

Acts 2

I WANT TO SHARE with you a basic precept of victorious Christian living - my inability to do anything for myself in the spiritual realm.

Repeat it, memorise it, believe it! For until you come to realise and acknowledge this truth, you are going to meet with repeated failure. For this reason God has given to every believer His Holy Spirit. Before Jesus went to the cross He gave this promise to His followers: *'I will not leave you helpless orphans ...'* (John 14 v 18a Williams Translation). Jesus recognised that His disciples would be able to do nothing for themselves in the spiritual realm, therefore, He promised to do something that would fill the void left by His departure. He would send the Holy Spirit who would be to them everything Jesus would be were He physically present.

'And I will ask the Father and He will give you another Helper, to remain with you to the end of the age; even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot accept, because it does not see Him or recognise Him, because He is going to remain with you and will be within you.' (John 14 vs 16, 17 Williams Translation).

This promise was fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost. But Peter reveals that the promise was not limited to the original believers, for when the convicted people asked what they should do, Peter answered *'Repent, and let each one of you be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.'* (Acts 2 v 38).

Let's briefly examine the Holy Spirit's relation to the Christian as seen from this important passage of Scripture.

1. The Holy Spirit is the Abiding Possession of the Christian

Peter said, *'... Ye shall receive the gift of*

The Holy Spirit and the Christian

by Ron Dunn



Converted to Christ at nine years old, Ron Dunn preached at revival meetings six years later, and pastored his first church when 17. He has pastored another three since graduating from a Baptist seminary.

Now 47, Ron is minister-at-large of a Baptist church in Texas, and President of Lifestyle Ministries Inc - which, among other things, sends out around 2,000 Bible study cassettes a month to people across the globe.

As well as local church meetings, he has spoken at Campus Crusade seminars, Keswick Conventions, evangelism conferences, and is one of the speakers at Filey-at-Skegness which starts today (1st September).

Ron has written several books. He is married, with two children.

2. The Holy Spirit is the Activating Principle of the Christian

Have you ever noticed the difference in the disciples before and after Pentecost? They had the same man, Jesus, before

asked what I think about this or that minister or ministry. My response is to ask the inquirer what *he thought* when he heard the person in question. If there was no accompanying 'Amen' from the

advertising, no ex-movie stars or football heroes! What they had attracted the whole city, Peter reveals in Acts 2 vs 15, 16, 17a, *'For these men are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only the third hour of the day; but this is what was spoken of through the prophet Joel: 'And it shall be in the last days, God says, that I will pour forth of my Spirit upon all mankind!'''*

The Holy Spirit released through the lives of available believers will snap the chains of worldly attractions that bind the lost and, like a magnet, will draw them towards Jesus.

You don't have to advertise a fire. John Wesley said, *'Get on fire for God and the world will come to watch you burn.'*

The attracting power of the Spirit lies in this fact: He always reveals and glorifies Jesus.

5. The Holy Spirit is to be the Acknowledged Person of the Christian

When the crowd asked Peter for an explanation, he simply acknowledged that it was all the work of the Holy Spirit.

Acknowledging the presence and power of the Spirit is the key to living victoriously. Writing to a group of Christians who were living defeated lives, Paul says, *'Do you know that you are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?'* (1 Corinthians 3 v 16).

As a solution to their immorality, Paul, again, reminds them of the Spirit's indwelling presence: *'... do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?'* (1 Corinthians 6 vs 19).

The meaning is clear. Failure to constantly acknowledge the Spirit's presence in your life will lead to sin and defeat.

To acknowledge the Holy Spirit means to yield to His Sovereign rule in every area of your life.

from God, and that you are not your own?' (1 Corinthians 6 vs 19).

2. The Holy Spirit is the Activating Principle of the Christian

Have you ever noticed the difference in the disciples before and after Pentecost? They're not the same men. Before Pentecost, they were fearful, unbelieving, suspicious of each other. After Pentecost, they exploded with courage and boldness; a new capacity for believing the unbelievable descended upon them; they became as *one* body, they beat as *one* heart, they thought as *one* mind.

The Holy Spirit's indwelling made the difference. Every time you see the Holy Spirit in Scripture you find energy, life, activity. He brooded over the chaos in Genesis 1 and made it cosmos. He brooded over Mary and brought forth the Messiah. He brooded over the grave and resurrected a glorified Jesus. He brooded over a bunch of weaklings in the upper room and turned them into a band of witnesses.

It's significant that the word for Spirit is 'wind', or 'breath'. God 'breathed' into Adam and he became a living soul. Jesus said in John 6 v 63, *'It is the Spirit who gives life ...'*

In verses 32 and 33 Peter makes it clear that the outpouring of the Spirit was infallible proof that Jesus had been exalted and that their message was true. Jesus promised that when He was raised and ascended the Father would send the Spirit. If the Spirit had not come, Jesus would have been exposed as a fraud and His followers as peddlers of a phony message. But the Spirit's presence authenticated their message.

It is the Holy Spirit who authenticates a man's message and ministry. I am often

The Spirit not only authenticates the message of others to our hearts but He also verifies our message to others. It is not our persuasive cleverness or eloquence that convinces men of the truth - it is the Holy Spirit.

See the picture in Acts 2. It's the Day of Pentecost, a Jewish Religious festival that brought Jews from all over the known world. Estimates of how many people were there that day range from one million to three million. Out of that vast, seething ocean of people, a small band of 120 nobodies get all the attention.

'Now there were Jews living in Jerusalem, devout men, from every nation under heaven. And when the sound occurred, the multitude came together ...' (Acts 2 vs 5, 6a).

I remind you these primitive Christians had no TV, no loudspeakers, no

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*YOUR DAILY
BREAD*

The mystery of God's ways - not
to be treated
lightly

Theological formulae - no medicine for the soul

For the Christian death
is a doorway

Better angry than hypocritical

Wrestling with God is better
than whistling in the dark

Listening is one thing - hearing
another

Job's leap of faith is our foundation fact - Jesus lives!

Our Bible readings are based on the Scripture Union programme. Helpful comments which open up these scriptures can be found in their booklet 'Daily Bread'. This bookmark may be cut out and used every day in your Bible (perhaps pasted on to stiff card).

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