

18. THE FOUNDATION OF OUR COMMUNION WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

The foundation of all our communion with the Holy Spirit lies in His being sent by the Lord Jesus to be our Comforter or Helper.

As Jesus was about to leave this world, He warned the disciples of the difficulties and rejection that they would face after His departure. This would come from both the secular as well as the religious community. Because the religious community had lost their way under the direction of the scribes and pharisees, they would think that they were serving God by persecuting the disciples.

But Jesus tells these things, not to frighten them, but to prepare them. He then encourages them that He would send the Holy Spirit to them. The Holy Spirit would have a far wider scope than the physical presence of the Master. So, it would be to all believer's benefit. The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father, through the Son to us. The Holy Spirit is promised to the elect as the Spirit of Sanctification (Making us Holy in preparation for our lives in Glory). He is also the promised Comforter and reveals to us the privileges that we are to enjoy as believers.

The proceeding of the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son, refers to Him as having been sent by Christ after His ascension. And His special work is to testify about Christ.

Communion with the Holy Spirit.

- a. We have communion with the Holy Spirit in His Willingness to be the Comforter and Helper. As Jesus willingly undertook the work of shedding His blood that we may have life, so the Holy Spirit willingly undertakes His work as Comforter and Helper to the regenerate.

The order of this process is first the loving Father's purpose in sending us His Spirit. Then by asking of the Son, which is followed by the willing proceeding of the Holy Spirit to us.

In the hand and work of God, there is always evidence of the inter, and intra relationship of the three distinct sovereign personalities of the Triune Godhead.

What strength, power, unity and majesty!! All this has been planned and executed, on our behalf by a loving, forgiving Father. Our response is to be one of obedience and humble submission to Father, Son and Holy Spirit, for this very special redemptive work on our behalf.

- b. We have communion with the Holy Spirit in the way He comes to us from the Father. The Father freely gives us the Holy Spirit. He is a free gift to the redeemed. It is indeed through His primary work of enlightenment that we are saved, and through His sustained work of sanctification that we do not fall away in this life. We receive the Holy Spirit by grace alone, and not from any effort on our part to make ourselves worthy to receive Him. His gifts to us are free and unmerited by us. So, the soul rejoices in the comforter for two reasons. Firstly, because He is willing to come to us, and secondly, because He is willing to be given to us.

The Holy Spirit is sent to us by the authority of the Father and the Son. **JN 14:26** “But the Counsellor, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name “. This shows that the Holy Spirit is willing to subject Himself to authority, when equal to the Father and the Son in the Godhead. On this sending of the Holy Spirit rests the right understanding of many of the mysteries of the gospel and our fellowship with Him.

The Sin Against the Holy Spirit.

No other sin is considered to be as rebellious as the sin of rejecting the Holy Spirit. It is the unpardonable sin. This is because, being equal to God the Father, and the Son, He was sent by their authority. Therefore, to sin against the Holy Spirit is to reject the whole authority of God, and to reject all the love for us by the Trinity.

We are to pray to the Father, and the Son for the Holy Spirit as sent by them. When we pray to the Holy Spirit, we remember Him as an equal member of the Triune God. We pray to Him as sent by the Father and the Son. We are not to grieve or hinder His work as He has a specific role in the salvation process.

In the Old Testament the receiving of the Holy Spirit was referred to as a pouring out. And this was in connection with the salvation of the Gentiles and a rejection of the Jews

ISA 32:15. The mystery of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament was not as clearly seen as He has been revealed to us by the Lord in the new dispensation.

The pouring out of the Holy Spirit gives us three great properties of grace in these times.

- a. The Holy Spirit is freely given in these times
- b. He comes from the love of the Father to us through the Son, and is ordered in all things
- c. He works to great effect, as He is poured out

The Holy Spirit is received by Believers.

We have no active role in receiving the Holy Spirit into our lives. He is poured into us as into an empty vessel. He comes into our hearts to enliven us. The world cannot receive Him in any way. Those that are selected by God for this receiving of the Holy Spirit is by God's sovereign choice alone. And He is received by us by the power of faith **GAL 3:2.** And it is through the preaching of the gospel that gives birth to the faith necessary to receive Him.

There are three special acts of faith by which we receive the Spirit.

- a. Faith receives the Spirit as the Spirit promised in the Covenant of Grace. We receive the promise of the Spirit by faith. **GAL 3:14** "... so, by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit".
- b. Faith receives the Spirit by prayer. We are to ask for Him as the comforter. Praying for the Holy Spirit is the most important work faith has to do in this world. He lives in our hearts. Let us get to know him better.
- c. Faith receives the Spirit by being alert to Him and His secret work in our hearts. As we seek Him, so we receive Him.

The Holy Spirit abides in Believers.

The Holy Spirit indwells every believer as the Spirit of sanctification.

We are the earthly temple of the Holy Spirit.

And He abides with us forever. Jesus said, “I shall never leave or forsake you”. As the Holy Spirit is God Himself, and as He dwells in us, we are always the recipients of His work in sanctification – being made Holy, because we are the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit here on earth.

However, the Holy Spirit is also our Comforter.

But why then do we as Christians go through times of mental turmoil? As the Holy Spirit is sovereign – He can decide when and how to comfort us. This is the process of bringing trials into our lives to bring us into obedience.

The Comforter does at times bring comfort to us, but we may not recognise it, or even refuse it in our anger or anguish. The Spirit as Sanctifier comes with power to conquer an unbelieving heart. The Spirit of Comforter comes with help and encouragement, to be received by a believing heart. Although we might not detect Him, He never leaves a troubled soul with no comfort. In due time the believer will recognise the Comforter.

- a. He works effectively. All His will in our lives will be accomplished.
- b. He works sovereignly. He distributes to all as He wills.
- c. He works freely. This demonstrates the Sovereignty of each person of the Godhead, to accomplish His particular task in the salvation process, as He wills.

So, although the Holy Spirit is sent by the Father, through the Son into our hearts. He does His work freely and according to His sovereign will.