

Lesson 60

10.13. The New Birth

- In the last class, we studied the attributes and works of the Holy Spirit. We saw in the Bible that the Holy Spirit is God because He possesses attributes that only God possesses **ETERNITY, OMNIPOTENCE, OMNISCIENCE, AND OMNIPRESENCE**. We also saw that the Holy Spirit performs works that only God can perform.
- We have seen in the Bible that the Holy Spirit is truly a person. His attributes and actions also demonstrate this:
 ⇒ **Romans 8:27**; *'Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is...'*

If the Holy Spirit were an energy or a force, as many claim, how could it have '*intention or a mind*'?

⇒ **Ephesians 4:30**; *'And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God...'*

Can energy have emotions? Can it feel sad? Sadness is a feeling that is characteristic of a person.

⇒ **1 Corinthians 12:11**; *'But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.'* (as He pleases).

'As He wills' refers to the area of the will.

- As we studied at the beginning of the course, all these characteristics are of the soul. The mind, will and emotions form a personality. '*As you wish*' depends on the will; '*do not grieve*' depends on the emotions; and '*intention of the Spirit*' depends on the mind.
- Many people confuse having a personality with having a body, but this is not true. God is spirit; he is a person, but he does not have a physical body. If God is not a person, then neither am I, because I was created in His likeness. I know God is a person because I am a person, and I know very well what it means to have a personality.
- We have also seen that the defining characteristic of our era, the Church, compared to the Old Testament, is the work of the Holy Spirit. In the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit did not permanently and universally dwell in believers.
 ⇒ **Psalms 51:11**; *'And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.'*

According to ⇒ **Psalms 51:11**, members of the Church of Jesus Christ cannot pray because the Holy Spirit dwells permanently in the spirits of God's children.

- We know that there are passages in the New Testament that create the impression of a possible loss of salvation. These passages could lead us to pray as David did.
 ⇒ **Hebrews 6:1–6**
 ⇒ **Romans 11**
 ⇒ **2 Peter 2:20–22**

However, when we study God's principle of new birth, we see that it is impossible to lose salvation, *if one is truly born again*. In other words, it is impossible for the Holy Spirit to leave a person and for that person to become lost.

⇒ **1 Corinthians 3:1-15**; *'But he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.'*

- Paul shows that a day will come when the works of the saved will be judged at *Christ's Bema*. He makes it clear that some will enter as though they have passed through fire; none of their works will pass through the fire. They will enter without work. *'But such a person will be saved.'* However, salvation does not lose the Spirit; it does not leave.
- This is the defining characteristic of our period. In the OT, we see that when the Holy Spirit acted upon people, he took possession of them, empowered them, came with them, came upon them, and came in them. However, there was no permanent indwelling. If the Holy Spirit had permanently dwelled in people during the OT era, would Jesus have spoken this way?

⇒ **John 14:16-17**: *'That He may abide with you forever.'*

- **V.16**: This was not always the case in the OT. The Holy Spirit came upon people and could also leave them. For example, when Saul sinned and became rebellious, the Holy Spirit withdrew. Samson was stubborn, obstinate, and sensual, and the Holy Spirit withdrew. David was afraid the Holy Spirit would leave him. However, Jesus says here, *'that he may be with you forever.'*
- **V.17**: *'The world cannot receive...'* Those who are not saved cannot receive it. *'You know him...'* It is in the present tense. Jesus is speaking to the disciples. You know the Holy Spirit. *'Because he dwells with you and will be in you.'* He dwells in the present tense, not in the past or future. However, Jesus then uses the future tense: *'will be in.'* This is the future because Jesus had not yet been glorified. The Greek word for *'in'* means *'inside'*. He is with you, but he will be inside you.

⇒ **John 7:37-39**: *'The Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.'*

Then, in ⇒ **John 14:17**, Jesus prophesied that the Holy Spirit would come in a new ministry. From the day of Pentecost, ten days after Jesus ascended to Heaven, and fifty days after his resurrection, the Holy Spirit came to dwell with us forever as Jesus prophesied.

- Are you born again? Are you a member of the true Church of Jesus Christ? Does the Spirit dwell in you forever? This is why the Bible says: *'Walk in the Spirit...'* (⇒ **Galatians 5:16, 25**). The Holy Spirit is within us; we don't need to continually call upon Him. Walk in the Spirit. He is here to convict us of sin, confession, the Word, and change of life.

⇒ **Ephesians 4:30**; *'Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God.'*

- How can I grieve the Holy Spirit if He is not in me? The phrase *'do not grieve the Spirit of God'* appears amid several other sins in this text.

⇒ **1 Thessalonians 5:19**; *'Do not quench the Spirit.'*

The Holy Spirit enlightens. The Holy Spirit is fire. If you quench the Spirit, He does not leave you; He simply becomes inactive within you. The oil of the Spirit makes the lamp of the Lord. We are lamps of light in a dark world. If you quench the Spirit, where will the Spirit find oil?

- All of these statements – such as '*do not grieve*' and '*do not quench*' – refer to the Holy Spirit within us. They mean that God is calling our attention, and they could only happen this way if the Holy Spirit is truly within us.

⇒ **Romans 8:9**

- If someone does not have the Holy Spirit, then they have never been born again. They do not belong to Jesus Christ. They are not part of the Church or the body of Christ.

⇒ **1 Corinthians 6:19**

- The Corinthians were the worst believers in the New Testament, according to the Bible. There was immorality, childishness, and partisanship among them. The stepson slept with his stepmother. People argued, '*I am of Paul, I am of Apollos, and I am of Christ.*' Everyone wanted to speak in strange tongues without interpretation. There was general confusion; everything was wrong there. To this Church, the Holy Spirit, through Paul, says, '*Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you?*' Although Paul wrote to that local Church, his words apply to the entire universal Church that God sees.

⇒ **Hebrews 12:1~11**

- God treats us like children. We have the Holy Spirit, and God disciplines us. If we could lose our salvation, why would there be discipline? Why wouldn't the Holy Spirit leave us forever? Why does correction and discipline often lead to physical death?

⇒ **1 Corinthians 5:1~5**

When a person turns away from God, it is often because they were never truly born again. Saying that you are a Christian, attending Church, and reading the Bible is not enough; there must be results – a change of life. When you fall, discipline comes to bring you back. But when you are not born again, discipline does not come because there is already a natural separation.

⇒ **John 3:1~12; The new birth**

- What happens when you accept Jesus Christ into your life? You say, 'I am born again.' Have you ever seen someone who has just been born again? It's not physical; it's spiritual. Nicodemus had a similar reaction: 'How can an old man enter his mother's womb again?' Jesus replied, '*I'm not talking about that, Nicodemus. I'm talking about being born of the Spirit and the Word. Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.*' This is not a rhetorical expression; it is a reality. A new spirit is made in us. The old spirit, (*dead is separated from God*), is taken away, and a new spirit is put in its place.

⇒ **John 20:19~22:**

'He breathed on them, and said to them, Receive the Holy Spirit.'

- Here, after his resurrection, Jesus showed his disciples how the Spirit would be received. As we have studied, this could only be done after Jesus had finished his work on the cross and removed the sins of the world. '*Jesus breathed on them, and said to them, Receive the Holy Spirit.*' Some people joke about this text, saying, '*It wasn't exactly receive.*' But if the Bible says, '*Receive the Holy Spirit,*' then you either receive it or you don't. How was the Spirit placed in man at the time of his creation? God breathed the Spirit of life into the clay figure.

Here, Jesus shows that God is breathing the Spirit of life once again, and a person is born again. God breathed a new spirit into you. You did not see or feel it, but it was placed in you. Because there is now a sinless spirit within you, the Holy Spirit can dwell in you. This is the difference from the Old Testament.

- The Holy Spirit comes to dwell in your new spirit and begins the work of sanctifying your soul, which is reflected in your body. Because the Holy Spirit inhabits your new spirit, your soul begins to be restored. Your personality is cleansed of the old pattern and begins to act according to the new pattern of the Word of God.
- How does the new birth truly work?

⇒ **John 1:12**; *'He gave the right to become children of God.'*

When we do not think about God, Satan easily tempts us with worldly desires. The idea that *'everyone is a child of God'* is a lie; we are all creatures of God. Children of God are those who are made children of God. How does one become a child of God? Attending Church, being *'good'*, or having good intentions does not make you a child of God. Being born to saved parents does not make you a child of God either.

We have our natural children. Why can I say that my child is my child? It's because he or she is born of me; that's the basic condition. The Bible uses this same principle to determine who the children of God are.

⇒ **John 1:13**; *'Who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but (were born) of God.'*

- To be a son, one must be born of someone. To be my son, one must be born of me. To be a son of God, one must be born of God. However, ⇒ **John 1:12** states a condition: *'to those who believe in his name.'* What name? Jesus Christ.

⇒ **2 Corinthians 5:17**; *'If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation...'*

- The correct translation from the Greek is: *'A new creation is.'* In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth, and God created man and woman. As in the beginning, God now makes another creation. He breathes a new spirit into man: *'A new creation has come about; the old has passed away. Behold, all things have become new.'* The spirit is new, but the soul and body remain the same. However, they will be transformed at the rapture. God created the spirit anew.

⇒ **John 3:2-12**

- God uses figures we can understand. Nicodemus went to see the Lord at night because he was afraid of his fellow Pharisees. He said:
 - **V.2**: *'No one can perform these signs unless God is with him.'* It was a great compliment to Jesus, but he is humble and doesn't waste time. He gets straight to the point.
 - **V.3**: Jesus replied, *'Unless someone is born again (born from above), he cannot see the kingdom of God.'* This was the answer Nicodemus (and all of humanity) needed. It was what he needed to know. As a Jew, Nicodemus thought he was already in the Kingdom of God.

- **V.5:** '*Unless someone is born of water and the Spirit...*' Here, water symbolizes the Word of God, not baptismal water. As we will see later, water is one of the symbols of the Word of God.
- **V.6~8;** Wind is one of the symbols of the Holy Spirit. What Jesus is telling Nicodemus is that the work of the Holy Spirit is inscrutable. Those who are not born of the Word and the Spirit cannot see the kingdom of God. Here, water represents the Word:
 - ⇒ **Ephesians 5:26;** '*That He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word.*'
 - ⇒ **John 15:3;** '*You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.*'
- Jesus said, '*Unless one is born of water and the Spirit.*' We have shown in two texts that water is the Word of God. Now, we will see that the Word is one of the agents of new birth.
 - ⇒ **James 1:18**
 - '*He brought us forth,*' means begot our new spirit.
 - '*A kind of Firstfruits of His creatures,*' those born again.
 - '*Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth,*' according to his will, He begot us by the word, by the Word of God.
 - ⇒ **1 Peter 1:23;** '*Having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible (seed).*
 - We are born again through the Word of God, which lives and remains, which is eternal and permanent. In Greek, the word 'seed' used here is 'spora,' a feminine word. Like the papaya tree, which has male and female trees that need to be fertilized by the seed of the former, a female seed needs to be fertilized to germinate.
 - ⇒ **1 John 3:9;** '*For His seed remains in him.*'
 - John also speaks of being born again (*born of God*) and uses the word 'seed,' but here it is not 'spora. Here, John uses the Greek word 'sperma,' meaning 'male seed.'
- Peter said: '*Having been born not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible seed,*' or female seed. John adds that '*he who is born of God does not sin habitually because the seed of God remains in him,*' the male seed the 'sperm' that we all know. Therefore, we can conclude that whoever is not born of the 'spore' and the 'sperm' cannot see the kingdom of God. **The Word of God is perfect!**
- Therefore, we can say with certainty that every child of God is '*born of the Word and the Spirit,*' of the 'spore' and the 'sperm.' The Word (*spore*) is preached, and the Spirit (*sperm*) gives life to that seed. This is beautiful because it is similar to natural birth, where the male seed fertilizes the female egg. This is the work of the Holy Spirit today. In the Old Testament, people could not be indwelt by the Spirit because they did not experience the new birth or have a new spirit as we do today. So, God made a tabernacle, and then a temple, where he could dwell among the people – 'dwell with,' not 'dwell in.'