The Holy Spirit

The Indwelling of the Spirit – Part 1 Lesson 9

I. The Indwelling of the Holy Spirit

1. In the Old Testament “the Spirit came upon” individuals briefly for a specific work or task.
2. Exodus 31:1-3 – “... and I have filled him with the Spirit of God ... – Bezalel (for the inspired design and construction of the Tabernacle)
3. Judges 3:10 – “The Spirit of the LORD came upon him, so that he became Israel’s judge and went to war.” – Othniel
4. Judges 6:34 – “Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon Gideon, and he blew a trumpet…” – Gideon
5. Judges 15:14 – “Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon him…” - Samson
6. Psalm 51:10-12 - ... do not take your Holy Spirit from me ... – David
7. Statements and promises concerning the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the New Covenant
8. Luke 11:11-13 – “... how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him?”
9. John 7:37-39 – “... he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive.”
10. Acts 2:37-39 – “And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”
11. Acts 5:31-32 – “... the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.”
12. Romans 5:1-5 – “... God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.”
13. Romans 8:9-11 – “... if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ.”
14. 1 Corinthians 2:11-1 – “We have not received the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God ...”
15. 1Corinthians 6:18-20 – “Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God?”
16. 1 Corinthians 12:12-13 – “... and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.”
17. 2 Corinthians 1:21-22 – “... and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit ...”
18. 2 Corinthians 5:5 – “... and has given us the Spirit as a deposit ...”
19. 2 Corinthians 11:4 – “... receive a different spirit from the one you received ...”
20. Galatians 3:1-5, 11-14 – “... by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit.”
21. Galatians 4:6 – “... God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts ...”
22. Ephesians 1:13-14 – “... you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance ...”
23. Ephesians 1:14-19 – “... he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being ...”
24. Ephesians 4:30 – “... the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed ...”
25. Ephesians 5:18 – “Instead, be filled with the Spirit.”
26. 1 Thessalonians 4:8 – “... God, who gives you his Holy Spirit.”
27. 2 Thessalonians 2:13 – “... through the sanctifying work of the Spirit ...”
28. 2 Timothy 1:14 – “... guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us.”
29. Titus 3:4-6 – “... the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously ...”
30. 1 Peter 4:14 – “... for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you.”
31. 1 John 3:23-24 – “... he lives in us: we know it by the Spirit he gave us.”
32. 1 John 4:13 – “... because he has given us of his Spirit.”
33. The questions we have to ask ourselves
34. Do these texts teach that the Holy Spirit is given to dwell in the Christian?
35. Do these texts teach that the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is mediated?
36. Is there any reason these texts should not be taken to mean what they state?
37. Denial of the Direct Indwelling of the Holy Spirit (stated objections)
38. What is the basic or fundamental reasoning for denying the direct indwelling? Consider the following line of reasoning:
39. Scripture states plainly that the Holy Spirit is given to dwell in the Christian. However, in fact the Holy Spirit Himself does not indwell the Christian!
40. Furthermore, direct indwelling by the Holy Spirit is imperceptible, and the notion of direct indwelling is doctrinally dangerous and uncomfortable.
41. Therefore, texts which state that the Holy Spirit indwells the Christian do not mean that the Holy Spirit indwells the Christian.
42. And, Scripture must mean that the indwelling is mediated – that is: the Holy Spirit indwells the Christian representatively, by means of some other agency such as the Word.

Note carefully: all the following objections depend on this basic reasoning.

1. Figures of Speech

(1) Objection: Statements of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit are figures of speech.

(2) Answer: We recognize figures of speech by obvious metaphorical language, or if we know independently that the statement cannot be literally true. The language found in these texts is not obviously metaphorical, and we have no way of knowing apart from Scripture\*which is where we find statements that teach Spirit indwelling\*that the Holy Spirit cannot directly indwell a Christian.

Note: this assumption partly or fully underlies many other objections. Saying “it can’t be literal because it doesn’t mean what it says” is a tautology.

1. Impossibility of God Indwelling Any Person

(1) All the universe cannot contain God (1Kings 8:27); therefore God cannot be confined to a human body.

(2) Jesus’ body was a human body, and God dwelt within it. This objection is based on a conclusion which we cannot know to be true apart from Scripture.

1. Demanding the Magic Words
2. Scripture does say the Spirit directly and personally indwells each Christian.
3. Nor does Scripture say that the indwelling is indirect and impersonal. We get “direct and personal” by taking plain statements to mean what they say.
4. The Word
5. The Holy Spirit indwells indirectly, by the agency of the word.
6. The Spirit and the word perform identical functions.
7. Ephesians 5:18-19 and Colossians 3:15-16 show that “Spirit” equals “word.”
8. The word is sufficient.
9. Answers to the supporting assertions
10. Spirit and word do not perform identical functions (Romans 8:12-17, 26-27; 2Corinthians 1:21-22, 5:5; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:13-14, 2:18, 4:3, 30, 6:17-18; Jude 19).
11. Not all statements in Ephesians 5:18-19 and Colossians 3:15-16 are parallel.
12. The word is sufficient for revelation, but not for all purposes (Romans chapters 7-8; Ephesians 1:15-19, 3:14-19; Colossians 1:9-11; James 1:5-7).
13. Problems with the “indwelling by the word” theory
14. Spirit and word are not received at the same point (John 7:37-39; Acts 5:32; Romans 10:17).
15. The word alone produces death; only by adding the Spirit does one get life (Romans chapters 7-8). If information (revelation of God\*s nature and law) created the problem, more information cannot solve the problem.
16. This doctrine is not taught anywhere in Scripture.