peace being edified." He is God, He is Yahweh, He is Adonai, He is Elohim. An attempt to tell us of His greatness in all of those names. We could just glibly talk about God or our buddy Jesus. They had the fear of the Lord and the comfort of the Holy Spirit was multiplied. This exhorted comes and works in the life of the church and the life of believers.

The concluding point regarding this working of the Spirit has to do with intercession. I feel it is important and prayer plays such an important part in all of our successes for the Lord. Paul, in Romans eight proves to us that prayer is vital to our success and to consolation and to bringing people together and to save those that are lost. I herd of speaker say just recently that when we go to pray what happens is if we're really on the right frequency, God sends down to us the request we are ought to make. I had never thought about that before, that God tells us what we ought to pray for.

Brother Alex Wilson used to say we can get so close to God that we always are going to pray the thing God wants. I'm not there yet, but that's interesting to think about. But prayer, Romans 8:26, is inspired by the Spirit and it is informed by the Spirit, for we are told He takes my request and He adjusts it when I don't ask the right thing, He adjusts it and takes it to the throne of heaven.

There is a two-word phrase in the Greek, kata Theon, 'according to the will of God'. Plummer defines that this way: According to God, after a godly sort, in God's way as opposed to man's way and the devil's way. Not in mine, but in the way of God. Horace Bushnell said how grand a fact is it and

how full of hope that the Spirit of God has presence in us so pervasively. Being at the very spring point of all of our most hidden movements, even back of all we can reach by our own consciousness and there, by His subtle most silent, really influential power He works. Configuring the desires before they are born into consciousness to the reigning order and will of God. Oh, if I would let the Spirit adjust my desires to the will of God, what a difference my praying would make.

We have only, I hope, whetted the appetite of you as a believer about the presence and power and work of the Holy Spirit. For when He comes to indwell us, there is a new melody that we sing in our day to day life. There is a new harmony that comes into our churches and into our homes and into our communities and, yay, into our nation. There is a new liberty to be the people that God would have us to be. E. Stanley Jones said, "God asked me, 'Will you give me your all?' Yes, Lord, of course I will. I will give you my all, all I know and all I don't know. God said, 'Then take my all, take the Holy Spirit, my all for his all.' My all was myself, His all was Himself, the Holy Spirit." I don't think it is a coincidence that the words we use, *dunamis* and those words, relate to great power.

I want to close by just very quickly running down 17 things that are the results of the filling of the Spirit. And I want you to tell me, from your own mind as you think about it, which of these are you seeing in your church.

1. We have a fuller knowledge of God, we are able to call Him Abba Father in the intimacy that comes.
2. There's a new reality and power in prayer when the Holy Spirit is working.
3. There's a greater and new and better understanding of the word of God.
4. There is a recognition of all the family of God, even those that are of a different stripe than I am, if they are born in the Spirit of God as I have been.
5. There is a divine compassion for the lost like Jesus who looked at the people and said that they are scattered like sheep without a shepherd. They are everywhere we look. Where is our compassion?
6. We become fearless to speak boldly.
7. We are joyful in our service and in our fellowship. We don't grumble because we have to do it.
8. There's an evidence of holiness in our lives.
9. There is a spirit of sacrifice that we're willing to go out of our way. We're willing to turn off the TV and go to church when we ought to be there. We are willing to go make that call, make that visit, give that extra dollar or whatever it might be.
10. We are ready to serve.
11. There is a steadfastness.
12. There is a willingness if necessary to suffer as many in the world are doing today for the name of Jesus Christ.
13. There will be in our lives a glorifying of Christ himself.
14. There will be a God-likeness.
15. There is an assurance and a hope.
16. We are bearing fruit.
17. We are comforted in our suffering.

May we pray and desire and seek by faith and obedience the filling and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

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