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**THE PLACE AND THE WORK OF  
THE HOLY SPIRIT**

**Part 1**

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*Volume 203*

## THE PLACE AND THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

*“Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink. He that believeth on Me, as the scripture hath said, out of his inner man shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believed on Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet (given); because Jesus was not yet glorified” (John 7:37-39).*

We take it that a message is something which has been at work strongly and deeply in the heart of a messenger; something about which the messenger himself has been quite definitely exercised, and something which, more than being an activity of the mind in connection with truth, is a conviction of the heart, the result of a real movement of the heart; resulting in the coming of such a messenger, either for the first time or again, to some very definite position before the Lord. If it is that which constitutes a message and a messenger, then we have no doubt that we are in the way of a message. We simply mean this, that we bring to you something which has been very strongly and in a renewed way (for it is not the first time) going on in our heart; concerning which there has been, as it were, a bringing back on the part of the Lord to an emphasis, a strength of position, and, we believe, with definiteness of meaning on His part. It is concerning the place and work of the Holy Spirit.

We trust that what is said, though in substance it may not be fresh, may have a newness about it in its application by the Lord Himself to our hearts. There will not be many of the Lord's people who will not be concerned with such a passage as the above; that is, concerned with the flowing out from their innermost being of rivers of living water.

That is only one aspect of the many-sided meaning, value and activity of the Holy Spirit in our lives, but we have come especially to that because of the immediate association with it in the chapter: “This spake He of the Spirit ... the Spirit was not yet, because Jesus was not yet glorified.” You will immediately recognise that the Advent of the Holy Spirit is essentially related to the glorifying of the Lord Jesus. It is related to the fact that the Lord Jesus

is glorified, that is, that He is now at the right hand of the Majesty on High, crowned with glory and honour. All the work of the Holy Spirit is bound up with that fact. The work of the Holy Spirit is the bringing forth of the meaning and content of that fact, to reveal, show and work out in part all the values and the virtues of the Lord Jesus being glorified. It is very important, when we are contemplating the work of the Holy Spirit, that we should know exactly where to begin, and that is our main note in this meditation.

### **The starting place of the Holy Spirit's activity or ministry**

What is true of the Holy Spirit Himself in that matter has to become true, very really and definitely, in our consciousness. Sooner or later we shall be brought to the place where we are fully alive to the basis upon which the Holy Spirit takes up His work. So that it should be to our help if that is brought before us definitely and clearly. The starting place of the Holy Spirit's work and ministry in the life of anyone, or any company, is the place of recognition of the fact of the utter impossibility of anything without Him.

It sometimes requires time, and often very drastic activities, history or experience. But we may take it as a settled thing that the Holy Spirit begins at zero, demands zero, and stands back until zero is struck. But zero is to be struck in our consciousness; we have to be made aware of its fact.

We are called with a great calling. We are called into the fellowship of God's Son; called to a great life; into living relationship to God Himself. We are called to a high life, a life which is God's own life in its nature, in its virtues; a holy life, a glorious life, a mighty life, a rich life.

We are called also into a great service, the fellowship of the gospel. It is the greatest work into which man has ever been called — workers together with God; God's fellow-workers. All of us are called into an eternal, heavenly and universal vocation. And yet the fact remains that neither you nor I, nor any man, can breathe the first breath of that life, or take the first step in that vocation without the Holy Spirit; and every subsequent breath and every subsequent step is in utter and entire dependence upon the Holy Spirit and impossible apart from Him. He is the vitality of that life and that service, and He is the quality of it. He is the very energy of it, and He is the nature of it. There is a great utterance of the Lord Jesus which is very far-reaching, and has a very profound meaning: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Now there you have two creations, and one of those creations is said to be the direct and immediate result of the Holy Spirit. But, mark you, the distinctive feature of that creation is not that it is just produced by the objective fiat or order of the Holy Spirit, as though

the Spirit said: Let be! It is not as though the Spirit commanded a creation to come into being, and it came in; as though there went forth a word and a power, and as the result some order of things was constituted. That is only half. The essential thing is this, that the Holy Spirit gives the character to the thing which He brings forth. He gives it its nature and its quality. It is Spirit! It is not merely something produced by divine power, but something with a certain quality, a certain nature. It is Spirit; that is, right at its innermost reality it is spiritual. That makes possible its relationship to God, who is a Spirit; and because of that everything else follows.

Take the matter of goodness, holiness. There is no goodness outside of God. That sweeps the board of all the counterfeits, all the false philosophies, the humanitarianisms, and the substitutes of the devil. Even the Lord Jesus Himself will interrogate a man who says to Him: "Good Master ..."; He will say: "Why do you call Me good? There is none good but one, that is, God." There is, of course, a deeper meaning of that interrogation. It carries with it this further interrogation: "Do you recognise who I am?" But still the principle holds good: "There is none good but one, that is, God." Goodness is inseparably bound up with God.

Nothing that does not come from God can get back to God; therefore, the Holy Spirit must be the quality of that which is going to get back to God. That is the profoundest element in the new birth, being born of the Spirit, that the Holy Spirit gives a divine quality to that which comes to Him, making it possible for that to come to God; and apart from that kind of birth nothing will ever get to God. From the very first act of the Holy Spirit in new birth, in introducing that divine quality, that divine element, right on, all goodness is mediated by the Holy Spirit, and is never found anywhere else. You and I cannot produce it, constitute it, provide it or contribute one fragment of it. Every bit of it comes by the Holy Spirit. The increase of holiness, of goodness, of divine nature, is by way of the Holy Spirit all the time.

When that is taken in its inclusive meaning, it is seen that the life of a child of God is an impossible thing without the Holy Spirit. We cannot live the Christian life apart from Him. But that also means this, that to live the life of the child of God fully, we must be filled with the Spirit. We shall live as children of God in the measure in which the Holy Spirit has possession of our lives, and no more. If the Spirit fills we shall be living the life of a child of God on a very full scale. If the Spirit is not filling then our lives as children of God will be at low ebb, or proportionately without the Holy Spirit.

What is true in the matter of the life is true in the matter of the service. No matter how much knowledge there may be, enthusiasm, vigour, interest, activity, the measure of the abiding, eternal, universal fruitfulness

is essentially the measure of the Holy Spirit doing the work. It is not for us to judge, but it is for us to recognise facts. It is for us to recognise the laws that God has already laid down. Nothing which is not done by the Holy Spirit is done of God.

That is a challenging statement, and it may raise many problems, provoke many questions. Nevertheless that fact is sure, and even to disciples who had seen all that the Lord Jesus had to show them in the days of His flesh, and heard all that He had to say to them in those days, and had recognised His cross, and had seen Him after His resurrection, the Word is still: “Tarry ye ... until ...”. And then from zero, the first breath, the first activity by the Holy Spirit, right on through everything afterwards there must be the activity of the Holy Spirit. When that ceases to be the order of the day, and men assume responsibility for the work of God, you find a different state of things coming in. That is responsible for a very painful history, of which we are all too well aware as having gone on through the centuries. It is fruitless to contemplate such questions as what would have happened if things had continued as they were at the beginning, and if only we could have had another generation on the basis of the ministry of the apostle Paul. It was said some years ago that if things had continued on the basis of the worldwide activity of the Moravian brethren in their first years, the whole world would have been evangelised in less than a generation. Here today, two thousand years afterwards, the whole world is nothing like evangelised. Why? Well, things did not continue as they were at the beginning, and that is the answer. But it is a very forceful answer. It is a mighty way of enforcing this fact, that, pile up your activities, pour in your energies, and let them be other than the activities of the Holy Spirit, and you spread things over an indefinite time, and never reach your end.

That is taking a wide view, but what belongs to the wide view comes down to the individual. None of us can live or serve to any divine purpose except by the Holy Spirit.

That means, then, that we shall have to come to that consciousness, in a very real way, of the Holy Spirit’s basis of beginning and going on. We shall be compelled sooner or later to take that position, either by force of outward circumstances (and who shall say that that is not moving again today in a very real way, in the realisation of ineffectiveness and inability to cope with the situation), or by reason of our own inward state, our utter weakness, the breakdown in the realm of our own efforts, where we come in every part of our being to recognise that that is something beyond us, we cannot touch it.

Oh! the utter folly of trying to inflate human energy and activity in the enterprise of the gospel, and thrusting out into this universal conflict human stuff, upon the basis of: Go and do the best you can for Christ! That spells

ruin sooner or later. Oh, that every one who went out into the work of the gospel had first of all been brought to this place of tarrying until they were endued with power from on high, and that under the deep consciousness that the whole thing was beyond them otherwise.

The Lord Jesus kept men near to Him for three years, and more, and during that time we have a very clear manifestation of the fact that they were unfit for this work. How they did break down on the right hand and on the left! And how their deepest and strongest confidence in themselves was proved to be the leaning upon a broken reed! One who would, with loudest voice, and with truest motive and meaning as far as he knew himself, declare that he would go even to death with his Lord, would be found within a very few hours denying his Lord in order to save his own skin. How little we know ourselves until we are put to the test! The Lord knew quite well that there were big tests ahead for these men. He knew what was in man, and He sought to let them know it, so that they came to the place where they knew, so deeply that there was no shadow of a doubt about it, that it was impossible to them. God only must do it, and if God did not do it then it could never be done.

That is not some advanced point in spiritual life and service. That is the commencing point of the work of the Holy Spirit. It may be that we go a long way before we come to that place, but, mark you, the Holy Spirit has not advanced that way, but has been waiting for the hour when He can say: Now we will commence! You commenced perhaps years ago, but we will commence now! That is the effect of it. If you have had an experience at all of an enlargement of the Holy Spirit in your life, you know that when that comes you say: Why, nothing has happened until now! We may have been very busy, active, energetic, but really we are only just beginning. That enlargement of the Holy Spirit in our lives is now beginning, and when that comes it comes to us as though nothing ever was before that time.

Oh, that this should really come to us by the illumination of the Holy Spirit Himself! Oh, that you and I should really see that everything, everything — the great comprehensive everything — to the most minute detail in relation to God, depends upon the Holy Spirit.

“Apart from Me ye can do nothing.” That is only another way of saying that everything, from the first gesture in this realm of divine things, depends entirely upon “Me”; so much so that the very first thing you find about the Holy Spirit in the unveiling of His work is the absolute sovereignty of God in relation to our knowing anything about the Spirit and the Spirit’s work.

That needs explaining. What is the first simile used in relation to the Holy Spirit and the child of God? It is ‘wind’. “The wind blows ...” at your beck and call, by your command or forbidding? No! It does not say anything like

that. “The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit.” There is a sovereignty about the wind. It takes things right out of your hands. Nothing can stand up against the wind. Nothing can control the wind. So is every one born of the Spirit. What was the sound of the rushing, mighty wind on the day of Pentecost? No one has said: Wind, blow today! It is not in the power of any mortal to control the movement or the time of the movement of the wind by the Spirit of God; it is absolutely sovereign. There is a sovereignty about this matter of new birth that man cannot bring about. No one can be born again by their own decision, by their own choice. No one can appoint the time when they shall be born again; in spite of all the procrastinators who say: Not today! Tomorrow! Later on! When the Spirit moves it is for us to put up our sails, or we may be eternally becalmed if we do not take advantage of that divine movement. This matter, right at its inception, is altogether outside of man’s control, man’s power. The sovereignty of the Holy Spirit is its own basic proof that everything is with Him and nothing is with us. What is with us is subsequent. The Spirit moves, the Spirit presents Christ, the Spirit convicts, the Spirit gives the message. What is subsequent to that is our attitude towards it.

We mention all this just to emphasise the fact that the beginnings are with the Spirit, as the continuations and the consummations. It is all with Him in life and in service.

It relieves us of a great deal of responsibility when we are rightly adjusted. When the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost acted according to His sovereignty, He took the commission right out of the hands of the disciples, and put the disciples into the hands of the commission. Do you see the force of that? “Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel ...”. That is the commission. When the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost sovereignly acted they did not have to call a committee and say: Now we must consider the commission and arrange how it shall be done; and we will send so-and-so in this direction, and those in that direction, and others still in a third direction! It happened! They went! They did not wait for conditions, counsels or commissioning. The Holy Spirit took the thing into His hands. He possessed Himself of the commission, and He possessed Himself of the men. The men and the commission became one, altogether apart from any human arrangement. That is very effective, and very blessed! Oh, to come back to recognise that, no matter whether we sit down for days and weeks on end to purpose, intend, arrange the work of the Lord, we shall never get anywhere unless the Holy Spirit comes and takes charge. And when the Holy Spirit takes charge things happen. The glorious sovereignty of the Spirit! Everything is with Him.

## **The main objective of the Holy Spirit**

There is a remarkable sequence of things in the Gospel by John in this connection. In chapter 1 the object of the Holy Spirit is brought into view. John the Baptist said concerning the Lord Jesus: "I knew Him not ...". That is a remarkable statement. There were many men walking about, and John was not able to discern who of all the men about was the Lord Jesus. "... but He that sent me ... said unto me, Upon whomsoever thou shalt see the Spirit descending ... the same is He ...". How utterly that Deity was veiled, that John the Baptist knew Him not. He is the Son of God.

Now note: the Holy Spirit is there related definitely and distinctly with sonship. And while it is true that the Sonship of the Lord Jesus is a unique Sonship, the truth holds good for all others in Christ who are sons of God, that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of sonship, and the object of the Holy Spirit's advent is sonship. Chapter 1 of John's Gospel is always the foundation chapter of the whole Gospel.

## **New birth by the Spirit**

Chapter 3 is the commencement of the practical process. Born of the Spirit. There the feature is sovereignty. The wind! The Spirit!

## **Vessels for the Spirit's residence**

You pass to chapter 4, and you have the Holy Spirit again, but a new development. The woman of Samaria, her vessel let down into the well, becoming full of water. This is used as an illustration, an illustration which falls far short of that which it illustrates. "The water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up unto eternal life." What is the new development? The sovereignty of the Spirit! Yes, but now the vessels of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit becoming definitely resident within distinct vessels. For what purpose? To fulfil exactly the same purpose as that woman's water. Why did she come all this way to draw water? Because she could not live without it! That was all! Cut off the water supply, and you cut off the life. It will not be long before the people are all dead.

Now you see, to become the very essential, indispensable life of the believer, the Holy Spirit becomes resident within the vessel. There is no life without. Everything depends upon Him. From the first breath to the last, all is bound up with the Holy Spirit.

We are seeking to give the Lord something to work upon, as we say all

these things; that the Lord will bring it all home to us and show the place which the Holy Spirit occupies.

We will stay here for a parenthesis; somewhat technical, and perhaps theological, but important. It is a false move, and a very dangerous one to separate between Father, Son and Holy Spirit. If we begin to make the Holy Spirit something, or Someone, holding an importance which is apart from the Father and the Son, to say nothing of superior thereto, we are in the way of the greatest peril. To make the Holy Spirit the figurehead, and not to keep in view the equal importance of Father and Son, is to become unbalanced in a way that will open the door to the most terrible deceptions and consequences. The Holy Spirit is working in relation to the Father, through the Son, and the Holy Spirit will never work on His own in relation to Himself. So that the Lord Jesus has to be kept in an equal place with the Holy Spirit, and the Father in an equal place with the Son. It is important to say that. You may not see the force of it just now, but it may break upon you at some other time. But let us be careful that when we are saying so much about the Holy Spirit we do not begin mentally to draw a circle round the Holy Spirit and concentrate on the Spirit. That is the thing which has led to some of the great modern deceptions, and ruin in the faith of many.

Making that as a parenthesis, let us notice this further thing.

### **The fulness of the Spirit constituting a witness**

When you pass from chapter 4 of John's Gospel into chapter 7, you pass into a still more, shall we say, advanced, or more fully developed activity of the Holy Spirit. This is what is found in chapter 7: "... out of his inner being shall flow rivers of living water". You are now born again, a child of God; you are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, and He has become your life utterly. What must be the result of that? That you have a testimony. Thereby you become constituted a witness.

Chapter 7 takes you to what is transpiring in the temple, the pouring out of the great vessels of water from the pool, celebrating the great last day of the feast. The Lord Jesus takes it all up and brings it over to Himself. What is the temple for? It is the place of the testimony of the Lord, the ministry of God; from which there should go forth to the ends of the earth that testimony, which is the testimony of Life. Ezekiel's vision showed the waters issuing from under the altar, from the sanctuary; coming down out from the court, away to empty themselves into the distant ocean, a river deepening and widening all the way. And on this side and on that side were very many trees, and all those trees were bearing their fruit continually and their leaves never faded. All this

was the expression of this life; for we are the testimony to this life, which comes out of the sanctuary. The Lord Jesus says: That is you, in My thought! Out from you (your bodies a temple of the Holy Spirit) shall flow rivers of living water; a testimony of life shall come through. That which issues from you, being the Spirit of the Lord, shall have all the way along that which speaks of the power of that life, the freshness of that life, the glory of that life. That is, wherever the river comes there shall be an expression of life. That is to be the effect of our being here as indwelt, permeated, filled with the Spirit.

Not only may we be conscious of it (and this is where we have to walk carefully and watchfully), but so many people want that baptism of the Holy Spirit which will deliver them altogether from a life of faith — for that is the effect of it in their lives. If only they can get that it will all be sense, and no longer faith; they will know, they will feel. But there is no word in the Scriptures which indicates that being filled with the Holy Spirit will deliver us from a life of faith. Very often it has proved that the most effective work done by the Holy Spirit through a life has been altogether hidden from the one who was used. They never had any consciousness of it being done, but it was done. Years afterwards they have received a letter, or they have met somebody who said: Do you know, on such-and-such an occasion the Lord spoke to me through you, and from that day to this I have been changed! And you remember: Oh, that was the time I had that bad patch, when I thought nothing at all was accomplished. Yes, He often hides His work. And the activity of the Holy Spirit does not mean that we shall not have to go on in faith. It is not always when we feel we are having a great time that the Holy Spirit is having a great time. The flowing out of the rivers is not always a thing that means that we can just splash about in it and have a good time. Sometimes it may be through agony and travail that life comes to others, death working in us.

Blessed be God, what does it matter (if the thing is done) if we struggle, and other souls are being born, quickened, renewed through our travail. The Lord says: “Out of his inner being shall flow ...”. That is our privilege, our blessed calling. That is a part of sonship. Birth, indwelling, ministry are all of the one Spirit, and all depends upon Him.

May the result of our meditation be that we come to a place where we do recognise that, as for ourselves, everything is impossible and hopeless. That brings us to the last word for the moment.

### **The cross closely related to the Holy Spirit**

That is why we commenced this meditation with the passage in John 7:39: “... this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believed on Him were

to receive: for the Spirit was not yet (given); because Jesus was not yet glorified.” How would He be glorified? Through the cross, that is all. Come back to chapter 1, the basic chapter for the whole Gospel, and see the two things related. John looked upon Jesus and said: “Behold, the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world ...”, the same is He that baptizes with the Holy Spirit: A Lamb! The Holy Spirit! What do you have there? The cross and the Spirit. You will always find those two things go together. Christ has redeemed us from the curse, having been made a curse for us, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit. The cross and the Spirit! First of all it is zero; and then the Holy Spirit begins. It is the end; and then He takes up things anew. It must be that way. Every new depth of death is a new fulness of the Spirit. These are old truths; there is nothing new in what we are saying. But, oh, how important!

Doubtless we have assented to all this; but do we agree, not to the doctrine, but to the position? It is that or nothing. That is the Lord’s Word. Life or testimony; life or ministry, only by the Spirit. All is possible by the Spirit. Everything is possible in life, in ministry: “Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts”. The Lord speak His Word into our hearts!

## THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE NAME OF JESUS

*Reading: John 7:37-39; Eph.1:19-23; Phil. 2:9-11.*

If you read through the book of the Acts, you will find that there are two main features running right through that book, two things which are uppermost. They are the Holy Spirit, and the Name of Jesus. The Holy Spirit is mentioned some seventy times in the book. The Name of Jesus is mentioned more than thirty times. You will see that they are joined together, they are in operation together. The Holy Spirit has assumed charge of everything, and as He goes forward with His mighty work He does it always in, through and by the Name of Jesus. We would suggest once more a perusal of the book, with a view to a fresh impression being made upon you, in connection with the place of the Name of Jesus. And you will not get very far into the book before that impression becomes a very strong one, and one which provokes in you wonder and praise.

The fact that these two things are the main features and characteristics of the book is very significant, and bears out so clearly this passage in John 7, as well as the words uttered by Peter on the day of Pentecost about the exaltation and glorifying of the Lord Jesus. In John 7 the distinct and clear statement is by way of comment on the part of the apostle upon what the Lord Himself had said: "... the Spirit was not yet; because Jesus was not yet glorified." The logic is that when Jesus was glorified the Holy Spirit would be; that is, His day would come. And so it proved, that on the glorifying of the Lord Jesus in heaven the Holy Spirit immediately came forth; and the first utterances of men under the government of the newly outpoured Spirit were all about the exaltation of the Lord Jesus. Not only were their utterances around the Name, the glory, the exaltation, the Lordship; but their deeds were all in the Name, upon the basis of the Name.

Much later on the apostle Paul is found giving a fairly full explanation of all that happened when the Lord Jesus returned to glory. He says that God highly exalted Him, and gave unto Him the Name which is above every name, that in the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven, in earth,

under the earth. Or, again: "... raised Him from the dead ... Far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all." That is the explanation of what took place when Christ returned to heaven. That is the ground upon which the Holy Spirit came.

In the contemplation of the Name of Jesus we have to find the starting-point, and to find the starting-point we have to go a long way back. And we shall be conducted to our starting-point by one very clear intimation in the words we have mentioned. A conjunction will be brought into view: "Wherefore, God highly exalted Him ...", showing to us that the exaltation of the Lord Jesus, and His being given the title to sovereignty, which is above every title, is a thing merited. It is not just something by way of mechanical appointment. It is not something which just represents an office (the office is carried with it); it speaks of a work done by which the title was merited and inherited.

We are linked in the context with a former position occupied by Him, a position of equality with God, which was undisputed on the divine side, settled, not argued, but simply affirmed. Away back in that dateless time there was, as we know, an aspiration, an ambition in another direction to be possessed of a title, the putting forth of the hand to grasp that title as something to be grasped at. The result of that through long, long, terrible centuries we know only too well. The position of dominion in the universe was sought after, to be personally held out of relationship to God, on a basis of independent action and personal interest.

There is the root and spring of all independent action and personal interest, and the fruit is easy to be seen. Its direction was possession apart from God. We will not dwell upon the dark side of the consequent history, but we do know that a rift or a discord came into the whole universal order through that act. Universal dominion has been shattered, the oneness, the concreteness, shall we say the cohesion, of the universe has been upset; a disintegrating force has been projected against the absolute unity of the universe in its government. If we did but know it, everything with which we are familiar of a spiritual character in the small fragment of our earthly life is just the coming out of that vast cesspool which was created at that time. Every bit of broken fellowship, discord, absence of unity, all these things of which we become aware in the spiritual realm when we become spiritual, as things which are always seeking to break in again to get the mastery once more, to assert themselves. These are not things which just come into the realm of our life as something new; they are like the

miasmas from that pit just coming up again, like the rolling clouds coming on across the ages.

Have you seen a great volume of smoke arising from some huge fire, and the breeze carrying it in rolling waves across the fields on, on and on to the distant horizon? Everything near and far, right to the end of sight, becomes touched by that smoke. You sense it afar off. That is exactly what happened in the spiritual realm away back in that dateless time. And even today when we become spiritually sensitive we sense that thing which has come across the ages, and it has broken up the spiritual unity of the universe.

That spiritual unity of the universe has to be recovered. That one sovereign government, centred in One — not in two, not in a host, but in One — has got to be re-established. All that fruit of an independent action and a personal interest has got to be destroyed, and once more this universe has to come under one Head, one government, one Name, without rival. That is the story of Calvary. You see that the Name which is above every name, the title to sovereignty above every title, the government unchallenged and unrivalled, is something which is given upon the basis of a work; it is merited. At the beginning the challenge, the ambition, the personal reaching out to possess, was something without merit. It was an unmerited possession. It was something sought ambitiously for self, out of relation with God. That was why it was denied, and that is why the rivalry was set up. It has to be merited.

This fact leads us to the heart of such incidents as the temptation of the Lord in the wilderness. When He was shown all the kingdoms of this world and the glory thereof, and offered them for one moment's worship, the Lord Jesus repudiated the whole. His repudiation carried with it two things. Firstly, this can never be truly and abidingly had as a personal thing out of relation with God; and, secondly, this is a thing which must be won, and can never be had as a gift at any other hand than the hand of Him who has a right to give it. And so He went the way of winning it, to receive it at the proper hands, and that way was the way of the cross. He became "obedient unto death; yea, the death of the cross. Wherefore God highly exalted Him, and gave unto Him the name ...". The Lord Jesus possesses that Name by right, as a merit. The Lord Jesus possesses that Name at the hand of God, and into Him we see once more gathered the unity of the government of the universe. In Him, again everything is made to hold together, says the apostle in the first chapter of his Colossian letter. It is that cohesion of the universe, that unity, that oneness in Him.

Unity is not something that can be brought about by any kind of human agreement. Unity is a thing which is only possible by the registration of the Name of Jesus in all that that Name contains of a mighty conquest of

the forces of disunity. We can never hold together simply because we come to certain sympathetic understandings of one another. We can never hold together because we take one another's imperfections into consideration and agree that we will not take very much notice of them. We can never hold together because we have an understanding upon certain things about which we will be agreed. We shall find that in that realm, and in every such like realm, the devil still has power. The only ground upon which unity of the right kind of the divine kind, can be had, is that there exists, in all its virtue — the virtue of its mighty, universal victory, the power of the Name of Jesus. We win only in that Name, not as a phrase, a label, but in all the spiritual virtue of that Name; for that Name represents something immense beyond our conception. It gathers up into itself all the mighty, infinite forces of a universal conquest. You can understand why things happened "in the name of Jesus" at the beginning.

It sounds so simple, so beautiful — and some have even foolishly fallen into a sentimental realm — when you read the second chapter of the book of the Acts: "... and had all things common". "And they sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all, according as any man had need." That is all very beautiful and nice, and it sounds like a very friendly little party. But there was something mightier behind it. The Holy Spirit did that, and you and I cannot imitate that. We never can say we will have a nice Pentecostal fellowship; we will have things as they had at the beginning; we will arrange it according to this plan! No! It cannot be done. That was the direct outcome of the advent of the Holy Spirit, and of the Holy Spirit having full possession of those lives. That carries with it this immense truth, that the Holy Spirit had come in relation to the Name of Jesus, that is in relation to all that that Name represented in the meeting of the full measure of the outcome of that original act in the hand against the throne. It is a very solemn thing, and places a tremendous responsibility upon us, to contemplate this fact, that any lack of unity, broken fellowship, discord between the saints, for which we may be responsible by reason of any real fault, unwatchfulness, lack of tolerance, unkindness, or for any other reason, is in direct complicity with the devil in its nature. It is not intended by us, but it is that in its nature. Or, to put that in another way, it is a hand against the throne, it is a movement against the testimony of Jesus, and we know only too well that when the enemy has been able to bring that about — and he has brought it about again and again — it has always jeopardised the interests of the Lord Jesus. It has always prejudiced His testimony and it has always taken from that glory which is His at the Father's right hand.

If we are responsible for that, and the Holy Spirit strives with us along that line, to get that put right, and warns and urges that that thing shall be put right, and we do not do it, we fall into a most tragic and terrible end; we are involved in that original work of the devil. That is a terrible thing to say, but it is true.

All this is but a way of saying one or two things, which can be said more simply and directly, but which need bearing out more fully. They are these: the Holy Spirit works in relation to the Name of Jesus, but that means that the Holy Spirit establishes all that that Name means of victory upon the ground of the cross, which cross must have its inward application to our lives to destroy the thing that is against the Name. One of the outcomes of that is fellowship among the saints.

Let us put that in another way. What is the basis of true fellowship? What is the basis of real spiritual fellowship? To use the New Testament word: What is the basis of New Testament “unity”? It is threefold: it is the cross, dealing its death blow to all that which has come in, into man, into the universe, through Satan’s original act; it is the Name, as representing the One in whom we are united, the Lord Jesus; it is the Holy Spirit, who is working from the victory represented by that Name, on the ground of the cross, in us. The threefold basis of divine, spiritual, indestructible unity is the cross, the Name, and the Holy Spirit.

It is very blessed to see the spontaneous outworking of that in the New Testament. It just came about then. The cross accomplished, Christ glorified, the Holy Spirit come; all those three made good in the lives of a company of men and women, and you have such unity as you can never find elsewhere outside of that realm.

From that point onward the enemy will be busy to bring back something of the old ground. It is not long before He finds occasion in someone who has not come on to that ground of their utter death to self, personal interest and independent action. What were the governing things in the life and action of Ananias and Sapphira? Personal interest and independent action. It is as clear as anything can be. The enemy found that ground in them, and sought to break in upon that whole regime of Holy Spirit fellowship in the Name of Jesus. It was a blow against the testimony. What was the end? The end was terrible, awful. It was also swift! And things had to be swift in those days, because the Lord was laying down laws for the whole dispensation; and so He quickly made His laws operative for our instructions. Sooner or later something like that will happen in every similar case; that is, a disastrous end will come.

We do not know why we are specially urged to stress this subject: unity, spiritual fellowship. But it comes up in a very strong way, because it is clear

that the result of the enemy's work at the beginning was to divide this universe, to send schism right through it. What then is the means by which that will be rendered inoperative, nil? It will simply be as the cross is really wrought into our being, getting rid of every kind of personal interest and independent line of things, where things are toward ourselves and for ourselves, out of the universal relationship.

There are some very clear, strong, and obvious examples today in certain realms where the subjective aspect of the work of the cross is refused. In those realms you find the largest number of discords, rifts, breaks in fellowship, divisions and schisms. That is perfectly clear. You do not need spectacles on to help you to see that. To put that the other way round; where the strongest fellowships are to exist, which hell cannot upset and the devil cannot destroy, will be the place where the cross is most deeply wrought into the life to destroy anything that is of a personal and independent character; when you and I are brought to the place, through that deep inworking of the cross, where nothing matters to us personally — and sometimes the test is closely applied. It is easy to say things like that, but it is not always easy to be made a doormat of, or, even less than that, to be put up in a corner and never taken any notice of at all. You might even save yourself by a spirit of martyrdom by being a doormat, but to be excluded from all recognition at all is more than human nature takes kindly to.

When the cross has been deeply wrought into our being you and I are brought to the place where nothing of a personal character matters. When truly before God — not as we think or imagine, for we do not know ourselves — but before the eyes of Him who is able to look through and see every film, every mist, every little taint of self, it really and truly is the Lord's glory alone which matters, you have a fellowship, a unity, which hell cannot touch, which the devil cannot break into. That represents a deep work and application of the cross of the Lord Jesus, and the work of the Holy Spirit is to that end. The Spirit of holiness is always seeking to get rid of every taint of self which forms a suitable ground for satanic activity; He is always seeking sanctification, and when He works that kind of sanctification, He is working in relation to the glory of that Name.

The Name of the Lord Jesus is wonderfully glorified in the second chapter of the book of the Acts because self has gone out, the cross is deeply represented in their spiritual state. There is no other way! What a mighty thing real spiritual unity is, and what a great work lies behind it. And what a great means of bringing the glory of that Name into view. We cannot stand in the Name of the Lord Jesus and have any personal interest. Those two things are mutually exclusive; they cannot go together. If there is a personal interest, the

power of that Name is set aside. That Name is the Name of Him who had no personal interest, who above all others in this universe had personal rights, reputation, position, and emptied Himself of every bit of it all, and so emptied Himself as to be obedient unto the death of the cross. Was there ever a more emptying means than the death of the cross? Now the Name shines with its pristine glory and splendour, because in His case there was not found a trace of self. "Wherefore also God highly exalted Him ...". The whole sovereignty and government of this universe is potentially, and will be presently consummately and actually concentrated in the Name of Jesus, and gathered up into His sovereign Headship. Every element that disputes that will be before long ruled out from this universe, and He will reign without rival, without the slightest suggestion of disputing His rights. He will reign whose right it is to reign. But let no one think that is just because God appointed Him to that. That is because He has attained that position through a course which was just the opposite to that adopted by the one who sought to obtain that same end by personal motives. We shall only know the operation of the power of the Holy Spirit in the measure in which the cross has dealt with all that ground in us.

There is a price associated with power. Human nature has in it a deeply rooted craving for power. It takes different forms, it may be of different kinds, but it is there. In the simplest form of expression it is that in us which dislikes being thought nothing of. The modern phrase, 'inferiority complex', is an expression which goes right to the heart of human nature. It is the consciousness that you are no good, worthless, and that is how everyone else regards you. It is only perhaps the lowest level of this thing, which expresses itself in many other forms and along more intense lines; a desire for power, place, recognition, reputation. From its lowest level it rises to the great world despotisms, the grasping at power that is in the whole human race. We have to have our ideas of power entirely revolutionised, turned inside out and upside down when we come to the Lord Jesus, and we have to recognise the infinite significance of a Lamb in the midst of the throne.

Why have a lamb and a sheep been chosen pre-eminently throughout the Bible as the type and symbol of One whose destiny it is to reign universally and have dominion from sea to sea? Well, try on any other creature what you can try on a lamb and see the result! Take a goat and see what you can do with a goat! We speak reverently, only by way of illustration. Take a pig and see what you can do with a pig. Take any other beast, and see what you can do! Take the lamb and the sheep: they are unresisting, without a sound, yielding, uncomplaining. Therein is the sublime symbol: He was "led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is dumb so He opened not His mouth". That is yieldedness; that is self-losing; that is the absence of the

uprising of personal strength to stand up for its own rights. That is the thing that is going to be represented in the mightiest power that this universe has ever known; but it revolutionises our ideas of power. We come to dominion by letting go, and not by standing up for our rights. We shall learn to reign by learning how to be emptied of all desire to reign as a personal desire. That is what is in the Name.

We may come into a mighty battle over a situation, and we never get through that spiritual battle, though we may be appealing to the Name, applying the Name, until we have been searched through and through as to whether we have a personal desire bound up with this thing, a personal interest in it. The whole issue is suspended until the fire has discovered anything of self, and when that has gone the way is clear. Very often it is not in the intense fire and conflict that we get through. The heats are too great. It is when we come to the place of helpless prostration and say we can do no more, and we surrender to the Lord, that the thing just goes through. The power of the Name is the power of divine virtues, wrought into the very depths of human nature, the human nature of the Lord Jesus. That Name is the Name which rests upon a perfected human nature through all the fires of personal testings. He has triumphed as a Man in every kind of testing, as to whether He would act out of relation to God, out of fellowship with His Father, with Himself in view, for His own sake and for His own ends. But never for one moment could He be diverted one hair's breadth from that utter selfless fellowship with His Father, not on any consideration, though He might escape the cross and all that the cross held. If any offer, bribe, suggestion, trick or threat carried with it the idea of disloyalty to His Father, acting out of fellowship with Him or serving His own ends, then the thing could not be entertained whatever the cost: "Wherefore also God highly exalted Him, and gave unto Him the name which is above every name." It is the virtue of all that that is in the Name.

When we are going to live and labour in the power of the Name it represents a spiritual position to which we have come through faith, where for us the cross means nothing for ourselves and all for Him; no interests whatever of ours to be taken into account, only His. Upon that the Name can come. The Holy Spirit has come to produce in us that state which is in Him at God's right hand, in order that all the power of that Name might operate in us and through us.

In the midst of this great realm we simply struggle for expression. How infinitely and universally wonderful is the Name of Jesus, when you get back to the starting-point and see what it was, and what it has been all through the ages, that was the ground upon which that Name had to be secured! What terrible work has been done because one wanted a name for himself! What

mischievous, the result of one wanting a name for himself, a reputation, a position, and an influence for himself. The history of these many generations of misery is the history of that one act. And whenever there is any kind of reproduction of that sort of thing you have in measure a continuation of that state — unhappiness, discord, loss of peace and rest and all such things. But when He comes, and in Himself, in His cross, takes up the whole thing from its root upwards, and deals with it in His own Person, and carries to glory a mighty, all-inclusive triumph over those works of the devil which he was manifested to destroy, the Holy Spirit comes.

The Holy Spirit comes to make real in us that work of His cross, and that power of His Name. When we ask for the Holy Spirit let us recognise what we are asking for. The Holy Spirit must have empty vessels. There is a lot in that word “empty”. The Name of Jesus must have the cross as its foundation. It is the great “wherefore”; the cross leading to the Name in its mighty, infinite potency.

The Holy Spirit is here to glorify the Name of Jesus, and that necessitates the making good of all the virtues that are represented by and bound up in that Name; and reproducing in the heart of the believer the state that that Name represents of an utter selflessness and an utter abandonment to the glory of God.

We have only touched the fringe of this thing. There is so much yet for us to know. The Lord bring us into the place where we can truly glory in the Name of Jesus.

## THE ILLUMINATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

*Reading: John 14:15-18, 25-27; 15:26-27; 16:7-14.*

It is necessary to mention a few technical details before we come to the real value of these Scriptures. In John 3 the symbol of the Holy Spirit is “wind”; in John 4 it is “water”; in John 7 it is the water again, a river, or rivers. When you come to this second triad of references, you find it is not symbols but direct teaching. Quite a clearly marked change is found here, and this change has its reason. In the first three passages you are dealing with the unsaved. When you come to these chapters you are dealing with disciples, those in close and believing relationship to the Lord. So that you pass from the elementary forms of teaching by symbols into the realm where things can be stated quite plainly and clearly without any illustration. Here you are dealing with people who are in faith relationship to Christ. Then we are able to understand and appreciate the value of these particular statements. These things cannot be said to unbelieving people. The things which are here uttered can never be given to those who are not in a faith relationship to the Lord Jesus. These things demand that basis. And yet they are prospective utterances. So far as this Gospel is concerned they are looking on to a time which has not yet arrived: “When the Comforter is come, whom I will send ...”.

For us that day has arrived, and that means that we are in the time now, not necessarily of waiting for these things but the time when these things are immediately available to us, and ought to be our blessed possession. A faith relationship to the Lord Jesus is necessary. Given that, there need be no waiting.

What are the things that are said? What is it here that is to be ours by the Holy Spirit? We will look at those things.

For the moment it is not necessary, and perhaps it would be without significance, to indicate that we are dealing in the second half of this Gospel with the collective side of things. In the first half we are dealing with the individuals: Nicodemus, the woman at the well; and all those chapters, right up to chapter 10, are related to individuals, and unsaved individuals. Now from chapter 10 onwards the collective comes in.

A further stage is reached in chapter 20, in relation to the Holy Spirit. From chapter 10 to chapter 17 there is the collective, and in chapter 20 the corporate comes in. There is a distinction between the collective and the corporate. The Lord is dealing with a company in these chapters especially from 10 to 17. When you get to chapter 20 you are on resurrection ground. The Lord Jesus, coming into their midst in resurrection, says: "Peace unto you; as the Father has sent Me, even so send I you." Then He breathed on them and said: "Receive ye the Holy Spirit." That is making a company, a collection, a One Body.

### **The inward illumination of the Spirit**

We return to chapter 14, verses 15-17: "If ye love Me, ye will keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may be with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive; for it beholds him not, neither knows Him: ye know Him; for He abides with you, and shall be in you." Verse 20: "In that day ye shall know ...". It is a very simple truth, but one of great value; so great is its value that to be without the realisation and enjoyment of it means to be in a very unsatisfactory spiritual state, in a state of great weakness, the weakness of the kind that ought not to be. It is that great value of inward illumination, He shall be in you! The world cannot receive Him because it knows Him not, it sees Him not. "In that day ye shall know."

The two things are set one against the other. On the one hand there is ignorance, darkness, blindness, and a state of incapacitation. The world cannot, because it sees not. It cannot because it is blind. But He shall be in you; at that day ye shall know. What a great blessing is ours now by the appropriation of faith, of inward illumination by the Holy Spirit. The value and importance of that being ours in an active way cannot be estimated. To be without that means to be in a state of helpless weakness in our relationship to the Lord. Many times we have said, and it must be repeated with renewed emphasis, not only now but perhaps continually, that one of the greatest needs of the Lord's people today lies in this very direction.

If we were to range the whole state of things which go by the Lord's Name today, and to understand why it is that they are so unsatisfactory as an expression of His mind, we should probably discover that this thing goes to the root of the whole situation. It is that the Lord's people, or those who bear the Name of the Lord, have become parts of a great external Christian order and system, as differing from the Holy Spirit's illumination of the things of the Lord within their own hearts. That does go to the root of matters. On the

one hand it means ignorance, it means incompetence, inefficiency, inability to take spiritual responsibility. It means exposure to almost anything which comes along which has a semblance of truth. It means openness to all manner of error and falsehood and deception. It means the being carried about by every wind of doctrine at the devices and cunning craftiness of men, whereby they lie in wait to deceive. All that is because of the absence of inward illumination by the Holy Spirit, and much more than that.

Turning from the disastrous and unhappy effects of such a state, let us view the thing positively, that it is true that for you and me the Lord has met this present provision, by giving the Holy Spirit of inward illumination on all matters concerning Himself, which also concern us. Spiritual strength, real sonship, is marked by that, that there is a real present, definite, personal, living inward knowledge of the Lord by the Holy Spirit, and nothing can substitute that. The stress laid upon this is born of the sense of the tremendous need of these days that the Lord should have strong, virile, spiritually competent children, that His family should not be composed of those who have very little, if any, immediate inward knowledge of Himself. This is the only thing to save from all the wreckage of the satanic campaign of deception. To send men and women out into the world who are not going to be easily caught by things which look like the truth, but are not; to have men and women who are able to take responsibility in relation to other lives also, for their preservation, their protection, their safeguarding, their holding in the way of life, it is necessary that the Lord has those who know the Holy Spirit in the direction of inward illumination.

It is a blessed thing to notice that the first thing that the Lord Jesus says to those who are in a living faith relationship to Himself is this thing. This is not necessarily something at an advanced point in the spiritual life, and you and I must grow and grow until we reach a certain point, and then we become possessed of spiritual inward illumination. We have seen those leap into this thing in the very early days of their spiritual life; that is, that almost from the beginning we have been able to discern their own personal walk with the Lord in which they were able to say: The Lord is speaking to me; the Lord is showing this and that to me; the Lord has been saying so-and-so to me!

For many this thing is not strange, but it is something they are already enjoying, something which is very real to them. If it is, then we are not speaking to you, but we are today tremendously exercised concerning a far-reaching state of things which is very much other than this, and which explains an appealing spiritual condition among multitudes who bear the Name of the Lord. The whole of their Christian life and order of things is

external to themselves, is bound up with a regulated, systematised order of Christianity in which they operate; but for them to know the voice of the Spirit, to be led by the Spirit, to be illumined by the Spirit concerning the Lord is another world.

It is not necessary to go further than simply to think of such a system as the system of Rome. It is an atrocity from this standpoint. Look at its results. Look at what can be done. I have been into the most solemn feasts of the Roman Church, where men and women in crowds at the moment of the elevation of the 'host' have prostrated themselves, and literally perspired, writhing in agony. Ten minutes later, in a brawl, they drew knives to stab one another. That is taking an extreme example. You may modify the thing, and to some extent get much higher levels of Christianity than that, but still it may be all external and outward. The only thing that will ever bring us to the place of spiritual maturity, to the satisfaction of God's heart, and express true sonship, is that which was true of the Lord Jesus when as Man on this earth He walked under the anointing of the Holy Spirit, knowing in His own heart what the Father was saying, and what the Father was doing. That is the present value of the Holy Spirit for us.

We may as well take these things as they come, and note that these things are provided already by the Lord, and given that we stand on the right ground of faith in all the work of our Lord Jesus in His cross, we can have these things by the appropriation of faith now. We do not come into things willy-nilly, and we do not come into these things automatically. God has made His promises and His provisions, but He desires something on our part before they can be made good to us. We have to recognise these facts, and look them straight in the face. First of all, God has definitely provided, on the ground of the cross of the Lord Jesus, the Holy Spirit, and one of the values of the Holy Spirit being given is inward illumination. Now, how is that going to be made good in my case? By the appropriation of faith! 'Lord, that is Your provision; I stand on the ground of the cross of Jesus Christ by faith, put in my claim for that, and appropriate it!' We shall find that it works, and we begin to know the Lord in a new way. But there must be a definite transaction with God on everything that He has offered, before it becomes an actual possession. You say, 'As a child of God, born again, surely I have the Holy Spirit?' There is all the difference between having and enjoying; and very often there is all the difference between having and living abidingly in the knowledge of what we have. But it is not a matter of having the Holy Spirit for everything. It is a matter of the Holy Spirit being able to make real all those things specifically in our experience. That comes by recognising the things, and exercising faith in relation to them.

## The Spirit's witness to Christ

“But when the Comforter is come ... even the Spirit of truth ... He shall bear witness of Me: and ye also bear witness, ...” (John 15:26-27). The question is: How shall the testimony of Jesus be maintained? That is a very big and important question. There is only one way, and this is it: “He shall bear witness of Me ...”. But, mark you, this again is the Holy Spirit's witness in the believer. Then the outward thing follows: “... and ye also bear witness ...”. The Holy Spirit is not going to bear witness to Jesus apart from instruments, but the witness of the instrument is subsequent to the witness of the Spirit; that is, the witnesses bear witness, because already witness has been borne in them.

That is how it was on the day of Pentecost. That is how it has ever been. What is the ministry of the church — that is, not of a special class in the church set aside to be ministers but the ministry of all believers? It is the maintaining through the dispensation of the testimony of Jesus. How shall that be done? In no other way and on no other ground than that the Holy Spirit has borne witness in the church, that is, in all believers, to Him.

Now follow this closely, for it is important. We shall see by this how it is possible for every believer to be in the ministry of the age, of the dispensation. That is our calling. What is it that constitutes us ministers of Jesus Christ? In other words: who are those that maintain the testimony of Jesus through the age? It is simply this, that the Holy Spirit bears witness to Him in us. What is the witness of the Holy Spirit to Him? (That comprises everything. Have you tried to range the content of the Lord Jesus? Have you ever sat down to try and draw up a list of all the values and virtues that are in the Lord Jesus? I have tried once or twice, and given it up. I thought one day that I would make a magnificent diagram, and catalogue all the things that are in Christ for us. I did not get very far, and will never try again. The content of the Lord Jesus can never be ranged, but there is in Him that which meets our need to a detail from A to Z. Whatever the need could possibly be in our life in relation to God, that is already in Christ for us. You will never, by any possibility, emergency or chance, come into a situation or a position in your life in relation to God, and in your service in relation to God, without provision already being made in Christ for that specific thing.) Now what is the witness of the Holy Spirit to Him? It is the revelation, for you, at all points, and times, and crises, and emergencies in your life, of that particular value in Christ to meet that particular need. So that as you go on in the Spirit He is just showing to you Christ in His manifold, many-sided, inexhaustible sufficiency for your life.

*To be continued.*