

Holy Spirit's Relationship with Christians

CHARISMATISM'S ERRORS REFUTED!

This article (together with the subsequent ones) is necessitated by the pervasive influence of Charismaticism in the church scene. The main purpose is to expose error and warn against the flood of erroneous doctrines now sweeping over the modern church in the name of Charismaticism. In this article, a pernicious notion of the Holy Spirit perpetuated by the Charismatics will be refuted, with overwhelming Scriptural support.

CHARISMATICS ERRONEOUSLY TEACH: "NOT EVERY CHRISTIAN HAS THE HOLY SPIRIT."

The Charismatics teach that not every Christian has the Holy Spirit and would often ask other Christians, "Have you received the Holy Spirit?" The Bible clearly refutes that claim. On the contrary, Scripture unequivocally teaches that every Christian has the Holy Spirit, and that without the Holy Spirit no one would even be a Christian. "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his" (Romans 8:9). Indeed, as this verse repeatedly declares – "ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit" (v. 9a); "the Spirit of God dwell in you" (v. 9b); and "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his" (v. 9c) – genuine Christians are never without the Holy Spirit.

The fact of the Holy Spirit's abiding presence in every genuine Christian is proven by the following biblical teachings about His work in every individual Christian.

HOLY SPIRIT REGENERATES EVERY CHRISTIAN

No one ever becomes a Christian except that the Holy Spirit works within his heart to convict and convert him. The Lord Jesus said, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5; cf. Ezekiel 36:25-27). It is the Spirit who gives a sinner the power to repent and believe on the Gospel of Christ so that he may have eternal life. The Spirit regenerates and renews us – "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" (Titus 3:5).

Make no mistake about it, it is the Holy Spirit who enables a person to know God's love for him. As Romans 5:5 tells us, "the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." In other words, it is the gift of the Holy Spirit in a Christian that helps him to know and rejoice in the love of God.

HOLY SPIRIT SEALS EVERY CHRISTIAN

Moreover, the moment a person puts his faith in Christ, he is "sealed" by the Holy Spirit for eternity. This is affirmed by Ephesians 1:13, 14 – "In whom (Christ) ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory." Paul also reiterates this truth in 2 Corinthians 1:22, by saying that God "hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our

hearts.” By giving the Holy Spirit to those who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, God “seals” or stamps them as His own possession. Hence, Scripture admonishes Christians to “grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption” (Ephesians 4:30). Without a doubt, the presence of the Holy Spirit in Christians right from the inception of their faith is an undeniable truth of the Bible!

The above few verses also tell us that Christians are sealed with the Holy Spirit, which is given as an “earnest” of their ultimate redemption in heaven. The Greek

the Bible speaks of the Spirit indwelling them. In Galatians 4:6, Christians are assured that “because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.” Christians’ sonship is evidenced by the presence of the Spirit whom God has sent to them. Clearly, the presence of the Spirit confirms the bestowal of sonship. Hence, Scripture affirms that “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

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word for “earnest” literally means “down payment” or “deposit of pledge”. That is to say, the Holy Spirit who seals Christians is the divine deposit in them, guaranteeing their eternal inheritance. The Holy Spirit is a “down payment” of the eternal joy and blessings that await Christians. This spiritual reality exists in Christians the moment they believe on Christ.

HOLY SPIRIT RESIDES IN EVERY CHRISTIAN

The abiding presence of the Holy Spirit in all Christians is further established when

The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God” (Romans 8:14-16).

The indwelling of the Holy Spirit in Christians (cf. Romans 8:11b; 2 Timothy 1:14b) is such a solemn reality that Christians are given the biblical designation of “the temple of God”. 1 Corinthians 3:16 rhetorically asks, “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?” That question was repeated in 1 Corinthians 6:19, emphasising the truth of the Spirit’s

indwelling in Christians – “What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?”

**HOLY SPIRIT GIVES SPIRITUAL GIFTS TO
EVERY CHRISTIAN**

The Holy Spirit indwells and empowers every believer in the New Testament with spiritual gifts to serve in the church. The apostle Paul wrote, “Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but

Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will” (1 Corinthians 12:11). Again, 1 Corinthians 12:18 says, “But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him” (cf. v. 24). This tells us that the kind of gifts received is not determined by the believer, but by the Holy Spirit. Besides, a Christian may have more than one gift, as equipped by the Holy Spirit according to His pleasure. Be that as it may, the primary purpose of spiritual gifts is for the edification of the church (1 Corinthians 14:4-5, 12, 17, 26; cf. Ephesians 4:12-13), and for God’s glory (1 Peter 4:10-11). It goes without saying

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it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal” (1 Corinthians 12:4-7; cf. Ephesians 4:7; 1 Peter 4:10). So, all Christians are gifted without exception. No believer is without at least one spiritual gift!

Having said that, individual giftedness is determined by God’s will, and not by human will. It is God who assigns spiritual gifts to believers as He deems fit. This truth is repeatedly taught in the Scriptures. “But all these worketh that one and the selfsame

that this is the Spirit-endowed privilege and Spirit-enabled responsibility of every born-again Christian.

CONCLUSION

From the above biblical facts, we see the falsehood of the claim that not all Christians possess the Holy Spirit upon salvation. The truth of the matter is that everyone who belongs to Christ has the Holy Spirit. A Christian without the Holy Spirit is a contradiction in terms; in fact, it is an impossibility!