

Walk in Holy Spirit (1)

Douglas W. Cho, D.R.S.

[Galatians 5: 25] If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

1. Holy Spirit: His Identity and Works

Holy Spirit, sometimes referred to as the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Jesus Christ, or the Spirit, is one of the three persons of the Triune God. Bible tells us that Holy Spirit proceeds from God the Father and God the Son. He performs the will and plan of God the Father here on earth. Some theologians compare the role of Holy Spirit as that of a mother in a family.

The Spirit of God took part in the creation work of the universe, led the people of Israel out of Egypt, and performed the enduring work of transforming the stiff-necked people of Israel into a people of God. Unfortunately, however, Israelites often refused the instructions and guidance of Holy Spirit and were disobedient to Him. Stephen, the first martyr of the New Testament church, criticized the history of Israel's disobedience to Holy Spirit as follows and was stoned to death by the Jewish religious leaders and their followers:

[Acts 7: 51-53] You stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears! You always resist Holy Spirit; as your fathers did, so do you. Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who foretold the coming of the Just One, of whom you now have become the betrayers and murderers, who have received the law by the direction of angels and have not kept it.

God delivered the people of Israel from the bondage of slavery in Egypt, led them through the Red Sea (Strait of Aqaba), into the Mt. Sinai area in present-day Saudi Arabia, where He ordered the seventy elders to gather around the tabernacle of God. Then, the Spirit of God, who was with Moses, descended on the seventy elders, whereupon the elders began to speak the words from God individually. However, afterward, the Spirit of God was no longer with them because of their stiff-necked attitude of disobedience, as pointed out by Stephen. Holy Spirit, however, remained with Moses, Joshua, Caleb, and a few other obedient elders.

[Numbers 11:25] Then the Lord came down in the cloud, and spoke to him, and took of the Spirit that was upon him, and placed the same upon the seventy elders, and it happened, when the Spirit rested upon them, that they prophesied, although they never did so again.

However, Moses expressed God's desire that Holy Spirit be present with all of Israel, not just a handful so that they all could understand the heart of God and speak His words. Despite such a generous desire of God of wanting to share His Spirit with them, the people refused to accept or follow the leadings of Holy Spirit. Today, we sometimes wonder why there were only a few people who had the Spirit of God during the Old Testament era. It is not because God refused to share His Spirit with them but because they refused to accept the presence of God's Spirit in their hearts and lives.

[Numbers 11:29] Then Moses said to him, "Are you zealous for my sake? Oh, that all the Lord's people were prophets and that the Lord would put His Spirit upon them!"

Accordingly, God ordained that the people of Israel, who are descendants of Abraham, live within the bounds of the Mosaic law so that they might come to know their Savior, to whom the law was pointing. And He granted the presence of His Spirit on whosoever had an obedient spirit.

2. The Cases of Saul and David

In King Saul and King David, we have two very opposite examples of persons regarding the privilege of having the Spirit of God in each. Saul, despite this privilege granted to him by God, did not properly value it and was disobedient to the control and guidance of the Spirit. On the other hand, David valued this privilege more than

anything. When the prophet Samuel anointed Saul as the king of Israel, the Spirit of God came upon him and God's presence and help were promised to him. God wanted to work with him and had a great expectation of his role as the king of His people.

[1 Samuel 10:6-7] Then the Spirit of the Lord will come upon you, and you will prophesy with them and be turned into another man. And let it be, when these signs come to you, that you do as the occasion demands; for God is with you.

But Saul did not obey Holy Spirit who resided in him, ignored the instructions of the prophet Samuel, and put his own will and priorities above God's, thus showing wrong examples before the people and the military as their king, on several occasions. God gave Saul numerous opportunities to make things right, but Saul never learned obedience. Eventually, Holy Spirit left Saul and God sent a bad spirit to him, which tormented him. When a child of God has been professing as a Christian and experienced the Spirit's presence and guidance in his/her heart and life, and then his/her attitude toward God becomes so bad that the Spirit of God can no longer dwell in this person's heart and life, it is a very sad situation indeed. But such situations have happened and are happening even now. We need to be careful of our attitude toward God if we desire to retain His presence with us.

[1 Samuel 16:14] But the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and a distressing spirit from the Lord troubled him.

On the other hand, David learned from the failures of Saul. When Saul was tormented by the bad spirit in him, young David played music to soothe Saul's spirit. But Saul threw a javelin to kill David. In his uncontrolled jealousy toward David, Saul searched all over the land of Judah to kill him. Thus, David learned very well what happens to a child of God when the Spirit of God leaves him and an evil spirit takes a grip on him, even one who has been anointed by a prophet to be a king over God's people. Later, when David sinned against God because of his affair involving Bethsheba and he was criticized by the prophet Nathan, David repented and pleaded to God that He would not remove His Spirit from him. Taking the Spirit's presence away from him was the worst punishment that David feared the most.

[Psalm 51:10-11] Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me away from Your presence, And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.

God looked down on David in true repentance and restored his spirit through Holy Spirit. What a merciful, kind God!

3. God's Greatest Gift: the Presence of Holy Spirit

God of heaven and earth dwells in the highest heaven. At the same time, He wants to dwell within the hearts of the men and women who have humble and repentant spirits, as proclaimed below. How marvelous is God, the Creator of all universe, wants to live in us if we are contrite and humble in spirit. That is the only requirement for having the presence of Holy Spirit.

[Isaiah 57:15] For thus says the High and Lofty One Who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: "I dwell in the high and holy place, With him who has a contrite and humble spirit, To revive the spirit of the humble, And to revive the heart of the contrite ones.

According to this desire, God wanted to grant the gift of His Spirit not only to Moses and David but to all of His people. And He proclaimed through His prophets that such a marvelous gift of Holy Spirit would be granted to all true believers in the coming era.

[Ezekiel 36:27] I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them.

[Joel 2: 28] And it shall come to pass afterward That I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your old men shall dream dreams, Your young men shall see visions.

This prophecy was fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost, soon after Jesus ascended to heaven after His resurrection. Holy Spirit descended from heaven like a whirlwind onto the Christians who were gathered together

in Jerusalem in expectancy. This gift of Holy Spirit was also given to all people who accepted the gospel of Jesus Christ thereafter. This marvelous miracle is still happening as people accept Jesus Christ as their Savior in repentance and humility, although you may not see a whirlwind.

[Acts 2:1-4] When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all [a]with one accord in one place. 2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. 4 And they were all filled with Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Whereas Adam and Eve were driven out of the Garden of Eden because of their sin, God has provided a way for repenting souls to enjoy the presence of His Spirit and the rich blessings of God while journeying in this world. When the Spirit of God comes into our hearts and lives, His presence brings the comfort, counsel, guidance, and protection of God to us. Many people, who do not know God, sometimes feel that they are all alone, with no one to help them, no one to comfort or to strengthen them in times of dire difficulties. For that reason, people commit suicide. However, the Bible tells us that God is willing to grant His Spirit's presence to whoever comes to him in contrite and humble spirits. That is, God will come into a soul to comfort, to teach, to guide, and to walk with such a person through life's journey. What a great, wonderful God is our Creator!

Proverbs chapter 3 teaches us about wisdom and understanding. Here, I suggest that we substitute 'wisdom and understanding' with 'the presence of Holy Spirit,' to fully comprehend the value of God's gift and blessings that come to us through the presence of His Spirit in us:

[Proverbs 3: 13-20] Blessed are those who find wisdom, those who gain understanding,

14 for she is more profitable than silver and yields better returns than gold.

15 She is more precious than rubies; nothing you desire can compare with her.

16 Long life is in her right hand; in her left hand are riches and honor.

17 Her ways are pleasant ways, and all her paths are peace.

18 She is a tree of life to those who take hold of her; those who hold her fast will be blessed.

19 By wisdom the Lord laid the earth's foundations, by understanding he set the heavens in place;

20 by his knowledge the watery depths were divided, and the clouds let drop the dew.

Children of God who live with Holy Spirit in them value the Spirit's presence in their life more valuable than silver and gold. Verse 16 states that even long life, material riches, and honor will be with them. These are extra gifts from God to His children who have the Spirit with them. However, these blessings are God's gifts and should not be our goals. They should never be the reason why we are serving God. The privilege of serving and worshiping God is far more valuable than riches, honor, or long life. Verse 17 speaks of peace and pleasantness in our ways as we walk with the Spirit of God.

Having the presence of God's Spirit within us is a 'tree of life,' just as Adam and Eve enjoyed the fruits of the tree of life in Eden. We live outside of Eden. Yet, we have this tree of life, which is mentioned only in Eden and in New Jerusalem (Revelation 22:2), by having Holy Spirit dwelling in us. Partaking of the tree of life gives us eternal life, which is promised by Jesus Christ. Thus, we can start taking part in this eternal life while we are living on earth, not after our transition into heaven. What a marvelous revelation this is!

Furthermore, verses 19 and 20 speak how God grants those living under the control of His Spirit access into His supernatural intelligence, with which He created the universe in the beginning (Genesis 1) and the unfathomable knowledge, which is in the mind of God. So, we are enjoying the fruits of the scientific truths that godly Christian men and women searched for and discovered thanks to the kind help of God's Holy Spirit.

Through this study, we have come to understand that the presence of Holy Spirit is a highly valuable gift of God given to all people who come to Him asking in a contrite and poor spirit. This gift has come true to all true Christians. We should value this gift in all sincerity, seek the guidance and help of His Spirit daily, consult and walk with Holy Spirit through all experiences we face, even through the COVID pandemic and the oppressive policies that constrict us by ungodly powers-in-being. May the Spirit's presence dwell richly in you and bless you each day!

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