

The Indwelling of the Holy Spirit

General Outline

- A. Introduction
- B. The Fact of the Spirit's Indwelling
- C. The Nature of the Spirit's Indwelling
- D. The Benefits of the Spirit's Indwelling
- E. Conclusions on Indwelling

1. Introduction

- a. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit is not well understood, because it is subjective. The promise of the gift of the Holy Spirit is certainly objective, but one cannot physically see the presence of the Holy Spirit in another person. However, when one sees the fruit of the Spirit exhibited by another person, the conclusion should be that the Holy Spirit is dwelling in that person. As Jesus said in John 3:8 - [8](#) The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.”
 - i. Nicodemus had objected to the doctrine (born again) because he did not understand how it could be. Jesus shows him that he ought not to reject it on that account, for he constantly believed things quite as difficult. It might appear incomprehensible, but it was to be judged by its effects. As in this case of the wind, the effects were seen, the sound was heard, important changes were produced by it, trees and clouds were moved, yet the wind is not seen, nor do we know whence it comes, nor by what laws it is governed; so it is with the operations of the Spirit. We see the changes produced. Men just now sinful become holy; the thoughtless become serious; the licentious become pure; the vicious, moral; the moral, religious; the prayerless, prayerful; the rebellious and obstinate, meek, and mild, and gentle. When we see such changes, we ought no more to doubt that they are produced by some cause - by some mighty agent, than when we see the trees moved, or the waters of the ocean piled on heaps, or feel the cooling effects of a summer's breeze. In those cases we attribute it to the “wind,” though we see it not, and though we do not understand its operations.
- b. John 7:37-39 - [37](#) On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. [38](#) Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, ‘Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.’” [39](#) Now this he said about

The Indwelling of the Holy Spirit

the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

- i. According to Jewish tradition, on the eighth day the people would go to the Pool of Siloam. As the priest dipped his golden pitcher in the pool and lifted it out, the people chanted from Isaiah 12:3: *“With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.”* By doing this they were reminded of the harvest they had experienced. They were also praying for rain for the coming season.
- ii. As the priest emptied the water at the base of the altar, and poured it out, Jesus cried *“If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink.”* Out of the emphasis on things that were physical, Jesus turned their attention to that which was spiritual and eternal. He meant that He would give a stream of living water that would flow into eternal life. Jesus was speaking of the Holy Spirit who would be given to those who believed on Him. The Spirit had not yet been given because Jesus had not yet been glorified.
- iii. This promise carries no hint of the nature of the Spirit that would be given to those who believe.
- iv. The promise would not be filled until Jesus had been glorified, probably referring to his ascension into heaven.
- v. It is a puzzling verse because the Spirit is involved in the lives of many of God’s people in the Old Testament.
 1. Judges 13:24-25 - [24](#) And the woman bore a son and called his name Samson. And the young man grew, and the Lord blessed him. [25](#) And the Spirit of the Lord began to stir him in Mahaneh-dan, between Zorah and Eshtaol.
 2. Judges 14:5-6 - [5](#) Then Samson went down with his father and mother to Timnah, and they came to the vineyards of Timnah. And behold, a young lion came toward him roaring. [6](#) Then the Spirit of the Lord rushed upon him, and although he had nothing in his hand, he tore the lion in pieces as one tears a young goat. But he did not tell his father or his mother what he had done.
 3. Judges 15:14 - [14](#) When he came to Lehi, the Philistines came shouting to meet him. Then the Spirit of the Lord rushed upon him, and the ropes that were on his arms became as flax that has caught fire, and his bonds

The Indwelling of the Holy Spirit

melted off his hands.

- 4.1 Samuel 10:9-11 - [9](#) When he turned his back to leave Samuel, God gave him another heart. And all these signs came to pass that day. [10](#) When they came to Gibeah, behold, a group of prophets met him, and the Spirit of God rushed upon him, and he prophesied among them. [11](#) And when all who knew him previously saw how he prophesied with the prophets, the people said to one another, “What has come over the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?”
- 5.2 Peter 1:19-21 - [19](#) And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, [20](#) knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone’s own interpretation. [21](#) For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.
- 6.Luke 1:15 – [15](#) for he will be great before the Lord. And he must not drink wine or strong drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother’s womb.
- 7.Luke 1:41-42 – [41](#) And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, [42](#) and she exclaimed with a loud cry, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb!
- 8.Luke 1:67 – [67](#) And his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied, saying,
- 9.Luke 3:21-22 – [21](#) Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heavens were opened, [22](#) and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form, like a dove; and a voice came from heaven, “You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.”
- 10.Luke 4:1 – [1](#) And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness
- 11.Luke 4:14 - [14](#) And Jesus returned in the power of the

The Indwelling of the Holy Spirit

Spirit to Galilee, and a report about him went out through all the surrounding country.

- vi. In many instances the Holy Spirit came upon a certain occasion, but what Jesus had in mind was a permanent indwelling of the Holy Spirit, which did come in two different measures after his glorification (ascension into heaven).

- 1. John 14:16-17 - [16](#) And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, [17](#) even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.

- a. The promise to the apostles, which happened at Pentecost.

- b. Acts 2:1-4 - [1](#) When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. [2](#) And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. [3](#) And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. [4](#) And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

- 2. Acts 2:37-38 - [37](#) Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?” [38](#) And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

- a. This measure is promised to all who were convicted, who repented, and who were baptized in the name of Jesus for remission of sins.

- b. Acts 5:32 - [32](#) And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.”

- i. Peter and the apostles repeat that the Holy Spirit is given to those who obey him.

- c. This gift of the Holy Spirit to obedient believers is cited in many instances covered elsewhere in this document, especially under “The Fact of the Spirit’s Indwelling.”

The Indwelling of the Holy Spirit

- vii. These two promises of the Holy Spirit came, as Jesus said, after he had been glorified.

2. The Fact of the Spirit's Indwelling

a. The Spirit Dwells in the Church

- i. 1 Cor. 3:16-17 - [16](#) Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? [17](#) If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple.
 - 1. You is plural, indicating that it is the church that is God's dwelling place.
 - 2. But the church is composed of individual Christians, and whatever is said of the church applies to all the body.
- ii. Eph. 2:19-22 - [19](#) So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, [20](#) built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, [21](#) in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. [22](#) In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.
- iii. 1 Pet. 2:5 - [5](#) you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

b. The Spirit Dwells in the Individual Christian

- i. Romans 5:5 - [5](#) and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.
- ii. Romans 8:9-11 - [9](#) You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. **Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.** [10](#) But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. [11](#) If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.
 - 1. Without the Spirit, we are not his.
 - 2. If we have the Spirit, he will impart life to our mortal bodies through his Spirit.
- iii. 1 Cor. 6:18-20 - [18](#) Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually

The Indwelling of the Holy Spirit

immoral person sins against his own body. [19](#) Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, [20](#) for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.

3. The Nature of the Spirit's Indwelling

a. Questions to Consider

- i. Is the Spirit's indwelling literal, personal?
 1. Does the Spirit literally dwell in the Christian?
 2. Does He somehow personally reside in the body of each Christian?
- ii. Is the Spirit's indwelling mediated, through the Word only?
 1. Does the Spirit figuratively dwell in the Christian?
 2. Does He dwell in the Christian only in the sense that the Word abides in us?

b. Arguments for a Literal, Personal Indwelling

- i. 1 Cor. 6:18-20 - [18](#) Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. [19](#) Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, [20](#) for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.
 1. Metaphor – the body of the Christian is the “temple” of the Holy Spirit.
 - a. Just as our body is a tabernacle for our spirit.
 - i. 2 Cor. 5:1-5 – [1](#) For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. [2](#) For in this tent we groan, longing to put on our heavenly dwelling, [3](#) if indeed by putting it on we may not be found naked. [4](#) For while we are still in this tent, we groan, being burdened—not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. [5](#) He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.
 - ii. 2 Pet. 1:13-14 – [13](#) I think it right, as long as I am in this body, to stir you up by way of

The Indwelling of the Holy Spirit

reminder, [14](#) since I know that the putting off of my body will be soon, as our Lord Jesus Christ made clear to me.

- b. So also the body is a dwelling place for the Spirit of God

2. Prepositions Used

- a. Within – a temple of the Holy Spirit within you
- b. From – whom you have from God

3. Reasoning

- a. From a statement of fact or condition to a command to be obeyed
 - i. Because the Spirit dwells in you (fact)
 - ii. Flee sexual immorality – obey the command of the Lord (imperative)
- ii. Gal. 4:6-7 - [6](#) And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!” [7](#) So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.
- iii. Rom. 8:12-17 - [12](#) So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. [13](#) For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. [14](#) For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. [15](#) For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!” [16](#) The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, [17](#) and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.
- iv. Eph. 3:16 - [16](#) that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being,
- v. Eph. 3:20-21 - [20](#) Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, [21](#) to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.
 - 1. The power at work within us --- strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being (3:16).

The Indwelling of the Holy Spirit

- vi. Phil 2:12-13 - [12](#) Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, [13](#) for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.
- vii. Phil 4:13 - [13](#) I can do all things through him who strengthens me.
- c. Arguments for Indwelling Through the Word Only
 - i. Through-the-Word-only advocates argue from the **imperative** to the **indicative**
 - 1. This view argues that a Christian must obey the word (**imperative**) in order for the Spirit to indwell (**indicative**)
 - 2. I.e., one must flee fornication (heed the Word) so the Spirit will dwell in them
 - ii. While I do not advocate for one position or the other, it is inconceivable that the spirit and the word can be separated to the extent that one operates independently of the other.

4. The Benefits of the Spirit's Indwelling

- a. "Sealed" by the Spirit
 - i. Eph. 1:13 - [13](#) In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit,
 - ii. 2 Cor. 1:21-22 - [21](#) And it is God who establishes us with you in Christ, and has anointed us, [22](#) and who has also put his seal on us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.
 - iii. A seal authenticates a document as genuine
 - iv. A seal is a mark of ownership, such as branding of cattle
 - v. A seal is also a mark of security, such as for medical products purchased from a shelf.
 - vi. When a person is baptized and is given the Holy Spirit as a gift, in effect God says "This person belongs to me!"
 - vii. A seal is also a guarantee (or earnest) of eternal inheritance.
 - viii. Gal. 4:6 - [6](#) And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!"
- b. The spirit is a guarantee (pledge, earnest, down payment) of inheritance.
 - i. Eph. 1:13-14

The Indwelling of the Holy Spirit

- ii. 2 Cor. 1:21-22 - [21](#) And it is God who establishes us with you in Christ, and has anointed us, [22](#) and who has also put his seal on us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.
- iii. Rom. 8:14-17 - [14](#) For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. [15](#) For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!” [16](#) The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, [17](#) and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.
- iv. The down payment can be forfeited and so nullify the inheritance.
 - 1.Eph. 4:30 - [30](#) And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.
 - 2.Heb. 10:26-31- [26](#) For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, [27](#) but a fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries. [28](#) Anyone who has set aside the law of Moses dies without mercy on the evidence of two or three witnesses. [29](#) How much worse punishment, do you think, will be deserved by the one who has trampled underfoot the Son of God, and has profaned the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has outraged the Spirit of grace? [30](#) For we know him who said, “Vengeance is mine; I will repay.” And again, “The Lord will judge his people.” [31](#) It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.
- v. Consider analogy to an engagement ring.
- c. We are strengthened by the spirit.
 - i. Eph.3:16-19 - [16](#) that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, [17](#) so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, [18](#) may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, [19](#) and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

The Indwelling of the Holy Spirit

- ii. Rom. 8:13 - [13](#) For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.
- iii. Rom. 8:26-27 - [26](#) Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. [27](#) And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.
- d. We are led by the spirit
 - i. Rom. 8:14 - [14](#) For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.
 - ii. Gal. 5:16 - [16](#) But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.
 - iii. Gal. 5:18 - [18](#) But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.
- e. We bear the fruit of the spirit
 - i. Gal. 5:22-23 - [22](#) But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, [23](#) gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.
 - ii. Rom. 15:13 - [13](#) May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.
 - iii. Rom. 5:8-9 - [8](#) but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. [9](#) Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God.

5. Conclusions on Indwelling

- a. Exactly how the Spirit indwells the Christian may remain a mystery...
 - i. Many understand the indwelling as literal, with the Spirit personally abiding in the Christian
 - ii. Others view it as figurative, the Spirit dwelling through the Word only
- b. Whatever the exact nature of the Spirit's indwelling, we must be careful to not...
 - i. Grieve the Spirit, by whom we sealed for the day of redemption
 - ii. Anger the Father, who has given us His Spirit as a pledge of our inheritance
 - 1. Heb. 10:26-31 – willful sin

The Indwelling of the Holy Spirit

- c. Whatever the exact nature of the Spirit's indwelling, we must be careful to...
- i. Bring glory to God, by producing the fruit of the Spirit
 - ii. Walk after the Spirit, being strengthened by the Spirit
 - iii. Rom. 8:5-14 - [5](#) For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. [6](#) For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. [7](#) For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. [8](#) Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. [9](#) You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. [10](#) But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. [11](#) If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you. [12](#) So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. [13](#) For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. [14](#) For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.