

THE GOD WHO WANTS TO DWELL IN US

As we reflect on the majesty of God's creation, we are drawn to a profound truth: amongst all that He created, the Lord chose to dwell only in human beings. Not in the magnificent stars or the vast universe, nor in the majestic mountains or impressive structures built by human hands, but within you and me. This realization should evoke a deep sense of humility and gratitude as we ponder the depth of God's love.

1. God's Unique Creation: Humanity as His Dwelling Place

In Genesis 1:27, the scriptures declare, "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." Out of all His creation, humanity was fashioned to reflect His image and bear His likeness. This truth sets us apart; it should compel us to recognize the significant honor and privilege we have as His chosen dwelling place. Consider the vastness of the cosmos and the intricate complexity of living creatures. Yet, with all of this glory, God's desire is to reside in our hearts, our beings. In Revelation 3:20, He emphasizes this intimate relationship: "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." God yearns for companionship; He seeks to be part of our lives.

2. The Humbling Reality of Sin

Why would the Creator of the universe choose to dwell in humanity, who are prone to sin and imperfection? Romans 3:23 states, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." This inclination to sin raises a crucial question: who are we that the Almighty God would desire to dwell in us? It's a humbling thought. The answer to this question lies in His profound love. Despite our failures, God demonstrates His love for us in Romans 5:8, stating: "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." His love is not contingent on our worthiness; instead, it is a testament to His divine grace. God has washed us clean with His blood, making us His sanctified dwelling. Ephesians 1:7 reminds us, "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."

3. A Father's Love Displayed

To understand this mystery, we can look at the relationship between Jacob and Joseph in Genesis 37:3. "Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of

his old age." Why did Jacob favor Joseph? This preference can be seen as a reflection of praiseworthy qualities—Joseph's character, his dreams, and ultimately God's plan for him. In a similar way, God's choice to dwell in us is not due to our perfection but rather His perfect love. Through Jesus, we are given a garment of righteousness. Galatians 3:27 reveals, "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." Through baptism in Jesus' name, we embrace our identity in Him and are enveloped in His love and grace.

4. An Eternal Garment

In Romans 13:14, Paul encourages us, "But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof." In doing so, we acknowledge the necessity of His presence within us. Just as Jacob clothed Joseph in a coat of many colors, we are clothed with an eternal garment of righteousness through Christ. This garment signifies our transformation; it represents our new identity as children of God. It is a reminder of the Holy Spirit's indwelling presence, marking us as His own. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 states, "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

5. The Stunning Revelation at Cornelius' House

In Acts 10:44-46, we read, "While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost." The shock of Peter and the Jewish believers stemmed from the long-held belief that the Spirit of God was reserved for the nation of Israel. Their astonishment mirrored the powerful message that God's grace extends beyond any ethnic or cultural boundaries.

This moment signifies the radical inclusivity of God's plan. Peter, who had previously prophesied about the outpouring of the Spirit, now found himself witnessing its fulfillment beyond the parameters of Jewish identity. This prophetic word spoken by Peter on the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2:17-18 resonates here: "And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams."

6. A Universal Calling

The pouring out of the Holy Spirit onto Cornelius and his household radically altered the understanding of God's chosen people. As Peter later declared in Acts 10:34-35, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." This truth underscores the idea that God's acceptance is not restricted by race, nationality, or social status; it is available to all who seek Him.

With the Holy Spirit being poured out on the Gentiles, we see that God's design is for everyone to be part of His family. The gift of the Holy Spirit is the ultimate identification of God's chosen people, affirming that all who receive Him are integrated into the heritage of faith, as echoed in Galatians 3:28, which states, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."

7. Other Examples of God's Acceptance

Throughout the Scriptures, we see various instances where God affirms His acceptance of individuals and groups through His Spirit. In Acts 2:38-39, Peter states, "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." This promise emphasizes that God's Spirit is not limited to a select group but is a gift intended for all who respond to His call.

Another striking example can be found in the life of Samaritans in Acts 8:14-17, where Philip preached to them, and upon their acceptance of the gospel, Peter and John prayed for them, and they received the Holy Spirit. This further illustrates God's acceptance of those previously marginalized by the Jewish community, showcasing the unifying power of the Spirit. As we reflect on the profound truth that God's acceptance is demonstrated through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, we recognize that this gift is not limited to a specific group but is available to all who seek Him. Just as Peter and the early church witnessed the Spirit being poured out on Cornelius and his household, today, Jesus is inviting each of us into an intimate relationship with Him through the Holy Spirit.

The promise of the Holy Spirit is for everyone—regardless of your background, past mistakes, or current struggles. In Acts 2:39, Peter assured us, “For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.” This promise holds true even today. If you find yourself yearning for a deeper connection with God, if you desire the empowerment and guidance of the Holy Spirit in your life, I invite you to come forward. Trust in the love and grace that Jesus extends, for He desires to fill you with His Spirit, equipping you for a life that reflects His glory and purpose.

Experience the transformation that comes from receiving the Holy Spirit—where you can know beyond a doubt that you are a child of God (Romans 8:16). Allow Him to reshape your life, filling you with His love, joy, and peace. You don’t have to walk this journey alone; together, we can embrace the fullness of the Spirit that God promises. As we enter into this sacred moment, I encourage you to believe. Step out in faith, open your heart, and receive what Jesus is eager to pour into your life. Let us pray together, and may you experience the life-changing power of the Holy Spirit today. Amen.