

09. The Gift of the Holy Spirit

What does the Bible says concerning God's provision for our future? See, we, as human beings, have basically two problems. All human beings have the same problems, whatever our religion, our culture, our language, our education, our temperament, or anything. We could simplify these problems by putting them into two categories: one is a problem relating to our past - our guilt, our failure, our sins; and the other is, problem relating to the future. How are we going to deal with what comes forth from our nature in the future? Is it going to be a repetition of the same old failures from our past? Do we have to keep on going to God again and again, asking Him to forgive us the same old sins that we have asked for many times in the past? Or, has God made some provisions so that we can overcome in the areas where we failed in the past?

The good news in the Bible is that God has made a provision. He has not only made a provision for our past failures through Christ's death on the cross of Calvary (that was a complete and total taking care of our past failures), but He has also provided for this problem of the possibility of our failing again and again in the same areas in the future by offering us the gift of His Holy Spirit. Now, Jesus said to His disciples, when He was on earth, just before He went up to heaven that, "It is good for you that I go away, because when I go, I will send the Holy Spirit from heaven to dwell in your hearts." The Holy Spirit is the very person of God, the Spirit of God, and this is the gift freely given by God to us, just as much as forgiveness of our sins.

The first day that the Christian message was preached in this world was 2000 years ago, and it is described in Acts 2. It was the Jewish feast of

09. 聖靈的禮物

《聖經》關於神給我們未來的供應是怎樣說的?我們作為人類,基本上都有兩個問題。全部的人類都有同樣的問題,無論我們什麼宗教、文化背景、語言、教育程度,無論我們是什麼性格。我們的問題都可以歸結為兩個類別:一個是關於過去,我們的罪惡感和失敗,和一切的過犯;另一個就是關於未來,我們如何來面對在未來會出現的那些,由於我們天性使然的問題。我們會像過往一樣,不斷重複著同樣的失敗嗎?我們需要一次又一次地來到神面前,請求祂寬恕我們已經犯了無數次的、同樣的罪嗎?抑或是,神給我們預備了什麼,可以使我們克服而不再跌倒于那個領域?

《聖經》裡的好消息(福音)就是,神為我們預備的供應。祂不單單用基督在十字架上的死,來處理我們過去的失敗(基督的死,完全地,處理了我們過去全部的失敗),祂還為我們預備了禮物,就是祂的聖靈,來說明我們未來在相同領域一次又一次的失敗。耶穌在地上當祂快要升天的時候,對祂的門徒們說:「我離開,對你們是有益的,因為當我離開了,我會讓天國裡的聖靈來住進你們的心裡。」聖靈是神本身(神的一個位格),是神的靈,如同赦免我們的罪一樣,聖靈是神免費給人的禮物。

使徒行傳的第 2 章,描述了在兩千年前,基督徒的資訊第一次在這個世上被傳講。那發生在猶太人的五旬節,很多人來到了耶路撒冷。使徒彼得站起來向眾人

Pentecost when many people had come together in Jerusalem. The apostle Peter got up and proclaimed the Gospel message: that Christ had died, that He had risen again from the dead, and then ascended to heaven. And that He has poured out His Holy Spirit that had filled the hearts of those 120 peoples, who were praying that day in Jerusalem. Then Peter said to all the thousands of people who were listening to him (Acts 2:38) these words: Repent (we have considered what that means) and let each one of you be baptized being immersed in water to symbolize the break with the past, the burial of the old man, and the resurrection of being a new man. That is the symbolism of going into the water and coming out in baptism - my old man is dead and is buried and now I am a new man in Christ. And then he said, 'if you do that, you will receive two gifts: one, the forgiveness of your sins (that deals with our past), and second, you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.' That is God's provision for the future. So, both of our problems are dealt with; our past, as well as our future. We have taken care of the guilt of our past and the provision of strength to overcome when we are faced with temptations and problems in the future.

Now many Christians think that God has only dealt with our past problems. As I said in the last study, you can receive from God only what you have faith for. If you don't believe, you cannot receive. If you don't believe, for example, that God will give you strength to face your problems in the future, you won't receive it. You may desire it, God may also desire to give you that strength, but you still won't receive, if you don't have faith. Every gift of God is received by simple faith. It is not because we deserve it. None of us deserve even the lowest of God's gifts. We don't deserve anything but hellfire. All of us deserve judgment. All of us deserve to burn

傳講福音:基督死了,又從死裡復活,然後升入了天國。神將祂的聖靈充滿了那天正在耶路撒冷祈禱的 120 個人。爾後彼得對全部在場的幾千個聽他講道的人說了下面的話(使徒行傳 2 章 38 節):「你們每個人都要悔改,浸入水中受洗,代表著你與過去的決裂,埋葬那個舊的人,重生出一個新的人。」這是受洗浸入水中爾後再出來的含義——我們那個舊人已經死了並被埋葬,現在開始,我是基督裡面的一個新人。爾後他又說:「如果你這樣做了,將會得到兩個禮物——第一個,是對你一切罪的赦免(處理我們的過去);第二個,你將領受聖靈作為禮物。「這是神為未來所做的預備。那麼,我們的兩個問題,過去和將來,都得到了處理。我們過往的罪被處理了,未來將面對誘惑和問題也得到了預備好的力量去應對。

現在有很多基督徒以為神只處理了我們過去的問題。如同我在前面講到的,你只能從神那得到你有信心的那部分。如果你不信的,就得不到。比如說,如果你不相信神會在未來給你面對困難的勇氣,你就將得不到。也許你很想要,神也很想給你這份力量,可只要你沒有信心,就無法得到。神給的每份禮物,你都要靠著信心來獲得。而且不是我們當之無愧地配得。我們沒有任何一個人配得哪怕是神最低的禮物。我們除了地獄的烈火,什麼都不配得。我們每個人配得的是審判。因為罪的緣故,我們該受的是在無間的地獄裡被永遠地火燒。我們犯的罪是故意的,使神蒙羞。神把全人類放在同一個類別,就是罪人,如此一來,祂就可以把憐憫給每一個人。這是神的方式——把我們全部人類都放

in hell for eternity because we have sinned. We have sinned deliberately, we have dishonoured God. So God places all humanity - the entire human race under sin so that He can have mercy on everyone. This is God's way - to put us all under sin so that we all are in the same category, so that no one can boast over another, saying, 'I am better than you.' You know how many people there are out in the world, who think they are superior to others?

It is because they haven't seen themselves in God's eyes. It is like I said in another study where the child who gets 20% thinks he is better than the child who gets 5%. And worse than that, the child who gets 20% thinking he is superior to the child who gets 19.5%. How much superior is he really? That is the height foolishness of one man who thinks he is better than another. It is all relative. In God's eyes, we are all failures and He gives us a promotion to the next class freely, i.e. forgiveness. Then He gives us strength to face the problem of our own sinful nature, the problem that we can face living in a world that is still under the curse, and that is through the gift of His Holy Spirit. It is His own presence coming in and dwelling in our hearts, filling our hearts, giving us strength from within.

You know, when Jesus was on earth, He could only encourage people and strengthen them from the outside. He walked with the disciples, He talked with them, but He could only be in one place at a given time. If He was in Galilee, He could not be in Jerusalem; if He was in Jerusalem, He couldn't be in Galilee; if He was in Palestine, He couldn't be in India. That would have been terrible, if it had continued like that forever. Because, then all of us would have to be where Jesus was. Even that wouldn't help us because how many thousands could get near Him in any case? And so, Jesus said

在同一個類別裡(就是「有罪的」),因此,沒有任何一個人可以吹噓「我比你強」。你知道世上有多少人,覺得自己比別人強嗎?

這是因為他們還沒有從神的角度來審視自己。如同我在前面講過的,得了 20 分的小孩覺得自己比得了 5 分的小孩強。甚至更糟的是,得了 20 分的孩子覺著自己比得了 19.5 分的孩子強。他強了多少?這和一個人覺得自己比別人好,是一樣愚蠢的。全都是相對的。而在神的眼中,我們都是不及格,並且祂給我們免費重修的機會,也就是「寬恕」。爾後祂給了我們力量,去應對我們與生俱來的罪性,來面對我們仍然必須生活在這被詛咒了的世上這一現實,這份力量就是祂的聖靈。這是祂自己親身來到並進入我們的心,充滿我們的心,從裡面給我們力量。

你知道嗎,當耶穌在世的時候,祂只能從外面鼓勵人。祂及門徒同行,祂同他們在一起,但在一個時間點祂只能在一個地方。如果祂在加利利,就不能在耶路撒冷;祂在耶路撒冷,就不能在加利利;如果祂在巴勒斯坦,就不能在印度。如果永遠這樣的話,就太糟糕了。因為那樣的話,我們就必須都在耶穌所在的地方。而且即使那樣也幫不了我們,祂身邊能站得下幾千人呢?因此,耶穌對祂的門徒們說:「我離開其實是更好的,因為如果我離開,我將把我的聖靈送到這,並住進你們的心裡,從而帶給你們我的存在。」每一個門徒,可以在世界上的任何地方接受聖靈,無論他們在哪,都可以與耶穌同在。

to His disciples that, "It is better if I go away, because if I go away, I will send My Holy Spirit who will come and dwell in your heart and that will bring my presence." All the disciples could receive this Holy Spirit in every part of the world and have the presence of Jesus with them wherever they are.

And even better than that, not just wherever they are, but instead of having Jesus outside of them, they could have Jesus inside of them. You know that is far better. Because with the disciples, even though Jesus was with them for three and a half years, and even though He taught them, encouraged them, challenged them, rebuked them, blessed them in so many ways, yet we see that, at the end of three and a half years, they were still competing with one another to see who would take over the leadership after Jesus died. They were still competing with one another for honour and position. That inward problem could not be dealt even with Jesus' physical presence. Jesus' physical presence only dealt with external problems around them. If there was a storm in the sea He could still it. Or, if there was not enough food to feed them all, He could provide it. Or, if there wasn't enough wine at the wedding, He could change the water into wine. External problems could be dealt with, but the internal problem - which is far more serious - of sin within could not be dealt with as long as Jesus was outside. And that is another reason why it was good that Jesus went away to heaven. Because He sent the Holy Spirit through the third person of the triune God to come and dwell in our hearts, so that the presence and the power of Jesus comes to us through the Holy Spirit within.

Now how do we receive this gift? Exactly the same way we receive the forgiveness of sins. Peter said, "repent, confess your faith in baptism in the name of

更好的是,不止是任何地方都可以有聖靈,而且耶穌在世的時候,是在他們的外面,現在他們可以有耶穌在他們裡面了。對於門徒而言,即使當時耶穌與他們同行了一年半,教導了他們再多,鼓勵得再多,挑戰得再多,訓斥得再多,在一年半的末尾,這些門徒仍在那競爭,誰該在耶穌死後得到領導權。他們仍然在彼此競爭榮耀和地位。他們內在的問題,即使耶穌本人在那,都無法解決。耶穌以肉身存在時,只能解決他們外在的問題。比如海上有風暴,祂可以止住。或者,如果食物不夠全部的人,祂可以提供。亦或者,如果婚禮上的酒不夠了,祂可以把水變成酒。外在的問題都可以解決,但是內在的問題——更嚴重的問題——內在的罪,無論耶穌肉身在世多久,都無法解決。這也是耶穌離世去天國對我們有好處的另一個原因。因為祂可以讓三位一體神的第三個位格,聖靈,來到我們的心裡,耶穌的存在和力量,通過聖靈,從裡面給我們。

現在的問題是,我們該如何得到這禮物?答案是,就像我們接受對罪的赦免是一樣的方法。彼得說:「悔改,奉耶穌基督的名受洗,叫你們的罪得赦,就必領受所賜的

Jesus Christ, and you will receive the forgiveness of sins and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38). There is no extra condition required. It is not some post-graduate degree. No, it is the beginning of Christian life. Many people have thought that, to receive the Holy Spirit, to be filled with the Holy Spirit, it is something which has to come many years after we begin the Christian life. No. On the very day that you begin your Christian life, you have to receive forgiveness to sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit. You open your heart and receive it. It is like going to a shop where somebody has already paid for a two-volume encyclopaedia for you. If you come home with one volume, and there you discover that you don't have the whole thing, what would you do? When you discover that both volumes are paid for, you go back to the shop and you say, 'well, I am sorry, I didn't take the second volume. That is paid for too.' And you take it, it is free.

So Peter offered forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit to those people who repented. That is what God offers us today. In Hebrews, 4:16, we read: Let us come boldly to the throne of grace, so that we may receive two things: mercy, and grace. Mercy and grace are not the same. Mercy is referring to the forgiveness of our sins, dealing with our past. We have all sinned, we need mercy. Grace is referring to God's power that He can give us to help us to be overcomers in the coming days - it is referring to the future. And it says here in Hebrews, 4:16, that let us come with boldness to God's throne, so we can receive mercy to deal with the past and grace through the Holy Spirit to help us face everything that we can face in the future: temptations, problems, trials, whatever it is. Isn't it wonderfully good news that God has provided for our past as well as our future, and all we need to do

聖靈」(使徒行傳 2 章 38 節)。這是沒有額外要求的。這不像是本科畢業後,要再考試晉級到研究生。不是的,這是基督徒生活的開始。很多人以為,接受聖靈,被聖靈充滿,是要在基督徒生活開始後的許多年才能發生的。不是的。從你開始基督徒生活的那一刻,你就要接受罪的赦免和聖靈這個禮物。敞開你的心去接受祂。這就像是去書店,已經有人為你交好了百科全書上下兩卷的錢。如果你回家,發現手裡只有一卷,你會怎麼做?當你發現兩卷都交過錢了,你會回到書店說:「對不起,我忘了把已經付好錢的另一卷取走。」爾後你拿到這第二卷,而且不用再交錢的。

因此,彼得告訴悔改的人可以同時得到罪的赦免和聖靈這個禮物。這也是神今天給予我們的。在希伯來書 4 章 16 節我們讀到:讓我們坦然無懼地來到施恩的寶座前,得到兩樣東西:憐憫和恩典。「憐憫」和「恩典」是不同的。「憐憫」指的是對我們罪的赦免,處理了過去。「恩典」指的是神能給我們的祂的力量,使我們成為戰勝罪的得勝者,針對的是未來。在希伯來書 4 章 16 節說道,讓我們坦然無懼地來到神的寶座前,收穫用來處理過去的「憐憫」,和說明我們面對未來所有問題的「恩典」——誘惑、難題、試煉,無論什麼。神為我們過去未來做了這樣的安排,我們需要的一切都可以從信心得來,難道不該說是極好的嗎?

is come in faith?

So I want to invite you right now to come to God boldly - don't hesitate. He invites you - say 'Lord, I believe you have dealt with my past. But today I also want to believe that you will strengthen me to face the future. I want you to fill me with Your Holy Spirit. I want you to fill my heart with your power, with grace, so that I can face the coming days.' Believe, and it will be yours.

因此,我想要邀請你一起,坦然無懼地來到神面前,不要遲疑。是祂在邀請你,請你說:「主,我相信你已經處理我曾經的一切過犯。但今天,我還要相信你將給我面對未來的力量。我要你用聖靈來充滿我,我要我的心充滿你的力量,你的恩典,這樣我可以面對未來的日子。」相信,爾後就會成為你的了。