

INDWELLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

In the past I have studied this subject long and prayerfully and I was asked by a good sister two weeks ago about the indwelling of The Holy Spirit. So not relying on my remembering all that I had previously studied I went to the computer and enter a search mode for Spirit, Holy, Ghost, and Comforter. There were a lot of Scriptures on these words. Then I listed all the Hebrew and Greek words and their definitions. I also went back and looked through some books and periodicals. I came across this article by Brother Colly Caldwell, dated February 3,1983. Personally I have never thought of it this way but I present it to you for your consideration.

"The New Testament is clear on the point that God dwells in some men. For example read the following:

No man hath beheld God at any time: if we love one another, God abideth in us, and his love is perfected in us: hereby we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit. And we have beheld and bear witness that the Father hath sent the Son {to be} the Saviour of the world. Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God abideth in him, and he in God. And we know and have believed the love which God hath in us. God is love; and he that abideth in love abideth in God, and God abideth in him. (1John 4:12-16 ASV)

Another obvious message of these few verses is that we dwell in God. Three times in the same passage which says that God dwells in us, John says that we dwell in God. The question we are , of course, going to be concerned about first is this: "Is the indwelling equivalent to personal, direct possession of the other person?" A point to remember is that the same thing is said of our dwelling in God that is said of God dwelling in us. I believe John explains what he means by this terminology:

As for you, let that abide in you which ye heard from the beginning. If that which ye heard from the beginning abide in you, ye also shall abide in the Son, and in the Father. And this is the promise which he promised us, {even} the life eternal. These things have I written unto you concerning them that would lead you astray. And as for you, the anointing which ye received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any one teach you; but as his anointing teacheth you; concerning all things, and is true, and is no lie, and even as it taught you, ye abide in him. (1John 2:24-27 ASV)

Notice the connection between the language of the two passages. God abides in us and we abide in Him (1John4). That which is heard abides in us and we abide in the Father and in the Son (1John2). John speaks of our anointed or taught and of the relationship of that to our abiding in Him.

The New Testament is also clear in informing us that Christ dwells in some men:

I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh it away: and every {branch} that beareth fruit, he cleanseth it, that it may bear more fruit. Already ye are clean because of the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; so neither can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit: for apart from me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatsoever ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; and {so} shall ye be my disciples. Even as the Father hath loved me, I also have loved you: abide ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I

have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.(John 15:1-10 ASV)

Strikingly, this passage which says that Christ dwells in us, also repeated affirms that WE dwell in Christ. The question again becomes, "Is the indwelling personal, direct possession?" Obviously, to me at least, Jesus is speaking of the intimate relationship or communion between the divine being and obedient, loving Christians. That relationship is based upon the communication between them. The divine beings love men and have communicated the heavenly desire for fellowship with men and the responsibilities attendant thereto. Christians on the other hand have listened to, responded to, and been influenced by the divine beings to share spiritual character and life. The relationship is so strong and close that each is said to dwell in the other!

The most controverted aspect of the indwelling topic is the involvement of the Holy Spirit. He also dwells in us but notice that we dwell in Him.

But ye are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you. But if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, he that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall give life also to your mortal bodies through his Spirit that dwelleth in you. (Romans 8:9-11;cf. 1 Cor.3:16-17; 6:19-20 ASV).

Paul explains that he is not discussing personal possession but has in mind a spiritual relationship between the personages of Deity and those who will be saved:

There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus...who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For they that are after the flesh mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the

Spirit...So then, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh: for if ye live after the flesh, ye must die; but if by the Spirit ye put to death the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. (Romans 8:1-14)

Having the Holy Spirit in us, and our being in the Holy Spirit, is to have such an intimate relationship that we are led by Him and influenced by what He says. Having the Holy Spirit in us is not something mystical, mysterious, or spiritualistic in the sense that we cannot relate to the terminology or understand it. It is not possession of the body or personal residence in a literal sense.

Persons "dwelling in" other persons is not uncommon expression. We speak of:(a) parents living in their children, or our being able to see a parent in his child; (b) lovers having each other in their hearts; (c) teachers abiding in their students; and,(d) national leaders possessing the hearts of the people. Do such expressions demand personal possession?

But now to the real point of this article. What is it practically to have the divine Beings in us? Many fine articles have argued the "how" of indwelling. I want to discuss what the practical import of it is in the life of the Christian!

I. When others dwell in you, you love them with virtually unbounded love. Isn't that true of parent and child, husband and wife, etc. A mother will give

life for child whom she holds dear in her heart. Listen to what Jesus said about that:

Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my word: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not keepeth not my words: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's who sent me. (John 14:23-24 ASV)

II. When others dwell in you, you think about them "all the time." You can hardly talk to young lovers about anything other than the object of their love because that is all they think about. Parents think about those children who are in their hearts "all the time." Now that should be true of Christians who have God in their hearts. Just here let us put two obviously parallel Scriptures together:

And be not drunken with wine, wherein is riot, but be filled with the Spirit; speaking one to another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms {and} hymns {and} spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts unto God. And whatsoever ye do, in word or in deed, {do} all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.(Eph.5:18-19; Col.3:16-17)

If all that I do is done in the name of the Lord and with thanksgiving, I must be thinking about Christ when I make all my decisions for living. If Christ dwells in me, I will think about Him. If I do not, that is evidence that He does not dwell in me!

III. When others dwell in you, you develop the same attitudes about things that they have. It is amazing how much a husband and wife come to think alike when they have a good marriage. It is important that Christians marry Christians for this very reason. We become so much a part of one another that our thinking is influenced by the other in almost every facet of life. Paul taught that we should come to have the same attitudes that God has and that such is evidence of Divine indwelling:

Know ye not that your bodies are members of Christ? shall I then take away the members of Christ, and make them members of a harlot? God forbid. Or know ye not that he that is joined to a harlot is one body? for, The twain, saith he, shall become one flesh. But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. Or know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have from God? and ye are not your own; for ye were bought with a price: glorify God therefore in your body. (1Corinthians 6:15-20 ASV)

We will come to think about right living, about sin, about things of the world, about spiritual things, etc., like God does if we are truly a of the Holy Spirit. If our relationship is good and we are influenced by the teaching of the Spirit, we will dwell in Him and He in us.

IV. When others dwell in you, you will develop the same attitude toward people that they have. Whether right or wrong, if my wife likes someone I tend to like them if she is hesitant about being comfortable around them, I am also hesitant. With regard to spiritual things, John put it this way:

No man hath beheld God at any time: if we love one another, God abideth in us, and his love is perfected in us: hereby we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit. And we have beheld and bear witness that the Father hath sent the Son {to be} the Saviour of the world. Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God abideth in him, and he in God. And we know and have believed the love which God hath in us. God is love; and he that abideth in love abideth in God, and God abideth in him. (1John 4:12-16 ASV)

V. When others dwell in you, you readily respond when they ask you to do

something. Wives who really love their husbands and have them in their hearts do not feel compelled to "submit." They gladly seek to please their husbands by responding to their wishes. And husbands do the same! Listen again to John on spiritual matters:

And hereby we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him; but whoso keepeth his word, in him verily hath the love of God been perfected. Hereby we know that we are in him: he that saith he abideth in him ought himself also to walk even as he walked. (1John 2:3-6 ASV)

VI. When others dwell in you, you want to be what they want you to be so that they will love and respect you. One of the greatest incentives to me to be the right kind of person is my godly wife who is in my heart and my two children who are Christians and are also in my heart. If God is in my heart, I will want to be what He wants me to be so that I will not disappoint Him. I don't want my wife to see me drunk, cheating others, engaging in immorality or public immodesty, and certainly I should not want God to see me that way. If I don't care how God sees me, He does not dwell in my heart:

And now, {my} little children, abide in him; that, if he shall be manifested, we may have boldness, and not be ashamed before him at his coming. If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one also that doeth righteousness is begotten of him. (1John 2:28-29 ASV)"

Brother "Colly" Caldwell provided this article to the Guardian Of Truth February 3, 1983, I received permission (18 June 1997) from same to reprint it in our bulletin (lhm). As always, I hope you will prayerfully and with diligence check each thought and Scriptures quoted in this article with God's Holy Word.

STRONG'S EXHAUSTIVE CONCORDANCE

HOLY:-as used in 1 Corinthians 6:19 (ASV) = 40. hagios {hag'-ee-os}; from hagos (an awful thing) [compare 53, 2282]; sacred (physically, pure, morally blameless or religious, ceremonially, consecrated): -(most) holy (one, thing), saint.

SPIRIT:-as used in 1 Corinthians 6:19 (ASV) = 4151. pneuma {pnyoo'-mah}; from 4154; a current of air, i.e. breath (blast) or a breeze; by analogy or figuratively, a spirit, i.e. (human) the rational soul, (by implication) vital principle, mental disposition, etc., or (superhuman) an angel, demon, or (divine) God, Christ's spirit, the Holy Spirit: -ghost, life, spirit(-ual, -ually), mind. Compare 5590.

ABIDING:-as in JOHN 5:38 (ASV) = 3306. meno {men'-o}; a primary verb; to stay (in a given place, state, relation or expectancy): -abide, continue, dwell, endure, be present, remain, stand, tarry (for), X thine own.

A FEW SCRIPTURES TO PONDER

2PE 3:14 Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for these things, give diligence that ye may be found in peace, without spot and blameless in his sight. (ASV)

JAM 4:10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall exalt you. (ASV)

HEB 13:21 make you perfect in every good thing to do his will, working in us that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom {be} the glory for ever and ever. Amen. (ASV)

HEB 4:13 And there is no creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and laid open before the eyes of him with whom we have to do. (ASV)

2CO 5:7 (for we walk by faith, not by sight); (ASV)

JER 10:23 O Jehovah, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. (ASV)

2CO 2:17 For we are not as the many, corrupting the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God, speak we in Christ. (ASV)

ACT 10:33 Forthwith therefore I sent to thee; and thou hast well done that thou art come. Now therefore we are all here present in the sight of God, to hear all things that have been commanded thee of the Lord. (ASV)