

# The Church's Purpose

(continued from front page)

Its motivating theme: "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" When churches become involved in hospital and health clinic work, or when they build schools for the education of their children, or when they see as one of their great missions to provide for the world's poverty, or when they feel obligated to create social upheaval and campaign for human rights, or when they feel called upon to express their views on the government's use of nuclear armaments or whatever, they have a distorted view of the purpose of the church.

— Bill Hall

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## Navarre News and Notes

**Remember In Prayer Those On Our Sick List:** Tracy Cauley, Carrie Hare, Felis Larson, Francis Mansfield, Jim Wetzstein, Starr Wilkins, Gerry Wiemert, J.D. Mosely in West Blocton and Connie St. Pierre's granddaughter. Keep Houston Perry in your prayers also.

We meet on James M Harvell Rd next to the public library in Navarre. Call us for directions and more information (850) 939-8109



Navarre church of Christ  
8490 James M Harvell Rd  
Navarre, FL 32566

Place Stamp Here

### SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

Sunday

Bible Class for all ages.....9:00 AM  
Morning Worship Service.....10:00 AM  
Evening Worship Service ..... 6:00 PM

Wednesday  
Bible Class for all ages.....7:00 PM

**VISITORS ARE WELCOME!**

**If you know of someone who would like to receive this publication, please let us know.**

**For a free Bible correspondence course by mail, call us.**

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# Navarre Messenger



*"Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee." Matthew 11:1*

Volume 3 Issue 8

April 22, 2007

### Thought To Ponder

**To see what is right and not do it is cowardice!**



**Revelation 21:7-8  
Mark 4:40  
James 4:17**

### Inside This Issue:

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Jim Bell  
Evangelist & Editor

## THE CHURCH'S PURPOSE

What is the purpose of the Lord's church? Is it to eradicate poverty, disease, social injustice, illiteracy from among men? Is it to bring about a cessation of war and conflict? Is it to campaign for a temptation-free society for Christians to live in?

If the church had as one of its great goals the eradication of disease, the Lord could have easily equipped it to accomplish that goal. Could not the same power that enabled one blind man to see have enabled all lame people to walk; that cured many people of varied diseases have cured all people of all diseases? And could not this same power have been given to the church in all generations?

If the church has as one of its great goals the eradication of poverty, the Lord could have easily equipped it to accomplish this purpose. After all, He fed the five thousand with five loaves and two fishes. He similarly fed four thousand on another occasion. Could not He who did these marvelous works have enabled His church in all generations to feed, clothe, and shelter the impoverished masses of the world through miraculous powers?

If the Lord had wanted His church to become a lobbyist group to apply political pressure toward a temptation and persecution-free society in which to live, He would have given instructions in that direction. He did not even lead His church into a direct effort to destroy slavery, but taught the Christian slave to be a better slave and the Christian master to treat his slaves as he would have his heavenly Master treat him (Colossians 3:22-4:1).

The church's purpose is to save souls and prepare people for eternity—it holds out to the impoverished the hope of some day walking a street of gold; to the suffering a time when there will be no pain; to the sorrowing a moment when "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." It tells the tempted and persecuted that there is value in these afflictions, that the testing of their faith is "more precious than of gold," and to rejoice -- It tells all to live godly lives in whatever environment they find themselves. It seeks to change people through the power of the gospel, not society through the coercion of legislators – Its weapons "are not carnal, but are mighty through God." (continued on back page)

**Check us out on the internet: [www.navarrechurchofchrist.net](http://www.navarrechurchofchrist.net)**

## How The Holy Spirit Dwells In The Christian

The Christian's relationship with God is meant to be the most blessed of all relationships that he or she has in life. Our love and devotion to God should exceed our love for any other person in the world. Jesus gave the command: "You shall love the Lord your God with **all** your heart, and with **all** your soul, and with **all** your mind" (Mat. 22:37, NASB). By loving God as we should, we fulfill an inherent need we all have to have a close and meaningful relationship with Deity (Ps. 42:1-2; 63:1; cf. Acts 17:26-28; Gen. 1:26-27).

If our relationship to God is right, this will mean that the Lord God will abide or dwell in us. According to Scripture, all three persons that comprise God (the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit – Mat. 28:19) dwell in the Christian (1 John 4:12-16; Eph. 3:17; 1 Cor. 3:16). What this means is that God, in a figurative, but **spiritual** sense, influences us for good and inhabits or resides in us. God indwelling us is closely related to the idea of God having **fellowship** or communion with us. In fact, if we have a right relationship or fellowship with God, then the Lord will also choose to dwell in us and be our God and a Father to us (2 Cor 6:14-7:1).

The Holy Spirit is God (Acts 5:3-4) who is meant to dwell in every Christian (Rom. 8:11; 1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19; 2 Tim. 1:14; James 4:5). Despite the controversy that surrounds this issue, every Christian should desire the indwelling of the Holy Spirit because of its eternal importance. It is essential for us to recognize what the indwelling of the Holy Spirit *actually* involves and on what basis we can know, *for sure*, that He dwells in us each day.

### The Holy Spirit Does Not Dwell in Christians Directly or Miraculously Today.

The apostles, unlike Christians today, experienced a **direct** and **miraculous** relationship with



the Holy Spirit. Only the apostles were given the promise to be baptized with the Holy Spirit (John 14:26; 15:26; 16:13; Acts 1:5, 8). *Baptism* of the Holy Spirit for the apostles meant that they were *overwhelmed* or "clothed with power" (Luke 24:49) and as a result, they were given many powers such as the ability to speak all truth or the revelation of God, speak in tongues, cast out demons, and heal the sick (Acts 2:4; Mark 16:17-18). The powers the apostles possessed demonstrated they were apostles who spoke the words of God (Mark 16:20; Heb. 2:4; 2 Cor. 12:12). The miracles they performed proved to their skeptics that they were obeying **God's** will, not fulfilling their own, in the preaching of the gospel: "And we are witnesses of these things; and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey Him" (Acts 5:32; cf. vs. 16-32).

Only through the laying on the apostles hands were miraculous spiritual gifts given to others (e.g., Acts 6:5-8; 8:14-17; 19:6; Rom. 1:11; 2 Tim. 1:6). The **only** exception to this was the time when the Holy Spirit's power was poured out upon the household of Cornelius, giving them the same gift the apostles had to speak in tongues. This was for the **special purpose** of demonstrating that salvation through the Gospel is for both Jews and Gentiles. (Acts 10:44-46; 11:15-18).



Spiritual gifts were for the purpose of inspiration, confirmation of God's Word, and the edification of saints (Mark 16:20; Acts 2:4; 1 Cor. 14:26). Once God's revelation or New Testament was completed or "the perfect" had come (1 Cor. 13:8-10) there was no longer a need for them.

### The Indwelling of the Holy Spirit is Accomplished Through the Word of God.

The easiest way to understand how the Holy Spirit dwells within Christians is to do a comparative study of Him with the word of God. What we soon discover is that **whatever the indwelling of the Holy Spirit does for the Christian today, He does through the word of God.**

Whatever work the Holy Spirit does for us, the Word also does. For example, the Holy Spirit gives us instruction (Neh. 9:30), so does the word of God (2 Tim. 3:16-17). The Holy Spirit gives us a new spiritual birth (John 3:5), so does the word of God (James 1:18; 1 Pet. 1:23). Time and again we find the Spirit and the Word doing the same work in Scripture (e.g., Jn. 14:26/ Jn. 6:45; Jn. 16:8/ Tit. 1:9; Jn. 6:63/ Ps. 119:50; Jn. 16:13/ 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 1 Cor. 6:11/ 2 Thes. 2:13; etc.). Thus, the word of God must be the **instrument** the Holy Spirit uses to do His work (Eph. 6:17b) and **indirectly** dwell in Christians today. How, for instance, is God's love "poured in our heart by the Spirit"? (Rom. 5:5). Is it by a "better felt than told" experience? No, but by our hearing God's word in faith (e.g., John 3:16). How does "the Spirit strengthen us with power in the inner man"? (Eph. 3:16). Not by a "divine injection" from above, but by our knowledge of God's word (Col. 1:10-11). The Father and the Son dwell in Christians in the **exact** same way, **through the Word of God** (2 Jn. 9; 1 Jn. 2:24; Eph. 3:17 / Rom. 10:17; Gal. 2:20 / Jn. 8:31).

### How Can Christians Know for Sure That the Holy Spirit Dwells in Them?

**By Hearing God's Word, "the Faith":** "This only I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or **by the hearing of faith?**" (Gal 3:2, NKJV -- cf. Eph. 4:5; Jude 3). For the Holy Spirit to dwell in us and thus have a positive influence upon us, we must **hear or listen** to God's word (Rom. 10:17; 2 Tim. 3:16-17). If we truly want to be "led by the Spirit" (Gal. 5:18a), then we will follow His lead and take heed to God's instructions as revealed in the New Testament Scriptures.

**By Obeying God's Word:** Spiritual transformation of our lives won't happen without obedience. We must not wait until, as some have put it, we've "got the Spirit" for change to occur. Only as we study "the law of the Spirit" (Rom. 8:2) and obey it will we bear the fruits of the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23). If we sincerely want the Holy Spirit to dwell in us, it will be our **conduct** that will determine this: "And **do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you**" (Eph. 4:30-32, NASB; cf. 1 Cor. 6:19-20). When Christians "walk in the truth" (3 John 4), they "walk in the Spirit" (Gal. 5:25) and as a result the Holy Spirit dwells in them. For true confidence that the Holy Spirit dwells in you, that your relationship with Him is genuine and right, render faithful obedience to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

— Mark Larson

North Charlottesville Bulletin

