

The Promise and Necessity of the Spirit and our Neglect

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A theology of the New Covenant that neglects to strongly emphasize the centrality of the ministry of the Holy Spirit of God is not a theology of the New Covenant. It remains a theology of the letter.

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The Promise and Necessity of the Spirit and our Neglect

II Corinthians 3:1-18 ESV

1 Are we beginning to commend ourselves again? Or do we need, as some do, letters of recommendation to you, or from you? 2 You yourselves are our letter of recommendation, written on our hearts, to be known and read by all. 3 And you show that you are a letter from Christ delivered by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.

4 Such is the confidence that we have through Christ toward God. 5 Not that we are sufficient in ourselves to claim anything as coming from us, but **our sufficiency is from God, 6 who has made us competent to be ministers of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit. For the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.**

7 Now if the ministry of death, carved in letters on stone, came with such glory that the Israelites could not gaze at Moses' face because of its glory, which was being brought to an end, 8 will not the ministry of the Spirit have even more glory? 9 For if there was glory in the ministry of condemnation, the ministry of righteousness must far exceed it in glory. 10 Indeed, in this case, what once had glory has come to have no glory at all, because of the glory that surpasses it. 11 For if what was being brought to an end came with glory, much more will what is permanent have glory.

12 Since we have such a hope, we are very bold, 13 not like Moses, who would put a veil over his face so that the Israelites might not gaze at the outcome of what was being brought to an end. 14 But their minds were hardened. For to this day, when they read the old covenant, that same veil remains unlifted, because only through Christ is it taken away. 15 Yes, to this day whenever Moses is read a veil lies over their hearts. 16 But when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed. 17 Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. 18 And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

Abraham and God's Promise

Allow me to begin by asking an important question. How is it that the giving of the Holy Spirit was the promised blessing to Abraham?

Search the Old Testament. You will not see "the promise of the Spirit" literally pledged to Abraham. Not even once. Of the "blessing of Abraham" the apostles always pointed to "the promise of the Spirit." Look at it with me:

Galatians 3:

13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree"— 14 **so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith.**

Galatians 3:

16 Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, "And to offsprings," referring to many, but referring to one, "And to your offspring," who is Christ.

Note: "Offspring" is none other than the Seed, Jesus Christ.

If this is true, how then does the promise made to Abraham find fulfillment through Messiah, the singular Seed?

The Promise and Necessity of the Spirit and our Neglect

Point #1: Paul's Short Answer: Messiah Jesus

Galatians 3:

14 so that *in* Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith.

It is obvious Jesus Christ is himself the bridge between what was promised and what is received, and that being the Spirit of the living God. All of Abraham's true offspring share in the promise through the indwelling Spirit of God. Through Spirit union with Christ, Abraham's children fellowship and friendship with God.

Point #2: The Spirit comes through Christ Jesus

When Messiah Jesus came to this earth, He dwelt among mankind for 33 years, He ministered under the anointing of the Holy Spiritⁱ and then He (Messiah) was crucified and died and was taken up to heaven and seated at the Right Hand of Glory. Yet, before He departed this life he gathered with His Apostles and gave them the following prophetic word:

John 14:

16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, 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. 18 "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. 19 Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. 20 In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.

Essentially, It was for our "advantage" that Jesus departed and has given us the Spirit of God. No departure, no promise fulfilled.

John 16:

7 Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you.

Sadly, those believers, who remain under the weight of a Sinai centered ministry of the Letterⁱⁱ never fully understand or realize the advantage that the Helper brings. Under the weight of Sinai's Law they struggle along day after day living their defeated lives. For them our Lord's promised "abundant life" remains in the "not yet" while the "now" is marked by misery and defeat.

John 10:

10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

The Promise and Necessity of the Spirit and our Neglect

Point #3: The relationship of the Abrahamic Covenant to Messiah and the Spirit and ultimately to the victorious New Covenant people of God.

If Abraham's faith and faithfulness to God is significant so too would the faith and faithfulness of all of his spiritual offspring who are in Christ.

The question then is this: How would God constitute a people, in fact a great nation made up of all peoples who would believe in faith, in order to fulfill his word to Abraham?

Genesis 12:

2 And **I will make of you a great nation**, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing.

Romans 4:

16 That is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his offspring—not only to the adherent of the law but also to the one who shares the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all,

The Old Testament describes the old covenant era as a time in which there was a limited work of God's Spirit working among and through men. It looked forward to the new age when God would pour out his Spirit upon Israel and all flesh. Jeremiah 31:31-33 and Ezekiel 36:25-28 reveal that the new covenant age to come, and now is, would mark the beginning of a transformation in the comprehensiveness of the work of the Holy Spirit.

Jeremiah 31:

31 "Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, 32 not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the LORD. 33 But **this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people.**

Ezekiel 36:

24 I will take you from the nations and gather you from all the countries and bring you into your own land. 25 I will sprinkle clean water on you,

and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. 26 **And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. 27 And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules. 28 You shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers, and you shall be my people, and I will be your God.**

When fulfilledⁱⁱⁱ this interiorized work (dynamic) of the Holy Spirit would result in the remnant of Israel,^{iv} the true children of Abraham^v, returning to God in loving and willing obedience. But this event could not happen until our Lord's glorification.

With the Glorification of Messiah (New) Covenant faithfulness is this assured through the giving and indwelling of His Holy Spirit within those who believe in Faith. God's design and goal with the institution of a New Covenant was to bring to pass covenant faithfulness by the indwelling and empowering of the Spirit. Where the Old Covenant failed the new excels!

Romans 8:

1 There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. 2 **For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. 3 For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, 4 in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. 5** For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. 6 To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. 7 For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. 8 Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. 9 **You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. 10 But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. 11** If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.

II Corinthians 3:

The Promise and Necessity of the Spirit and our Neglect

7 Now if the ministry of death, carved in letters on stone, came with such glory that the Israelites could not gaze at Moses' face because of its glory, which was being brought to an end, **8 will not the ministry of the Spirit have even more glory? 9 For if there was glory in the ministry of condemnation, the ministry of righteousness must far exceed it in glory.** 10 Indeed, in this case, what once had glory has come to have no glory at all, because of the glory that surpasses it. 11 For if what was being brought to an end came with glory, much more will what is permanent have glory.

Point #4: The relationship of Messiah to the New Covenant community of the Spirit.

Within the Old Testament there was a wealth of passages to help the believing community understand that there would be a direct connection between Messiah and the work of the Holy Spirit of God.

The Old Testament prophets foretold the eschatological outpouring of the Spirit that would come about through the ministry of the Messiah but before the chosen remnant of God could experience the outpouring and blessings of the new age (beginning at Pentecost) the work of the Spirit-filled suffering Servant had to be accomplished.

Isaiah 42:

1 Behold my servant, whom I uphold,
my chosen, in whom my soul delights;

I have put my Spirit upon him;
he will bring forth justice to the nations.

2 He will not cry aloud or lift up his voice,
or make it heard in the street;

3 a bruised reed he will not break,
and a faintly burning wick he will not quench;
he will faithfully bring forth justice.

4 He will not grow faint or be discouraged
till he has established justice in the earth;
and the coastlands wait for his law.

5 Thus says God, the LORD,
who created the heavens and stretched them out,
who spread out the earth and what comes from it,
who gives breath to the people on it
and spirit to those who walk in it:

**6 “I am the LORD; I have called you in righteousness;
I will take you by the hand and keep you;
I will give you as a covenant for the people,
a light for the nations,**

**7 to open the eyes that are blind,
to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon,
from the prison those who sit in darkness.**

Isaiah 49:

1 Listen to me, O coastlands,
and give attention, you peoples from afar.

The LORD called me from the womb,

The Promise and Necessity of the Spirit and our Neglect

from the body of my mother he named my name.

2 He made my mouth like a sharp sword;
in the shadow of his hand he hid me;
he made me a polished arrow;
in his quiver he hid me away.

3 And he said to me, "You are my servant,
Israel, in whom I will be glorified."

4 But I said, "I have labored in vain;
I have spent my strength for nothing and vanity;
yet surely my right is with the LORD,
and my recompense with my God."

**5 And now the LORD says,
he who formed me from the womb to be his servant,
to bring Jacob back to him;
and that Israel might be gathered to him—
for I am honored in the eyes of the LORD,
and my God has become my strength—**

**6 he says:
"It is too light a thing that you should be my servant
to raise up the tribes of Jacob
and to bring back the preserved of Israel;
I will make you as a light for the nations,
that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth."**

7 Thus says the LORD,
the Redeemer of Israel and his Holy One,
to one deeply despised, abhorred by the nation,
the servant of rulers:
"Kings shall see and arise;
princes, and they shall prostrate themselves;
because of the LORD, who is faithful,
the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you."

Isaiah 61:

**1 The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me,
because the LORD has anointed me**
to bring good news to the poor;
he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and the opening of the prison to those who are bound;
2 to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor,
and the day of vengeance of our God;
to comfort all who mourn;
3 to grant to those who mourn in Zion—
to give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes,
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,

the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit;
that they may be called oaks of righteousness,
the planting of the LORD, that he may be glorified.

4 They shall build up the ancient ruins;
they shall raise up the former devastations;
they shall repair the ruined cities,
the devastations of many generations.

5 Strangers shall stand and tend your flocks;
foreigners shall be your plowmen and vinedressers;

6 but you shall be called the priests of the LORD;
they shall speak of you as the ministers of our God;
you shall eat the wealth of the nations,
and in their glory you shall boast.

Isaiah 11:

1 There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit.

**2 And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him,
the Spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the Spirit of counsel and might,
the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.**

3 And his delight shall be in the fear of the LORD.
He shall not judge by what his eyes see,

or decide disputes by what his ears hear,
4 but with righteousness he shall judge the poor,
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;
and he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.

5 Righteousness shall be the belt of his waist,
and faithfulness the belt of his loins.

Isaiah 44:

1 "But now hear, O Jacob my servant,
Israel whom I have chosen!

2 Thus says the LORD who made you,
who formed you from the womb and will help you:
Fear not, O Jacob my servant,
Jeshurun whom I have chosen.

**3 For I will pour water on the thirsty land,
and streams on the dry ground;
I will pour my Spirit upon your offspring,
and my blessing on your descendants.**

**4 They shall spring up among the grass
like willows by flowing streams.**

5 This one will say, 'I am the LORD's,'

The Promise and Necessity of the Spirit and our Neglect

another will call on the name of Jacob,
and another will write on his hand, 'The LORD's,'
and name himself by the name of Israel."

Isaiah 55:

**1 "Come, everyone who thirsts,
come to the waters;
and he who has no money,
come, buy and eat!
Come, buy wine and milk
without money and without price.**

2 Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread,
and your labor for that which does not satisfy?
Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good,
and delight yourselves in rich food.

3 Incline your ear, and come to me;
hear, that your soul may live;
and I will make with you an everlasting covenant,
my steadfast, sure love for David.

4 Behold, I made him a witness to the peoples,
a leader and commander for the peoples.

5 Behold, you shall call a nation that you do not know,
and a nation that did not know you shall run to you,
because of the LORD your God, and of the Holy One of Israel,
for he has glorified you.

6 "Seek the LORD while he may be found;
call upon him while he is near;

7 let the wicked forsake his way,
and the unrighteous man his thoughts;
let him return to the LORD, that he may have compassion on him,
and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

Point #5: Messiah fills up the promise given to Abraham

The fulfillment of the Old Testament prophet's encouraging words to the believing remnant of Israel would reach its climax with the life, death, resurrection and glorification of Messiah. The apostle Peter affirms the confirmation of the things foretold on the day of Pentecost.

Acts 2:

29 "Brothers, I may say to you with confidence about the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. 30 Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would set one of his descendants on his throne, 31 he foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption. 32 **This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses. 33 Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing.** 34 For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he himself says,

"The Lord said to my Lord,
Sit at my right hand,
35 until I make your enemies your footstool.'

36 Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified."

Some may find my next quote of interest. Listen carefully to verse 6.

Revelation of John 21:

5 And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true." 6 And he said to me, "It is done! **I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment.** 7 The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son. 8 But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death."

With the crucified Lamb of God having found acceptance and satisfaction in the eyes of his Heavenly Father the new age was

The Promise and Necessity of the Spirit and our Neglect

inaugurated with the glorification of the Son of God and the Son's giving and sending his Holy Spirit for the purpose of sanctifying and leading God's new covenant people through a greater Exodus out of this present world and into the heavenly City, the New Jerusalem of God, where their citizenship is recorded by the hand of God.

Point #6: The promise made to Abraham, the prophets, John's Messiah, and fulfillment in the Spirit of God

John in his Gospel is in agreement with the prophetic word when he proclaims Jesus of Nazareth as being none other than this Spirit-filled suffering Servant-Messiah who has come into the world to accomplish the promised eschatological outpouring of the Spirit of life.

Immediately at the outset of his gospel account John proclaims Jesus as the one upon whom the Holy Spirit descended and upon whom the Holy Spirit remains.

John 1:

32 And John bore witness: "I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him.

Jesus received the Spirit without measure.

John 3:

34 For he whom God has sent utters the words of God, for he gives the Spirit without measure.

Jesus Christ is the source of living water. He says, "Come to me and drink!"

John 7:

37 On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. 38 Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, '**Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.**'"

The apostle Paul understood the connection of Messiah to the Abrahamic promise. All that was promised would flow through Messiah. He is the holy linkage between the promise and its fulfillment. I believe John in his gospel takes this understanding for granted.

Galatians 3:

14 so that **in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles**, so that **we** might receive the promised Spirit through faith.

There could be no "we" in Gal 3:14 until the covenant breaking Jew and the lawless Gentile were provided the same access to God through

The Promise and Necessity of the Spirit and our Neglect

Christ. The “dividing wall” had to be torn down so that all may enter through Christ.

Ephesians 2:

18 For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father.

Point #7: Christ, the Source of the Spirit

In Ezekiel 47 there is a picture of the true Temple^{vi}, Jesus Christ. "Rivers of living water" flow outward from within the Messiah, who is himself the eschatological rock, temple and land, bringing life and blessing to the world, in fulfillment.

Ezekiel 47:

1 Then he brought me back to the door of the temple, and behold, water was issuing from below the threshold of the temple toward the east (for the temple faced east). The water was flowing down from below the south end of the threshold of the temple, south of the altar. 2 Then he brought me out by way of the north gate and led me around on the outside to the outer gate that faces toward the east; and behold, the water was trickling out on the south side. 3 Going on eastward with a measuring line in his hand, the man measured a thousand cubits, and then led me through the water, and it was ankle-deep. 4 Again he measured a thousand, and led me through the water, and it was knee-deep. Again he measured a thousand, and led me through the water, and it was waist-deep. 5 Again he measured a thousand, and it was a river that I could not pass through, for the water had risen. It was deep enough to swim in, a river that could not be passed through. 6 And he said to me, "Son of man, have you seen this?" Then he led me back to the bank of the river. 7 As I went back, I saw on the bank of the river very many trees on the one side and on the other. 8 And he said to me, "This water flows toward the eastern region and goes down into the Arabah, and enters the sea; when the water flows into the sea, the water will become fresh. 9 And wherever the river goes, every living creature that swarms will live, and there will be very many fish. For this water goes there, that the waters of the sea may become fresh; so everything will live where the river goes. 10 Fishermen will stand beside the sea. From Engedi to Eneglaim it will be a place for the spreading of nets. Its fish will be of very many kinds, like the fish of the Great Sea. of very many kinds, like the fish of the Great Sea.

A similar picture is drawn for us in the last chapter of our Bibles. (Note the tense of the verbs.)

Revelation of John 22:

1 Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb 2 through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. 3 No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be

The Promise and Necessity of the Spirit and our Neglect

in it, and his servants will worship him. 4 They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. 5 And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.

If Jesus Christ is the Rock from out of which the Water of Life flows then He is equally the Land that provides the river's source and through which the Rivers of Life flow to refresh the people of God and to bring life.

Because Jesus is the Spirit-filled Messiah and Servant, he is the person who would (after his glorification) baptize people in the Holy Spirit.

John 1:

33 I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, **'He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.'**

He gives the living water of the Spirit to those who ask of him.

John 4:

10 Jesus answered her, **"If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water."** 11 The woman said to him, "Sir, you have nothing to draw water with, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? 12 Are you greater than our father Jacob? He gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did his sons and his livestock." 13 Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, 14 but **whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty forever. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.**"

But only those who believe that Jesus is the Messiah can receive this gift (John 7:37-39). In other words, the eschatological outpouring of the Spirit is performed by Jesus Christ the true Temple, Rock, etc..

John 7:

37 On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, **"If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink.**

John in his Gospel makes this undeniable link to the Old Testament prophetic expectations of the believing remnant to the giving and outpouring of the Eschatological Gift of the Spirit with the ministry of Messiah. That much is evident. **What is not evident, at least to the**

casual reader, is that much of the Upper Room discourse^{vii} contains a grand disclosure by Messiah, as to how he was about to fill up in the days just ahead, the promise given to father Abraham.

The Spirit proceeds from God the Father, but (He, the Spirit of God) would be sent by Jesus to dwell within his disciples.

John 14:

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.

John 15:

26 “But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me.

The Spirit would be given to those who love Jesus and who keep his word (John 14:23).

John 14:

23 Jesus answered him, “If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.

The Spirit would not be given to the unregenerate Hebrew and Gentile people of the world.

John 14:

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.

Jesus’ disciples would see the Spirit and know him (John 14:17). The Spirit would abide with them forever (John 14:16).

This eschatological outpouring of the Spirit, however, would not take place until after Jesus’ glorification.

John 7:

The Promise and Necessity of the Spirit and our Neglect

39 Now this he said about the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were to receive, **for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.**

The comprehensive outpouring of the Spirit was reserved for the present new covenant age which was inaugurated through the death and resurrection of Christ.

Point #8: The Realization & Benefits

The teaching in John's Gospel concerning the Holy Spirit is concluded in John 20:22 when Jesus breathes upon his disciples, saying, "Receive the Holy Spirit."

There has been a fair amount of discussion on the relationship of this incident with the giving of the Spirit at Pentecost. It is best understood as a prophetic action on the part of Jesus that was intended to communicate the truth that the eschatological gift of the Holy Spirit—which would be poured out after Jesus' glorification (John 7:39), i.e., after his resurrection and ascension—would be mediated through Messiah Jesus himself, and also that the gift of the Spirit to be received by his disciples would be a sharing in the Spirit of Christ himself^{viii}.

All that Messiah Jesus promised in the Upper Room is a present reality within those who love God. John in his first epistle confirms the new reality of the indwelling Spirit (the Interior Imperative) that the saints of God have enjoyed since the glorification of their Lord and Savior.

I John 2:

27 But **the anointing that you received from him abides in you**, and you have no need that anyone should teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about everything—and is true and is no lie, just as it has taught you—abide in him.

I John 3:

24 Whoever keeps his commandments abides in him, and he in them. And by this we know that he abides in us, **by the Spirit whom he has given us**.

I John 4:

4 Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for **he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world**. 5 They are from the world; therefore they speak from the world, and the world listens to them.

I John 4:

12 No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, **God abides in us and his love is perfected in us**. 13 **By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit**. 14 And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. 15 **Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God**

The Promise and Necessity of the Spirit and our Neglect

abides in him, and he in God. 16 So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.

Point #9: Conclusion

The promise of power for living in the New Testament is awesome!
Hear Paul's prayer for the Ephesians:

Ephesians 1:

18 having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, 19 and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might.

Why is it that so few believers live in the reality of this amazing power of the Spirit of God energizing their daily lives?

I believe I have at least one answer though there is probably several or more. Like Mephibosheth^{ix}, we have been brought into an inheritance and intimacy with God in Christ, but some are unable to embrace the glory of this blood purchased spiritual inheritance.

A "dead dog" mentality, has been produced in some of our number by the internal wounds caused by rejection, the external influences of a performance-oriented society, and the spiritual influences of a perverted gospel. An infatuation with Sinai has encouraged many of God's saints to revert back under a cloud of condemnation and unworthiness. Vain attempts to earn the favor of God by standard keeping is the ruin of many. They have tried to "oil up" the old wineskin of performance and tradition in a vain attempt to contain the new wine of the Spirit, however, as Jesus predicted, the wine is spilled because the wineskin breaks."

The Greatest sin in our day is the Denigration of the Holy Spirit

The Church of Christ does not need a second baptism of the Spirit. What the New Covenant community needs is a fresh appreciation and reliance upon God the Holy Spirit. He is God and He dwells in His New People. They are the stars and dust of Genesis 13. God's saints do not need, as some suppose, more of the Law and Sinai's terrors. The Law never did help God's saints get victory over the flesh and its sinful appetites and neither our Lord nor his New Covenant ministers send the Christian back to Sinai's Law for sanctification. Sanctification only

The Promise and Necessity of the Spirit and our Neglect

comes through the indwelling Spirit. His presence and His influences alone constitute a holy vessel.

All of Scripture, properly understood is for our good. If we are to be the image bearers of Christ Jesus then we must learn Christ from Genesis to the Revelation. It is only when we live in the power of the Spirit that the flesh is subdued and controlled. God grant you a total reliance upon his Spirit for your sanctification. He accomplishes what Sinai's Law could never accomplish.

Galatians 3:

3 Are you so foolish? **Having begun** by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?

The Spirit-filled (controlled) life is the Christ-directed life by which Christ lives His life in and through His people through the Holy Spirit.

John 15:

1 "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. 2 Every branch of mine that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. 3 Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. 4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. 5 I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. 6 If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. 7 If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.

God's New Covenant saints have no excuse for living continually in the flesh. That's a barren life. To profess to be a child of God while living a life continually under the power of the flesh is to live a lie.

Galatians 3:

13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree"— 14 so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith.

i We need to give greater time and consideration to the Spirit's relationship to Messiah during his lifetime and ministry.

ii II Corinthians 3:7 Now if the ministry of death, carved in letters on stone, came with such glory that the Israelites could not gaze at Moses' face because of its glory, which was being brought to an end,

iii It should be noted that the circumcision of the heart was in itself nothing new to the faithful of Israel.

Deut. 30:6 And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, so that you will love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live. What is new and unique is God's promise to couple the circumcision of the heart with the inscription of the Spirit. This helps us to more fully understand Paul's definition of the inaugurated New Covenant in 2 Corinthians 3.

iv Romans 9:6-12 gives us a definitive understanding of true Israel.

v Romans 9:6 But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel, (and) Romans 2:28-29 For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: 29 But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.

vi John 2:18-22 So the Jews said to him, "What sign do you show us for doing these things?" 19 Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." 20 The Jews then said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?" 21 But he was speaking about the temple of his body. 22 When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the Scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

vii The passage known as the Upper Room Discourse in the Gospel of John, chapters 13 through 17, takes us into the intimate thoughts of Jesus just before his Crucifixion. Some have called this the "holy of holies" of Scripture. That is, if you think of Scripture as a temple, this is the sanctuary, where you come into the very presence of God himself. By means of his words to his disciples, we are permitted here to enter into the thinking and emotions of Jesus just before his own crucifixion. Within hours of this event, the Lord was hanging upon a cross. In less than twenty-four hours he was dead and buried. These therefore constitute the last words of Jesus before his own death. As we look carefully, then, at this passage--a few verses at a time--we will begin to see more clearly into the heart of our Lord, into his total understanding of our needs: to see his preparations and provision for us, and to understand more clearly how we are to bear the fruit which remains. [<http://www.raystedman.org/thematic-studies/secrets-of-the-spirit>]

viii 2 Corinthians 3:17 Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.

ix 2 Samuel 9