

# THE RESTORER

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## Spirit Given to Us

We are hearing more and more of people claiming that the Holy Spirit dwells in them personally and literally. Some think that he literally moves them and empowers them to perform miracles. Some think that he cannot do this, but that in some indescribable manner he literally dwells in them and does something spiritually for them. When brethren talk about this latter idea they use almost identical mystical phraseology with that of the man who supposes that the Lord saves him directly by giving him an indescribable feeling. It is no wonder that the phraseology is similar, for neither are taught in the Bible.

To the Romans Paul said; "because the love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit which was given unto us." (Rom. 5:5). There are many other passages which declare that the Holy Spirit is given to us and that he dwells in Christians; but not one of them remotely hints that this is a literal personal contact and indwelling. Perhaps it could have been said of the people who were inspired to reveal the word and confirmed the word with the miraculous signs (Mk. 16:17-20; Heb. 2:3, 4; 1 Cor. 13:8,9). But that work is completed. What passage teaches that the Christian today has a literal, personal indwelling of the Holy Spirit for any purpose?

Actually, their argument is the same as that of the "faith only" people. The passages which mention faith but do not mention any other specific conditions of salvation or justification are made to mean "by faith only." These "personal indwelling" people take the

passages which say the Holy Spirit is given to us and dwells in us, but which do not say anything about the nature of the indwelling, and confidently affirm that it is a personal literal indwelling.

All three of the Godhead are said to dwell in Christians. Sometimes the passages do not describe the nature of the indwelling of Jesus Christ. Are we to take those passages and argue that he personally and literally dwells in us? Of course not, especially if the Bible tells us how he dwells in us. Paul spoke of revealing what was once a mystery "which is Christ in you." (Col. 1:27). How does he dwell in us? "That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith." (Eph. 3:17).

In this same letter we are said to be a habitation of God (Eph. 2:22); and that the Father is in all (Eph. 4:6). Men have no difficulty in perceiving that this is not a personal literal indwelling. They readily see that this is the same type of relationship as is sustained with Christ.

The same context speaks of the "Spirit in the inward man." (Eph. 3:16). It is here that men fly off into fantasy. They will not accept the same relationship as is sustained with Christ and God. They should be able to see that it is a faith relationship of God's purpose in the gospel (Eph. 3:6,11); of Christ's authoritative reconciliation in the gospel (Eph. 2:16; 3:11); of the Spirit's revelation of the gospel for our understanding (Eph. 3:4,5). - to be continued -

— Robert C. Welch

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## Spirit and Word

The Lord says that the Spirit is given to us (Romans 5:5). We have already shown that the Holy Spirit is in the inward man (Eph. 3:16) of the children of God, and that in the context God and Christ are also said to be in us, not personally and literally, but by faith. It is not unreasonable to conclude that the Spirit dwells in the same way unless the Bible teaches otherwise. Men, even brethren, have assumed that he is in us in some other personal, literal but indescribable way; but the challenge is extended to find such teaching in the Bible.

### WITNESS

Do they think that it is in this passage? "The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God." (Romans 8:16). This is not the passage which teaches personal indwelling. It does not say how the Spirit bears witness. There is a passage which states clearly how he bears witness: "And the Holy Spirit also beareth witness to us; for after he hath said, This is the covenant that I will make with them... then saith he, And their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." (Heb. 10:15-18). This is quoted from Jeremiah 31:33, 34. The Spirit bears witness by saying through the prophets as in Eph. 3:3, 4.

### SPIRIT IS TRUTH

Plainly we are told about how the Spirit bears witness: "And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is the truth." (1 Jno. 5:6, 7). Notice it again for emphasis: "The SPIRIT IS THE TRUTH." Now, declare that it

is figurative and not literal, or whatever you will, it still says the Spirit is the truth. Notice also: "for the truth's sake which abideth in us, and it shall be with us for ever." (2 Jno. 2). He also declares that the person who denies that he sins does not have the truth in him and does not have the word in him (1 John 1:8, 10). Thus, in plain language we are told about the indwelling truth, the Spirit. We can know this, but the man is dealing in fantasy and assumption who says that the Spirit dwells in us in some other way.

### SEAL AND EARNEST

Speaking of our blessings in Christ, Paul says; "in whom, having also believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is an earnest of our inheritance." (Eph. 1:13, 14). The seal placed upon a man's writing guaranteed that it was his agreement and promise. An earnest was a pledge given to assure that the agreement would be carried out. Hence, the Spirit is the seal and earnest to the child of God that his promises will be fulfilled. But the passage does not say that it is a literal personal indwelling; that is merely an assumption. How about this inspired explanation of God's seal? "Howbeit the firm foundation of God standeth, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his: and, Let every one that nameth the name of the Lord depart from unrighteousness." (2 Tim. 2:19). There is the guarantee, the word which the Spirit has given. So, be filled with the Spirit (Eph. 5:18) or, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly." (Col. 3:16).

—Robert C. Welch

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## Indwelling Spirit

The Spirit is said to be given to children of God (Rom. 5:5). He dwells in the Christian (Eph. 3:16) in no indescribable manner. The Scriptures tell us plainly how he dwells within us. When the truth (2 John 2) abides in us this is the Spirit abiding in us, for "The Spirit is the truth" (1 John 5:6, 7).

Everything the Spirit is said to do to the Christian now, we find that the word does. Some people assume that because the Spirit is said to dwell in Christians, then this indwelling must be in some way beyond and without the word; but there is no need for such an assumption and there are no grounds for such an assumption in the Bible.

### LED BY THE SPIRIT

"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God." (Rom. 8:14). Who can deny that often men are guided or led by words or by teaching? Schools have their guidance counsellors. They do not literally take the children by the hand to lead them; it is by words, by advice, by teaching. Who would attempt to deny the fact that the Bible is given us to lead us and guide us? We are drawn to the Lord by being taught of God, by hearing and learning (John 6:44, 45). The Bible does not say that the Spirit leads the children of God in some way beyond and without the word, and there is no need for assuming such a leading. The Scriptures completely furnish the man of God (2 Timothy 3:16, 17).

### SEARCHING HEARTS

There is a passage which indicates that the Spirit searches the hearts of God's children: "And in like manner the Spirit also helpeth our infirmity: . . . and he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God." (Rom. 8:26, 27). We are assured here that the Spirit makes intercession to God for us, just as we are assured that Jesus

Christ, our high priest, makes intercession for us (Heb. 4:14-16; 5:25). They make intercession in heaven. But how does he search the heart? by literal indwelling? or as the truth or word? The word is said to be such a searcher or discernor. "For the word of God is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart." (Heb. 4:12). The word of the Lord makes known unto me what I am. That is the purpose of the completed, perfect, revelation (1 Cor. 13:10-12).

13:16-17

### SPIRIT OF ADOPTION

"But ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." (Romans 8:15). By the Spirit we are adopted children of God, hence we can call upon him as Father. But this does not even hint that this reception is literal and separate from the word. He has sent the Spirit into our hearts, whereby we make this cry (Gal. 5:6). But since the Spirit is the truth and the truth is to dwell in us, it is pure assumption to say that this is not what is meant in these passages. In fact, we are said to be children of God by a process described as new birth, or adoption. It is not literal birth (John 3:3-6). This new birth, or adoption, is of water and the Spirit (John 3:5). This process of adoption or new birth is by obedience to the truth, the word of God (1 Peter 1:22, 23) by which we become children of God and call upon him as Father. There is no personal, literal indwelling and influence here; it is the word, the truth.

Men need to get away from this idea of a mystical, personal, literal indwelling of the Spirit in the child of God. It is not taught in the Scriptures. They need to be emphasizing the importance of the truth in the hearts and lives of Christians. The words spoken by Jesus are spirit and are life (John 6:63). The Spirit is the truth (1 John 5:6, 7).

— Robert C. Welch