

of pursuing Him, just look at Jesus. If you live in God's presence, that is what you will experience, and God Himself will ultimately conform you to the image of His Son, the image He planned for you from the beginning.

Jesus' physical presence brought to us something that couldn't be accomplished any other way. But amazingly, there was another chapter that would follow His earthly life—another extension of the Father's pursuit as He invited us to be with Him.

CHAPTER 5 INDWELLING



THEY WERE AFRAID. Jesus continually told His disciples that He was about to leave. This made no sense to them, for they thought He was establishing an earthly kingdom. Although the cross had been prophesied, they could not understand its purpose. And practically, they thought everything hinged on Jesus' physical presence with them.

How could they survive without His flesh and blood presence? The truths they were learning, the glory they were observing, the ministry they were experiencing, and the sheer joy of living with Jesus would be lost without Him.

The Next Step

The unfolding story of the presence of God included a chapter which the disciples could not imagine, but one that was essential for life in God's presence to be fully accomplished. Although they would not understand it until Pentecost, (How could they?) Jesus foreshadowed what was about to happen in His words recorded in John 14.

"Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater works than these he will do; because I go to the Father. Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son."⁴²

How could the disciples possibly do greater works than their Master? Their works would not be greater in significance but in scope. Instead of

⁴²John 14:12-13

Christ being confined to one body in one place at one time, He would fill *every believer* with His presence. The Spirit of Christ, clothed in the human flesh of millions of believers, could be all over the world at the same time!

“I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and *will be in you*. ... In that day you will know that I am in My Father, *and you in Me, and I in you*. ... Jesus answered and said to 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 abode with him*.”⁴³

Following Jesus’ death, burial, resurrection, and ascension, God would send the Holy Spirit (Himself in spirit form) at Pentecost to begin a new age—an age in which every believer would be indwelt by the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of Christ would now be present all the time in each believer, giving them everything they needed to experience the uninterrupted presence of God. Just as the Father, in His endless pursuit of us, sent His Son in physical presence, now He sent His Spirit with indwelling presence.

In the Old Covenant, the Spirit of God came upon men and women, enduing them with power for service for a season or a task. This is why David would cry out in Psalm 51: “Do not cast me away from Your presence, and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.”⁴⁴

⁴³John 14:16-17, 20, 23 (*emphasis mine*)

⁴⁴Psalm 51:11

To lose the Spirit upon one’s life in the Old Testament age was to lose the presence of God, which was the worst fate possible, for everything flows from His presence. But in the New Covenant, following Pentecost, the Spirit would be given to every believer at the moment of their salvation. The physical presence of Jesus was no longer necessary, for His presence would now be in every true believer in the person of the Holy Spirit.

Fully God

The Spirit of God is not a sub-level member of the Trinity; when we receive the Spirit, we have all of God we will ever have. Growth in our walk with Christ then, is learning how to be filled with the Spirit and follow His initiation ... how to walk by His leadership, how to listen and follow His Spirit’s prompting and the illumination of His Word.

It is also possible to quench or grieve the Spirit. Although He does not leave us, we can hinder His activity in and through our lives. We must learn more and more how to let Him have control. The question is not “How much of the Spirit do you have?” but “How much of you does the Spirit have?” We will see this clearly in the following chapters.

His presence is our greatest need, and our presence is God’s great desire. This is nowhere more evident than God’s willingness to literally inhabit us. God went to extraordinary lengths to send His Son to inhabit a virgin’s womb for man’s salvation. But think of Pentecost on equal terms. On that day, God once again humbled Himself to inhabit us by His Spirit.

Why would He take such a humbling step? So that we might be with Him and He with us. So He might fully restore us to His original

purpose and plan ... to see us in His own image, ruling and reigning in His power with Him.

What could be a more convincing proof that the Father desires our presence? He has come to live in us.

There is one final movement in this story ... the most glorious chapter of all.

CHAPTER 6 **COMING!**

