

2.

The Church Covenant



The Needed Power To Keep The Covenant

The often used phrase “***We engage***” conveys the idea of “***We pledge or promise***” Again, the ***Church Covenant*** is a **pledge**, a **vow**, a **promise**, and an **agreement!** And as stated in the first paragraph it is to be entered into **solemnly** and **joyfully!** Every person who enters into this ***covenant*** must have every intention of keeping the ***covenant***, BUT INTENTIONS ALONE WILL NOT SUFFICE! Every person who enters into this ***covenant*** must make every effort to keep the ***covenant***, BUT MERE HUMAN EFFORT WILL NOT SUFFICE! Keeping and honoring the ***Church covenant*** requires a power beyond ourselves, and therefore the first part of the second paragraph reads “***We engage, therefore by the aid of the Holy Spirit***” THE COVENANT CAN ONLY BE KEPT BY GOD’S HELP! The ability to fulfill the promises of the ***Church covenant*** is attributed to the work of the ***Holy Spirit***, and not us!

I. THE AID OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

A. A Reminder That Human Resources Are Not Sufficient:

Zechariah was called and commissioned of ***God*** to encourage the people in their responsibility to rebuild the Temple. He reminded them in ***Zechariah 4:6*** that human resources of themselves would not accomplish the work. There were issues, there were situations, there were conditions, there were problems facing Israel that could not be handled by mere human ability and resources. He told them that the work would not be accomplished “***by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts***” Zechariah was reminding them that the work was so massive and extensive that it would take more than human **intellect** and **ability**, IT WOULD TAKE A POWER AND AN ABILITY BEYOND THEIR OWN! This is also true in every aspect of the Christian life, and is why ***Christ*** reminded the first church “***for without Me, ye can do nothing***” [***John 15:5***]. The other side of this is what ***Paul*** said in ***Philippians 4:13*** “***I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me***” THESE ARE TRUTHS THAT WE MUST ALWAYS KEEP BEFORE US!

B. God In The Person Of The Holy Spirit Indwells Every Saved Individual:

The possession of the ***Holy Spirit*** is a distinguishing mark of a child of God! To be without the ***Spirit*** is to be without ***Christ!*** Paul wrote in ***Romans 8:9*** “***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***” If one has ***Christ*** for Redeemer, then they have the ***Holy Spirit*** of ***God*** as their **Indweller!** He is given to ***God’s*** people in consequence of ***Christ*** having redeemed them

from the curse of the Law [**Galatians 3:13-14**]. *God*, in the Person of the *Holy Spirit* takes up His abode in the renewed and sanctified heart. Paul wrote in **Galatians 4:6** “*Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying Abba Father*” THIS INDWELLING EXPRESSES A PERMANENT ABODE! The *Holy Spirit* does not come merely as a Visitor, but as an Inhabitant! EVERY SAVED PERSON HAS THE HOLY SPIRIT DWELLING WITHIN THEM! He is called the “*Spirit of God*” in **Genesis 1:2** and HE DWELLS WITHIN EVERY CHILD OF GOD! He is called the “*Spirit of Christ*” in **I Peter 1:11** and HE DWELLS WITHIN EVERY SAVED INDIVIDUAL! The very same *Spirit* that raised *Jesus* from the dead DWELLS WITHIN EVERY SAVED INDIVIDUAL! He is called the “*Power of the Highest*” in **Luke 1:35** and as such DWELLS WITHIN EVERY CHILD OF GOD! He is called the “*Spirit of Holiness*” in **Romans 1:4** and as such DWELLS WITHIN EVERY SAVED INDIVIDUAL! He is called the “*Spirit of Life*” in **Romans 8:2** and as such DWELLS WITHIN EVERY SAVED INDIVIDUAL! He is called the “*Spirit of Might*” in **Isaiah 11:2** and as such DWELLS WITHIN EVERY SAVED INDIVIDUAL! The Sovereign One of the universe dwells within every saved individual! The Omnipotent, Almighty God dwells within every saved individual! The Pure, and Holy God dwells within every saved individual! Therefore we read in **I John 4:4** “*greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world*”

C. The Indwelling God Is Active:

Paul wrote in **Philippians 2:13** “*For it is God which worketh in you*” The word translated “*worketh*” comes from a verb meaning “*to work, to be active, to produce effect*” GOD NOT ONLY INDWELLS THE SAVED INDIVIDUAL, HE IS ENERGETIC WITHIN THE SAVED! God as the Indweller produces a certain effect in the child of God! He exerts an influence over the saved individual! Paul said in **Galatians 2:8** “*For He that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcicion, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles*” WHEREVER THE HOLY SPIRIT OF GOD DWELLS HE DOES SOMETHING!

1. The Holy Spirit Works Within As A Subduer:

In whomever the *Holy Spirit* indwells, He in some degree mortifies and subdues the evils of the soul- “*The Spirit lusteth against the flesh*” [**Galatians 5:17**]. Paul wrote in **Romans 8:13** that it is “*through the Spirit*” that the deeds of the flesh are mortified.

2. The Holy Spirit Works Within As A Fruit-Producer [Galatians 5:22-23**].**

3. The Holy Spirit Works Within As A Spirit Of Supplication [Romans 8:26**].**

4. The Holy Spirit Works Within To Convict, To Draw, To Lead, To Assure, To Refresh, And To Enable [Ezekiel 36:27**].**

5. The Holy Spirit Works Within A Desire Of That Which Pleases God:

Paul wrote in **Philippians 2:13** “*For it is God which worketh in you to will” WHEREVER THE HOLY SPIRIT DWELLS, HE WORKS A DESIRE FOR THE THINGS OF GOD! The *Psalmist**

wrote in **Psalm 110:3** “*Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power*” THE GOD THAT INDWELLS THE SAVED LEADS THEM TO WILL!

- (a). *He Gives Them A Desire To Please God.*
- (b). *He Gives Them A Desire To Be Close To The Lord.*
- (c). *He Gives Them The Desire To Know The Lord Better And More Fully.*
- (d). *He Gives Them The Desire For The Word Of God.*
- (e). *He Gives Them A Desire To Be In The Will Of God, And To Be In Subjection To God.*
- (f). *He Gives Them A Desire For God To Be Glorified In Their Lives.*
- (g). *He Gives Them A Desire For Holiness And Righteousness In Their Lives, Both Inwardly And Outwardly.*
- (h). *He Gives Them A Desire For God’s House.*
- (i). *He Gives Them A Desire For Fellowship With The Lord And The People Of The Lord.*
- (j). *He Gives Them A Desire To Be What They Ought To Be.*

6. The Holy Spirit Works Within The Ability To Do:

Paul wrote in **Philippians 2:13** “*For it is God which worketh in you.....to do*” The **Holy Spirit** makes the heart and the mind **willing** and **desirous** for that which is pleasing to **God**, but that is not all, He also gives the **courage**, the **strength**, and the **ability** to do! [**II Peter 1:3**]. Those whom the Lord adds to His churches, and causes to enter into **covenant** agreement, He also gives the ability to **keep** and **honor** that agreement!

II. WHAT IT MEANS TO SEEK THE AID OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

A. Seek The Power Of The Holy Spirit:

In **Romans 15:13** Paul used the phrase “*through (by way of) the power of the Holy Spirit*” It is “*by way of the Holy Spirit’s power*” that the child of God is enabled to live for the Lord, and fulfill his/her obligations toward the Lord, toward the church of the Lord, and toward one another! Every church member has the responsibility to seek the power of the **Holy Spirit** upon their **will**, upon their **affections**, and upon every aspect of their life!

B. Seek The Teaching And Guidance Of The Holy Spirit:

C. Strive Not To Grieve The Holy Spirit:

Paul wrote in **Ephesians 4:30** *“grieve not the Holy Spirit of God”* The word *“grieve”* means *“to afflict with sorrow”* Anything in the life that is contrary to **God** in some degree grieves the **Holy Spirit**. Following the statement *“grieve not the Holy Spirit of God”* Paul proceeded to give further instruction [**verses 31-32**] that sheds some light upon the subject of grieving the **Holy Spirit**.

D. Strive Not To Quench The Holy Spirit:

Paul wrote in **I Thessalonians 5:19** *“Quench not the Spirit”* The word *“quench”* means *“to extinguish, to put out, to cool”* This is done by **grieving** Him, and by **disregarding** His presence, and **refusing** His guidance.

E. Strive To Walk In The Spirit:

Paul wrote in **Galatians 5:16** *“Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh”* Walking under the guiding impulse of the **Holy Spirit**, and in conformity with His leading is **key to living a life for the honor and glory of the Lord!**

When a child of God is added by the Lord to one of His churches, they enter into covenant agreement with the Lord, and with the church to which they have been added, and such is a very solemn **responsibility** and **obligation!** Membership in one of the Lord’s churches involves a **promise** and a **commitment** of life to the Lord, and to the other members of a local body! **This covenant should not be entered into lightly, but with the realization that its responsibilities and obligations require a power beyond self!** When one enters into such a covenant they ought to be determined to seek the power of God to enable them to be what they ought to be!

