

**Christian Students @ SAC  
Bible Study - Spring 2022  
Week 12**

**THE NORMAL CHRISTIAN LIFE  
Chapter 8**

**THE HOLY SPIRIT  
(1)**

**Scripture Reading:** Rom. 5:5; 8:9; Acts 2:33-36

**Rom. 5:5** And hope does not put us to shame, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

**Rom. 8:9** But you are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Yet if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not of Him.

**Acts 2:33** Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God and having received the promise of the Holy Spirit from the Father, He has poured out this which you both see and hear.

**Acts 2:34** For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he himself says, “The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at My right hand

**Acts 2:35** Until I set Your enemies as a footstool for Your feet.”

**Acts 2:36** Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made Him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you have crucified.

We have spoken of the eternal purpose of God as the motive and explanation of all His dealings with us. Now, before we return to our study of the phases of Christian experience as set forth in Romans, we must digress yet again in order to consider something which lies at the heart of all our experience as the vitalizing power of effective life and service. I refer to the personal presence and ministry of the Holy Spirit of God.

And here, too, let us take as our starting-point two verses from Romans, one from each of our sections. “The love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit which was given unto us” (Romans 5:5). “If any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His” (Romans 8:9).

God does not give His gifts at random, nor dispense them in any arbitrary fashion. They are given freely to all, but they are given on a definite basis. God has truly “blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ” (Ephesians 1:3), but if those blessings which are ours in Christ are to become ours in experience, we must know on what ground we can appropriate them.

In considering the gift of the Holy Spirit it is helpful to think of this in two aspects, as the Spirit outpoured and the Spirit indwelling, and our purpose now is to understand on what basis this twofold gift of the Holy Spirit becomes ours. I have no doubt that we are right in distinguishing thus between the outward and the inward manifestations of His working, and that as we go on we shall find the distinction helpful. Moreover, when we compare them, we cannot but come to the conclusion that the inward activity of the Holy Spirit is the more precious. But to say this is not for one moment to imply that His outward activity is not also precious, for God only gives good gifts to His children.

Unfortunately we are apt to esteem our privileges lightly by reason of their sheer abundance. The Old Testament saints, who were not as favored as we are, could appreciate more readily than we do the preciousness of this gift of the outpoured Spirit. In their day it was a gift given only to the few—chiefly to priests, judges, kings and prophets—whereas now it is the portion of every child of God. Think! we who are mere nonentities can have the same Spirit resting upon us as rested upon Moses the friend of God, upon David the beloved king, and upon Elijah the mighty prophet. By receiving the gift of the outpoured Holy Spirit we join the ranks of God's chosen servants of the Old Testament dispensation. Once we see the value of this gift of God, and realize, too, our deep need of it, we shall immediately ask, How can I receive the Holy Spirit in this way, to equip me with spiritual gifts and to empower me for God's service? Upon what basis has the Spirit been given to His children?

## The Spirit Outpoured

Let us turn first to the Book of the Acts chapter 2 verses 32 to 36 and consider this passage briefly:

"(32) This Jesus did God raise up, whereof we all are witnesses. (33) Being therefore by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he hath poured forth this, which ye see and hear. (34) For David ascended not into the heavens; but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, (35) Till I make thine enemies the footstool of thy feet. (36) Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly, that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified."

We will set aside for the moment verses 34 and 35, and consider verses 33 and 36 together. The former are a quotation from the 110th Psalm and are really a parenthesis, so we shall get the force of Peter's argument better if we ignore them for the time being. In verse 33 Peter states that the Lord Jesus was exalted "at the right hand of God" (mg.). What was the result? He "received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit." And what followed? The miracle of Pentecost! The result of His exaltation was—"this, which ye see and hear."

Upon what basis, then, was the Spirit first given to the Lord Jesus to be poured out upon His people? It was upon the fact of His exaltation to heaven. This passage makes it quite clear that the Holy Spirit was poured out because the Lord Jesus was exalted. The outpouring of the Spirit has no relation to your merits or mine, but only to the merits of the Lord Jesus. The question of what *we* are does not come into consideration at all here, but only what *He* is. He is glorified; therefore the Spirit is poured out.

Because the Lord Jesus died on the Cross, I have received forgiveness of sins; because the Lord Jesus rose from the dead, I have received new life; because the Lord Jesus has been exalted to the right hand of the Father, I have received the outpoured Spirit. All is because of Him; nothing is because of me. Remission of sins is not based on human merit, but on the Lord's crucifixion; regeneration is not based on human merit, but on the Lord's resurrection; and the enduement with the Holy Spirit is not based on human merit, but on the Lord's exaltation. The Holy Spirit has not been poured out on you or me to prove how great we are, but to prove the greatness of the Son of God.

Now look at verse 36. There is a word here which demands our careful attention: the word "therefore." How is this word generally used? Not to introduce a statement, but

to follow a statement that has already been made. Its use always implies that something has been mentioned before. Now what has preceded this particular “therefore”? With which is it connected? It cannot reasonably be connected with either verse 34 or verse 35, but it quite obviously relates back to verse 33. Peter has just referred to the outpouring of the Spirit upon the disciples “which ye see and hear,” and he says: "Let all the house of Israel *therefore* know assuredly, that God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified". Peter says, in effect, to his audience: “This outpouring of the Spirit, which you have witnessed with your own eyes and ears, proves that Jesus of Nazareth whom you crucified is now both Lord and Christ.” The Holy Spirit was poured out on earth to prove what had taken place in heaven—the exaltation of Jesus of Nazareth to the right hand of God. The purpose of Pentecost is to prove the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

There was a young man named Joseph, who was dearly loved of his father. One day news reached the father of the death of his son, and for years Jacob lamented Joseph's loss. But Joseph was not in the grave; he was in a place of glory and power. After Jacob had been mourning the death of his son for years, it was suddenly reported to him that Joseph was alive and in a high position in Egypt. At first Jacob could not take it in. It was too good to be true. But ultimately he was persuaded that the story of Joseph's exaltation was really a fact. How did he come to believe in it? He went out, and saw the chariots that Joseph had sent from Egypt.

What do those chariots represent? They surely typify here the Holy Spirit, sent both to be the evidence that God's Son is in glory and to convey us there. How do we know that Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified by wicked men nearly two thousand years ago, did not just die a martyr's death but is at the Father's right hand in glory? How can we know for a surety that He is Lord of lords and King of kings? We can know it beyond dispute because He has poured out His Spirit upon us. Hallelujah! Jesus *is* Lord! Jesus *is* Christ! Jesus *of Nazareth is* both Lord and Christ!

If the gift of the Spirit depends thus upon the exaltation of the Lord Jesus alone, is it possible that *He* has been glorified and *you* have not received the Spirit? On what basis did you receive forgiveness of sins? Was it because you prayed so earnestly, or because you read your Bible from cover to cover, or because of your regular attendance at church? Was it because of your merits at all? No! A thousand times, No! On what ground then were your sins forgiven? “Apart from shedding of blood there is no remission” (Hebrews 9:22). The sole ground of forgiveness is the shedding of blood; and since the precious Blood has been shed, your sins have been forgiven.

Now the principle on which we receive the enduement of the Holy Spirit is the very same as that on which we receive forgiveness of sins. The Lord has been crucified, therefore our sins have been forgiven; the Lord has been glorified, therefore the Spirit has been poured out upon us. Is it possible that the Son of God shed His Blood and that your sins, dear child of God, have not been forgiven? Never! Then is it possible that the Son of God has been glorified and you have not received the Spirit? Never!

Some of you may say, I agree with all this, but I have no experience of it. Am I to sit down smugly and say I have everything, when I know perfectly well I have nothing? No, we must never rest content with objective facts alone. We need subjective experience also; but that experience will only come as we rest upon divine facts. God's facts are the basis of our experience.

Go back again to the question of justification. How were you justified? Not by doing anything at all, but by accepting the fact that the Lord had done everything. And enduement with the Holy Spirit becomes yours in exactly the same way, not by your doing anything yourself, but by your putting your faith in what the Lord has already done.

If we lack the experience, we must ask God only for a revelation of the eternal fact, that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is the gift of the exalted Lord to His Church. Once we see that, effort will cease, and prayer will give place to praise. It was a revelation of what the Lord had done for the world that brought to an end our efforts to secure forgiveness of sins, and it is a revelation of what the Lord has done for His Church that will bring to an end our efforts to secure the baptism of the Holy Spirit. We work because we have not seen the work of Christ. But when once we have seen that, faith will spring up in our hearts, and as we believe, experience will follow.

Some time ago a young man, who had only been a Christian for five weeks and who had formerly been violently opposed to the Gospel, attended a series of meetings which I was addressing in Shanghai. At the close of one in which I was speaking along the above lines, he went home and began to pray earnestly, "Lord, I do want the power of the Holy Spirit. Seeing thou hast now been glorified, wilt thou not now pour out thy Spirit upon me?" Then he corrected himself: "Oh no, Lord, that's all wrong!" and began to pray again: "Lord Jesus, we are in a life-partnership, thou and I, and the Father has promised us two things—glory for thee, and the Spirit for me. Thou, Lord hast received the glory; therefore it is unthinkable that I have not received the Spirit. Lord, I praise thee! Thou

hast already received the glory, and I have already received the Spirit.” From that day the power of the Spirit was consciously upon him.

### **Questions**

1. Upon what basis has the Spirit been given to His children?
2. How do you *know* that you have received the outpouring of the Spirit and that the Spirit is in you?