

GODHEAD COURSE

Lesson 23

Received or Formed

Previous lessons have established that the comforter, or promised Spirit is the Spirit of Jesus, and that the indwelling of the Spirit in the believer is the indwelling of Christ.

Is the Spirit received or formed? Some would have you believe that the indwelling of the Spirit, or the indwelling of Christ is merely knowing His word, having a good relationship with Jesus and developing a Christ like character. Is this all what it is? Does the believer receive something from outside their body into their body?

Do we really, literally receive something from outside of us called the comforter/ Spirit or life or is it just a metaphorical talk?

Examples:

1. Pentecost

Prior to the outpouring of the Spirit, Jesus told the disciples to *“wait for the promise of the Father... For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.” Acts 1: 4,5*

It is important not to miss the point being portrayed. Jesus told them to *“wait”* for the promise, and that they *“shall”* be baptized. Jesus was referring to something they did not have as of yet. Up till that time, they have not been baptized with the Holy Spirit yet. That is why He told them to wait for it.

Consider the day of Pentecost:

“And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.” Acts 2:2

“And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.” Acts 2:3

“And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” Acts 2:4

God demonstrated the baptism of the holy Spirit in a physical way for a reason. One reason was to show the Jews that there is something to what these people believe and teach. And another reason is for modern believers to understand that these people received something that they did not have before. They received something from outside of them.

Some would like to say that the Holy Spirit is formed or produced within the heart by reading the word of God because it contains the Spirit in it. In other words, the word of God is the seed that is in us, and when we believe it, we activate this seed and

manifest, form or **produce the life of Christ** / Holy Spirit within. Many verses are shared to prove that the Spirit is in the word.

Although I am not negating the fact that the Word of God is an *avenue* to receive the Spirit. I would like to highlight that all the apostles had the word of God before Pentecost:

- They had faith
- They believed
- They read the word
- They prayed and meditated
- They loved the Lord and obeyed Him

But Jesus told them *“Wait for the promise of the Father, ... ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.”*

The point is, if the Spirit is produced or formed in our hearts by reading and believing the word of God, then how come the disciples needed to wait until Pentecost to receive it? How come Jesus said that if He does not go away the comforter will not come, and why did John say that the Spirit was not yet given because Jesus was not yet glorified?

It is rather obvious that this Spirit or comforter Jesus spoke about was dependent on Him being glorified more than on the apostles reading and believing. Yes, of course unless a person believes he will not receive, but simply reading and believing before the glorification did not result in them receiving the promised Comforter until after the glorification.

2. Acts 19

“He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.” Acts 19:2

“When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.” Acts 19:5

“And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.” Acts 19:6

These 12 disciples received something they did not have before.

Why emphasize this point? It is necessary to understand that when Jesus said the comforter will be in you, He meant that we will literally receive something we did not have before. Something or someone will come from the outside in. This was clearly demonstrated on Pentecost and in Acts 19.

Also notice Jesus’s words:

“Nevertheless I tell you the truth: It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send him unto you.” John 16:7

“And he, when he is come, will convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:” John 16:8

Notice what is being said about the Comforter?

“come unto you”, “send him unto you”, “when he is come”

Jesus put it in a way that one cannot miss the point. He will send him, the comforter will come. This is not the language used of something that is simply produced in the heart as a result of faith and belief in the word of God. It is the language used to describe something sent to you and something that will come to you from outside in.

In other words, before He is sent, regardless how much faith and belief and knowledge of the scripture the disciples had, they could not receive the comforter because he had not been sent yet.

The answer to the question is yes, we do literally receive something we did not have before. We do receive “the Holy Spirit” from the outside in.

The Bible says:

“Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?” 1 Cor 3:16

This is not metaphorical. It is a reality. We literally receive the Spirit of God into our hearts. We, us, our bodies are the temple of God where God will dwell through His Spirit.

Here are some more examples:

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall RECEIVE the gift of the Holy Ghost.” Acts 2:38

The Spirit is something they did not have but could receive through repentance and accepting Jesus

Another interesting example is the believers in Samaria. Notice what we read:

“Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: Acts 8:14

“Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: Acts 8:15

“For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.” Acts 8:16

“Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.”

Acts 8:17

“And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money,” Acts 8:18

“Saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost.” Acts 8:19

These people were baptized in Jesus name but had not received the Spirit yet. The apostles had to lay hands on them and instantaneously they received the Spirit. It is not that they developed a new scriptural understanding that blessed their hearts and minds. No this is talking about something that happened the moment hands were laid on them

Another example is Peter at Cornelius's house

“And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning.” Acts 11:15

“Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost. “Acts 11:16

“Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God?” Acts 11:17

Obviously being baptized by the holy Spirit means to receive the Spirit from outside in. you are receiving something/someone you did not have before. Notice it is not a progression or development or a forming. It is receiving it. It is an instantaneous event, not a progression or attainment.

- The Spirit is a person
- The Spirit is received
- It is an instantaneous thing

People in Samaria believed the truth, learnt nothing new, and they were baptised in the name of Jesus. But they only received the Spirit after the disciples laid their hands on them.

The bible is clear, we receive Christ instantaneously when we are baptised by the Spirit which forms the new birth. Jesus said:

“... Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” John 3:5

With this in mind, how are the following words to be understood?

“My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you,” Gal 4:19

Some use this verse to counteract the indwelling of Christ. They say, see, the indwelling of Christ, or the reception of the Spirit of Christ is something we form in

ourselves. As we study the word of God and develop a relationship with Jesus, our character grows more and more to resemble Him. That is what it means to have Christ within. It means to form Christ within.

Consequently, they interpret all the verses in the book of acts in light of their misunderstanding of this one verse.

Two points:

1. What does Christ form in you mean?
2. “until Christ be formed in you.” The word “until” denotes a process, a duration of time, something that is yet to happen in the future. How does this stack up in comparison to all the instantaneous reception of the Spirit in the book of Acts? Is Paul talking about the same thing, or something different that follows after the reception of the Spirit.

When read in context this verse becomes very easy to understand. The Galatians already received the Spirit. Prior to this verse in question, Paul wrote:

“This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?” Gal 3:2

“And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.” Gal 4:6

When Paul told them “until Christ be formed in you” he was not referring to them receiving Christ, or receiving the Spirit. Not at all. He already told them that you received the Spirit.

The problem was not in them receiving the Spirit, it was in them growing in the Spirit, walking in the Spirit.

The forming of Christ in them is the object of the new birth and the reception of the spirit.

There is a difference between receiving Christ and growing into His Character. The bible talks about growing in Christ as well:

“He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.” Eph 4:10

“And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; Eph 4:11

“For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Eph 4:12

“Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:” Eph 4:13

Christ dwells in the believer for a reason. To lead us all to grow into His image. (2 Cor 3:17, 18)

Because Jesus is in us, we grow from glory to glory

Someone might say, this can not be. How could one person be in another? How could Jesus be in the believer. It just can not be! Well, let us ask the question: Can A spiritual being dwell inside a person?

Demons, who are ministering spirits, can. There are few example, I will read you one:

“And Jesus asked him, saying, What is thy name? And he said, Legion: because many devils were entered into him.” Luke 8:30

“And they besought him that he would not command them to go out into the deep.” Luke 8:31

“And there was there an herd of many swine feeding on the mountain: and they besought him that he would suffer them to enter into them. And he suffered them.” Luke 8:32

“Then went the devils out of the man, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the lake, and were choked.” Luke 8:33
(See Mark 5:12, Mark 1:25;9:25)

If fallen angels can dwell inside people, why not Jesus. Remember we saw the same word that was with God was made flesh to dwell among us, then was made Spirit to dwell in us.

The problem is that people are confusing

- 1. the new birth with Character perfection
- 2. Receiving Christ with forming Christ
- 3. Being born again with growing unto a perfect man

They are both connected together, but one precedes the other

- an indwelling Saviour precedes a manifested Saviour.

Let us take it with baby steps:

1. 1. The Spirit came on Jesus at His baptism (Matt 3:16), and He said the Father in me (John 14:10)
2. 2. Christ promised to be in the believers (John 14:20)
3. 3. Christ breathed on the disciples (John 20:22)
4. 4. Told them to wait in Jerusalem until they receive the Spirit (Acts 1:4,5)

5. 5. They were in one accord, still believing the same thing, strong in faith because they have seen Christ alive already, but they did not have the Spirit yet.
6. 6. On Pentecost, Jesus received the Spirit from the Father (Acts 2:33),
7. 7. On Pentecost, The Spirit came down from heaven and rested on the believers (Acts 2:3)
8. 8. Peter said repent, be baptised and you will receive the Spirit (Acts 2:38)
9. 9. In Samaria, they believed and were baptised in the name of Jesus, but only after the apostles laid hands did they receive the Spirit (Acts 8:15-17)
10. 10. In acts 19 they were baptised and when Paul laid hands on them, the Spirit came on them. (Acts 19:6)

If you are an honest student, when you read this information you can only arrive at one conclusion. The reception of the holy Spirit is an instantaneous event. It comes from outside into the believer. It is not something that we develop through bible study, prayer and fasting. No. It is a Gift from God given to the believer when he repents and opens their heart to Jesus.

So, in Conclusions:

1. The believers received something from outside in that was dependent Christ being glorified
2. The reception of the Spirit was instantaneous upon accepting Jesus and the laying on of hands
3. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit, is the indwelling of Christ.
4. When we receive Christ, we receive his life.