

# The Harvester



## Preparing Souls

## To Serve The Lord



Volume 38

August 2017

Number 1

## HOLY SPIRIT INDWELLING (PART 2)

By Brian R. Kenyon

The Bible is clear that the Holy Spirit indwells the faithful Christian (Acts 5:32; Rom. 8:9; 1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19; Gal. 4:6-7; et al.). However, since the Bible does not explicitly say how, the subject has attracted much discussion over the years. As long as a person's view does not violate plain Bible passages or principles, it should not be a matter of fellowship. In last month's Harvester, an argument was presented to prove that the Holy Spirit indwells faithful Christians personally and literally in a non-miraculous way. That article discussed reasons why "personally," "literally," and "non-miraculous" are used. It also examined Joel's prophecy about the Spirit age (Joel; 2:28-32).

The argument is as follows:

1. All Bible statements whose immediate or remote contexts do not demand a figurative meaning are statements that are to be taken literally.
2. The statements concerning Holy Spirit indwelling found in Acts 5:32; Romans 8:9; First Corinthians 3:16; 6:19; and Galatians 4:6-7 are Bible statements whose immediate or remote contexts do not demand a figurative meaning.
3. Therefore, the statements concerning Holy Spirit indwelling found in Acts 5:32; Romans 8:9; First Corinthians 3:16; 6:19; and Galatians 4:6-7 are statements which are to be taken literally.

The first premise is without doubt true and accepted by most people who read this article. If people are allowed to take statements figuratively when the context does not demand such, then anyone can make the Bible teach anything they want! It seems brethren understand this in all areas of Bible interpretation, except, for some reason, when it comes to Holy Spirit indwelling. They want to make Bible verses figurative when there appears no contextual reason to do so.

### RULES FOR DETERMINING FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

Before examining the passages in Premise 2 of the argument, a consideration of D. R. Dungan's "rules for determining figurative language" in the Bible is enlightening (195-201). Dungan gave seven rules, but only five are relevant to this discussion. The others involve numbers and sarcasm. First, Dungan said, "The sense of context will indicate [figurative language] ... nothing should be regarded as figurative unless such a demand is made by the meaning of the immediate context, or by the evident meaning of the passage as a whole."

Second, "A word or sentence is figurative when the literal meaning involves an impossibility." Some may see apparent impossibilities because they cannot understand something, but God has not chosen to reveal everything we might want (cf. Deut. 29:29).

Third, a statement is figurative "if the literal interpretation will cause one passage to contradict another ... if we have two passages, and the literal interpretation of both makes the one to contradict the other, we are at liberty to regard the language of one, at least, as figurative." The only exception would be when a word has two meanings in different contexts.

Fourth, a statement is figurative "when the Scriptures are made to demand actions that are wrong, or forbid

**Thankful for Your Support**  
*As We Begin Our 49th School-Year*  
**To God Be the Glory!**

those that are good.” Literally cutting off hands and feet and plucking eyes would fall into this category (Mt. 17:8-9).

Fifth, a statement is figurative “when it is said to be figurative.” Dungan went on to elaborate, “The author is supposed to know whether the language was figurative or not; and hence, if he says it is, we have nothing to add.”

According to Dungan’s rules, the passages in Premise 2 pass the test of being literal statements. Nowhere in the New Testament is a passage that explicitly speaks of Holy Spirit indwelling explicitly said to be figurative by its writer. Of course, some passages will use figurative concepts, but that does not mean every statement in the context is figurative. If that were the case, then no practical truth could be taught from a figurative setting. Think of how useless the parables would be if that were true. An example involving Holy Spirit indwelling would be First Corinthians 3:16. Paul used the figure of a “temple” to describe the Christian’s body. Obviously, the human body is not made of bricks and mortar. However, when one understands “temple” as a dwelling place, then it may not be as figurative as one might think. Be that as it may, even within that context, certain statements are literal, such as “If any man defile,” “him shall God destroy,” and “the temple of God is holy.” If one can understand those terms in a figurative setting as being literal, then why cannot one understand “the Spirit of God dwelleth in you” as being literal?

## PROVING PREMISE 2

The minor premise reads: The statements concerning Holy Spirit indwelling found in Acts 5:32; Romans 8:9; First Corinthians 3:16; 6:19; and Galatians 4:6-7 are Bible statements whose immediate or re-

mote contexts do not demand a figurative meaning. Due to space limitations in this article, detailed consideration will only be given to Romans 8:9.

In Romans 8:5-8, Paul contrasted life “after [according to] the flesh” with life “after [according to] the Spirit.” In that text he explicitly informed the readers why living “after the flesh” leads to death: (1) it is “enmity against God;” (2) it is unable to be “subject [subordinate]” to God’s law; and (3) it is not able to “please God.” (Rom. 8:7-8). Romans 8:9 belongs to a paragraph that runs through verse 11. A consideration of these verses in their context will reveal an understanding that contributes greater appreciation for the plan of salvation and the blessings that are found in being a Christian. However, the focus here will be on verse 9: “But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.”

Paul turned to the Roman Christians and emphatically stated that they did not live like those in the flesh. “In the flesh” brought back to mind all that was previously said about “the flesh” and “the Spirit” (Rom. 8:5-8). When Paul said they were not “in the flesh,” he obviously was not denying their physical existence. Rather, “The thought is still of mind-sets, of conditioned patterns of thinking and acting—the one [‘in the flesh’] determined by belongingness to the world, the other [‘in the Spirit’] by belongingness to God” (Dunn 428). Truly, those who live according to the Spirit cannot at the same time be living according to the flesh.

“If so be that” (Rom. 8:9) comes from a Greek word that means “since; if it is true” (Newman). This clearly indicates the fact that Christians are “in Christ”

### Special Thanks To Our Generous Supporters In June 2017

**Florida Churches of Christ:** Atlantic Beach (Oceanside); Auburndale (Orange Street); Callahan (First Coast); Clearwater (Central); Daytona Beach (Beville Road); Dunnellon; Gainesville (Thirty-Ninth Avenue); Haines City (Central); Jacksonville (Paxon, Wesconnett); Kissimmee; Lakeland (Sixth Street, North Lakeland, South Florida Avenue); Melbourne (North Melbourne); New Port Richey (River Road); Parrish (North River); Plant City (Laura Street); Sarasota (Osprey Avenue); Sebastian; Stuart.

**Out of State Churches of Christ:** Alabama (Double Springs, Shiloh, Prattville); Michigan (Wayne Road); North Carolina (Pike Road); Oklahoma (Seminole); South Carolina (Seneca); Tennessee (Livingston, Walnut Grove); Texas (Kamay); Virginia (Westside).

**Individuals:** M/M Blane Anderson, bettye bolding, M/M Manuel Brown, Annie Chambers, M/M Freddie Clayton, M/M William A. Clayton, M/M Reginald Colton, M/M Hollis Cress, David M. Deal, Gy Dickinson, M/M Robert Doak, M/M John Donaldson, M/M Jim Edmonson, Dale Eppley, M/M George K. French, M/M Allen R. Gardner, Dotty Gutzler, Stephan Haynes, Joan Humphrey, Gloria Jones, M/M Hiram Kemp, M/M Darnell Kirkland, Carla Lee, M/M C. E. Manning, Brenda Mask, M/M Nathaniel McCray, Maudeann McKendree, Joe Morgan, Nancy Norton, Charles Paulin, John E. Petty, M/M Jack Pinckert, Jr., M/M Robert Pratt, M/M Uleyses Richardson, Gary Rine, Roger Rosie, Johnye C. Sims, M/M Daniel K. Stearsman, Joyce Stearsman, Glenda Sullivan, Ada Walling, M/M Lazaros J. Watson, M/M Douglas Wheeler, M/M Art Wilkins, Debbie Milton Winkle.

**Memorials:** **Bonnie Parton** (M/M Duane Nelson); **George Peterson** (Dorothy Peterson).

**Special Contributions:** Estate of Dean Wilson, Denis L. Fontaine Foundation, Inc.

**\*Our final deposit for the month is usually made on the last Wednesday of the month. All contributions received after that time are reported on the next month’s financial statement.**

## The Harvester

Published Monthly  
Florida School of Preaching  
1807 South Florida Avenue  
Lakeland, FL 33803  
(863) 683-4043

Editor: Brian R. Kenyon, Director

### Board of Directors

Ted Wheeler, Chairman  
Brian Kenyon, Vice-Chairman  
Tim Simmons, Secretary  
Chad Tagtow, Treasurer

Steve Atnip                      Philip Lancaster  
George K. French                Walter Podein  
Bruce Daugherty                Ben Radford, Sr.

Uleyses Richardson

**Training Preachers Since 1969**

with the Holy Spirit dwelling in them. If the Holy Spirit dwells in Christians, the Holy Spirit liberates them from the “law of sin and death” (cf. Rom. 8:2-3), which works through the flesh. Paul could therefore say that Christians are not “in the flesh, but in the Spirit.”

While it is true that much false teaching has claimed support from Romans 8:9, the truth of what the verse teaches should not be dismissed with the error. This verse does teach that the Holy Spirit dwells in the Christian, and without the indwelling of the Spirit a person cannot be a child of God. “Dwell” (Rom. 8:9) comes from a Greek word that means to “live, dwell, have one’s habitation” (Bauer 557). Leon Morris translates the verb “live,” noting that the Holy Spirit is not an “occasional visitor,” but rather “takes up residence in God’s people” (Morris 308). Paul declared that there can be no union with Christ without the indwelling of the Holy Spirit! Morris further comments, “the presence of the Spirit in believers is not an interesting extra to be seen in a few unusual people . . . It is the normal and necessary feature of being a Christian” (308).

The indwelling of the Holy Spirit is so essential that Paul declared, “if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his” (Rom. 8:9b). The word translated “have” (*echo*, ἔχω) comes from the infinitive form of a Greek word that denotes the “language of possession,” which often in the New Testament refers to demon possession (cf. Mt. 11:18; Mk. 3:22, 30), but in Paul’s writings almost always refers to a “good possession,” such as “the Spirit of God” or “faith” (cf. 1 Cor. 7:40; 2 Cor. 4:13) (Dunn 429). The point is that if one does not “possess” the Holy Spirit, he or she cannot belong to Christ. It may be that the qualification of having “the Spirit of Christ” was introduced by Paul because he was aware of some who claimed the Holy Spirit but failed to live according to the Spirit’s demands (cf. 1 Jn. 1:6-7). Even today, some people claim to be “Spirit-filled” Christians, but their manner of conduct is far from a life “after the Spirit.” Real Christian character is not determined by one’s profession or reputation, but by whether one is living in such a way that others can see “the Spirit of Christ” dwelling in him or her (cf. Mt. 5:13-16; Rom. 12:1-2). The possession of the Holy Spirit is declared to be absolutely necessary in order for one to be acceptable to God (cf. Jude 19), and the proof of one’s having “the Spirit of Christ” manifests itself by one’s outward conduct.

There is nothing in the immediate or remote context that qualifies “the Spirit of God dwell in you” as a figurative expression. This writer is aware of some who apply the expression only to the apostles and the miraculous age. However, not only is this reading into the text something that the plain language of the Bible does not declare, it

also distorts the remainder of the chapter. Paul confirmed that the Holy Spirit dwelling in the Christian was the key to the rest of the blessings mentioned (cf. “if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you . . . Therefore . . .,” Rom. 8:11-12). It is because the Spirit indwells faithful Christians that they will enjoy a resurrection (Rom. 8:11); that they have “received the Spirit of adoption” (Rom. 8:15); that they are “heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ” (Rom. 8:17); that “the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed” (Rom. 8:18); that they have help for their “infirmities” in that “the Spirit itself maketh intercession” for them (Rom. 8:26-27); that “all things work together for good” (Rom. 8:28); and that nothing can “separate us from the love of Christ” (Rom. 8:35-39). If the indwelling Holy Spirit was only for the apostles and the miraculous age, then preachers misapply the text when they say the blessings of Romans 8 belong to Christians today.

The truth of the matter, however, is that those blessings do apply today because the same Spirit-indwelling indicating that the Romans belonged to Christ indicates that Christians today belong to Christ. If “the Spirit of God dwell in you” does not literally mean “the Spirit of God dwell in you,” where is the God-inspired teaching that makes it figurative or that makes it apply only to the apostles and the miraculous age? Why not simply accept what the Bible teaches?

The same could be said with the other passages in Premise 2. If “the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him” (Acts 5:32) does not mean that “God hath given [the Holy Ghost] to them that obey him,” then where is the God-inspired commentary of what it does mean? If “the Spirit of God dwelleth in you” (1 Cor. 3:16) does not literally mean “the Spirit of God dwelleth in you,” then where is the God-inspired teaching that makes it figurative or only applicable to the miraculous age? If “the Holy Ghost . . . in you” (1 Cor. 6:19) does not literally mean “the Holy Ghost . . . in you,” where is the God-inspired teaching that makes it figurative or only applicable to the miraculous age? If “God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts” (Gal. 4:6) does not literally mean that “God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts,” then where is the God-inspired teaching that makes it figurative?

## CONCLUSION

According to the rules of logic, an argument is sound if it is valid and its premises are true. The argument presented above is in a valid form, which means if Premise 1 is true and Premise 2 is true, the conclusion must also be

## Florida School of Preaching

1807 South Florida Avenue

Lakeland, FL 33803

www.fsop.net email: fsop@fsop.net

Phone: (863) 683-4043; (800) 320-9780


Fax: (863) 683-0750

Nonprofit Org.  
US Postage  
PAID  
Lakeland, FL  
PERMIT #235

*Electronic Service Requested*

Please Do Not Re-Send  
without affixing  
correct postage!

true. Note again Premise 1: All Bible statements whose immediate or remote contexts do not demand a figurative meaning are statements that are to be taken literally. Who would say that is false? Consider Premise 2: The statements concerning Holy Spirit indwelling found in Acts 5:32; Romans 8:9; First Corinthians 3:16; 6:19; and Galatians 4:6-7 are Bible statements whose immediate or remote contexts do not demand a figurative meaning. An unbiased reading of these passages will indeed show that nothing contextually demands a figurative meaning. Therefore, the conclusion must be true: The statements concerning Holy Spirit indwelling found in Acts 5:32; Romans 8:9; First Corinthians 3:16; 6:19; and Galatians 4:6-7 are statements which are to be taken literally. The

Holy Spirit personally and literally indwells the faithful Christian in a non-miraculous way. 

### WORKS CITED

- Bauer, Walter. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. 2nd rev. ed. by William F. Arndt, F. Wilbur Gingrich, and Frederick W. Danker. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979.
- Dungan, D. R. *Hermeneutics: A Textbook*. Cincinnati, OH: Standard Publishing Company, 1888.
- Dunn, James D. G. *Romans 1-8*. Word Biblical Commentary. Vol. 38a. Eds. David A. Hubbard and Glenn W. Barker. Dallas, TX: Word, 1988.
- Morris, Leon. *The Epistle to the Romans*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1988.
- Newman, Barclay M., Jr. "A Concise Greek-English Dictionary of the New Testament." *Bible Works* 6, 2003. CD-ROM.

Save  
the Date!  
Jan. 15-18,  
2018

*Join Us for Our 43rd Annual Lectureship!*

**Do You Understand the Biblical  
View of the Home?**