

The Fullness of the Holy Spirit for Life and Work - 5

The "Newness" of the Holy Spirit

Bibliography:

Campbell, John McLeod, [1856] *The Nature of the Atonement*, Handsell Press

Murray, Andrew [1963 ed] *The Spirit of Christ*, Marshall, Morgan and Scott.

Review:

Session1 :On the inside, each of us has become a dwelling place of the Spirit.

Session2: Distinguishing the functioning difference of body, soul and spirit

Session 3: Led by the Spirit: knowing the character and tone of voice and activity of the Spirit

Session 4: The Temple of the Holy Spirit

1. The Spirit as the Enlightener, the Sanctifier and Stengthener

Consistent with the work of the Lord Jesus as Prophet, Priest and King as He ascends and send us the Holy Spirit so we find that He is the One who enlightens us, sanctifies us and strengthens us.

[1] Enlightens us - this is worked out for us in John 13-17 where the themes of Jesus' teaching about His work is that He is the Spirit of Truth. He will bear witness to us of all that pertains to Christ, He will guide us into all the truth for He will take what is of Christ and declare it to us.

[2] Sanctifier - this is worked out in Romans and Galatians, where it is applied to churches were coming out of heathenism. Also in the case of the Corinth, where wisdom was prized and overvalued, the double theme of the Holy Spirit as sanctifier and enlightener is brought together; so that the sancitifying work and the enlightening work is intertwined; both works needing to be appreciated at once.

[3] Strengthening work of the Spirit is uppermost in the Acts of the apostles. His power to them to be witnesses to the world and also the power He was to them in persecution and difficulties which required solution and direction.

2. The theme of Romans is that of righteousness and life through faith.

In the letter to the Romans, Paul is working out a full integrated understanding of the gospel of redemption and how it comes to be applied in the individual Christian and in the Christian body as it gathers together for its common life.

[1] Consistent with the righteousness that Christ has won for us through His life, death and resurrection, up to 5.11 Paul teaches us how through faith a man or woman comes to be righteous.

[2] In 5.1-11 he outlines what that righteousness through faith looks like, what it is.

[3] In 5.12-21 he makes clear how that righteousness is rooted in our living connection with the 2nd Adam, and in justification of Life.

[4] In 6.1-13 he explains how this Life comes through the believing [trusting] acceptance of Christ's death to sin and His life to God as being ours.

[5] Then in 6.14-23 he explains the willing surrender that brings about a work in us that we are to be servants of God and of righteousness.

[6] In chapters 7-8 he develops this along the lines that we are dead to sin [understood as a power] and also that we are also dead to the law [understood as the strength of sin]. Then he comes to consider the new law that his gospel brings to take the place of the old one - the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.

3. Service in the 'oldness' of the letter and service in the 'newness' of the Spirit. [1]

There is great power in a contrast.

In 6.13-23 Paul had sharply contrasted the service of sin and the service of God and of righteousness. In 7.4 to show what is the power of the work of the Spirit in us, he uses a contrast as well; it is that of the **service in the oldness of the letter** - in bondage to law - with the **service of the newness of the Spirit**, in the liberty and power that Jesus, through the Spirit, gives.

[2] In the following passage, 7.14-25 and 8.1-16 we have that contrast worked out as the contrast of two states. The contrast is necessary, because it is alone in the light of that contrast that the two states can be understood - it explains the two contrasts of 7.4, but it does so in a highly practical description of the two states.

[3] The key word for each state is clear; it is the "law" [20x] in Romans 7 and the "Spirit" used only once; and it is the "Spirit" in Romans 8 [16x].

[4] The contrast is between the Christian life in the Law and in the Spirit.

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4. Objective work already done needs to come to experience.

Dwelling upon the **objective work** that Christ had already secured for us, Paul had previously said [Romans 6] that we were

[a] dead to sin and made free from sin so that we might become servants of righteousness. He spoke of the 'newness of life' [6.4] He had also said that we were made

Here, in speaking of the **subjective experience** which is made ours by the work of the Spirit within us he can make clear

[b] dead to law so that having died to that which held us we serve in the newness of the Spirit, and not the oldness of the letter [Rom 7.1-4].

5. 'Oldness' of the letter considered as subjective experience

Three characteristics of the 'oldness' in the one who is 'made free' [7.4]:

[1] **flesh** 7.14,18 expounded in 1 Cor 3.1-3 where it is used of regenerate Christians, who had not yielded themselves to the Spirit entirely. They have the Spirit, but allow the flesh to prevail. So the adjective 'carnal' or 'spiritual' means to identify what element is strongest in them.

So we may think of 7.14, 18 as describing the regenerate man as he is in himself. He believes by the Spirit, but does not walk by the Spirit [Galatians 5.25]. He has the new spirit within [Ezek 36.26] but does not intelligently, as to his decision practically accepted to God's own Spirit to dwell and rule within him. He is carnal.

[2] **will** 7.18 [7.15-21] To will is present with me, but how to do good is not". This is an impotent state in which the law leaves a man. Willing, but not doing - this is the service of God in the oldness of the letter - it is life before Pentecost [Matt 26.41]. The secret of the power 'to do' is not yet known [Philippians 4.6]. He may delight in the law in the inward man, but the power is wanting.

[3] the experience of '**captivity** to the law in my **members**' [7.23] - which describes a bondage, an inability to do as you will. We have been made free [7.4] from law, but still does not know that liberty.

6. The Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus [8.1-16] as subjective experience.

Here also, a twofold relation exists. Objectively- there is the law over me, outside of me, external, and there is the law of sin in my members - subjective and internal.

So, in being made free from law, there is an objective liberty in Christ offered to my faith, and there is a subjective personal possession of that liberty offered to my faith in trusting the inward power of the Spirit, dwelling in me and ruling my members, even as the law of sin had done.

Are these two states, set before us in Rom. 7.14-23 and 8.1-16, how shall we think of them?

[i] interchangeable, varying all the time with highs and lows. Moving from the one to the other.

[ii] successive, having entered on the 8.1-16 people have left behind forever that of 7.14-23. Many can testify to the blessing it was to them to see the knowledge of this victory.

[iii] continuous, where we feel clearly that we have not got beyond the fact that in me, in my flesh, dwells no good thing. In this way the believer sees that it is not the two experiences that are simultaneous, but the two states are. When our experience is most fully that of the law of the Spirit of life, still we are bearing about the body of sin and death. **As a state**, bearing about in his body [Rom 6.6,8.13] the flesh that is hatred against God, no believer ever gets beyond Romans 7. **As an experience** no believer need abide in it, because the life of the Spirit gives from moment-to-moment the deliverance and the victory by faith.

So we learn that, to enjoy the fullness of the Spirit, we must know that the law, the flesh, and that self effort are all totally impotent in enabling us to serve God. It is the Spirit within, taking the place of law without, that leads us to liberty for which Christ has set us free.

Our gracious God, we have learnt from You that in Christ Jesus our salvation is full and finished. All is done!

As we, by faith take this to be objectively true, and yet, in the Spirit, bear about in our body the dying of Jesus continually, help us, in hope, to understand this temporary state will be finally undone as He returns for us - and we shall be like Him.

So, by faith in the indwelling Holy Spirit, help us to live in the state in which we are and yet to experience constantly, albeit moment-by-moment, the liberty of the Spirit of life.

Help us not to be undone by this state, but to look by faith to You, by trusting Him, consciously to deny the flesh and yield to the Spirit for power and life. We call upon You in Jesus' name. Amen.