

**John 14:17—“With You” and “In You”:
A Construct for the Ministry of the Holy Spirit in the OT?**

Dr. Roy E. Beacham
rbeacham@centralseminary.edu

The Problem: John 14:17 “... He (the Spirit) dwells with you and will be in you” (NASB).

The Question:

Does this verse conclusively prove that the pre-Pentecost ministry of the Spirit was some kind of “external” accompaniment (“with” you), while the post-Pentecost ministry of the Spirit would be an “internal” (“in” you) indwelling?

- I. The issue of protocol
 - A. This verse should be interpreted on the basis of prior (OT) revelation regarding regeneration and the permanent work of the Holy Spirit. This verse should not define OT revelation and the work of the Holy Spirit. Do OT theology by studying the OT, and then interpret John 14:17. Do not do OT theology by beginning with John 14:17.
 - 1) The OT demonstrates spiritual regeneration
 - 2) The OT demonstrates spiritual permanency
 - 3) John 14:17 must be consistent with OT theology
 - B. Of course, all interpretation must both spiral and systematize. In any case, the study of the ministry of the HS in the OT does not/should not *begin* in John 14.
- II. The tense of the verb (εἰμί): “... He (the Spirit) dwells [*present*] with you and **will be** [*future*] in you” (NASB).
 - A. UBS 1 & 2: accepted textual support for reading this verb as *present* (ἔστιν): “He abides (present) with you and **IS** (present) in you.” Reading the final verb (εἰμί) as a *future* indicative (ἔσται) is secondary. The reading is classified as “D.”
 - B. UBS 3 & 4: reversed positions and accepted the primary reading as future (ἔσται) and demoted the present-tense-reading (ἔστιν) as secondary. UBS 3 still classified the reading as “D.” UBS 4 upgraded it to “C.”
 - C. Westcott: (*Commentary on John*, Eerdmans, 1973, p. 206) defends the present tense.
 - D. It is tenuous, at best, to build a theology of OT and/or NT indwelling on the foundation of a questionable Greek reading in one text of Scripture.

III. The nature of the prepositions (παρά and ἐν)

- A. Are these prepositions physically spatial in this context? Does παρά mean physically “outside of” and ἐν physically “inside of”?
- 1) The preposition παρά (“with”), like ἐν (“in”), is used of *future* Spirit ministry (v 23). Thus, if the Spirit was “outside of” (παρά) the disciples formerly, in what sense is he “with” (παρά) them in the future? One cannot assert that being “with” spatially precludes the possibility of being “in” (ἐν) at the same time.
 - 2) If ἐν means spatially “inside of,” how do we explain 14:20; 17:20 & 23?
 - 3) It is tenuous, as best, to build a theology of the HS in the OT on the foundation of two Greek prepositions.

IV. The intent of John 14:1—to explicate the soon coming of the HS as:

- A. The promise of the Father—sent at the behest of His Son (14:16, 26; 15:26, et al).
- B. The representative of Christ—personifying Christ during his absence (14:18, 21; 17:26)
- C. The facilitator of spiritual unity—creating union with Father and Son (14:20; 15:4; 17:20ff)
- D. The baptizer into Christ's body—Christ is in us/We are in Christ [The HS's new ministry]
 - 1) Christ is “in us”: Col 1:27; 2 Cor 3:17-18
 - 2) We are “in Christ”: Rom 8:1; 12:5; 1 Cor 1:30; 2 Cor 5:17; Gal 2:20; 3:27; Eph 1:3
 - 3) We are baptized into Christ's “body”: 1 Cor 12:13

Conclusion: It is problematic to build an OT theology of the HS on the foundation of John 14:17

- A. It is questionable hermeneutically
- B. It is questionable grammatically and syntactically
- C. It is questionable contextually

Some points of discussion:

List all of the ministries of the HS.

Which relate essentially to salvation?

Which relate essentially to sanctification?

Which relate, essentially, to neither salvation nor sanctification?

Which are limited to post-Pentecost (i.e., which are OT, which are NT)?