

**The Tree of Life is a weekly teaching summary.**

**The Tree of Life from the week ending 03/27/05**

**What it means to be initiated into the secret of the mystery. Part 9.**

**The Baptism of the Spirit, every believer has been made a new spiritual species, the church, the body of Christ, the bride of Christ and the temple of the living God.**

In our study of the baptism of the Spirit we have noted the importance of operating in faith and not emotions. Through the baptism of the Spirit every believer has been made a new spiritual species, the church, the body of Christ, the bride of Christ and the temple of the living God. The baptism of the Holy Spirit also ensures us of our eternal security as members of the royal family which occurs at salvation. 2Co 1:21-22, *Now He who establishes us with you in Christ [the doctrine of predestination] and anointed us [baptism of the Holy Spirit + the sealing of the Holy Spirit] is God [the Father], who also sealed us and gave us the Spirit [filling of the Spirit] in our hearts as a pledge.*

We can't understand the ministry of the Spirit unless we have that doctrine resident in our soul. Eph 1:13, *"In Whom also, when you heard [common grace] the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation, in whom also, when you believed, you were sealed by the Holy Spirit with reference to the promise."* The Greek word for *sealed* is *sphragizo* meaning to set a seal upon something or to mark with a seal. This word was used in the ancient world in five different ways: 1) Business transactions or business contracts. Signet rings were pressed into wax signifying that the transaction was finished. In the spiritual realm, the sealing of the Spirit is God's final stamp of approval. The work for salvation is totally finished according to Joh 17:4; 19:30. 2) A sign of ownership upon horses and chariots, tombs, libraries, treasures etc. 1Co 6:19-20, *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? For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.* You belong to Him, you can't erase or remove it. 3) A signature for cashing checks. All one had to do was put their seal or signet on paper. This reminds us of all the resources that belong to God which He has made available to us. 4) To protect something that was valuable. The kings seal was placed upon the treasury or library to indicate the protection and security of what was inside. No one would intrude on that which belonged to the King. The analogy is that as believers we are of infinite value to God. The Old Testament saints were called the *apple of His eye* in Zec 2:8, in Mal 3:17 *We are His jewels*, in Isa 62:3, *We are His crown of glory*. As believers in the Church, we are His children, His heirs, royal priests and ambassadors etc. 5) To seal fruit as a sign of approval. The last thing to be done before the delivery of fruit was the sealing. The analogy is that the sealing of the Holy Spirit is God's stamp of approval. He has presented us holy, unblamable, and unreprouvable! He presented us *a glorious church* in Eph 5:27, not having spot or wrinkle.

Sealing is a reminder of the fact that God loves us with an infinite love, which will never change, we can do nothing to break the seal. God did all the work, God drew up the contract and all we did was sign on the dotted line when we believed. Sealing was used in the ratification of treaties and is analogous to the doctrine of reconciliation, in which man is reconciled to God through the death of His son. Part of this contract, made at the moment of salvation, are two guarantees of our portfolio of invisible assets: The sealing ministry of the Holy Spirit and the indwelling of Christ as the Shekinah glory. 2Co 1:21-22, *Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and anointed us is God, who also sealed us and gave us the Spirit in our hearts as a pledge.*

Eph 1:13-14, *In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation, having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is*

*given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory.*

Our security from the baptism of the Spirit is also based upon the character of God. God is perfect, therefore His plan is perfect. Through the baptism of the Holy Spirit, God has put His *seal* on us. God is able to be at peace with us through our Lord Jesus Christ, Col 1:20, *and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven.*

God's peace is founded solely on the work of the cross, totally apart from anything in or from us. His eye rests on the work accomplished by Christ for the believer. However, when we are not walking in the Spirit we are in the flesh and have turned to the old man which was crucified on the cross (Rom 6:6). We then have to be restored to fellowship, and when we are, we find our acceptance with God unchanged. God's basis must be our basis for acceptance, there is no other, (Eph 1:6).

God is fully satisfied with His beloved Son on our behalf, and there is no reason for us not to be also. Our satisfaction can only spring from and rest in His satisfaction. When the Holy Spirit reasons with man, He does not reason from what man is to God, but from what God is to man. Sadly, most believers actually reason just the opposite, from themselves to God. When all is going well and God seems to be blessing, they feel He loves and accepts them. But when they are stumbling, they feel that He does not love and accept them. However, He has accepted us in His Son, and upon this **fact** we must rest our faith. As in justification, our acceptance is by **grace** alone. We are not *on probation*, we have been thoroughly accepted in Christ. As to our past life, it does not exist before God because we died at the cross with Christ, and Christ is now our new life. Grace, once bestowed, is never withdrawn, God knew all the human failures and sins beforehand. His action was independent of our failures, not dependent upon them.

The following points are the proper attitude for every believer under grace:

1) To believe, and to consent to be loved while unworthy, that is the great secret to the spiritual life. 2) To refuse to make resolutions and vows; for that is to trust in the flesh. 3) To expect to be blessed, though realizing more and more your lack of worth. 4) To rely on God's chastening [child training] hand as a mark of His kindness. 5) To understand that to hope to be better for acceptance is to fail to see yourself *in Christ only*. 6) To understand that to be *disappointed* with yourself, is to have *believed* in yourself. 7) To understand that to be *discouraged is unbelief*, as to God's purpose and plan of blessing for you. 8) To understand that to be proud, is to be *blind!* For we have no standing before God, *in ourselves*. 9) To understand that the lack of divine blessing, therefore, comes from unbelief, and not from *failure of devotion*. 10) To understand that to preach devotion first, and blessing second, is to reverse God's order, and preach *law, not grace*.

The Law made man's blessing depend on devotion, but grace confers undeserved, unconditional blessing. Our devotion may follow, but does not always do so. We must never forget that God's ways are not man's ways. Many religions and psychologies are dependent on fear to keep their disciples in line. While fear does have a place in Christianity, God has higher and more effective motivations and one of these is love. Often, fear produces only numbness, but love thrives on love. Until the Christian is scripturally sure of his standing, he is not going to do much standing. 2Th 2:16-17, *Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father, who has loved us and given us eternal comfort and good hope by grace, comfort and strengthen your hearts in every good work and word.*

There is another principle we need to note concerning the baptism of the Holy Spirit: **The analogy of the head and the body.** The body of Christ is the Royal Family of God designed to complement our Lord's third royal title given by God the Father at the time of His resurrection, ascension, and session. This title is King of kings and Lord of lords. The body is made up of the kings and lords. The head, TLJC, is incomplete without His body. The humanity of Christ is incomplete without a Royal Family. This analogy teaches that the church cannot be a living organism without union with Christ. The fulfillment of the head completing the body and the

body completing the head is found in our Lord's prophecy given in our passage, Joh 14:20, "*You in me and I in you.*"

"*You in me*" refers to Church-age believers in union with Christ from the baptism of the Holy Spirit resulting in positional truth or positional sanctification. "*I in you*" refers to the indwelling of Jesus Christ as a vital union between the head and the body. All Church-age believers are formed into one body and one Royal Family, Eph 4:4-5, 5:30-32; Col 1:24, 2:19, Eph 2:14-16.

Joh 7:37-39, *Now on the last day, the great {day} of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If any man is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, From his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water." But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet {given,} because Jesus was not yet glorified.*

The phrase "*streams of living water will flow from within him*" is a prophecy of the filling of the Spirit, resulting in residence, function, and momentum inside the PPOG. This is for the Church-age only. The great power demonstration of the Church-age, which includes the baptism of the Holy Spirit, could not begin until the glorification of Jesus Christ at the right hand of the Father. First came the head in the great power demonstration of the hypostatic union, then came the body in the great power demonstration of the Church-age.

Every believer, at the moment of salvation, is entered into union with Christ, the head, and this union is a part of our position in Christ. This means that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is the most important thing that happens to us at salvation. It forms the church universal, the body, the Royal Family of God, and the new spiritual species. This distinguishes us from every other dispensation and makes it possible for us to have equal privilege and equal opportunity inside the PPOG. It also gives us a tremendous confidence of acceptance and a purpose in life. God has made it crystal clear in His Word exactly what His purpose is for each one of us. The baptism of the Spirit is a means of taking us out of the first Adam and placing us in the last Adam. This is positional truth, 1Co 15:22, *For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive.*

The first Adam, the head of the human race, was made in God's image in the realm of personality, intellect, emotions, will, etc. Therefore there could be communion, fellowship and cooperation between Adam and the woman, and also with God. God was sovereign and man was subject to His will. This is perfect freedom. But we know that Adam chose his own way over God's way, relying on himself instead of God. As a result he immediately became self-centered instead of God-centered, dead to God who is the source of all life, and dead in trespasses and sins (Eph 2:1). In this condition, we are told that in Gen 5:3, *When Adam had lived one hundred and thirty years, he became the father of a son in his own likeness, according to his image.* His son was born after his own fallen image and not in the image of God, therefore, he brought forth a sinful, ungodly, self-centered human race, *born dead in trespasses and sins*, Rom 5:12-19. However, in Heb 1:1-3, *God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high;*

The image of God was back on Earth, this time in the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ, God's last Adam. 1Co 15:45, *So also it is written, "The first man, Adam, became a living soul." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit.*

Natural birth made us members of the fallen, sinful first-Adamic race. However, our spiritual birth made us a member of the new Godly race. When we were born again, we were born into Him who became our life, Col 3:3-4; Rom 5:19.

God is still carrying out His purpose of making man in His own image. Although His original purpose is the same, He is not using the original man to accomplish it. All is now centered in the Last Adam, our Lord Jesus. Being born into Him through faith, we became

partners with the divine nature (2Pe 1:4). As the Lord Jesus is allowed to express Himself through us, the world will see *Christ in you, the hope of glory*, (Col 1:27).

1Co 15:45-49, *So also it is written, "The first man, Adam, became a living soul." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit. However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural; then the spiritual. The first man is from the earth, earthy; the second man is from heaven. As is the earthy, so also are those who are earthy; and as is the heavenly, so also are those who are heavenly. And just as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.*

This principle is also in view in Rom 8:28-30, *And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose [there's the purpose again]. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren; and whom He predestined, these He also called; and whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.*

Here is the **good** for which God is working all things together, His original purpose of making us in His own image. This is centered and expressed in His Son, Christ, who is our life. This is why Paul's determination for each of his converts was threefold; Stage 1, Gal 4:19, *Christ being formed in your body* [soul structure]. Christ is formed in us as we develop a soul structure to think with God. Stage 2, the experience of spiritual autonomy (Eph 3:17) where Christ is said *to be at home in your hearts or right-lobes*. Stage 3, the experience of spiritual maturity, Phi 1:20, *Christ exalted or glorified in your body*.

When we see that all things are working together for good to make us more and more like the Lord Jesus, we will not be frustrated and upset when some of these things are hard to understand and often contain an element of death. We will be able to rest in God's plan and recognize as our Lord said to the Father, Mat 26:42, *"My Father, if this cannot pass away unless I drink it, Thy will be done."* Or as Job said, Job 13:15, *Though He slay me, I will trust in Him*. This is a prerequisite for spiritual maturity. We concentrate on Him and what God is doing in our life rather than ourselves. 2Co 3:18, *But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.*

It is one thing to know what God's purpose is for our lives, but it is another to know how He is accomplishing this purpose. In fact, one of God's most effective means in accomplishing His purpose for our lives is the process of failure. Many believers are simply frantic over failure and they will go to all lengths in trying to hide it, ignore it, deny it or rationalize it. They are resisting the main instrument in God's hand for conforming us to the image of His Son. Failure of self in our Christian life is allowed and often engineered by God in order to turn us completely away from ourselves to His source for our life, Christ.

As we consistently concentrate on Him who is revealed in the Word, the Holy Spirit will quietly and effortlessly change the center and the source of our lives from self to Christ. We will say with the apostle Paul, Gal 2:20, *I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me;*

Don't try to be like Him, just look at Him and be occupied with Him. Simply behold Him and look upon Him through the Word of God. This is what occupation with Christ is all about. Come to the Word for one purpose, to meet the Lord and not to get your mind crammed full of information. Don't make your goal Biblical scholarship, but instead Biblical fellowship with Christ. Phi 2:13, *for it is God [the Holy Spirit] who is at work in you, both to will [give you motivation] and to work [He gives you the ability to execute] above and beyond His good pleasure*. He is working everything together for this one purpose: 2Co 4:11, *For we who live are constantly being delivered over to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh*.

One of the most important factors in Christian growth is the Holy Spirit's revelation of the self-life to the believer. Self is the fleshly, carnal life of the first Adam, which is dead in

trespasses and sins (Eph 2:1). It is thoroughly corrupt before God and a life in which there is no good thing in the sight of God, Rom 7:18, *For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the wishing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not.* In Rom 8:8, *and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.*

Nowhere do spiritual principles mean more. In order for any of us to get beyond just knowing about the Lord and entering into a consistent and growing personal fellowship with Him, we must first come to know ourselves. Introspection is not involved here, the Holy Spirit uses experiential revelation, Joh 12:24, *“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains by itself alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.”*

All resurrection life springs out of death or else it would not be resurrection life. Christians are being taught that they need to blossom into full bloom and become a dynamic, radiant personality coupled with busy service. The tragedy of this sort of thing is that self is being elevated rather than the life of TLJC. No believer will truly come to know the Lord Jesus as his life and his place in the body of Christ until he knows by experience the deadly self-life that is deep within us all. Not everyone has had the experience of the Romans Chapter 7, the agony of conflict, where you have a desire to do good but end up practicing evil.

Rom 7:14-24, *For we know that the Law is spiritual; but I am of flesh, sold into bondage to sin. For that which I am doing, I do not understand; for I am not practicing what I would like to do, but I am doing the very thing I hate. But if I do the very thing I do not wish to do, I agree with the Law, confessing that it is good. So now, no longer am I the one doing it, but sin which indwells me. For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the wishing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not. For the good that I wish, I do not do; but I practice the very evil that I do not wish. But if I am doing the very thing I do not wish, I am no longer the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me. I find then the principle that evil is present in me, the one who wishes to do good. For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man, but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind, and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members. Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death?*

It is a great blessing when a believer realizes the awful conflict of struggle and defeat. The first step out of this is to realize the insufficiency and death of the self-life. The neediest people are not those who are having a heartbreaking, agonizing struggle for victory, but rather those who are having no struggle at all. Those jogging along in a religious experience and settling for less than God's highest and best. The Romans 7 experience is a shattering discovery that leads to a magnificent series of further discoveries of things which God has designed for spiritual enrichment. Self-revelation precedes divine revelation. The believer who is going through struggle and failure is the Christian who is being carefully and lovingly handled by the Lord in a very personal way.