

The Holy Spirit in Us

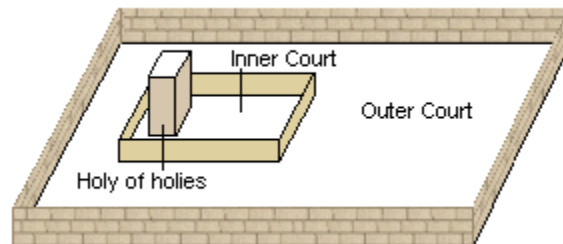
By Ney Bailey

Some of us think, "If Jesus were here on earth, and we could see Him, we would follow Him anywhere." But in Ezekiel 36:26-27, the Lord says, "I will put my Spirit within you and cause you to walk in my ways." There is something about that word "within." "I will put My Spirit within you." There was a time when I needed to be reminded His Spirit was within me. I remember reading that, and for days I walked around thinking, "His Spirit is within me!" Christ is in me by His Spirit today as surely as He was with the disciples. It is amazing to realize His Spirit lives within us and often we don't pay any attention to Him at all.



Where The Holy Spirit Lives

I Corinthians 3:16 says, "Do you not know your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit." Andrew Murray, in his book *The Spirit of Christ*, elaborated on this in a way that was very helpful to me. He said in the Jewish temple there were three courts: the outer court, the inner court, and the Holy of holies.



Murray described how our bodies are like the outer court. The inner court is like our mind, our will and our emotions. But inside of us is the Holy of holies where the Spirit of God dwells. The Holy Spirit dwells inside our spirit. So inside you and inside me is the Holy of holies. The Holy of holies is in you. Verse 17 of that chapter says, "The temple of God is holy, and that temple is what you are." That will help your self-image to know the Holy of holies is in you and in me.

How then do we keep our temples cleansed? Once we've accepted Christ the blood of Christ cleanses us. How then do we keep our temples cleansed? By faith. By taking God at His word.

1 John 1:9 is a verse I like to call "the Christian's bar of soap." It says, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

The last time you washed your hands when they were really dirty, did you stand over the sink and say, "Where did the dirt go, I'm so worried about it?" No you didn't. You accepted by faith that the dirt went down the drain. You never thought about it. That is what we need to do. If we confess our sins, He is faithful; He is just to forgive our sins and to cleanse us from *all* unrighteousness. We need to believe He has forgiven us even if we don't see or feel it.

The Holy Spirit always points us to Christ. He always points us to forgiveness, to the cross and to the blood of Christ. He always points us to no condemnation. Why? Because Romans 8:1 says, "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."



But what does Satan do? He wants to rob you of the peace God says is yours. Satan tries to make you look back and think about your own worst sin. You think about those things and they go across your mind like a video. What we need to do is bring those sins under the cross and say, "Lord Jesus this just proves that I need a Savior. Lord, thank you that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses me from all sin." Think about your sins through the cross and through the blood of Christ, and you will have God's peace. Don't review old sins. Believe God's forgiveness.

The Holy Spirit Speaking to Us

Now, what about current sins, sins that God may be bringing to your attention?

The way the Lord gets through to me, more than any other way, is through my relationships. I had a relationship in my life that had plagued me for years. I had such a hard time with this person that I thought, "If you are going to be in heaven I don't even want to go there." I was pointing my finger at this person. I was critical. I was judgmental. I was finding fault. I had nothing good to say about them. And the whole time, I was justifying myself.

Then one day the Lord pointed me to Luke 18:9, "And He also told this parable to certain ones who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and viewed others with contempt." I realized I was viewing this other person with contempt. This is the parable Jesus told:

"Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee (self-righteous, arrogant religious leaders in Jesus' day) and the other a tax collector (often corrupt, over-taxing people, hated by most.) The Pharisee stood and was praying this to himself, 'God I thank You that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week, I pay tithes of all that I get.' But the tax collector, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast saying, 'God be merciful to me, the sinner.'"

Jesus explained the parable saying, "I tell you this man (the man who said 'God be merciful to me the sinner') went down to his house justified rather than the other, for everyone who exalts himself shall be humbled, but he who humbles himself shall be exalted."

When I read this I said, "O Lord, I'm being like the Pharisees. I hate this. I'm viewing this person with contempt." I realized that I needed to look at my own heart. As I began to look at my own heart, I saw jealousy, lack of love, pride, anger, judging, pointing my finger. I then looked at Galatians 5:16-23. "But I say walk by the Spirit and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh...The fruit (or deeds) of the flesh are evident which are immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, strife, outburst of anger, jealousy, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these...But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self control, against such things there is no law."

Sometimes we look at the sin list and we say, "Well I don't find myself in there anywhere." But do you know what we fail to do? We fail to look at ourselves in the fruit of the Spirit list and say, "How loving am I being? How kind am I being? How faithful am I being? How gentle am I being?" We tend to measure ourselves by the sins instead of measuring ourselves by the fruit of the Spirit.

Andrew Murray said, "Why is it that we find Christians who are holy and harsh?" He goes on to say, "Because they know nothing of the Spirit of love. Only the Holy Spirit can produce his love."

As I thought about the person who had hurt me, I was reminded of a verse in 1 Peter 3:8,9: "To sum up, let all be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kind hearted and humble in spirit, not returning evil for evil, or insult for insult."

I felt this person had done evil things to me, had done insulting things to me. But after it says, "not returning evil for evil, or insult for insult," it says, "but giving a blessing instead, for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing."

As I looked at what I saw in my own heart and confessed that I was like a Pharisee and I prayed, "Lord, be merciful to me a sinner. Lord, would you please show me how to give a blessing to this person?" I was in England at the time, and in one of the bookstores I remember seeing a rather expensive book that I knew he would really like. The next time I came back to America, I gave that book to him. I cannot tell you how deeply touched he was. It meant the world to him and I think God used it in a powerful way.

The Holy Spirit will always be faithful to show us where we are not like Christ. He was faithful to show me where I wasn't like Christ. As we read God's Word and ask the Holy Spirit to lead us in ways that are pleasing to him, he will produce in our lives the fruit of the Spirit: "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness and self control."

Jesus said, "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you; abide in my love...These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full." (John 15:9,11)

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Ney Bailey is the author of *Faith Is Not a Feeling*. WaterBrook Press.
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