

In Acts 2:38, 39 Peter said, "Repent and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."

Acts 5:32 states, "And we are His witnesses to these things, and so also is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him." It should be clear that the giver in these verses is God and the gift is the Holy Spirit

J. M. Powell one of the most informed men on Restoration History at the age of 90 in 1997 stated, "Until recent years, as far as I know, all of my preaching brethren taught that the gift of the Holy Spirit is the Spirit himself."

By contrast today many ardently believe the Holy Spirit dwells in the Christian only "through the word." By this they mean He dwells in us "representatively" through the Word.

The Word of God and the Holy Spirit are not the same. The Holy Spirit is the third person in the Godhead. The Holy Spirit inspired certain men to write the Word. Thus, the Word is not the Holy Spirit.

The "Gift of the Holy Spirit" in Acts 2:38 was not the Word, because the people had already received and believed the Word before they were baptized (see Acts 2:41). Before we became Christians most of us had a certain amount of the Word dwelling in us or else we would never have obeyed the gospel.

If I build a house with a hammer and a saw, does this mean I dwell in the house through the hammer and saw?

To say water gets into a tank by means of a pipe does not mean the water never gets into the tank. Some argue that the Holy Spirit dwelling in us is a figure of speech. If so, then we must also conclude that God and Christ dwelling in us is figurative also. It would also mean that Christians dwell in Christ and his church figuratively.

Do Christians only dwell in the church figuratively?

Certainly not, we literally dwell in the church which is the body of Christ. (See 1 Corinthians 12:27, Ephesians 5:30.)

The way I know the Spirit dwells within me is because the Lord says He does. About a dozen times the Scriptures tell us that the Holy Spirit dwells in us.

For example in **1 Corinthians 3:16** Paul writes, "Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?"

1 Corinthians 6:19 says, "Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?"

Paul told the Thessalonians, that God "has also given us His Holy Spirit" (**1 Thessalonians 4:8**).

In **Romans 8:11** Paul writes, "But 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."

In **Romans 8:9** Paul says, "But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you."

The word "you" in this phrase refers to the brethren, the children of God. The word "in" is the translation of the Greek preposition "en" and Thayer says it means "in the person." "Dwells," simply means to abide.

The Spirit of God makes his home in us, not in temples made with hands (**Acts 17:24**). Paul tells us that our bodies are the "temple of the Holy Spirit." The Greek word for "temple" is a word that means the dwelling place of deity.

It is said that Barnabus was a good man, "full of the Holy Spirit and of faith" (**Acts 11:24**). Here we have the Holy Spirit linked with faith and a man is said to be filled with both. Seven others were said to be "full of the Spirit and of wisdom" (**Acts 6:3, 5**).

Where did the faith and wisdom reside?

No one doubts that Luke intended for us to get the idea that faith and wisdom resided within these men.

If faith and wisdom were in these men was not the Holy Spirit in them also?

When writers wished to convey the idea that men were filled with wrath, fear, jealousy, sorrow, joy, peace, etc. they used this very same word that is used to tell us that persons were filled with the Holy Spirit.

The gift of the Holy Spirit is not a miraculous gift. His indwelling does not mean that we would have certain feelings, experiences or perform miracles.

Today God works through natural laws to bring us blessings.

Can we not believe the Spirit dwells in us in a non-miraculous way just as God and Christ dwell in us in a non-miraculous way?

It is no more miraculous than God's hearing and answering our prayers is miraculous.

Do we mean miracles will be involved if we say to a brother or sister, "God bless you?"

We can ask God to be with someone without having to think that God has to perform miracles to be with him.

Must Christ perform a miracle to strengthen us? (See [Philippians 4:13](#).)

Paul prayed that God would strengthen Christians with might by his Spirit in the inner man ([Ephesians 3:16](#)).

Does it take a miracle for the Holy Spirit to do this?

It may be a mystery but not a miracle.

To say that the Spirit dwells within us is no more miraculous than saying the Word dwells in us. We cannot even understand how the Word of God dwells in our minds any better than we can grasp how the Holy Spirit dwells in us. We do not even understand how our mind, or our soul dwells in us.

In fact we would not even know we have a soul had not God told us. The Spirit's dwelling in the Christian is no more miraculous than God or Christ dwelling in him. Jesus told his apostles, "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" ([John 14:23](#)).

Is this just figurative language or is it literal?

A failure to understand the Spirit's indwelling is due in part to a tritheistic concept of God. There is one God ([essence](#)), but there are three distinct personalities in that one God, each of them called God. That one God is spirit ([John 4:24](#)).

So there is only one self-existent eternal, omnipresent Spirit. And when that one Spirit dwells in a human body, it is correct to say that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit dwells in him.

The Bible does not separate the persons of the Godhead; it distinguishes between them, but does not separate them, except where the humanity of Jesus is involved. Jesus said he and the Father would make their abode with all who love him and keep his word ([John 14:23](#)). The Father and the Son, dwell in us in the same way the Holy Spirit dwells in us. They all make their abode in us.

We do not claim to know how He does this, but we believe it, because God's Word says so. Since faith comes by hearing the Word of God ([Romans 10:17](#)), we believe He dwells in us by faith, not by something we feel.

Think how the Godhead must feel when after repeatedly saying the Holy Spirit dwells in the Christian, some say, "No, you really do not dwell in us at all. You just dwell in us representatively through the Word."

There is no power in a hammer to drive a nail unless the agent or owner uses it; there is no power in a sword to kill the enemy unless and until it is used by the soldier. The gospel is powerful to convict men of sin and bring them to Christ for salvation because the Holy Spirit uses it.

He got the word from the Father, ([1 Corinthians 2:10-13](#)), revealed and recorded it through the apostles and prophets, confirmed it through miracles, and ever since Pentecost has been using it as his instrument to convert and sanctify men. It is through the Word that men are made Christians.

But none of this proves to the slightest degree that the Holy Spirit dwells in the Word or that his indwelling is through the Word only, or that two of the persons in the Godhead are in heaven and one is on earth dwelling in the Word.

[What does the indwelling Spirit do for us?](#)

At the time one becomes a Christian the gift of the Holy Spirit serves as a seal ([identification](#)) and as an earnest ([pledge or down payment](#)) on our future inheritance in heaven. ([See 2 Corinthians 1:22; 5:5.](#))

We can "[abound in hope through the power of the Holy Spirit](#)" ([Romans 15:13](#)). We can be "[strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man](#)" ([Ephesians 3:16](#)). From within our hearts ([because we are sons](#)), the spirit "[helps in our weaknesses,](#)" and makes "[intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.](#)"

The result is, "[all things work together for good to those who love God](#)" ([Romans 8:26-28; see also Galatians 4:6](#)).

The Hebrew writer admonishes, "Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, *(not the Word)* that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:16).

Is this not part of the intercessory work of the Holy Spirit?

The "love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us" (Romans 5:5). Knowing that the Holy Spirit dwells in us motivates us to be a better person. It helps us restrain from doing things with our bodies that are wrong such as some of the works of the flesh (Galatians 5:19-21).

Let us rejoice and be thankful for the continual abiding presence of the Godhead in us. Now may "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all" (2 Corinthians 13:14).