

# THE INWARD TESTIMONY OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD IS MISSING

*“He that believes on the Son of God has the witness in himself.”* 1 John 5:10.

*“The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.”* Rom. 8:16

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Why do Christians believe that the Bible is the Word of God, sixty-six books forming a single book of instruction in which God reveals to us the reality of redemption through Jesus Christ the Savior? The answer is that God Himself has confirmed this through what is called “the inward witness of the Holy Spirit” John 15:26, 1 John 5:7, 1 John 2:20 & 27.

*“But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him”* 1 John 5:27.

The unknown witness of the Spirit of God in the heart of man is missing in many of our Baptist churches today. The inner witness of the Spirit of God in the heart is an unknown factor in our Baptist church services anymore. Conviction has been lost, sin has disappeared from its pulpits and repentance is nowhere to be found. In Romans eight Paul wrote to the church there at Rome, *“The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God”* Rom. 8:16. And the results bears its testimony, our churches are filled with unregenerate members. The world has moved in and the members have moved out and gone back into the world. So it is “as go the churches so goes the nation.” Look at us today!

Salvation is all of God. The Holy Spirit has to apply it, it is the Spirit that makes the unwilling willing, He makes the ungodly godly, and it is He that brings the vile rebel to the feet of Jesus, or else salvation will never be accomplished. No one, neither you nor I can change the heart, neither the penitent himself. The Spirit searches the hearts and tries the reigns of men. It is God the Holy Spirit, who masterfully and provisionally changes the life of any man if any changes are made. He is the witness, He is the soul winning agent that preps the heart, prevents straying and paves the way for surrender. He sanctifies the believer, exhorts and comforts the soul, protects and warns against the enemy both outward and inward and presents him before God in Heaven. It is His work alone and anything else is heresy and blasphemy. Our job is simply that of a vessel through which He operates! We’re to remove ourselves “putting to death” that He is manifested.

Many are they today who think I should not be critical of the Church and suppose this old preacher to be ill-tempered, but they are wrong. The Apostle Paul warned two-thousand years ago of the great falling away in a letter to the church at Thessalonica, it was even going on in his day and here we are two thousand years hence. And we think no one should be critical. We’re sick, the church is sick, something is terribly wrong. You’re wrong about me; too, I love the Church, especially the local Baptist church. I have a tendency to be jealous for local Baptist churches. Purity is in order! Christ established the church to be a vanguard of the truth, protector, soul saving station for the proclamation of the gospel. Jesus Christ came to save sinners, the most horrible, like this old preacher writing here. And we’ve gone cold, anemic,

diabetic, living off of life support and in intensive care having walked away from our first love. O' how putrefying we've become. Jesus described the seven churches in Revelation two and three as decaying, Laodicean and went on further to ask the question "*Will I find faith on earth when I return?*" You can criticize this old guy all you want, I've been around a while, but it's the Bible you're really going to have to deal with! Take it up with the Scriptures, He penned them. Jesus even told us in Paul's epistle to the Hebrews that those He loved, He would chasten.

Our Baptist churches are filled with strange voices, unsound spirits, evil lifestyles and unintelligible language, replacing the tender wooing of God's Holy Spirit. The music is subjugated to heathenism and has lost its melody. Our Baptist distinctive are being neglected for the popular crowds and its teaching ignored, outright rejection for appeasement. Every false doctrine is being taught, Baptist now can lose their salvation, hogwash! Calvinism and Pentecostal Charisma are uniting most churches and the love drunk folks are everywhere shining as the crown jewel of religious service. Is God doing as He promised writing "Ichabod" over our churches? The Spirit of God has been replaced in our churches with humanism and He is standing at the door knocking seeking entrance. The witness of the Spirit is missing the convicting power of God's Holy Spirit has taken leave. Where are the long lines of repentant mourners confessing sin and weeping over their wretchedness as they make their way to the altar? I'll tell you where, taking flight heavenward, gradually withdrawing His own home. Jesus is about to return and call out the rest of His Church!

In these closing days of the Church Age, surrounded by a fearful "*falling away*" from Bible standards and the teaching of the early Christian church, we are prone to forget or neglect to hold rigidly to the foundation doctrines that were blessed to the fathers. We have an unchanging God, who says, "*My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips;*" and since he never changes his attitude toward truth, we must never let down, alter, or change our attitude toward the doctrines taught in his Word. All the doctrines that God blessed in the early Christian church are ours to keep and give out to this generation, not one of them may we safely neglect! The Bible doctrine of the "Witness of the Spirit" was much emphasized in the early church, and all those seeking for either justification or sanctification were urged to press on after God until they received a clear "witness," and not to profess any state of grace without a definite "witness of the Spirit" that God had given them that grace.

If all pastors, evangelists, and Christian workers today would seek and obtain, for their own hearts, a clear "witness of the Spirit," and then insist, as was universally done in the early Church, that all their converts seek until they received a definite "witness" to the grace they were seeking; and then also persuade the church members to go down before God through repentance, prayer, and fasting, until they obtained a clear "witness" to the grace of justification or sanctification. If the Christian world would do this, then the joy and freedom that characterized the early church period would return; and what is of the greatest importance, an old-time conviction for sin, almost unknown today, would seize the sinner world. Dare we meet this blind generation, drunken on alcohol, saturated with nicotine, mad with lust, bewitched with worldly sports and pleasures, at the judgment, unless we, with burning hearts of love, have done our utmost to get them saved during their day of probation?

"The Witness of the Spirit," properly speaking, is not a "blessing" or a "feeling." It lies in the realm of fact. The Christian is "blessed" when on the mountain top, but the "blessing" disappears when he reaches the valley of sorrow and trial. But "The Witness of the Spirit" glows on through both experiences.

Here is our Scripture verse, "*He that believes on the Son of God has the witness in Himself.*" First, Believing on the Son of God comes before the inner witness. "He that believes on the Son of God has the witness in Himself." He believes before he has that witness, and it is only as a believer that he obtains it. This is self-evident in the text. No one can read these words without seeing that a man must be a believer before he has the witness in himself. It does not say, "He who has the witness in himself

becomes a believer,” but the order is reversed, “*He that believes has the witness in himself.*” He believes first and then he receives the inner witness.

Secondly, The Inner Witness naturally follows upon faith. “*He that believes on the Son of God has the witness in himself.*” It is quite impossible that the Inner Witness should precede faith and this you will clearly see if you think a minute. Here is a medicine well-known to be exceedingly efficacious in a certain disease. A sick man says that he will not believe in its power until he has some inner witness of it. It is clear to you that he cannot possibly have any evidence of its power until he has at least enough faith to take the medicine and give it a chance of operating upon him. So is it with this blessed remedy of the precious blood of Jesus. You cannot have any inner witness to its power till first of all, you receive it by faith. “*To as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to as many as believed on His name,*” John 1:12.

Only those whom God the Holy Spirit has regenerated will submit to Scripture as His inerrant and infallible Word. The Holy Spirit does not give us a new argument for the truth of the Bible, but He confirms in our hearts the truth of Scripture. God will not force people to believe against their wills. Sinners are only persuaded to receive the Bible as God’s Word as the Holy Spirit changes their hearts and assures them that they can trust and rely on what Scripture says. Well then:

How do we know we are saved? For that seems to be a grave question with some. God declares in His Word, even in that sure Word of testimony, “*Whereunto ye do well to take heed as unto a light that shineth in a dark place that every believer in Jesus Christ is saved.*” Again, we know on the “authority of Scripture” that believers are saved, because the privileges which are ascribed to them prove that they are in a saved condition. John goes to the very root of every matter, and in John 1:12 He tells us, “*As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name.*” Once again, the whole tone of Scripture regards the believer as a saved man. “Believers” is a common synonym for saints, for sanctified persons; and truth to say the Epistles are written to believers, for they are written to the Churches, and Churches are but assemblies of believers.

How do we know that we are believers? It is clear that if we are believers we are saved, but how do we know that we are believers? First of all, as a general rule, it is a matter of consciousness. How do I know that I breathe? How do I know that I think? I know I do, and that is enough. Faith is to a large extent a matter of consciousness. I believe, and if you ask me how I know it I reply, “I am sure I do.” Still, there is another evidence. How do I know that I am a believer? Why by the very remarkable change which I underwent when I believed; for when a man believes in Jesus Christ there is such a change wrought in him that he must be aware of it? Things we never dreamed of before we have realized now. I remember a guy who when he was converted said, “Well, either the world is new or else I am.” This change is to our strong evidence that faith is in us, and has exercised its power. We have further evidence that we believe, for our affections are so altered. The believer can say that the things he once loved he now hates, and the things he hated he now loves; that which gave him pleasure now causes him pain, and things which were irksome and unpleasant have now become delightful to him. Especially is there a great change in us with respect to God. We know, also, that we believe because though very far from perfect we love holiness and strive after purity. And we know that we have believed in Jesus Christ because now we have communion with God; we are in the habit of speaking with God in prayer and hearing the Lord speak with us when we read His Word. We know that we have believed in the Lord Jesus Christ because we have over and above all this a secret something, indescribable to others, but well known by ourselves, which is called in Scripture the “witness of the Holy Spirit:” for it is written, “The Spirit Himself also beareth witness with our spirit that we are born of God.” There comes over the soul sometimes a peace, a joy, a perfect rest, a heavenly sweetness, a supreme content, in which, though no voice is heard, yet are we conscious that there is rushing through our souls, like a strain of heaven’s own music, the witness of the Spirit of God. As I draw this writing to an end, may I ask you the reader a profound question?

Do you believe in Jesus Christ or no? If you believe you are saved; if you believe not you are condemned already. Let me lastly ask; are any of you seeking after any witness beyond the witness of God, beyond the witness of the Word of God? If so you are, do you not know that virtually you are making God a liar?

YOU WOULD NOT CALL GOD A LIAR WOULD YOU? OR DO YOU?