

1-2-3 John, Part 13 – The Holy Spirit Inside

Just after talking about the assurance of believers, John says we have the Holy Spirit inside. Several things testify about the relationship that believers have with Christ. John is getting to the heart and soul of Christianity.

1 John 3:24 NKJV Now he who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.

John 15 talks about the relationship that believers have with Christ. In that text, Jesus talks at length about abiding in Him and the result of that life. One of the great benefits of abiding in Christ is the Spirit whom He has given us. This is more than a new way of thinking. The Spirit of Truth takes up residence in us.

John 14:16-17 NKJV And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever— the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.

Jesus said the Holy Spirit would be a Helper Who would dwell with you and will be in you. Remember that John had initially been writing to believers who were being influenced by false teachers who denied that Jesus was the Christ. The message he gave is especially necessary as we approach the end of this age. Christ's message and promise of the Holy Spirit seems more necessary as John is addressing believers who have been challenged by false teachers. Before we go further into 1 John 4, it is necessary to remind ourselves of what Jesus said about the Holy Spirit.

John 16:7-11 NKJV 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 depart, I will send Him to you. And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they do not believe in Me; of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.

The next few verses are very important in relation to what John is saying in our text.

John 16:12-15 NKJV I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you.

The necessity of the Holy Spirit's work in believers is evident. After Jesus went back to the Father, the advent of the Holy Spirit into believer's lives is crucial for our spiritual development and maturity. We need to know for certain that the Holy Spirit is not only with us but in us. Again John was addressing people who had false teachers who were

antichrists.

Mark 13:22 NKJV For false christs and false prophets will rise and show signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.

As early as the first generation church this prophecy was being fulfilled. We are still seeing many who have denied Christ and have offered substitute christs. Just recently another has arisen in Australia that is declaring he is the christ and his wife is Mary Magdalene.

1 John 4:1 NKJV Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

The Church must be led by the Spirit of God. We are to be people of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus said, "When the Holy Spirit comes, He will guide you into all truth and draw us away from error."

John is showing us the impact the Holy Spirit has in believers when we abide in Christ.

1 John 3:24 NKJV Now he who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.

We must make take this personally.

The Holy Spirit abides in us. We rely upon the constant abiding presence and guidance of the Holy Spirit. He directs us into truth, a life of obedience to God and away from the error.

John has been talking about the manifestations of God's love in our lives.

The love of God controls and urges our lives. Once we have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit starts working in us.

1 John 3:9 AMP He said, "No one born of God deliberately, knowingly, and habitually practices sin, for God's nature abides in him."

Our lives are marked by Christ's nature. We know that we have a clean heart because we walk in confidence toward God. Now, he is telling us the Holy Spirit is directing us into a right life. The guidance of the Holy Spirit keeps us on the right path and comforts us when we are under attack.

To emphasize the Spirit's help, John tells us about the spirit of error that is in the world.

In the first part of 1 John, we were warned about the spirit of Antichrist that is working in the world. Now, John wants the church to check and see what spirit they are listening to.

In Revelation chapters 2 and 3, the glorified Christ speaks to churches.

He says, “*He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.*” (Revelation 2:7; 2:11; 2:17; 2:29; 3:6; 3:13; 3:22) Here in 1 John 4:1 we are told, “Do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God...”

The word for spirit is ‘pneuma.’

“Pneuma” can refer to the Holy Spirit, the spirit of Christ, the human spirit, an evil spirit, or the spirit of the antichrist. Some people assume that the voice of their conscience is the Holy Spirit. We need to know that we are being led by the Spirit of God.

What ‘spirit’ are you listening to?

The spirit we are listening to shows our relationship with God.

John tells us to “*Test the spirits, to determine if they are from God...*” (1 John 4:1).

It is not wrong to test the impulses and direction we feel with the character and nature of God’s Word. In the same way, we should test every miracle, prophecy and word to see that it is of God. The Holy Spirit will never direct us in a manner that is contrary to God’s nature and character.

Jesus expects His church to be led by the Holy Spirit.

We must have an ear to hear what the Holy Spirit is saying. This is why we need to know *what spirit* we are listening to. It is a matter of influence and direction in your life.

1 John 4:4 AMP Little children, you are of God [you belong to Him] and have [already] defeated and overcome them [the agents of the antichrist], because He Who lives in you is greater (mightier) than he who is in the world.

You need to know that your life is directed by the Holy Spirit. If you are, you are living in a manner that pleases God. If you are not being directed by the Holy Spirit, something else is choosing your changes. Your life is being directed down a different path. There is a dramatic difference in us. He says: “You are of God.”

Listen to what he says has happened in us.

1 John 3:1 “Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God.”

1 John 3:2 “Now we are children of God; ...we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him.”

1 John 3:3 “Everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself...”

1 John 3:5 “You know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin.”

1 John 3:6 “Whoever abides in Him does not deliberately and habitually practice sin.”

1 John 3:9 “Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him...”

1 John 3:10 “In this the children of God ...are manifest.”

John is emphasizing the impact of what happens in us when the Spirit influences our lives.

We will be directed toward Christ and obedience to the faith. We will walk in love toward God and others. We will be kept from error and will be led into all truth. We will be living an overcoming life in Christ. The nature and character of Christ will be manifest in us.

The evidence of hearing the Holy Spirit is in the new life.

The Holy Spirit always leads into actions of obedience to the Father and a Christlike lifestyle. If you are being led by the Holy Spirit, you are headed into God's blessing and favor.

When we are led by the Holy Spirit, we will be turned away from what is false.

He keeps us from error. Jesus said, "*When the Holy Spirit comes He will guide you into all truth.*"

Are you listening to the Holy Spirit?

He knows what is truth and what is error. God is not leaving your future and success to chance or some '*other spirit.*' He has given the Holy Spirit to help us. If you are listening to the Holy Spirit, He will keep you in the truth. There are many other voices in the world. If you are listening to *any other spirit*, you will fall into error.

When we are listening to the Holy Spirit, our lives will bear the fruit of God's nature and character.

The Holy Spirit always directs us into the Father's love. As a result we will manifest the blessing of the Father's love. This impacts and changes our heart, mind, and strength. Our lives will be a revelation of the same nature that is in God. This is why He has implanted His seed in us. This is why He says: "*You are of God.*" This is why He says: "*Greater is He Who is in you.*" God has planned your success. As a result, we will demonstrate the influence of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

John draws a final conclusion on this matter.

1 John 4:4–5 HCSB You are from God, little children, and you have conquered them, because the One who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. They are from the world. Therefore what they say is from the world, and the world listens to them.

You are of God is a major conclusion in our lives. You are not of the world. The people of the world have ears that are in tune with the spirit of the world. When we are truly filled with and led by the Spirit, we are conquerors. This is God's plan for His children. This is why He has given His Spirit.