

RESTORED BY THE SPIRIT

- A. Introduction: Eph 1:19,20; Rom 8:11--Paul prayed that Christians would know the greatness of God's power in us, the same power that raised Christ from the dead, the Holy Ghost. We're taking some time to discuss the Holy Spirit and what He is here to do to help us better cooperate with Him as He works.
1. God is one God who simultaneously manifests as three Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. They're distinct, not separate. They co-inhere or share one Divine nature. You can't have one without the other.
 - a. Jesus is the visible incarnation of everything the Father is. The Holy Spirit is the invisible presence of everything Jesus is. These three Persons work in cooperation with one another.
 - b. The Father planned redemption. The Son purchased it through the Cross. The Holy Spirit performs it (or makes it a reality in our lives) when we believe God's Word about what the Father has provided through the Son.
 2. John 14:16,26; 16:7--The night before Jesus was crucified, as He prepared His disciples for the fact that He was soon going to return to Heaven, He told them that the Father was going to send another like Himself, the Holy Spirit. And that's a good thing.
 - a. Through the Cross, the nature of God's relationship with men was going to change. Jesus would pay the price for sin making it possible for men to be cleansed of sin and then indwelt by God.
 1. John 14:17--Jesus said: The Holy Spirit has been with you, but He will soon be in you. I've been with you and I will soon be in you through the power of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Spirit will be in you and through you all I have been with you.
 2. The Holy Spirit is the performer. He will make real in your experience what I am about to purchase for you through My death, burial, and resurrection.
 - b. The Book of Acts is a record of what happened after Jesus was crucified, raised from the dead, and returned to Heaven. His disciples went out to preach that because of Jesus' death and resurrection, men's sins can be remitted or wiped away. In this record we see two distinct experiences with the Holy Ghost — being born of the Spirit and being baptized with the Spirit. John 20:22; Acts 2:1-4; Acts 8:5-8; 14-19; Acts 9:3-18; I Cor 14:18; Acts 10:30-48; Acts 19:1-7
 1. When men believed on Jesus they were born of the Spirit (born from above, born again). Their sins were washed away and they became sons of God. John 1:12,13; John 3:3-5; Titus 3:5; I Pet 1:23; Eph 5:25-27; James 1:18; etc.
 2. This was followed by baptism in the Spirit. In each case this baptism was accompanied by supernatural demonstrations with speaking in other tongues (languages) being common to all.
 - A. This can difficult to discuss because we're talking about an Infinite, Omnipotent (all powerful), Omniscient (all knowing), Omnipresent (present everywhere at once) God who has chosen to create and interact with finite beings and words fall short.
 - B. Over the past 2,000 years many varying ideas about the Holy Spirit and baptism in the Spirit have arisen. We're endeavoring to sort this out.
 - C. Someone who is born again has the Holy Spirit in Him because he is born of God. But the Bible is clear that there is a second experience, a greater work, accompanied by speaking in other tongues or languages. Let's continue our discussion.
- B. As with every topic we discuss, this subject makes much more sense when considered in terms of the big picture or the overall plan of God.
1. Almighty God created men and women to become His sons and daughters through faith in Christ. He made the earth to be home for His family. Eph 1:4,5; Isa 45:18
 - a. When Adam and man in Adam sinned, a curse of corruption and death entered the entire material creation. Men and women became unfit for sonship and earth is no longer a fit home for God and His family. Gen 3:17-19; Rom 5:12; Rom 8:20; etc.
 - b. Redemption is God's plan to deliver His creation from bondage to sin, corruption, and death and

restore men and the earth to our created purpose. The Bible begins and ends with God on earth with His sons and daughters. Gen 2; Rev 21:3

1. Jesus came to earth the first time to pay the price for sin. All who put faith in Him and His sacrifice at the Cross receive remission of sins. They are born of God and become His sons.

2. Jesus will come again to cleanse the entire material creation and restore the heavens and the earth to a fit forever home for Himself and His family.

2. Acts 2:1-13--When the original disciples were baptized with the Holy Ghost Jerusalem was jammed with Jewish pilgrims from many nations who were in the city for the Feast of Pentecost. The crowds heard noises coming from the upper room where the disciples were when Holy Ghost came on them.

a. Acts 2:14-21--A multitude gathered and Peter preached to them. He quoted the prophet Joel to explain what was happening. God will pour out His Spirit in the last days. Joel 2:28-32

1. The last days are the days leading up to the Lord's coming to complete the plan of redemption. They began with His first coming and will culminate with His return to establish His kingdom on earth. The crowd understood Peter to say: You're witnessing the beginning of it.

2. God is pouring out of His Spirit on men and women to cleanse them so He can indwell them and restore them to their created purpose, sonship and relationship with Him.

b. Acts 3:21--In Peter's next recorded sermon he preached that Jesus has returned to Heaven until the times of restitution. Restitution comes from a Greek word that means to restore something to its former state: Until the final recovery of all things from sin (TLB)

1. God is working to restore His entire creation—men and the earth—to what He intended before it was damaged by sin. The Holy Spirit has come to begin the work of restoring creation to what God planned in the beginning.

2. Gen 1:1-3--These's much in these that we aren't going to address now, but consider this point. Note how God created in the beginning. He worked by His Spirit and His Word.

A. Ps 33:6--The Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters and God said, Let there be light and light came into existence. Spirit and breath are the same Hebrew word.

B. Jer 1:12; Heb 11:3; Luke 1:35;45--The Holy Spirit is the performer. He brings the Word of the Lord to pass. (Keep in mind these are finite terms being used to describe to finite human beings the work of the Infinite, Omnipotent, Omnipresent, Omniscient God.)

3. For men and women, this restoration through the Spirit and the Word of God means being born of God and then conformed to the image of Christ.

a. Rom 8:29--For those on whom He set His heart beforehand He marked off as His own (Williams) to be made like his Son (Goodspeed), to be made like to the pattern of His Son (Conybeare).

1. God's plan since before He created the earth was and is to have sons like Jesus. Jesus in His humanity is the standard or pattern for God's family. He wants sons and daughters who are like Jesus in character and love, holiness and power.

2. God's plan is to restore and transform sinners who bow their knee to Jesus as Savior and Lord into sons like Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit.

A. The Holy Spirit works in and through the Word of God when we believe. That's how we were born again and that's how we are conformed to the image of Christ.

B. II Cor 3:18--And all of us, as with unveiled faces [because we] continued to behold [in the Word of God] as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are constantly being transfigured into His very own image in every increasing splendor and from one degree of glory to another; [for this comes] from the Lord [Who is] the Spirit. (Amp)

b. Being born of the Spirit is the beginning of a process of restoration and transformation that will ultimately conform us to the image of Christ in every part of our being (Lessons for another day).

C. The New Testament epistles have much to say about how we cooperate with the Holy Spirit as He works in us to conform us to the image of Christ.

1. It's important to know that the context of the statements about the Holy Spirit in the epistles is the Book of Acts. That means the epistles were written to people born of and baptized in the Spirit and who spoke or prayed in other tongues. For example, take the church Paul established at Ephesus. They're the ones to whom Ephesians was written. Consider their picture of Christianity. Acts 19
 - a. When Paul arrived, he met what he thought were believers (they actually knew only John's baptism). His first question was: Have you received the Holy Spirit since you believed (v1-5)?
 - b. When they were baptized in the Holy Ghost they spoke with tongues and prophesied (v6,7). Supernatural happenings (miracles) occurred through the ministry of Paul (v11,12). When certain people tried to cast out devils without the power of the Holy Ghost, it didn't end well (v13-16). God was greatly magnified and the Word of God grew and prevailed (v17-20).
2. Paul wrote his epistle to them while he was in prison in Rome (60-63 A.D). This is the letter where he said he prayed that they (we) would know the greatness of the power in them (Eph1:19).
 - a. Keep in mind that Paul was personally taught the message he preached by Jesus, the Lamb who takes away the sins of the world and baptizes in the Holy Ghost. Gal 1:11,12; John 1:29,33
 1. In this epistle Paul wrote much about the power in believers, which he defined as the power that raised Christ from the dead, the power of the Holy Ghost. Eph 1:19,20
 2. Note one verse. Eph 3:20--Paul reminded them that God is able to do exceedingly abundantly above what we ask or think by His power that works in us (the power of the Holy Ghost).
 - b. Paul concluded this epistle by exhorting believers to be strong in the Lord and the power of His might (Eph 6:10). This is the same power he referenced in chapter one, the power these people saw demonstrated when they came to the Lord under Paul's ministry, the power of the Holy Ghost.
 1. Paul tells them (and us) to put on the armor of God. God's armor is His Word (Ps 91:4). Each piece of armor Paul lists is a category of information from God's Word which helps us stand against the evil day and attacks of the enemy (Eph 6:14-17). (Lessons for another day).
 2. v17--Note that Paul refers to the Word of God as the specific instrument used by the Holy Spirit. This makes sense since the Holy Spirit works through the Word of God to perform (or make real) in our lives and experience what Jesus provided through the Cross.
 3. We say this all the time, but it bears repeating. It's so important to become a regular, systematic reader of the New Testament. Read it from start to finish over and over. Don't worry about what you don't understand. Understanding comes with familiarity. Don't stop to look up words or consult a commentary. You can do that at another time. Just keep reading.
3. There's much we could say, but note one point in connection with our discussion. Paul tells them (and us) to not only utilize God's Word, but to pray with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit. Eph 6:18-- Use every kind of prayer and entreaty; and at every opportunity pray in the Spirit. (Goodspeed)
 - a. God has chosen to work with His people as we pray. There are different types of prayer prayed for different purposes (lessons for another day). But consider this in the context of being strong in the Lord and the power of His might. How do we pray in cooperation with the Holy Spirit in us?
 - b. Effective prayer is prayer that is in agreement with God's Word. Many of us pray: Oh God, please give me strength, meaning: Give me something I don't have. But that's not how Paul prayed. He recorded a Spirit inspired prayer in Eph 3:16.
 1. He prayed that the Ephesians would be strengthened by God's Spirit in them. He knew what he (and they) had and wanted them to know also. Someone from the outside has already come into us to strengthen us, the Holy Spirit.
 2. John 14:16--I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Comforter (Counselor, Helper, Intercessor, Advocate, Strengtheners, Standby) that He may remain with you forever. (Amp)
 3. One of the themes we see in Paul's epistles is that believers are the temple or dwelling place of God. We need to live with that awareness. I Cor 6:19--Are you not conscious that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit that is in you (Williams)?
4. Note that Paul also talked about praying in the Spirit. That means praying in tongues. Tongues is from

a Greek word for the tongue. When the word is used metaphorically it means language.

- a. Tongues is a language not known to the one who is doing the speaking. It's supernatural because the Holy Spirit gives the speaker the words which he then speaks out.
 1. While Paul was in the city of Ephesus at the time he founded the church, he was visited by believers from Corinth, another church established by Paul. They came with reports of trouble in the church, one of which was misuse of tongues in their services. Paul wrote his first epistle to the Corinthians at that time.
 2. I Cor 14 addresses this issue (lessons for another day). Note two points. v14,15--He defines praying in the Spirit as praying in tongues. v4--Praying in tongues edifies the speaker.
 - b. Edify comes from a word that means to build up like a house. The Holy Spirit's number one goal in you is to build you up into conformity to Christ or make you Christ-like in every part of your being through the Word of God.
 1. He does it by giving you light or understanding as you read the Word of God. He is here to guide us into all truth and God's Word is truth. John 16:13,14; John 17:17
 2. The Holy Spirit reveals the Living Word, the Lord Jesus Christ, to us through the written Word, the Bible. The Word of God builds us up. Acts 20:32; I Thess 2:13; etc.
 - c. Praying in tongues is a vital part of this process of being conformed to the image of Christ. Rom 8:26--The Holy Spirit has been given to help us pray when we don't know what or how to pray.
 1. You may believe that your greatest need is for doors of ministry to open up to you. So you pray: God open doors for me. Help me to be patient until you promote me in ministry. But God knows what you need most is to deal with your pride and your unkind treatment of others. However, you don't see it, so you can't pray about it.
 2. When you pray in tongues (or a language not known to you) the Holy Spirit can by pass your intellect (and unrenewed mind) and pray perfect, effective prayers through you. He can expose in a gentle, loving way the issues you need to deal with by His power.
 3. It's vitally important to take time to pray in tongues everyday and allow the Holy Spirit to pray perfect and effective prayers through you as you cooperate with Him.
 - A. The Lord is much more concerned with you developing Christ-like character than where you work or live, or what position you hold in the church. The number one call on all of us is to shine the light of Jesus Christ in our little corner of the world. Phil 2:13-15
 - B. We're designed to be God's imagers, His representatives in this world. We've been created to show forth the His virtues. I Pet 2:9
- D. Conclusion: We have lots more to say, but consider this thought as we close. The Holy Spirit has come to restore us to all that God intends. This process gives us security—the Blood of the Lamb has so cleansed us inwardly that God can indwell us. It gives us purpose—we can cooperate with God the Holy Ghost as He works in us. It gives us hope—the process will be completed. More next week!