REGENERATING INFLUENCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

“The Holy Spirit seeks to abide in each soul. If it is welcomed as an honored guest, those who receive it will be made complete in Christ. The good work begun will be finished; the holy thoughts, heavenly affections, and Christlike actions will take the place of impure thoughts, perverse sentiments, and rebellious acts.” –(Counsels on Health, p. 561 [1896]) Latter Day Events, p. 187.

SUBMISSION TO GOD’S WILL

1. What is critically necessary so the Holy Spirit can work in a person’s heart and mind?

Hebrews 12:9 Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?

“Therefore we are subject to the discipline and restraining influences of the Spirit of truth. If we abide in Christ, if the love of God dwells in the heart, our feelings, our thoughts, our actions, will be in harmony with the will of God. The sanctified heart is in harmony with the precepts of God’s law.... The Lord would have all His sons and daughters happy, peaceful, and obedient. Through the exercise of faith the believer comes into possession of these blessings. Through faith, every deficiency of character may be supplied, every defilement cleansed, every fault corrected, every excellence developed.” –The Acts of the Apostles, pp. 532, 563, 564.

2. What example in the holy Scriptures illustrates how man’s heart is molded by God’s Spirit?

Jeremiah 18:6 O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the Lord. Behold, as the clay is in the potter’s hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel.

“The Lord Jesus acts through the Holy Spirit; for it is His representative. Through it He infuses spiritual life into the soul, quickening its energies for good, cleansing it from moral defilement, and giving it a fitness for His kingdom. Jesus has large blessings to bestow, rich gifts to distribute among men. He is the wonderful Counselor, infinite in wisdom and strength; and if we will acknowledge the power of His Spirit, and submit to be molded by it, we shall stand complete in Him. What a thought is this! In Christ ‘dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are
3. What changes happen in a person’s life when he yields to Him?

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

“You cannot change your heart, you cannot of yourself give to God its affections; but you can choose to serve Him. You can give Him your will; He will then work in you to will and to do according to His good pleasure. Thus your whole nature will be brought under the control of the Spirit of Christ; your affections will be centered upon Him, your thoughts will be in harmony with Him….

“Through the right exercise of the will, an entire change may be made in your life. By yielding up your will to Christ, you ally yourself with the power that is above all principalities and powers. You will have strength from above to hold you steadfast, and thus through constant surrender to God you will be enabled to live the new life, even the life of faith.” –Steps to Christ, pp. 47, 48.

SINCERITY

4. How does the influence of the Holy Spirit work in a converted soul?

Psalm 139:23, 24 Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: 24 And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

“Christ is the source of every right impulse. He is the only one that can implant in the heart enmity against sin. Every desire for truth and purity, every conviction of our own sinfulness, is an evidence that His Spirit is moving upon our hearts.” –Steps to Christ, p. 26.

“Those who walk and talk with God practice the gentleness of Christ. In their lives, forbearance, meekness, and self-restraint are united with holy earnestness and diligence. As they advance heavenward, the sharp, rough edges of character are worn off, and godliness is seen. The Holy Spirit, full of grace and power, works upon mind and heart. The heart in which Jesus makes His abode will be quickened, purified, guided, and ruled by the Holy Spirit, and the human agent will make strenuous efforts to bring his character into harmony with God. He will avoid every-thing that is contrary to the revealed will and mind of God.” –God’s Amazing Grace, p. 206.
5. What desire fills one who desires to be progressively transformed?

*Philippians 4:8* Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

*1 Peter 1:13-16* Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; 14 As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: 15 But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; 16 Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.

“The work of transformation from unholiness to holiness is a continuous one. Day by day God labors for man’s sanctification, and man is to cooperate with Him, putting forth persevering efforts in the cultivation of right habits. He is to add grace to grace; and as he thus works on the plan of addition, God works for him on the plan of multiplication. Our Saviour is always ready to hear and answer the prayer of the contrite heart, and grace and peace are multiplied to His faithful ones. Gladly He grants them the blessings they need in their struggle against the evils that beset them.” –*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 532.

“The Lord does not propose to perform for us either the willing or the doing. His grace is given to work in us to will and to do, but never as a substitute for our effort. Our souls are to be aroused to cooperate. The Holy Spirit works in us, that we may work out our own salvation. This is the practical lesson the Holy Spirit is striving to teach us. ‘It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure.’” –*(The Youth’s Instructor, August 20, 1903)* *Messages to Young People*, p. 147.

**A TRANSFORMED CHARACTER**

6. What great privilege do those who are living with God have? What example of a heart changed by the regenerating influence of the Holy Spirit is found in the Scriptures?

*1 John 4:13; 3:24* Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.... 3:24 And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.

“Even John, the beloved disciple, the one who most fully reflected the likeness of the Saviour, did not naturally possess that loveliness of character. He was not only self-assertive and ambitious for honor, but impetuous, and resentful under injuries. But as the character of the Divine One was manifested to him, he saw his own deficiency and was humbled by the knowledge. The strength and patience, the power and tenderness, the majesty and meekness, that he beheld in the daily life of the Son of God, filled his soul with admiration and love. Day by day his heart was drawn
out toward Christ, until he lost sight of self in love for his Master. His resentful, ambitious temper was yielded to the molding power of Christ. The regenerating influence of the Holy Spirit renewed his heart. The power of the love of Christ wrought a transformation of character. This is the sure result of union with Jesus. When Christ abides in the heart, the whole nature is transformed. Christ’s Spirit, His love, softens the heart, subdues the soul, and raises the thoughts and desires toward God and heaven.” –Steps to Christ, p. 73.

7. How can one’s character be transformed? How does the apostle John encourage the believers?

2 Corinthians 3:18 But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

1 John 2:28, 29 And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming. 29 If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him.

“Do you ask, ‘How am I to abide in Christ?’ In the same way as you received Him at first. ‘As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him.’ ‘The just shall live by faith.’ Colossians 2:6; Hebrews 10:38. You gave yourself to God, to be His wholly, to serve and obey Him, and you took Christ as your Saviour. You could not yourself atone for your sins or change your heart; but having given yourself to God, you believe that He for Christ’s sake did all this for you. By faith you became Christ’s, and by faith you are to grow up in Him—by giving and taking. You are to give all—your heart, your will, your service—give yourself to Him to obey all His requirements; and you must take all—Christ, the fullness of all blessing, to abide in your heart, to be your strength, your righteousness, your everlasting helper—to give you power to obey.” –Steps to Christ, pp. 69, 70.

FOR PERSONAL STUDY

“He who lives the principles of Bible religion, will not be found weak in moral power. Under the ennobling influence of the Holy Spirit, the tastes and inclinations become pure and holy. Nothing takes so strong a hold upon the affections, nothing reaches so fully down to the deepest motives of action, nothing exerts so potent an influence upon the life, and gives so great firmness and stability to the character, as the religion of Christ. It leads its possessor ever upward, inspiring him with noble purposes, teaching him propriety of deportment, and imparting a becoming dignity to every action.” –God’s Amazing Grace, p. 206.

“Faith works by love and purifies the soul. Through faith the Holy Spirit works in the heart to create holiness therein; but this cannot be done unless the human agent will work with Christ. We can be fitted for heaven only through the work of the Holy Spirit upon the heart; for we must have Christ’s righteousness as our credentials if we would find access to the Father. In order that we may have the righteousness of Christ, we need daily to be transformed by the influence of the Spirit, to be a partaker of the divine nature. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to elevate the taste, to sanctify the heart, to ennoble the whole man.” –Selected Messages, book 1, p. 374.