

# The Indwelling of the Spirit – a Figure of Speech

*By Jerry Moffitt*

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For many years our brotherhood has disagreed on the mode of the indwelling of the Spirit. We have never divided over the issue because there have not only been good, sound men on both sides, but we have wise men on both sides of the issue.

As with many others, I have never felt that acceptance of the personal indwelling was a step toward the dangerous error of a special leading of the Spirit. And some of the best warriors against the charismatic movement and against a direct operation of the Spirit have been those who believe in the personal indwelling of the Spirit.

For more than 26 years I have puzzled over the mode of the indwelling and have felt that there was insufficient scriptural evidence to settle the issue. God doesn't answer every question (Deut. 29:29). Still, in teaching on sanctification, from time to time, I felt I was being led by Scripture in a natural way toward what might be called an indwelling of the Spirit through the Word. Finally, I decided to put the Scriptures and such thoughts into a simple monograph.

Following are those Scriptures and thoughts.

## Transformation

Paul told the Roman Christians to “be not fashioned according to this world: but be ye *transformed by the renewing of your mind*, that ye may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God” (Rom. 12:2). Truly a transformation is to

take place; other passages which seem to indicate the same thing in various figures are presented for your contemplation:

“For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he should instruct him? *But we have the mind of Christ*” (1 Cor. 2:16).

“Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 2:5).

“I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I that live, *but Christ liveth in me*” (Gal. 2:20).

“My little children, of whom I am again in travail until *Christ be formed in you*” (Gal. 4:19).

“To whom God was pleased to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is *Christ in you*, the hope of glory” (Col. 1:27).

“But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, *are transformed into the same image from glory to glory*, even as from the Lord the Spirit” (2 Cor. 3:18).

“And we have the word of prophecy made more sure; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawn, *and the day-star arise* in your hearts” (2 Pet. 1:19).

As we have seen, some of the verses (Gal. 2:20; Col. 1:27) talk of Christ dwelling in us. Others talk of God dwelling in us or his Word dwelling in us.

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly” (Col. 3:16).

“And for this cause we also thank God without ceasing, that, when ye received from us the word of the message, even the word of God, ye accepted it not as the word of men, but, as it is in truth, the word of God, *which also worketh in you that believe*” (1 Thess. 2:13).

"For *it is God who worketh in you both to will and to work, for his good pleasure*" (Phil. 2:13).

"I know that ye are Abraham's seed; yet ye seek to kill me, because *my word hath not free course in you*" (John 8:37).

"In whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit" (Eph. 2:22).

"Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my word: and my Father will love him, and *we will come unto him, and make our abode with him*" (John 14:23).

Now, I believe all this is talking basically about sanctification. Paul said, "Having therefore these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, *perfecting holiness in the fear of God*" (2 Cor. 7:1).

I believe all these things happen much this way. A person hears the Word of God and of his free will and by obedience puts away bad traits and takes on good traits and holy characteristics. In doing so he resembles Christ more.

It can be said, figuratively, that Christ dwells in him. Christ is formed in him (Gal. 4:19). God has his abode with him (John 14:23).

The Word has free course in him (John 8:37).

It could be said he is full of the Spirit (Acts 6:3). It comes through obedience to the Word so the Bible attributes sanctification to the Word (John 17:17).

Now notice another passage. Paul said, "But ye are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you. But if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin" (Rom. 8:9-10).

Would not the concept of the Spirit dwelling in us fit well with all the passages above? Is it another way, by a figure of speech, of describing the transformation called sanctification which occurs in our lives by obedience to God's Word? Why would the dwelling of the Spirit be literal and all the other indwellings be figurative? And if the "indwelling of the Spirit" is a figure which describes the reality of sanctification, like all the rest, what figure is it?

## Metonymy

There is what is called the "metonymy of the cause" where the "cause" is put for the "effect." Sometimes a person is put for an activity of that person. For example, in 1 Thessalonians 5:19 Paul says, "Quench not the Spirit," when he seems to have in mind the gifts of the Spirit, especially in context "prophecys" (Gal. 5:20). Acts 7:51 says, "Ye do always resist the Holy Spirit." Bullinger says:

*The testimony of the Holy Spirit as given by the prophets. Their fathers resisted the prophets and would not hear the Spirit's voice in them and now they, like their fathers, were resisting the same testimony at Pentecost, and since then culminating in Stephen (see pp. 542-543 in Figures of Speech Used in the Bible, by E.W. Bullinger, published by Baker Book House in Grand Rapids, Mich.).*

Under "metonymy of the cause" and under "the person acting for the thing done" Bullinger has several whole categories involving the Holy Spirit. One is called the "Spirit for the gifts and operations of the Spirit" (p. 540). All examples he gives are worth considering. Could not the Holy Spirit (the Person) stand in the place of the thing he does (sanctification which comes through obedience to the truth [John 17:17])?

Could not the indwelling Spirit be by "metonymy of the subject"

stand for the fruit he bears in our life when we obey his Word? Metonymy of the Subject is where the subject is put for something pertaining to it, so it seems so to me. For example, notice 2 Corinthians 3:6: “Who also made us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant; not of the letter, but *of the spirit*.” Bullinger says *spirit* stands for “the ministration of the Spirit, verse 8: the New Covenant as contained in the Gospel” (p. 543).

It seems clear there is a “metonymy of the cause” where sometimes the person acting is put for the thing done.

Again, I do not find the doctrine of the personal, literal indwelling of the Spirit distasteful, in and of itself, as long as one does not teach he does something to us separate and apart from the Word. That notion can contradict truth regarding free will and lead to the error of Calvinism. Too, so far I cannot prove the two concepts on the mode of the indwelling are mutually exclusive.

Some Scriptures might speak of one mode of indwelling while other Scriptures speak of another mode of indwelling. Yet, I still have not seen a personal indwelling proved, though I desire to continue to study it with an open mind.

## A Personal Opinion

All good sound brethren I have spoken to agree that the mode of the indwelling does not affect salvation and must never divide us. We have good and sound brethren on both sides of this issue. Our dispute must be with those who suppose the Spirit in you works on you or does something to you separate and apart from the power of God’s Word. To save us, God chose the persuasive power of his Word. That leaves our free will intact. The error of a mysterious working on us apart from the Word of God cripples personal choice, weakens human responsibility, and violates the Word of God.

In an age when the denominational world says, “Christ paid it all,” and “God does it all,” and “You can’t save yourself,” those who teach direct leading of the Spirit without the Word are enemies of truth and in our battle with them we cannot take prisoners. Some of our best fighters in the fray, however, are those who differ with my indwelling and who believe in a direct personal indwelling. It is an honor to fight alongside them.

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## The Blood Of Christ

*Neal Pollard*

The topic above should cause one’s mind to focus on some precise areas. Naturally, the blood of Christ implies thoughts of the “incarnation” of Christ (that Christ took on the form of man, while all God, and, thus, had blood coursing through His veins; Philippians 2:8). The blood of Christ further educes from one’s thoughts the atonement Christ made for all mankind through the shedding of His blood at the cross (cf. Hebrews 9:12-14). The blood of Christ also elicits reflection upon the suffering and death of the sinless man from Nazareth (1 Peter 2:24). And on one might reflect.

The phrase, the blood of Christ, appears verbatim in the New Testament in four verses. With each reference one finds important lessons about the function and significance of His blood. Christ’s blood is central in the Father’s plan of salvation and life within His favor. What does the blood of Christ bring to needy man?

# **The Blood Of Christ Brings Redemption (1 Peter 1:19)**

In 1 Peter 1, one sees the inspired apostle speaking to persecuted (1), predestined (2), purified (2), and pliant (2) people of God. What would cause a Christian to suffer wrong for doing right? What would cause a Christian to search out from the scriptures the terms of election, accept the terms of pardon, and follow the terms of Christian living? Simply, an understanding of redemption.

Perhaps the verse most loved and quoted is John 3:16. Yet, so bekown and familiar, this verse is sorely misunderstood and underapplied. Jesus, the speaker of the words recorded in this verse, foretells the act of redemption. With His divine foreknowledge, Christ understood that the gift of the Father's only begotten Son (Himself) meant the shedding of His blood at Calvary. The purpose of that shed blood, He knew, was to redeem the lost race of man from the power and hopelessness of sin. Paul says, "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons" (Galatians 4:4,5). By inspiration, Paul reinforces this with Titus (Titus 2:14).

# **The Blood OF Christ Brings Removal (Hebrews 9:14)**

The King James Version uses, in this verse, the word "purge" in translating the effect of the blood of Christ upon the conscience of one to whom that blood is applied. Purge means "to purify, especially of sin, guilt, or defilement" (The American Heritage Concise Dictionary, 1994). Thayer shows the original word translated "purge" in this verse means "free from the guilt of sin" (The New Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon, 312). Clearly, the Spirit-guided writer of Hebrews

speaks of the effect of the applied blood of the Savior. The audience of Hebrews, of which modern man is a part, needs some agent to remove the guilt of sin (dead works) from their lives. The blood of Christ is that agent. For the agent to be effective (to do the job it was intended to do), one must come in contact with it. Where does one come in contact with the blood?

Jesus shed His blood when He died (John 19:34). Paul writes "that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death" (Romans 6:3). One cannot literally go over to Jerusalem to a hill called Mt. Calvary and find the man Jesus bleeding to death on a cross. Furthermore, because one cannot do this, one cannot in some literal way reach up to Him and take some of His shed blood and apply it to himself. Thus, there is no literal, physical way for today's man or woman to contact the actual, shed blood of our Lord.

Yet, Revelation 1:5 reveals that Christ, on His cross, washed us from our sins in His shed blood. God would not allow His Son to shed His life-blood and then provide no means for mankind to contact that blood in some way. And, there is a way and only one way. In identical terminology, Acts 22:16 says that baptism washes away sins. In summation, Christ shed His blood in His death. We are buried with Christ in baptism. Christ washed our sins with His blood. We wash away our sins in the act of baptism. The blood of Christ and baptism, inseparably joined, remove the sins of those who recognize and submit to the authority of Christ in being baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38; 1 Peter 3:21).

## **The Blood Of Christ Brings Return (Ephesians 2:13)**

At the creation of man, there was no need for means whereby man could return to a right relationship with Jehovah. The idea in Ephesians 2 that, specifically here, the Gentiles were



“far off” implies the need to return. How could they come back to God? Paul stresses the fact that Christ’s blood was the only means whereby reconciliation could be made. Thus, Paul penned the glorious fact that Christ “made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself” (Colossians 1:20). As if an inseparable gulf was crossed by Adam and Eve through their sinning at Eden, that gap of sin separated man from God (cf. Isaiah 59:1,2; Note: This is not to suggest that all inherit Adam’s sin– the false idea of Hereditary Depravity – but rather that through Adam sin entered the world, Romans 5:17, and, consequently, all have sinned, Romans 3:23). Not with acts of goodness or meritorious works could man ever earn his salvation (Titus 3:5). Yet, there are conditions that God expects man to meet in order to have past sins forgiven and the restoration of a right relationship with the Father (Titus 2:12; Hebrews 5:9; Ephesians 2:8). By shedding His blood, Christ paved a road of return (i.e., the “narrow road” of Matthew 7:13,14) to take us back to God. There was no access before and without Him and after sin was in the world (cf. 1 Timothy 2:5; John 14:6). How did Christ effect this return with His blood?

He took the first, old covenant God made with Moses and Israel out of the way by dying on the cross (Ephesians 2:12,14-15). He placed all believers in the faith into one body [the church](Ephesians 2:14,15,16; 4:4). He provided the message of reconciliation in commissioning the preached word to all men (Ephesians 2:17; Acts 1:8). He opened the avenue of prayer by His death on the cross, encouraging petitioning the Father to enhance our relationship with Him (Ephesians 2:18). He sets aside a place in the Kingdom [the church] for all the faithful obedient into which all spiritual blessings flow (Ephesians 2:19-22; 1:3; Matthew 16:18-19). To all who obey the commandments of God relative to entrance into His church, reconciliation and return to God are provided.

# **The Blood Of Christ Brings Remembrance (1 Corinthians 10:16)**

As Eden shows the importance God stressed in mankind before the cross to anticipate that great event, this verse shows the importance God stresses in mankind after the cross remembering it. Those washed in the blood of Christ, contacted in baptism, are added to the church (Acts 2:41-47). Therein, those added [Christians] are governed by the Word of God in worship and conduct. A vital part of New Testament worship is the weekly participation in the Lord's Supper (Acts 20:7). Why has God authorized that Christians do so, and with such frequency?

The answer is "communion." In connection with the Lord's Supper, this word is translated "communion" only once in the New Testament. Yet, the original word from which it is translated is koininia, among the most recognized of all Greek words even among those who have little knowledge of that language. Most often, koininia is translated "fellowship." "Fellowship" is also employed by the inspired New Testament writers to make reference to the "Memorial Feast." The apostles and early Christians continued steadfastly in the fellowship of the Lord's Supper (Acts 2:42). The fellowship of the Lord's Supper was not to be defiled by the presence of idolatry at Corinth (1 Corinthians 10:20), but rather the communion was to be exclusively with the Lord.

In 1 Corinthians 10:16, Paul stresses that there is communion. That fellowship is with the blood of Christ, which suggests a multitude of things. First, the blood of Christ places one into the one body (the church— Colossians 1:18)(Acts 20:28). Therefore, the fellowship of the Lord's Supper involves corporate (collective) activity. Together, children of God are drawn closer to one another remembering the Savior whose blood purchased them from sin. This communion, then, is a means of expressing encouragement and thanksgiving together as the redeemed. The Lord's Supper cannot, then, have significance to

those not members of the body as there is no celebration and fellowship with Christians. Also, the Lord's Supper provides a communion between the individual Christian and his Lord. Thus, Paul instructs each to "examine himself" (1 Corinthians 11:28). None other can obey the command of self-examination and remembrance for another in the Lord's Supper or in any spiritual matter. Yet, the Lord's Supper is special because of both the sharing with others and the individual responsibility. As an institution, the Lord's Supper is, in both regards, a crucial means whereby Christians remember the sacrifice, suffering, and death of Christ in shedding His blood on the tree.

The blood of Christ purchased man's pardon (1 Peter 1:19). The blood of Christ purges man's conscience (Hebrews 9:14). The blood of Christ propels man closer to God (Ephesians 2:13). The blood of Christ provides recollection of atonement (1 Corinthians 10:16). His blood was important in prophecy (Isaiah 53:3-5). His blood was important in physicality (John 19:34). His blood is important in perusal (Matthew 26:28; 1 Corinthians 11:28).

# Come to Dinner

*by George W. DeHoff*

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# Matthew 22:2-14, Luke

# 14:16-24

This parable could be called “The Parable of the Great Invitation” or “The parable of Frivolous Excuses.” It is a call to dinner. “All things are ready, come.”

“The kingdom of Heaven is like unto” (Matt. 22:2). Then He describes certain things about the kingdom of God. This is a judgment parable and contains these central thoughts: (1) The guilt of the Jewish nation for rejecting God’s word; (2) God will have a people nevertheless; (3) Since the Jews rejected the gospel message, his servants invited others.

Standing out clearly in the scripture is the importance of the call. In both the Old and the New Testaments, feasts denote spiritual blessings. The feast in this parable is the gospel of the kingdom of heaven. Since this is a call of God to accept the gospel message, it is all important. The certain king of the parable points to the great God of the universe, the King of kings and Lord of lords. Since it is the King’s dinner, the invitation is tremendously important.

In the second place, this call is important because the feast honors the King’s son. Christ refers to Himself. He is the son of God. If the king was giving a dinner in honor of a servant perhaps the call to attend would not be so important, but he is honoring his son. This makes the invitation all important. To refuse the invitation dishonors the son.

The Bible teaches every knee should bow and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God, the Father (Phil. 2:10-11). Since this confession and homage is inevitable, we must either make the confession here or hereafter. We should gladly accept this great invitation.

Third, this call to dinner is important because of the immense preparation, “all things are ready” (Luke 14:17). Nothing is undone. Can we not see the great banquet table groaning under

the load of luxurious delicacies? Nothing is omitted. No expense is spared. Calvary is an accomplished fact. The blood of the Lamb of God soaked into the wood of the cross, and dripped to the ground beneath the accursed tree.

“All things are ready.” Think of what the great spiritual feast cost the Father. It cost His only begotten son. The preparation was most elaborate but very necessary. There was no other way for man to come to God to be forgiven. It took the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, the very son of God. What an important call and how tragic it is to reject it.

Fourth, the punishment of those who refused the call shows the importance of the call to dinner. If it seems drastic for the disappointed king to send his armies to destroy those who rejected his invitation, and killed his servants, consider the importance of the invitation. If you think the man found at the supper table without a wedding garment was too severely punished for his neglect, weigh the significance of this invitation he had slighted.

Those who heard the call and rejected the invitation suffered severe punishment. Christ’s prophecy, for the Jewish nation, came to pass in the year A.D. 70, when the Roman armies, under Titus, laid siege to the city of Jerusalem and razed it to the ground. The terrible destruction of Jerusalem in the first century of this age is a kind of prophecy of the utter destruction that awaits the impenitent at the close of this age. Modern day people should take note, and shudder.

This call is universal—to the Jew first, and also to the Greek (Rom. 1:16). In the parable under discussion the elite received the invitation. They turned it down with scorn and frivolous excuses. The King’s servants then went out into the highways and hedges looking for guests. The Jews rejected Christ and cried, “His blood be on us and on our children” (Matt. 27:25). At first, the offer of salvation was to the Jews. When they rejected it, the teachers turned to the

Gentiles.

The call was to dine at the great banquet table of the Lord. It is universal, God is not a respecter of persons. "Whosoever will" is the language of the scriptures. His loyal servants are still delivering the message all over the world that whosoever will may come to Christ and obey His gospel. It is a message of love, and freedom. Thank God, everyone has an invitation to attend this great wedding feast.

This call is for preparation. Orientals wore long white robes at public festivals. Those who appeared with any other garments were culpable, and punished. The wedding garment is the righteous deeds of the saints. If we obey the commands of Jesus to believe and be baptized the promise of salvation from past sin is ours (Mark 16:16). If we are faithful at all costs, we will receive a crown of life (Rev. 2: 10). Obedience to the plan of salvation, and clean living, and faithful service are the right clothes for this feast. N& one attended this banquet with improper robes. Common clothes would insult the king, and dishonor his son. If we are to enjoy the great blessings of God we must make preparation. Why should anyone appear in filthy rags when clean garments are available? "He that is unrighteous, let him do unrighteousness still: and he that is filthy, let him be made filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him do righteousness still: and he that is holy, let him be made holy still" (Rev. 22:11).

This call also contains a warning. Much of our Lord's teaching is interspersed with warnings. Those first bidden began to make excuses—feeble, flimsy, foolish, frivolous excuses. Verse 7 tells the consequences of the refusal of the call to dinner: "But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth; and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murders, and burned up their city." Verse 13 tells what happened to the poor fellow who tried to get by with unfit garb: "Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

These things are for our admonition. Transgression deserves severe punishment. Notice that these people “made light of it and went their ways.” Some took his servants and treated them shamefully, slaying them. One man came, “not having on a wedding garment.” These words speak disaster. The call of God contains a warning. It is tragical to go about your business as if nothing happened. You can enjoy a feast of good things at the Father’s table. It’s up to you!

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## How Are Men Saved?

*By Louis Rushmore*

Out of boundless love, God the Father sent his son Jesus Christ into the world to die for our sins. “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). “But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8). “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him” (2 Corinthians 5:21).

The sacrifice of Jesus Christ for us was part of God’s grace and mercy by which we are saved. The sacrifice of Christ and grace permits a just God to grant forgiveness of sins; Christ’s sacrifice and mercy permits a just God to withhold punishment for sins. “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God” (Ephesians 2:8). “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).

Through grace God gives men what they do not deserve

(salvation), and through mercy God does not give men what they do deserve (punishment). However, the grace and mercy of God which results in salvation is conditional upon man's obedience to the Gospel.

With no less love for our souls, Jesus Christ willingly died for us. "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me" (John 6:38). Through his shed blood Christ saves us. "And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood" (Revelation 1:5). "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Ephesians 1:7).

Also, as mediator between God the Father and ourselves Jesus saves us. "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Timothy 2:4-5). However, Christ as mediator and his blood save men conditionally.

The Holy Spirit's role in conversion relates primarily to the provision of inspired revelation (the Word of God). Second Peter 1:20-21 summarizes the way in which Scripture was communicated from God to man. "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter 1:20-21).

The Holy Spirit, along with God and Jesus Christ, participates with men in their conversion. "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit" (1 Corinthians 12:13). That joint participation of the Godhead with us in the forgiveness of



sins is non-miraculous and through the Word of God.

All that the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit have done to arrange for the forgiveness of sins is conditional upon man's obedience to God's plan of salvation recorded in the Gospel (the New Testament portion of the Bible). First, one must examine what the Bible teaches about salvation in order for faith to develop. "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17). Without faith salvation is impossible. "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Hebrews 11:6); "I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (John 8:24).

However, faith only is useless. "But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?" (James 2:20). "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only" (James 2:24). Though men cannot earn salvation, God refuses to grant forgiveness of sins to men who refuse to obey him.

Faith is followed by repentance. All men are required to repent or perish. "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent" (Acts 17:30). "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3).

Profession before others of one's faith in Jesus Christ naturally occurs next. "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Romans 10:10). One New Testament character worded his profession: ". . . I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God" (Acts 8:38).

Baptism (immersion) is the point at which sins are forgiven. "The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us

(not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 3:21). "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16). Baptism, though, does not save without the Godhead's role in salvation as well as man's part in his own salvation (i.e., hearing, believing, repenting, professing).

God the Father, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit have done their parts toward saving men. However, man also has a role in his own salvation according to Philippians 2:12. "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" (Philippians 2:12).

Man's role is summarized in the Bible as obedience. Speaking of Jesus, "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Hebrews 5:8-9). Obedience is the conditional basis of the Father, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit's roles in our salvation.

Men who do not obey the Gospel will be lost. "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power" (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9).

Dear Reader, are you saved? Have you obeyed the Gospel yet? The Father Son, and Holy Spirit have done their parts toward your salvation. It only remains for you to fulfill your role in your own salvation.

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# The Blood of Christ (Outline)

*By Victor M. Eskew*

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## I. Introduction.

*A. Jesus shed blood at Gethsemane, in the halls of Pilate, and at Calvary.*

*B. Christians remember his blood each Lord's Day.*

*C. Peter called it "precious" blood (1 Pet. 1:19).*

*1. The word precious means "dear, valuable, costly."*

*2. The blood of Jesus is invaluable.*

## II. The Precious Blood of the Lamb.

*A. The blood was real.*

*1. While on earth, Jesus had a human body of flesh, blood, and bones (John 1:14; Phil. 2:5-8; Luke 24:39).*

*2. Jesus' blood, like ours, was composed of red cells, white cells, platelets, and plasma. It was real blood.*

*B. The blood was royal.*

1. He was of the house and lineage of David, whose dynasty continues to the end of time (Isa. 9:7; Luke 1:32-33).

2. His kingship was mocked during his crucifixion (Mark 15:16-20).

3. Jesus was raised from the dead to sit on his eternal throne (Dan. 7:13-14; Acts 2:32-36).

4. Jesus is "King of kings and Lord of lords" (1 Tim. 6:15).

C. The blood was innocent.

1. Jesus did nothing wrong (Heb. 4:15; 1 Pet. 2:22).

a. Judas said, "I have sinned in that I have betrayed innocent blood" (Matt. 27:4).

b. The wife of Pilate said, "Have nothing to do with this just man" (Matt. 27:19).

c. Pilate said, "I find no fault in this man" (Luke 23:4).

d. Pilate also said, "I am innocent of the blood of this

*just person" (Matt. 27:24).*

*2. The people who knew Jesus best could not convict him of sin (John 8:46).*

*3. If the enemies of Jesus could not convict him of sin, who can?*

*D. The blood was substitutionary.*

*1. Jesus gave himself for us (Titus 2:14).*

*2. Jesus "bare our sins in his own body" (1 Pet. 2:24).*

*3. Jesus "washed us from our sins in his own blood" (Rev. 1:5).*

*4. Jesus' stripes heal us (Isa. 53:5).*

*E. The blood is satisfying.*

*1. God is holy (holiness is a general term for moral excellence).*

*a. "The Lord our God is holy" (Psa. 99:9).*

*b. "Holy and reverend is his name" (Psa. 111:9).*

*c. His pure eyes cannot behold evil (Hab. 1:13).*

*d. Men fear God because he is holy (Rev. 15:4).*

*2. The holiness of God demands that sin be punished.*

*a. God is just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus (Rom. 3:26).*

*b. God cannot tolerate evil.*

*c. God must judge and condemn sin.*

*d. God can justify sin only by the merit of a substitutionary sacrifice.*

*e. God can only be just if he forgives by a blood sacrifice, because "the blood of it is for the life thereof" (Lev. 17:14).*

*3. Jesus' blood satisfied the demands of divine justice.*

*a. Jesus was made a sin-sacrifice for us, though he knew no sin (2 Cor. 5:21).*

*b. Jesus became an "offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour" (Eph. 5:2).*

*F. The blood of Jesus was effective.*

*1. It cleanses from sin (Matt. 26:28; 1 John 1:7).*

*2. It redeems from sin (Eph. 1:7).*

*3. It gives life to the dead (Eph. 2:4-5; 1 John 5:11).*

*4. It purchased the church (Acts. 20:28).*

*5. It was shed once, never to be shed again (Heb. 10:11-12).*

### **III. Conclusion.**

*A. The blood of Jesus is precious.*

*B. His blood is real, royal, innocent, substitutionary, satisfying, and effective.*

*C. We remember his blood each Lord's Day.*

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## **Working the Works of God**

*By H. A. (Buster) Dobbs*

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The Bible teaches that works have nothing to do with salvation, and it teaches that works are necessary to salvation.

Still, the Bible does not contradict itself.

How can this be? How can the Bible say two things that seem to be diametrically opposed and yet not contradict itself? It would appear to be self-evident that works cannot be both necessary and unnecessary to salvation.

Since the Bible is inspired of God (2 Tim. 3:16-17), it must be true and therefore cannot contradict itself. Truth, in order to be truth, must be coherent. If two statements contradict, either one or both of them must be false, but there is no way they can both be true. How, then, do we deal with the fact that the Bible says works are not necessary to justification, and also says that we are justified by works?

Some assume a “take your pick” attitude and go blithely down the path not knowing how to reconcile the two statements – and, possibly, not caring. The honest person however cannot do this and must either reject the Bible or find a logical way to harmonize the two statements.



# Various Works

To understand the Bible we must define its terms correctly. It is necessary to understand accurately how Bible writers use the word “works” (sometimes “deeds”), or we will be confused. A survey of how the Bible uses this word will help us to avoid the confusion of misunderstanding. A failure to understand something correctly leads to incomprehension and perhaps unbelief.

Following is a partial list of “work(s)” mentioned in the Old and New Testaments:

- The work God does – Gen. 2:2; Judges 2:7; Ps. 71:17; 1 Cor. 12:6; John 6:28-29; John 10:37; John 14:10
- The work man does in providing food and shelter – Gen. 3:17-19; Exod. 23:12; Exod. 26:1; Eccl. 2:4; Matt. 21:28
- The work man does in obeying specific commands of God – Gen. 6:13-22; John 9:4; 1 Cor. 15:58
- Work of iniquity (evil) – Ps. 6:8; Ps. 14:1; Jer. 1:16; Ezek. 33:26; Matt. 7:23; Luke 13:27; John 3:19; Rom. 1:27; Eph. 4:19; Rom. 13:12 (“works of darkness”); Gal. 5:19-21 (“works of the flesh”)
- Work of righteousness (good) – Ps. 15:2; Acts 10:35; Matt. 5:16; Rom. 3:27; 1 Cor. 3:13-14; 2 Cor. 9:8; Gal. 6:10; Eph. 2:10; Titus 2:14; James 1:4; James 3:13
- Works that are worthy of repentance – Acts 26:20
- The mighty works (signs, miracles) of Jesus – Matt. 11:23-24; John 10:32; Acts 2:22
- Works of the Law of Moses – Rom. 3:20; Rom. 3:28; Gal. 2:16; Gal. 3:2
- Greater works done by Jesus’ disciples – John 5:20; John 14:12
- Good and bad works by which all men shall be judged – Rom. 2:6; 1 Pet. 1:17; Rev. 20:12-13; Rev. 22:12
- Human works apart from works of God – Rom. 9:11; Rom. 11:6

- Converts to Jesus – 1 Cor. 3:14
- Apostolic signs, and wonders, and mighty works – 2 Cor. 12:12
- Work of sinless perfection – Eph. 2:9; Col. 2:21-23
- The power that works in the saved – Eph. 3:20; Eph. 4:12
- The word of God that works in the believer – 1 Thess. 4:11; 2 Thess. 1:11; 1 Tim. 2:10; 1 Tim. 5:12; 2 Tim. 2:21
- Works that justify – James 2:24; James 3:13
- Works of the devil – 1 John 3:8
- The ungodly works of ungodliness – Jude 1:15

This gives a sample of various “works” mentioned in the Bible. It is a mistake to suppose that the word work(s) always refers to condition of acceptance with God. It does not!

Even a casual glance at this list will convince the thoughtful Bible student this is a complicated subject, having many interrelated parts. It is difficult to deal with because of the need to take different relationships or points of view into consideration.

The mighty acts of Jehovah are works. Creation (Ps. 8:3-6; Ps. 19:1; Ps. 33:4; Ps. 92:5; Ps. 102:25; Ps. 104:24), redemptive acts in history like the Exodus (Judges 2:7-10).

Jesus is our perfect example in all things (1 Pet. 2:21). The Savior went about doing good (Acts 10:38-39; John 4:34; John 5:36; John 10:25-38; John 15:24; John 17:4). His words and his works confirmed his authority and mission.

Humans are sinless at birth, seeing that Jehovah is the Father and Giver of the human spirit (Heb. 12:9; Eccl. 12:7). As the child matures it comes to understand that some things are right and other things are wrong, but chooses to do wrong things and ignore right things. This is called sin – sin of omission and sin of commission. This is the something a person knowingly does to himself. Iniquity separates a soul from its

God (Isa. 59:2). Those who die in sin cannot go where Jesus is; they "shall not inherit the kingdom of God (John 8:21; Gal. 5:19-21).

In his infinite compassion Jehovah sent Jesus to offer himself sacrifice for sins (John 3:16; John 10:18; Matt. 26:28).

We access the grace of God and the blood of the Lamb of God through belief (John 8:24).

"They said therefore unto him, What must we do, that we may work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent" (John 6:28-29).

Saving belief is a work that includes other works. Faith is shown by works (James 2:18). "Faith without works is dead" (James 2:20). Abraham was justified by works produced by faith (James 2:21-22). Works make faith perfect (James 2:22). Sinners are justified by works and not by faith only (James 2:24). Faith without works is dead (James 2:26).

Jesus said, "He that believeth (a work) and is baptized (a work) shall be saved" (Mark 16:16). "Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?" (James 2:22). In baptism the sinner, "is buried with Christ" and is "raised with him through faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead" (Col. 2:12). In baptism we are buried "with" Christ and we are raised "with" him believing that God will keep his promise to save "he that believeth and is baptized." Peter tells us that baptism saves (1 Pet. 3:21). In baptism our sins are washed away (Acts 22:16).

The spirit that is born again in the water of baptism (John 3:5) enters the kingdom of God, where faith continues to work, bringing glory to God (Matt. 5:16). The saved "work the work of the Lord" (1 Cor. 16:10), abound "in every good work" (1 Cor. 9:8). Servants of righteousness "end shall be according to their works" (2 Cor. 11:5). The child of God is "created in

Christ Jesus unto good works" (Eph. 2:10); the saint is "fruitful unto every good work" (Col. 1:10). The Christian "works out his own salvation with fear and trembling" (Phil. 2:12). Paul prayed that God the Father may "comfort your hearts and establish them in every good work and word" (2 Thess. 2:17). Women professing godliness are to adorn themselves "with good works" (1 Tim. 2:10). If a man desires the office of bishop, he desires "a good work" (1 Tim. 3:1). Widows to be enrolled are to be "well reported of for good works" (1 Tim. 5:10). The new covenant lauds the good works of some that are "evident, and cannot be hid" (1 Tim. 5:25). Those described as "a vessel unto honor" are "prepared unto every good work" (2 Tim. 2:21). "The man of God" is "furnished completely unto every good work" (2 Tim. 3:17). Preachers are to be "an ensample of good works" (Titus 2:7), "zealous of good works" (Titus 2:14). Followers of Jesus are to "be ready unto every good work" (Titus 3:1). Paul desired "that they who have believed God may be careful to maintain good works" (Titus 3:8). "God is not unrighteous to forget your work and the love which ye showed toward his name, in that ye ministered unto the saints, and still do minister" (Heb. 6:10). "Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works" (Heb. 10:24). Our Lord Jesus "make you perfect in every good thing to do his will, working in us that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be the glory for ever and ever. Amen" (Heb. 13:21).

The "wise and understanding among you? let him show by his good life his works in meekness of wisdom" (James 3:13). Behave seemly among the pagans, "that, wherein they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they behold, glorify God in the day of visitation" (1 Pet. 2:12). "My Little children, let us not love in word, neither with the tongue; but in deed and truth (1 John 3:18). Jesus knows and commends the works of his disciples on earth (Rev. 2:2, Rev. 2:9, Rev. 2:19; Rev. 3:8). Those who die in the Lord are blessed because "their works follow with them" (Rev.

14:13).

On the last great judgment day, God will render unto every man “according to their works, whether they be good or evil” (Eccl. 12:14; Rev. 20:12-13; Rev. 22:12).

It is because of a present and future judgment that we must avoid the works of the flesh ... the works of darkness ... the works of the devil. Abstaining from all evil works is critical to the believer.

In the light of what the new covenant has to say about the importance of good works – works of faith – works that justify (James 2:24) – it seems strange that anyone would say that works have nothing to do with salvation ... unless, of course, he is blinded by denominational dogma.

The Bible does warn us that we cannot live to maturity and be sinless (Rom. 3:27; Eph. 2:8-9; Rom. 4:2-6). “All sin and fall short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23). It also tells us the works of the Law of Moses cannot save us (Rom. 9:32; Gal. 2:16; Gal. 3:10). If eternal salvation could come by the Mosaic Law, then the death of Jesus was needless, because the people had that law for 1,500 years before Jesus was born of a woman (Gal. 2:21). We are also told that we cannot save ourselves by austerities (Col. 2:18).

Some honest person may be misled into wrongly supposing that when the Bible tells us we cannot be saved by our own works because it is not possible for us to live without sin – sooner or later all will sin and fall short of God’s glory, that it is saying that even works of faith and righteousness – works of God – do not save. Also some will read Bible passages which say that the works of the Law of Moses cannot save, and mistakenly conclude that works have nothing to do with salvation. This study should clear that up because it gives indisputable proof that there is no justification without works.

It is indisputably true that works are necessary to justification (James 2:24), but it is also true that some works cannot save – the work of living a perfectly sinless life – the work of devising our own scheme of redemption – the works of the Law of Moses – the works of darkness, which are the works of Satan.

So, it is true that works both save us and have nothing to do with our salvation, depending on what kind of works you are talking about.

It is not possible for a reasonable adult to be sinless and therefore, in this sense, one cannot save himself by his own works. We cannot be saved by the works of Satan, nor by the works of the Law of Moses, nor by any human invention. Such works have no power to save and many of them are an offense to God.

Still, it is true that the work of faith (the works produced by faith, see Rom. 1:5; Rom. 16:26), bring the sinner into a right relationship with his Creator, help to maintain that relationship, and will one day be the reason for his promotion to glory (Matt. 25:31-46). To say that works have nothing to do with salvation is to fly in the face of Bible teaching.

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## **Anti-Christ (antichrist)**

*By A. B. Gregoreo*  
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No other term in the Bible stirs the imagination and fires such wild speculation as that of “antichrist.” The speculation

is extreme among those religious teachers holding the various premillennial theories. It is the stuff of scary movies and novels that attract multitudes of superstitious worldlings. In their ignorance, authors weave a web of error. God's word provides the light that will help us understand the who and what of "antichrist."

The term is a combination of "anti" and Christ. "Anti" has two basic meanings: (1) "over against," hence one who puts himself in the place of Christ; (2). "opposition to," i.e., one who stands in opposition to Christ.

From first to last, the story of the Bible is that of Satan's attempts to take the place of God, and his opposition to the Creator's rule and will. This was first displayed in heaven in the misty past when certain angels, not content with their position, sinned and were cast down to hell (2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6). Satan then appeared in Eden to corrupt the only creatures made in God's image (Gen. 3:1-6).

In Noah's day he nearly succeeding in snaring all of humanity in his vile net (Gen. 6:9-12). In Egypt, Satan's man enslaved the Hebrews and slaughtered their male children. Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, crushed God's people and demanded that they worship his image (Dan. 3:1-5).

The Holy Spirit inspired Daniel to foresee Satanic efforts to hinder and even destroy God's cause. From the broken Grecian Empire he saw a "little- horn that rose up to persecute God's people (Dan. 8:9-14; 23-25). This represented the Syrian tyrant Antiochus Epiphanes (176-164). He hated the Jews and their religion. Their temple he robbed. He placed an image of Jupiter in the Holy of Holies. A swine was sacrificed on the sacred altar and the temple defiled with its blood. He forbade circumcision. Every copy of the Hebrew Scriptures that could be found was destroyed. He tore down the walls of Jerusalem. Truly he was anti-God.

Daniel also saw yet another little horn that persecuted God's people. It sprang from the Roman Empire and most likely represented the vicious emperor Domitian (Dan. 7:23-26). From Nero onward most of the Roman emperors were antichrist.

Jesus was confronted by antichrist forces of evil. At his birth, wicked Herod the Great sought to have him murdered. When his ministry was launched, the Jewish hierarchy waged an ongoing war against him and his teaching. Ultimately they secured his death. The Master warned his disciples of imposters who would claim to be Christ, i.e. messiah (Matt. 24:5). With deceitful signs they would lead many astray, even among the elect (Matt. 24:24).

Paul warned of a coming "man of sin" (2 Thess. 2:1-12) – described as the "son of perdition." He would oppose and exalt himself against all that is called God or worshiped. He would sit in the temple of God and set forth himself as God. His coming would surely be a work of Satan. He would use lying signs and wonders to deceive people. This malevolent spirit of anti-Christian iniquity was already at work in Paul's day.

The apostle John wrote of "antichrists," not just one single evil individual. In his day there were already many antichrists. They formerly had been among the faithful churches but they have gone out from them because they were no longer with them in heart and mind (1 John 2:18-19). They were liars because they denied that Jesus is the Christ (1 John 2:22). They denied his Sonship to God. They were false prophets. In their teaching they denied Jesus had come in the flesh, i.e., his incarnation. They were actively at work in John's day and he warned the brethren to reject and avoid them. They were deceivers (2 John 7). Because they did not abide in the doctrine of Christ, they had not God (2 John 9). There is an attitude or spirit held by certain false teachers then and now which John labels "anti-Christian" (1 John 4:1-3).



Antichrists are of two varieties. There are those yet within the church. Paul warned the Ephesian elders, "From among your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them" (Acts 20:30). He likewise warned Timothy that "some shall fall away from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons" (1 Tim. 4:1-3). Such antichrists seek to corrupt the faith and practice of the church. They seek power and control over congregations.

Some create their own churches that compete with Christ's church for the souls of men. These are counterfeit churches that do great damage to Christianity. We see popes who put themselves in the place of Christ, claiming to be the head of the church (Eph. 1:22). Of similar nature are the founders and heads of denominations. Founders and leaders of all the cults that pervert the message of the Master seek to situate their "church" in the place of Christ's sacred body as antichrist. Most prominent in this class of antichrists are those theologians and "pastors" who have embraced one of the many varieties of religious skepticism. Claiming to be Christians, they deny Jesus existed from eternity, that he is God, that he was virgin born, that he worked genuine miracles, that his death secured forgiveness of humanity's sins, and that he arose and ascended back to heaven. Occupying positions in seminaries and churches, these unbelievers are against Christ and his holy Cause.

Then there are those antichrists who in no way are associated with Christianity. They are unbelievers of every stripe who hate Jesus, his church, his word, and his disciples. Their hatred drives them to make war against the saints (Rev. 12:13-17). This warfare can be violent, physical persecution such as Rome and Jews employed in the early years. Modern examples of this violent anti-Christian spirit are seen in Russia under Communism, China, Cuba and most Muslim nations.

The opposition of unbelieving anti-Christians can be

ideological such as presently prevails in academia, the media and the entertainment industry. They ignore the existence of Christianity, or they marginalize Christians. They subject them to ridicule and continual assaults on their faith. This opposition can take the form of legal harassment. Anti-Christian organizations such as the American Civil Liberties Union and Americans United for the Separation of Church and State use every legal trick to hinder, hobble, and undermine the influence of Christianity in America.

Imagining antichrist to be some horrid supernatural enemy who is to come at the end of our age, many are ignorant, blind, and unaware of the antichrists working in their very midst!

Paul describes the end of all such anti-Christian enemies, "Whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of his coming" (2 Thess. 2:8). In the day when the Christ returns, "every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God " (Phil. 2:10-11). This will certainly include every person who has set himself in the place of Christ or worked against his cause!

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