

KNOW THE TRUTH

Lesson 10 - The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit (2 of 2)

Outline is drawn from pages 261-282 of Know the Truth - A Handbook of Christian Belief by Bruce Milne.

KEY CONCEPTS FROM CHAPTER 21 - "THE SPIRIT AND CHRISTIAN GROWTH"

- I. Hope
 - A. "One of the glorious fruits of this amazing reality is Christian hope." (Milne, 261)
 1. "This follows inevitably from the fact that our participation in Christ includes his resurrection and exaltation." (Milne, 261)
 2. "The presence of the Spirit is therefore marked by the presence of hope (cf. 1 Cor. 13:13; Gal. 5:5; Eph. 1:18 with 1:13f.; 4:4)." (Milne, 261)
 3. "Hope, the assured and joyful anticipation of the future triumph of God's purposes and the glorious coming of our Lord Jesus, is a shining mark of the religion of the NT (cf. Rom. 5:2; Col. 1:4; 1:27; Titus 2:13; 3:7; 1 Pet. 1:3f.). Paul speaks of it vividly as a 'helmet, the hope of salvation', which is accordingly a basic, crowning feature of Christian discipleship (1 Thess. 5:8)." (Milne, 261)
 4. "The Holy Spirit is the life of the kingdom of God already present (Peter's point at Pentecost, cf. Acts 2:16-21). But the fullness of the kingdom will be experienced in the future when the Lord returns." (Milne, 262)
 5. "The Spirit is therefore the 'first instalment' or 'downpayment' (Eph. 1:14; 2 Cor. 1:22; 5:5) of the full inheritance. He is quite literally 'glory begun below'. Not surprisingly, therefore, he imparts to the disciples, as a basic fruit of his presence, an assurance of the 'hope of glory'." (Milne, 262)
 - II. Assurance
 - A. "The hopeful confidence with respect to the future which we have just identified with respect to God's total purpose is also experienced by the Christian at the personal level as the assurance of salvation." (Milne, 262)
 1. "This is another fruit of the Holy Spirit's presence in our lives: 'This is how we know that he lives in us: we know it by the Spirit he gave us' (1 John 3:24)." (Milne, 262)
 2. "In similar vein, Paul refers to the Holy Spirit as a 'seal' (2 Cor. 1:22; Eph. 1:13; 4:30), a word in the first-century world for something which guaranteed security, such as a locking device (Matt. 27:66; Rev. 20:3)." (Milne, 262)
 - B. "Subjectively, this experience of assurance consists in an inward peace of conscience concerning our standing with God, the firm persuasion that Christ's merits atone for our sins and that we have been brought into light, freedom and sonship in Christ." (Milne, 262)
 1. "This subjective persuasion has an objective point of reference, the 'inward witness of the Spirit' (cf. Part 1), which is a persuasion concerning the truth and divinity of the written Scriptures centred in the gospel of Christ." (Milne, 262)
 2. "True assurance persuades at both objective and subjective levels." (Milne, 262)
 - C. "What ought we to do if doubts about our standing in Christ should ever come to us?"

1. "First, these doubts do not mean we are unregenerate; the devil is 'the accuser of our brothers' (Rev. 12:10). 'I believe; help my unbelief!' is a cry of the believer (Mark 9:24, RSV)." (Milne, 262)
 2. "Secondly, we should read the Word of God and listen to it being expounded." (Milne, 263)
 3. "Thirdly, we should look for evidences of the work of God in our lives. This can be precarious since only God can judge truly (1 Cor. 4:3f.), but 1 John gives identifiable marks of grace." (Milne, 263)
 4. "Fourthly, we should observe the role of the gospel sacraments in deepening and confirming faith." (Milne, 263)
- D. Some claim that assurance of salvation is not possible before God's final judgment, that indeed it represents an act of presumption; others say that assurance is confined to a privileged minority. Scripture, however, clearly holds out to every Christian the privilege of knowing that they are God's children..." (Milne, 263)
- III. Sanctification
- A. Introductory Remarks
 1. "Having brought us to birth 'in Christ', the Spirit continues to work upon us to conform us more and more to the image of the Christ with whom he has united us. This process of moral renewal and transformation is commonly referred to as 'sanctification'." (Milne, 263)
 - B. The meaning of sanctification
 1. "The root idea of 'sanctify' is to 'set apart' or 'consecrate'." "
 - C. Sanctification by the Spirit
 1. "The crucial role of the Spirit is underlined in the language used of the Christian life..."
 - D. Sanctification in Christ
 1. "The Spirit's ministry in sanctification must be understood from the perspective of the fundamental, indissoluble relationship between Christ and the Spirit... sanctification is as much a work of Christ as is justification (Eph. 5:26f.)." (Milne, 264)
 - E. The heart of sanctification: union with Christ
 1. "Sanctification is essentially that process whereby the Spirit makes increasingly real in our lives our union with Christ in his death and resurrection. There are two far-reaching implications." (Milne, 264)
 - a) "First, the Christian life is a matter of becoming in intrinsic character what we already are in Christ. 'Become what you are' is the sum of the call to holy living (Eph. 5:8)." (Milne, 264)
 - (1) "for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light" (Ephesians 5:8, ESV)
 - b) "Secondly, the Christian life is inescapably corporate. Teaching on Christian holiness has frequently concentrated almost exclusively on the 'holy man' or the 'holy woman', to the neglect of the biblical concern for 'the holy people' or the 'holy church'." (Milne, 265)]
 - F. The future perspective of sanctification
 1. "The 'has come'/'still to come' tension of the kingdom of God (see Part 7) is mirrored in the life of Christians." (Milne, 265)

- a) "We are already within the kingdom of God through our union with Christ (Col. 1:13) and now 'sit in heavenly places' in Christ by the Spirit." (Milne, 265)
 - b) "But we still experience the old era of decay and corruption, of sin and physical death." (Milne, 265)
- G. Questions about sanctification
- 1. Crisis or process?
 - a) "Does sanctification take place gradually, or in a definable crisis experience: a 'second blessing', 'baptism', 'fullness', 'perfect love', 'clean heart', 'full assurance', or whatever?" (Milne, 266)
 - 2. Rest or struggle?
 - a) "Are Christians called to struggle to conform to the moral standards set out in scripture, or are we called essentially to an attitude of faith in Christ and what he has done, a resting in Christ as our sanctification?" (Milne, 267)
 - (1) The NT incorporated both elements.
 - 3. Complete or partial?
 - a) Scripture
 - (1) "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." (1 John 1:8, ESV)
 - (2) "If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us." (1 John 1:10, ESV)
 - b) Nature of sin - thought, word, deed
 - c) Life experience
- H. The terminology of sanctification
- 1. Filling with the Spirit
 - a) "Fill' is plainly a metaphor and it fundamentally misleads if pressed literally, as though the human objects of the Spirit's ministry were reduced to impersonal receptacles, and the blessed Spirit himself to a spiritual substance." (Milne, 268)
 - (1) "to be filled with the Spirit implies that the Spirit is the dominant influence in our behaviour." (Milne, 268)
 - 2. Baptism in/with the Spirit
 - a) "An examination of these references and of the whole NT idea of baptism yields the conclusion that 'baptism in the Spirit' refers to an aspect of Christian initiation. In other words, in Scripture 'baptism in the Spirit' belongs to that complex of ideas which refer to Christian beginnings: repentance and faith, justification, conversion, regeneration, water baptism, ingrafting into Christ, adoption into God's family..." (Milne, 269)
 - b) "Hence every true believer in Christ has been baptized in the Spirit..." (Milne, 270)
 - c) "What, then, are we to say about subsequent experiences of the Spirit if we cannot call them 'baptism in the Spirit'? Several possibilities have been suggested."
 - (1) "Deny the validity of the experience."
 - (2) "Follow the traditional Pentecostal line and continue to call these experiences 'baptism in the Spirit', despite the departure from NT usage."

- (3) "See the later experience as the experiential realization in a new and fuller degree of what was given in essence at conversion." (Milne, 270)
- d) "Hesitations concerning some 'second-blessing' terminology, however, must not be allowed to impoverish us spiritually." (Milne, 270)

IV. Perseverance

- A. "If we are enabled to believe and the work of Christ is thus applied effectively to us, can we thereafter forfeit our salvation? This too has aroused considerable debate." (Milne, 271)
1. "The idea that, once imparted, salvation cannot be lost is known as the perseverance of the saints. It has been consistently maintained in Reformed theology and there is clear support for it in Scripture." (Milne, 271)
 2. "Perseverance is also clearly implied in other doctrines already discussed. If we have been incorporated into Christ in his whole saving action, then we shall also share in his coming triumph." (Milne, 271)
 - a) What of those passages that warn against falling away? (Heb. 2:3f.; 4:1f.; 6:1-9; 10:1f.; Matt. 24:13; John 15:6; Rev. 2:5)
 3. "Passages cited as evidence that true Christians might be lost either refer to cases where there was no genuine faith initially (1 John 2:19), or else are simply reminders of the moral seriousness of the Christian life." (Milne, 272)

V. Means and End

A. The Holy Spirit and the Word of God

1. "To complete this exposition of the Spirit and Christian growth, we note again his inspiration and illumination of the Scriptures (John 14:26; 15:26; 16:13f.; Eph. 1:17; Heb. 3:7; 1 Pet. 1:11; 2 Pet. 1:21f.; 1 John 2:20, 27). The bond between the Spirit and the Word is one of the keys to understanding his entire ministry in the church. In guiding, inspiring, sanctifying and upbuilding God's people, his supreme instrument is Scripture (2 Tim. 3:16f.). Conversely, any claim to the Spirit's presence, leading or blessing which bypasses the Word, or minimizes its authority, is clearly alien to the Spirit who led and empowered Jesus and the apostles, and hence foreign to all true, God-honouring faith (cf. Part 1, p. 34ff.)." (Milne, 272-273)

B. The Holy Spirit and the end

1. First-fruits
2. Deposit/guarantee

*Note the list of scriptures on page 273

KEY CONCEPTS FROM CHAPTER 22 - "HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE: THE HOLY SPIRIT TODAY"

See pages 275-278

APPLICATION

See pages 278-281