

## **Holy Spirit – Here to Stay 1 Corinthians 3:16-17**

In last week's message I spoke of several truths concerning the Holy Spirit. If you recall, He is God and has always been an integral part of the Triune Godhead. This truth is foundational for every believer in understanding how God works in our lives. I also pointed out that every true believer receives the gift of the Holy Spirit at the moment of genuine, faithful acceptance of Jesus Christ as Savior. Did you know, however, there are a few other teachings about the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Some teach that the Holy Spirit comes and goes as you need Him. Here today, gone tomorrow. These are the ones who do not believe in eternal security and the doctrine of "once saved, always saved". Others teach that you receive the Holy Spirit at some point after accepting your salvation. Thanks in part to misunderstandings surrounding moments in the Book of Acts. So, which one is truth? Let me just say this first, this is not an easy question to answer because the Bible is often used to support each one and subsequently creates some confusion for many believers. God, however, does not intend to confuse us, especially concerning such an important matter as the "indwelling of the Holy Spirit" in the lives of His children.

The Bible often teaches about the unique relationship we have with the Holy Spirit. I shared some of those with you last week. Jesus told the apostles that they would "receive the Holy Spirit" (John 20:22). In Acts 1, when Jesus ascended back to heaven, the group there, "received" the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8). John teaches that believers are given the Holy Spirit (1 John 3:24, 1 Thessalonians 4:8). Peter teaches that the Holy Spirit lives "in" the believer (1 Peter 1:11). And Paul says that "God has sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts" (Galatians 4:6) and to the Corinthians he said that the believer becomes a temple for the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 3:16).

If we take those verses and study them more closely, we'll find they all lead us to understand that He "resides" in the believer. This understanding of residing comes when we consider how these passages of scripture were originally penned in the Greek. The verb used most often is, *oikeo*, which is taken from the word for house, which is, *oikos*. What do we use our house for? We live, or we reside, in them. Our house is our place of residence. Four times in the Scriptures we'll find this word *oikeo* and each time it is used to explain the relationship of a believer and the Holy Spirit. **Romans 8:9-11, 1 Timothy 1:14, and 1 Corinthians 3:16-17.**

Let's focus on Paul's words from **1 Corinthians 3:16**. His reference to every believer as God's temple helps us understand the significance of the term *oikeo*. Not simply does the Holy Spirit make us His home, but instead, He takes up permanent residency in our heart, forever! And if we accept this truth and believe this about the Holy Spirit, then we can be assured that He is not a guest, free to come and go, but that He is moved in, here to stay, and is never going to leave.

Why is this image of the temple so important? To the nation of Israel, the temple was where God resided. It is where He could be found living among His people. When Jesus died on the cross all that changed. There was no longer a need for God to reside in a building. Do you remember how the temple was constructed? What was used to separate the Holy of Holies, the place where God resided, from the rest of the temple? A veil, or a thick curtain was used for this separation. We know from **Mark 15:38**, that Jesus ripped this curtain in two and tore it

down from top to bottom. This meant that God initiated the coming change. No longer was a physical temple needed for God's people. It has been replaced with the residency of His Spirit now being in the hearts of all believers, Jew, and Gentile.

The truth surrounding the permanency of the Holy Spirit in our heart also leads us to the truth of eternal security. Many of you have heard that when you become a Christian, at the moment of your conversion, you are sealed with the Holy Spirit. You are sealed into Jesus Christ. This idea of being sealed brings with it thoughts of protection, thoughts of something being closed off. Nothing from the outside can ever get on the inside. No outside influences or interferences can take place. If we believe the words of Ephesians 1:13-14, and we should, then we see that the sealing of the Holy Spirit into the heart of every true believer is a fulfillment of God's promise that was made through Jesus Christ. **Read Ephesians 1:13-14.**

If you keep reading through Ephesians, you'll come to chapter 4 and in verse 30, you'll find the reasoning behind God sealing you with His Spirit. **Read Ephesians 4:30.** You see, the presence of the Holy Spirit in your life is a constant reminder of God's promise to finish what He has already begun in you. When He looks at the believer, He sees the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is His seal of ownership. When you give yourself to Christ, then guess what, His Spirit moves into your heart and He's not moving out.

What does all this mean? Well, do you have Him? There's only one way to have Him. God's plan for you involves bringing you to a point of no return. He is bringing you to the end of yourself, to a point where, out of desperation, you finally decide that the answer is Him. Where are you in this process? Have you surrendered to Jesus as Savior and Lord? Are you at the end of yourself and just need to give up and give in? Today's the day. The hour is now. Please do not wait any longer.