

4. The Works of the Spirit in Sanctification

The works of the Spirit in connection with the sanctification of God's saints are numerous and varied, although they are all directed toward, and productive of, the same general effects, namely, sanctification and final glorification. 1 Pet. 1:2—"according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." Let us examine briefly the different things which the Spirit is said, in Scripture, to do for the saints of God by His indwelling of them.

1. Christians are said to have the "spirit of adoption," that is, the Spirit of the Divine family. The alien who complies with the terms or admission or incorporation into the Body of Christ is thereby adopted into God's family, the Household of the Faith. Rom. 8:14-15: "For as many as are led by the spirit of God, these are sons of God. For ye receive not the spirit of bondage again unto fear; but ye received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." The adopted person thus becomes an heir of God and joint-heir with Jesus Christ. After his adoption, not before, he has the right, according to the Will of God, to call God his Father; he has the privilege of wearing the family name, the name *Christian* (Acts 11:25); he has the hope of the Heavenly Inheritance; and he may rightly claim to have the Spirit of the Divine family. Gal. 4:5—"that he [Christ] might redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." Eph. 1:5—"having foreordained us unto adoption as sons through Jesus Christ unto himself."

2. This privilege of adoption carried with it *the witness of the Spirit*. Rom. 8:16,17—"The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God: and if children, then heirs: heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." This is all very clear. The Spirit bears witness *with* our spirits, not *to* our spirits. The Spirit, through the Word, instructs us regarding what we must do to be saved and to continue in a saved state, and our spirits tell us whether or not we have complied with His instructions. Therefore His Spirit and our spirits bear witness *with* each other, *to* one and the same truth, namely, that we are children of God. No man can deceive his own spirit. There is no intimation here that

the Spirit leads His people in some mysterious, incomprehensible manner; on the contrary, the inference is that He leads them by the teaching of the Word. He who is led by the Word is led by the Spirit; he who does not following the teaching of the Word is *not* led by the Spirit; and he who has the Word—the Mind of Christ—in his heart and life has also the Spirit. I John 3:23-24: “And this is his [God’s] commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, even as he gave us commandment. And he that keepeth his commandments abideth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he gave us.” Our abiding in Christ, and His indwelling us, is predicated on our keeping His commands. When we keep those commandments, Christ dwells in us “by the Spirit which he gave us.” Therefore, “as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God . . . and if children, then heirs: heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ.” This teaching is all in harmony with our fundamental thesis that the Spirit indwells the people of God *through faith*.

3. God’s people under the New Covenant are also said to have the *seal of the Spirit*. Eph. 4:30—“And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, in whom ye were sealed unto the day of redemption,” that is, of the redemption of the body. Eph. 1:13, 14—“in whom ye also, having heard the word of the truth, the gospel of your salvation—in whom, having also believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is an earnest of our inheritance.” These words are addressed to Christians. They teach clearly that all who put their trust in Christ, having heard the Word of truth, believed it, and obeyed it, are sealed with the Holy Spirit. The indwelling Spirit is the Corporate Seal of the Body of Christ; it stamps every member as being God’s own possession. 1 Cor. 6:19,20—“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.” Cf. Paul’s words to the Ephesian elders, Acts 20:28—“Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit hath made you overseers, to feed the church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood.”

4. The Spirit is also said to *aid the saints of God in their intercessions*. Rom. 8:26,27—"And in like manner the Spirit himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered; and he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God." Here we learn that the indwelling Spirit assists our infirmity in prayer, makes intercession for us according to the will of God. He takes our petitions, the deepest longings of our souls, clothed in our own poor human language, and prepares them for proper presentation at the throne of grace. One of the problems that has ever confronted God is that of clothing His revelations to men in terms of human comprehension. Likewise, one of the essential works of the Spirit is ever that of taking the prayers which are made by Christians, and clothing them in terms possessing the proper dignity and grace to be addressed to the Maker of Heaven and earth. As the spirit, in revelation, translates the language of earth into that of earth, so, in intercession, He translates the language of earth into that of Heaven. The Christian, therefore, has two Intercessors or Advocates: the One, Christ Himself, seated at the right hand of God; the other, the Holy Spirit within his own heart. This truth should be a source of great encouragement and comfort to all the saints.

5. The members of the Body of Christ are said also to share the *communion of the Spirit*. 2 Cor. 13:14—"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all." This is the well-known Apostolic Benediction. The word rendered "communion" in this text means literally a *sharing together*, a *having in common*. In the light of this meaning, it becomes clear that the Apostle is praying here that the Corinthian Christians, and all other Christians as well, may share equally the sanctifying measure of the Spirit, to the end that they may in common manifest the fruit of the Spirit in their lives. It is this sharing together and sharing alike of the Holy Spirit that makes the Church *one Body*. It may be said with equal force that, on the contrary, divisions, factions and schisms are evidences of carnality or lack of the Spirit. "Our fellowship," writes John, "is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ" (1 John 1:3). This fellowship with the Father and

the Son is made possible—is realized—only through the communion of the Spirit. Such communion or fellowship perpetuates and guarantees the oneness of the Body. Cf. Eph. 4:4-6: "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as also ye were alled in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all." Cf. Eph. 2:22—here we are told that God "inhabits" the Church through His Spirit. By strict allegiance to the seven essentials of Christian unity here enumerated, the saints are to "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:3). It is evident that "keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" and maintaining "the communion of the Spirit" is a matter of adhering strictly to the teaching of the Word of Christ. To this I might add that it is equally obvious that present-day denominationalism is the result solely of the introduction of human authority into the Church of Christ.

6. The indwelling Spirit is also said to *transform the saints from glory to glory*. 2 Cor. 3:17,18—"Now the Lord is the Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord the Spirit." Again, it will be seen that this transforming activity is wrought through the Word of Christ. The Word is that mirror which reflects the image of God in the Person of His Son Jesus Christ, who is "the very image of his substance" (Heb. 1:3); hence, by gazing into this mirror and feeding our souls upon the living Word reflected therein, we become partakers of the divine nature ourselves. And thus the Lord—the Logos—and the Spirit become in effect *one* in us, as the Spirit transforms us "from glory to glory." Christian growth is, after all, entirely a matter of becoming *like Christ*.

5. The Spirit and the Word in Sanctification

We can now see clearly that the ordinary or sanctifying measure of the Spirit is imparted to the saints, and nurtured in them, by their obeying and following the Word, by their studying the Word and meditating upon it, and by their keeping the ordinances, appointments and services authorized by