

STOP RESISTING THE HOLY SPIRIT!

Follow Christ

Banska Bystrica, 27th August 2017

καὶ μὴ λυπεῖτε τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον τοῦ θεοῦ, ἐν ᾧ ἐσφραγίσθητε εἰς ἡμέραν ἀπολυτρώσεως. ³¹ πᾶσα πικρία καὶ θυμὸς καὶ ὀργὴ καὶ κραυγὴ καὶ βλασφημία ἀρθήτω ἀφ' ὑμῶν σὺν πάσῃ κακίᾳ. ³² γίνεσθε [δὲ] εἰς ἀλλήλους χρηστοί, εὐσπλαγχνοί, χαριζόμενοι ἑαυτοῖς, καθὼς καὶ ὁ θεὸς ἐν Χριστῷ ἐχαρίσατο ὑμῖν.

Eph 4:30-32 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. ³² Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

יְהוָה מָרַד וְעָבַד אֶת־תְּרוּתוֹ וְיָשַׁוּ אֶת־עַדְוָתוֹ לְפָנָיו
 וְיִתְּנֵם לְהָלָא לְאֹיְבֵי הוּא לְנִלְחָמָם
 LXX: αὐτοὶ δὲ ἠπείθησαν καὶ παρώξυναν τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον αὐτοῦ

Is 63:10 But they rebelled and grieved his Holy Spirit; therefore he turned to be their enemy, and himself fought against them.

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0. INTRODUCTION: PROBLEMS OF CHRISTIAN LIFE

- the problem of *dissatisfaction*: (1) complacency, (2) grumbling

0.1. PERSISTENT PROBLEMS IN CHRISTIAN LIFE

- permanent defeat; lack of reality; deep uncertainty; lack of discipline; lack of progress...

0.1.1. UNSOLVABLES

- Abraham (Wait!)
- Paul (You have enough!)
- Asking “heaven on earth” (impossibilities)

[Tozer] When Carlyle heard that Margaret Fuller had decided to "accept the universe" he roared with laughter. "Well, she'd better!" he shouted good-naturedly. And she had. And so had we. This idea was once expressed better by a simple-hearted man who was asked how he managed to live in such a state of constant tranquility even though surrounded by circumstances anything but pleasant. His answer was as profound as it

was simple: "I have learned," he said, "to cooperate with the inevitable." The idea here set forth is so wise and practical that it is hard to see how we Christians have managed to overlook it so completely in our everyday living. That we do overlook it is shown by our conduct and conversation. Some of us "kick against the pricks" for a lifetime, all the while believing that we are surrendered to the will of God. (*Born After Midnight*)

0.1.2. AVOIDABLES

- Apostasy: Lack of faith (Heb 3); believing "in vain"
 - **1Cor 15:1-2** the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, ² and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you- unless you believed in vain (ἐκτὸς εἰ μὴ εἰκῆ ἐπιστεύσατε).
- Lack of progress

0.2. CAUSES (SOME)

- (1) resisting the Holy Spirit → (Stephen Acts 7);
- (2) Half-heartedness; → full commitment (Mt 7:8)
- (3) vexation → peace of God (1Thes 5:23; Rom 16:20)

1. THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

What you can expect from the work of the Holy Spirit in you...

- the New Covenant → the Promise of the Father → the Holy Spirit
- "charismatic" and anti-charismatic attitudes
 - John MacArthur: charismatics: "... vital Christianity is one sensational experience after another" (*Charismatic Chaos*, p. 27)
- the work of the Holy Spirit → (1) rejection of "chaos", (2) forgetting Jesus
 - Wilkerson: "I say to you it is possible to gather Spirit-filled people in one place, praising and lifting up their hands - and still have Christ walking among them as a stranger!" (Wilkerson A Christless Pentecost)
- the two types of the work of the Holy Spirit (1) enhancing/replacing humans by spiritual gifts, (2) developing human character by spiritual fruit (eg. Gal 5:22-23 ἀγάπη χαρὰ εἰρήνη, μακροθυμία χρηστότης ἀγαθωσύνη, πίστις ²³ πραύτης ἐγκράτεια)
- the Holy Spirit: (1) assurance [Rom 8:16]; (2) intimacy, love, fellowship [2Cor 13:14]; (3) effective Christianity [Acts 1:8]

1.1. SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE

- is religious boring? repetitive? impractical?... ⇒ you do not know the Holy Spirit!

[Watchman NEE] The error with people today lies in their mistaking the knowledge of the Bible to be spiritual knowledge, not knowing that true spiritual knowledge is learned from God. If anyone desires to learn before God, he has to deal with Him as well as to be dealt with by Him. (*Spiritual Knowledge*, p. 41)

- **1Cor 2:12** Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God (ἵνα εἰδῶμεν τὰ ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ χαρισθέντα ἡμῖν·)

[CHAMBERS] One of the great secrets of life is that obedience is the key to spiritual life as curiosity is the key to intellectual life. In the spiritual domain curiosity is not only of no use but is a direct hindrance. When once a man learns that **spiritual knowledge can only be gained by obedience**, the emancipation of his nature is incalculable (*Shade of His Hand*)

[CHAMBERS] There are some saints who are ideally actual, i.e., **instructed as well as sanctified** and living in unsullied communion with God, and there are others who are like Ephraim, "a cake not turned." Once let it dawn on your mind that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost and instantly the impossible becomes possible; the things you used to pray about, you no longer pray about, but do. As in the natural world, so in the spiritual, knowledge is power. All we need to experience is that we have "passed out of death into life"

(rv): what we need to know takes all Time and Eternity. "And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God . . ." (John 17:3). Begin to know Him now, and finish never! (*He Shall Glorify Me*)

1.2. INTIMACY

- is the Lord *distant? unreal? detached? religious? too demanding?* ... ⇒ you do not know the Holy Spirit!
- with Jesus (no orphans)
 - **John 14:17-18** ...the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you. ¹⁸ "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you (Οὐκ ἀφήσω ὑμᾶς ὀρφανούς, ἔρχομαι πρὸς ὑμᾶς).
- with the Father (Abba!)
 - **Gal 4:6** And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!"

1.3. DYNAMICS OF PROGRESS

- is your christian life *stagnant? weak? unexciting? formalistic? confined to church building?* ... ⇒ you do not know the Holy Spirit
- comfort; guidance;
 - **John 14:16-17** And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper (ἄλλον παράκλητον), to be with you forever, ¹⁷ even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.
- joy (Rom 14:17) → strength
 - **Neh 8:10** for the joy of the LORD is your strength (מְצִיטָה הִיא הַיְהוָה הַחַיִּים).
 - **Rom 14:17** For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit (δικαιοσύνη καὶ εἰρήνη καὶ χαρὰ ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ).
- power through the Word
 - **1Cor 4:20** the kingdom of God does not consist in talk but in power (οὐ γὰρ ἐν λόγῳ ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ ἀλλ' ἐν δυνάμει).

2. WAYS OF RESISTING THE SPIRIT

- (1) grieving, (2) extinguishing, (3) resisting...
- resisting the Holy Spirit in church leaders...
- the sermon of Stephen in Acts 7 answered two accusations: (1) the place – the temple, (2) the customs – the laws
 - **Acts 6:13-14** This man never ceases to speak words against this holy place and the law, ¹⁴ for we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and will change the customs that Moses delivered to us." ... **Acts 7:51** you always **resist the Holy Spirit**. As your fathers did, so do you

2.1. RESISTING PROPHECY

Acts 7:9 "And the patriarchs, **jealous** (ζηλώσαντες τὸν Ἰωσήφ) of Joseph, sold him into Egypt; Joseph → too young

- (1) Negatives: favoritism; informer;
 - **Gn 37:3** Now Israel loved Joseph more than any other of his sons, because he was the son of his old age. And he made him a robe of many colors
 - **Gn 37:2** Joseph brought a bad report of them to their father
- (2) Positives: obedient, just,
- DREAMS → from God (prophecy)

2.2. RESISTING AUTHORITY

2.2.1. MOSES – PHARAOH’S SON

Acts 7:27-29 But the man who was wronging his neighbor thrust him aside, saying, '**Who made you a ruler and a judge over us?** (τίς σε κατέστησεν ἄρχοντα καὶ δικαστὴν ἐφ’ ἡμῶν) ²⁸ Do you want to kill me as you killed the Egyptian yesterday?' ²⁹ At this retort Moses fled and became an exile in the land of Midian,

Moses → too rash **Ex 2:11-12** One day, when Moses had grown up, he went out to his people and looked on their burdens, and he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his people. ¹² He looked this way and that, and seeing no one, he struck down the Egyptian and hid him in the sand...

- (1) Negatives: too rash; irresponsible (?)
- (2) Positives: HIGH POSITION → possibility of deliverance

2.2.2. MOSES – THE LEADER

Acts 7:39-40 Our fathers refused to obey him, but thrust him aside, and in their hearts they turned to Egypt, ⁴⁰ saying to Aaron, 'Make for us gods who will go before us. As for this Moses who led us out from the land of Egypt, **we do not know what has become of him.**' (οὐκ οἶδαμεν τί ἐγένετο αὐτῷ)

- (1) Negatives: long unavailability, absence...
- (2) Positives: MEETINGS WITH GOD → sure guidance

2.3. RESISTING INFINITY (TRANSCENDENCE)

Acts 7:47-51 But it was Solomon who built a house for him. ⁴⁸ Yet the Most High does not dwell in houses made by hands, as the prophet says, ⁴⁹ "Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool. What kind of house will you build for me, says the Lord, or what is the place of my rest? ⁵⁰ Did not my hand make all these things?" ⁵¹ "You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit (ὁμεῖς ἀεὶ τῷ πνεύματι τῷ ἁγίῳ ἀντιπίπτετε). As your fathers did, so do you.

The temple → earthly structure

- (1) Negatives: limiting God to *space*...
- (2) Positives: access to God in space

3. TO REMEMBER

- Make sure you have the right attitude to the Holy Spirit. Do not allow the circumstances to make it unbiblical.
- Decide whether your persistent problem (if you have one) is not caused by your grieving or resisting the Holy Spirit.
- Guard your attitudes to other Christians, especially Christian workers. Your attitudes to them may mean you are rejecting the solution of your problem(s) given by God.