

Abilene Christian University

Digital Commons @ ACU

Stone-Campbell Books

Stone-Campbell Resources

1990

The Holy Spirit

Garth W. Black

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.acu.edu/crs_books



Part of the [Biblical Studies Commons](#), [Christian Denominations and Sects Commons](#), and the [Christianity Commons](#)

Garth Black

The Holy Spirit

Expanded Edition



THE WAY OF LIFE
SERIES



THE WAY OF LIFE SERIES

- 101 Schubert: Marriage, Divorce and Purity
102 Black: The Holy Spirit, Expanded Edition
856 Davis: Science and Christian Faith
106 Ferguson: Church History, Early and Medieval
107 Ferguson: Church History, Reformation and Modern
108 Ferguson: The New Testament Church
111 Thomas: The Biblical Doctrine of Grace
113 Lewis: Archaeology and the Bible
114 Davis: Philosophy of Religion
116 Willis: My Servants the Prophets, Volume 1
117 Willis: My Servants the Prophets, Volume 2
118 Willis: My Servants the Prophets, Volume 3
119 Willis: My Servants the Prophets, Volume 4
864 Thomas: Evolution and Antiquity
121 Thomas: The Spirit and Spirituality
122 Thomas: Galatians-Romans Self Study Guide
123 Thomas: Corinthians Self Study Guide
125 Ferguson: A Capella Music in the Public Worship
127 Pack: Tongues and the Holy Spirit
128 Hoover: Fallacies of Unbelief
129 Hoover: Ideas and Their Consequences
131 Willis: Insights from the Psalms, Volume 1
132 Willis: Insights from the Psalms, Volume 2
133 Willis: Insights from the Psalms, Volume 3
134 Smith: Glorifying God
141 Willis: The Message of the Old Testament, Volume 1
142 Willis: The Message of the Old Testament, Volume 2
143 Willis: The Message of the Old Testament, Volume 3
144 Willis: The Message of the Old Testament, Volume 4
145 Willis: The Wisdom Literature
159 Thomas: Divorce and Remarriage
164 Ferguson: Message of the New Testament, Acts, Volume 1
165 Ferguson: Message of the New Testament, Acts, Volume 2
166 Thomas: Message of the New Testament, Romans
167 Thomas: Message of the New Testament, I Corinthians
168 Thomas: Message of the New Testament, II Corinthians
170 Olbricht: Message of the New Testament, Ephesians & Colossians
173 Thomas: Message of the New Testament, Hebrews & James
175 Ferguson: The Letters of John
176 Pack: Revelation, Volume 1
177 Pack: Revelation, Volume 2
178 Lightfoot: Parables of Jesus, Volume 1
179 Lightfoot: Parables of Jesus, Volume 2
180 Lightfoot: How We Got the Bible
181 Ferguson: The Everlasting Kingdom

Garth Black

The Holy Spirit

Expanded Edition



THE WAY OF LIFE
SERIES

231.3
B627h
1984

THE HOLY SPIRIT

by

GARTH W. BLACK

Copyright © assigned
1984 to Abilene
Christian University

Copyright © 1990 Expanded Edition
Abilene Christian University
Abilene, Texas

All rights in this book are reserved. No part of it may be reproduced in any manner without permission in writing from the publisher except brief quotations used in connection with a review in a magazine or newspaper.

12345

PREFACE

It is the author's hope that this study will aid in a quest for a better understanding and appreciation of the Holy Spirit and His activity, particularly with regard to the Christian. The subject of the Holy Spirit has been one of confusion and controversy throughout the ages. To many it is a topic best ignored. To others it is one of mysticism. The Bible has much to say about the Holy Spirit, and a thorough study of this topic can be richly rewarding and inspiring. One request is made. Please read and study the lessons of this book in the order in which they are presented. Many statements are made and conclusions drawn in the last chapters that are based on premises established in earlier lessons.

The author would like to express his appreciation to two men who have encouraged and aided him in the publication of this work. The first is Dr. Frank Pack, professor emeritus at Pepperdine University, Malibu, California, and the second is Dr. J. D. Thomas, professor emeritus at Abilene Christian University, Abilene, Texas. I am greatly indebted to these two men.

For clarity the personal pronouns referring to the Holy Spirit are capitalized throughout this book. The Bible quotations are from the American Standard (1901) Version.

Two appendices have been added since the original publication of this work in 1967. They were written with the hope of shedding additional light on areas where there has been considerable discussion and confusion with regard to the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Christian.

May God bless all efforts to better understand the Biblical teaching on the Holy Spirit.

Garth W. Black

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LESSON	PAGE
I Introduction	5
II The Holy Spirit in the Old Testament	10
III The Holy Spirit in the New Testament— The Gospels	16
IV The Holy Spirit in the New Testament— In The Church	22
V The Gift of the Holy Spirit	31
VI The Reception of the Holy Spirit By the Christian	39
VII The Significance of the Indwelling Spirit to the Christian	45
VIII The Work of the Holy Spirit in the Life of the Christian—His Purpose	51
IX The Work of the Holy Spirit in the Life of the Christian—Through the Instrumentality of the Written Word	57
X The Work of the Holy Spirit in the Life of the Christian—Through His Dwelling in the Christian (1)	61
XI The Work of the Holy Spirit in the Life of the Christian—Through His Dwelling in the Christian (2)	68
XII Errors Concerning the Work of the Holy Spirit in the Life of the Christian (1)	76
XIII Errors Concerning the Work of the Holy Spirit in the Life of the Christian (2)	85
APPENDIX— The Termination of Spiritual Gifts	95
APPENDIX II— Romans 8:26-27 — An Exegesis	104

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

The doctrine of the Holy Spirit, His personality, His work, and His relationship to God and man is clearly taught within God's written word. The Spirit is a central figure in both the Old and New Testaments. In his dealing with men of all ages God has used His Holy Spirit time and time again to bring about the fulfillment of his divine purposes. As we study the Bible the presence of the Spirit and His work is seen in nature, in the writing of God's word, in the prophets, in Christ, in the apostles, in the conversion of the alien sinner, in the activities of the early church, and in the life of every Christian. Several phases of the Spirit's activity have been completed, but God still continues to use the Holy Spirit in the Christian era to accomplish his divine purposes. Concerning the Christian, it is God's eternal purpose that he be transformed into the image of Christ and ultimately be redeemed. It is to this end that the Holy Spirit is active in the life of the Christian.

It is the purpose of this study to investigate the teaching of the Bible as it concerns the Holy Spirit, with particular emphasis on those passages that deal with the Holy Spirit in the life of the Christian. The first four chapters will be devoted to introducing the person of the Holy Spirit and giving a general view of the Bible's teaching on the third member of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit. The next seven chapters will discuss the gift of the Holy Spirit, His significance to the Christian, and the work and activities of the Holy Spirit as they pertain to the child of God. The last two chapters will deal with some of the errors that have been taught in respect to the Holy Spirit and His work.

Evidences of the Spirit's Personality

The Holy Spirit is a distinct person and active in all the ways of a personality. The Holy Spirit is not a glorified "it." Neither is He a mere influence. He is not an impersonal and vague force, and He is far more than the mind, temper, or disposition of God or Christ. The Holy Spirit is a divine person. He has all the marks of individual personality and He is always spoken of, like God and Christ, in the singular number. The works of the Spirit proclaim His personality. He speaks (I Timothy 4:1); He testifies (John 15:26); He teaches and quickens the mind (John 14:26); He guides (John 16:12-13); He leads and forbids (Acts 16:6-7); He searches (I Corinthians 2:10). He has the characteristics of a person: a mind (Romans 8:27); knowledge (I Corinthians 2:11); affection (Romans 15:30); will (I Corinthians 12:11); goodness (Nehemiah 9:20). He suffers slights and injuries that can only be ascribed to personality. He can be grieved and vexed (Ephesians 4:30; Isaiah 63:10). He can be despised (Hebrews 10:29). He can be blasphemed (Matthew 12:30-32). He can be resisted (Acts 7:51). He can be lied unto (Acts 5:3). The Spirit has the characteristics of a *divine* personality. He is eternal (Hebrews 9:14). He is omniscient (I Corinthians 2:10-11). He is omnipotent (Micah 3:8). He is omnipresent (Psalms 139:7, 10). His works also manifest divinity: the work of creation (Genesis 1:2; Job 26:13); the work of regeneration and resurrection (John 3:5); He is the source of the miraculous (Matthew 12:28; I Corinthians 12:9, 11). These attributes and works which are ascribed to the Holy Spirit could only belong to a person. Hence, He is, like God and Christ, an individual person. Throughout the Scriptures from their beginning to their end, we see God, Christ and the Holy Spirit as divine beings, living, speaking, acting, influencing, blessing, reconciling, transforming, loving, and glorifying. The Holy Spirit is thus not seen as a thing, but as a glorious person—the Holy Spirit.

The Relationship of The Spirit to God and Christ

There are three members of the Godhead: God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. In the Old Testament the Godhead is presented as being composed of God, the originator, author and supreme ruler of all things; the promised Messiah; and the Holy Spirit, the organizer, life imparter, law-giver and guide of the created universe. In the New Testament they are revealed as the Father, who gave his only begotten Son to save the world; the Son, who became flesh; and the Holy Spirit, who is the Comforter that should abide with the children of God forever and lead them into all truth.

Each member of the Godhead has had his special dispensation with man on the earth. God's dispensation refers to the time beginning with the creation of man to the coming of Christ. During this time God appeared in different ways and revealed himself in symbols, covenants, various confessions and teaching. God, through angels and other agencies, spoke to man and instructed him (Hebrews 1:1). At times God revealed himself and his will to man in visions and dreams. At other times he spoke through the Holy Spirit to his messengers. God was prominent and dominant in all the affairs of his people during this dispensation.

The dispensation of Christ began when the Word became flesh and dwelt among us and the Lord began His personal ministry on earth. It is not meant by this that the Father had nothing to do with Christ's dispensation, it simply means that the work of Christ was itself conspicuous, eminent, and salient during this period. This continued until Christ made His ascension back to the Father. During His personal ministry Christ walked and talked with men concerning the will of the Father.

Following the dispensation of Christ's personal ministry, and beginning with the first Pentecost after the resurrection of

Christ, the dispensation of the Holy Spirit began. The period of time in which men are now living may be called the Holy Spirit's dispensation. This does not mean that the Holy Spirit had nothing to do during God's dispensation or the dispensation of Christ's personal ministry, but that He "now takes the lead" during this age as a member of the Godhead. In fact, all that we know of God and Christ come through the Holy Spirit. The Bible is entirely a product of the Holy Spirit. In all dispensations the Holy Spirit is presented as the organizing, life-imparting, law giving and guiding personality and representative of the Godhead in the conduct of the material world. But in His dispensation, the Holy Spirit is also particularly active in the spiritual realm. The Holy Spirit is salient and present in all of the work of God and Christ today concerning the redemption of man. He is the *executing power* of the Godhead during the church age. The Holy Spirit took up the work where Christ left it and carries it on to completion and its final consummation. The Spirit is the ever present helper and guide for the children of the Godhead, dwelling in His temple on earth, and in it comforting, strengthening and guiding God's people (I Corinthians 3:16-17). God promised to abide with them forever. This he was to do in and through the person of the Spirit (John 14:23; John 14:16-17; Ephesians 2:22).

Thus in the order of the unfolding ages each of the persons of the Godhead in turn exercised an earthly ministry and dealt with man in the work of redemption. These activities are well summarized by the following statement:

Under the law, God, the Father, comes down to earth and speaks to men from the cloud of Sinai and from the glory above the mercy seat; under grace, God the Son is in the world, teaching, suffering, dying and rising again; under the dispensation of election and out-gathering now going on the Holy Spirit is here carrying on the work

of renewing and sanctifying the church, which is the body of Christ.¹

In each dispensation the three members of the Godhead have cooperated, but one member has been more prominently active in each period. At least one member has been on earth either in person or representatively during each of these dispensations. During each period the other two members of the Godhead seem in a way to have yielded to the prominence of the one presently represented on earth.

Questions For Study

1. What will be the expected points of emphasis in this series of lessons on the Holy Spirit?
2. List some areas in which the Holy Spirit has been active in the course of history.
3. How do we know that the Holy Spirit is a divine personality and not merely a vague and impersonal force?
4. Why can the church age be referred to as "the dispensation of the Holy Spirit?"
5. Comment on the relationship between the various members of the Godhead during each dispensation, in which one figure was more prominently active than the others.

¹A. J. Gordon, *The Ministry of the Spirit* (Philadelphia: The Judson Press, 1894), p. 25.

Chapter II

THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

Of the 39 books in the Old Testament 23 refer directly to the Holy Spirit. The same prominence is not given in the Old Testament, to the Holy Spirit that is given in the New Testament. This is probably true because the New Testament deals with the Holy Spirit's dispensation. The Spirit is mentioned in the Old Testament under different names or titles. Sometimes He is referred to as the Spirit; then as the Spirit of God; Spirit of Jehovah; Spirit of the Lord, and Holy Spirit. Of the 88 distinct references to the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament there are 18 different names applied to Him.

The Spirit of God in Relation to God

There are no single Old Testament passages which make clear the complete New Testament doctrine of the Trinity and the distinct personality of the Spirit in the full New Testament sense. Such statements as Genesis 1:26 imply a Godhead of more than one person, but a clear distinction between the members of the Godhead is not evident here. There is no clear indication in the Old Testament of a belief that the Spirit of God is a personality distinct from God. However, there is observed in the Old Testament both an identification of God and the Spirit of God, with a distinction between them. The identification is seen in Psalms 139:7 where the omnipresence of the Spirit is declared. "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?" Also, Isaiah 63:10, "But they rebelled and grieved his Holy Spirit" (See also Jeremiah 31:33 and Ezekiel 36:27). In a great number of passages God and the Spirit of God are not thought of as identical, as in Genesis 1:2, "And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters"; Genesis 6:3, "And Jehovah said, My Spirit shall not strive with man forever"; Psalms 51:11, "And take not thy

Holy Spirit from me." (See also Nehemiah 9:20; Psalms 104:29f.) These passages do not prove that God and the Spirit of God were thought of as distinct beings by the Old Testament writers but only that the Spirit had activities of His own distinct from God. The Spirit was God in action, with a view to accomplishing some particular end or purpose of God. The Spirit was therefore God, immanent in man and in the world. Even as an angel of the Lord in certain passages represents both God himself and "one sent" by God, so in like manner the Spirit of God was both God within or upon man and at the same time one sent by God to man. There are several Old Testament passages which are in harmony with the Trinitarian concept of the New Testament; Isaiah 48:16, "And now the Lord Jehovah hath sent me and his Spirit." Also, Haggai 2:5, "And my Spirit abode among you" (See also Zechariah 4:6; Psalms 51:11; Genesis 1:2; Nehemiah 9:20; Psalms 104:29f.)

The Spirit in Nature

Old Testament writers regarded the phenomena of nature as the result of God's direct action through his Spirit. The manifestations of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament begin with the dawn of creation. The Holy Spirit first appeared in the creation, "And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters" (Genesis 1:2). Here the Holy Spirit brings order and beauty out of the primeval chaos and conducts the cosmic forces toward the goal of an ordered universe. In Job 26:13 the beauty of the heavens is ascribed to the Spirit; "By his Spirit the heavens are garnished." So here He is the wonder worker in the material universe. This same thought is expressed in Psalms 104:28-30, "Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created; and thou renewest the face of the ground." (See also Isaiah 32:15; Job 32:8; 33:4; Psalms 33:6.)

The Spirit of God in Man

The Spirit was thought of as imparting natural powers, both physical and intellectual, to man. Also, the extraordinary powers exhibited by the Israelites on occasion were usually attributed to the Spirit. It is noted that such gifts and powers, conferred by the Holy Spirit for service in God's kingdom, were upon men who already had a degree of power, wisdom, or knowledge in performing certain skills. The Holy Spirit thus heightened their own ability and power.

Normal powers. In Genesis 2:7 God originates man's personal and intellectual life by breathing into his nostrils "the breath of life." Physical life is declared to be due to the presence of the Spirit of God (Job 27:3). Elihu, in Job 33:4, says, "The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty giveth me life." Man is thus regarded by the Old Testament writers in all parts of his being, body, mind and spirit, as the direct result of the action of the Spirit of God.

Extraordinary powers. The greater part of the Old Testament passages which refer to the Spirit of God in man have to do with gifts and powers conferred by the Holy Spirit for unusual service in the furthering of the kingdom of God. The Holy Spirit seems to have guided men in their ability to work for Jehovah, "And I have filled him with the Spirit of God in wisdom and in understanding and in knowledge and in all manner of workmanship" (Exodus 31:3). Here God heightened the ability and skill of Bezalel. In the book of Judges (3:10) the Holy Spirit conferred powers upon the judges and warriors. "The Spirit of God came upon Othniel and he judged Israel." God heightened his ability and power. In Judges 6:34 the Spirit came upon Gideon, and in Judges 11:29 He came upon Jephthah. In Judges 14:6 the Spirit of God came mightily upon Samson and he was able to kill a lion. These demonstrations of the Spirit's power in the Old Testament make it apparent that they were for the purpose of imparting great strength and

valor to God's chosen commanders who were to lead his people to victory against their foes. It may be noted that the Spirit imparted these special endowments of power without reference to the moral character of the recipient.

Other Old Testament characters who received extraordinary powers through the Holy Spirit include Daniel, who is represented as having wisdom to interpret dreams through the Spirit, and afterwards, because of the Spirit, he was exalted to a position of authority and power (Daniel 4:8; 5:11-14; 6:3). Joseph was also able to interpret the Pharaoh's dream through the Spirit of God (Genesis 41:16, 38). In Nehemiah 9:20 it is stated that the Spirit was given to the people for instruction and strengthening during the wilderness wanderings and to the elders along with Moses (Numbers 11:17, 25). The Holy Spirit is mentioned in connection with the construction of the temple (I Chronicles 28:11-12) and in the rebuilding of the temple (Zechariah 4:6-7). These activities of the Spirit reflected in the life of the people.

The Spirit in Old Testament Prophecy

A most distinctive and important manifestation of the Spirit's activity in the Old Testament was in the sphere of prophecy. The word prophet means one who speaks for God. When God had a new message for his people or when he wanted to press the old message on their consciences he sent the Spirit, not upon the multitude but upon a chosen messenger or messengers. The Spirit then was able to move the mind of the multitude through the mind, voice and life of the prophetic messenger. The extent to which the ordinary individual being taught received the Spirit was the extent to which he willingly accepted the truth through God's inspired messenger.

Thus, the prophet was God's mouthpiece to the people, being distinguished from others as the man who possessed the Spirit

of God (Hosea 9:7). These men of God were not chiefly concerned about future events but were pre-eminently and conspicuously reformers and teachers of the law. They ordinarily began their messages with the phrase, "thus saith Jehovah," or its equivalent, but they also ascribed their messages directly to the Spirit of God (Ezekiel 2:2; 8:3; 11:1, 24). Many of the prophets declared that they were speaking by the Holy Spirit. Isaiah said, "The Spirit of the Lord Jehovah is upon me" (Isaiah 61:1). And Jeremiah said, "Now the word of Jehovah came unto me" (Jeremiah 1:4). Ezekiel said, "The Spirit lifted me up and brought me unto the east gate of Jehovah's house" (Ezekiel 11:1 and 11:5). In Nehemiah 9:30 the prophets were said to have spoken by the Spirit, "Yet many years didst thou bear with them, and testified against them by thy Spirit through thy prophets." David also spake by the Holy Spirit, "The Spirit of Jehovah spake by me, and his word was upon my tongue" (II Samuel 23:2). The New Testament honors the Old Testament as being the words of the Holy Spirit. Peter said, "For no prophecy ever came by the will of man: but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit" (II Peter 1:21; cf I Peter 1:9-10). "All the major prophets claimed the Holy Spirit for what they said. The Old Testament clearly and frequently emphasizes the fact that the Holy Spirit appeared in God's revelation to man.

The Old Testament prophets also gave good evidence for the hope that in the last days the Spirit would be given to all men (Ezekiel 36:27; 37:14; 39:29; Isaiah 44:3; Joel 2:28; Zechariah 12:10). There is no doubt that the early church thought that these prophecies were fulfilled in itself.

The Spirit in the Messiah

In the book of Isaiah there are several distinct references to the Spirit in connection with the Messiah. The Messiah is conceived as the ideal king, who springs from the root of

David in some instances and in others as the suffering Servant of Jehovah. In Isaiah 11:15 a picture is given of the "shoot out of the stock of Jesse." The Spirit imparts wisdom and understanding and endows him with manifold gifts. In Isaiah 42:1 the "Servant" is in like manner endowed with gifts of the Spirit by virtue of which he shall bring forth justice to the Gentiles. In Isaiah 61:1ff occur the words which Jesus quotes and applies to himself in Luke 4:12ff, beginning, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me . . ." In these passages the prophet Isaiah describes the Messiah as having a wide range of powers, all of which can be traced to the action of God's Spirit.

Questions For Study

1. List some of the names that are applied to the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament.
2. What passages in the Old Testament seem to identify God and His Spirit? Note other passages in which God and the Spirit are distinguished from one another.
3. How close does the Old Testament come to making clear the doctrine of the Trinity?
4. In what ways is the Spirit active in nature?
5. In what instances did the Holy Spirit impart extraordinary powers to individuals in the Old Testament?
6. In what way was the Spirit active in the Old Testament prophets and their teachings?
7. What prophet relates the Spirit to the promised Messiah? What does he say the Spirit will do for the Messiah?

Chapter III

THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT— THE GOSPELS

The New Testament presents a wide range of activities of the Holy Spirit; His person, advent, work and relation to Christ are all discussed in the New Testament. There are about 264 references to the Holy Spirit in the New Testament. The following names are found in New Testament passages for the Holy Spirit: the Spirit (Romans 8:13); Spirit of God (Romans 8:14); Spirit of Christ (Romans 8:9); Spirit himself (Romans 8:16); Spirit of God's Son (Galatians 4:6); Spirit of the Father (Matthew 10:20); Spirit of truth (John 14:15-17); Holy Spirit (Acts 28:25); Comforter (John 14:26). The dispensation of the Spirit is clearly seen in the New Testament, and for this reason the New Testament may well be called "The book of the Holy Spirit." The Old Testament writers were aware of the Spirit's action upon inanimate nature and they attributed any unusual manifestation of power of a human spirit to an intervention of the Spirit of God. The New Testament writers, however, make it evident that the Holy Spirit was not only the channel for abnormal manifestations of spiritual power, but in New Testament times and during the age of the church would remain with man as an abiding source of life and as the agent of righteousness.

In The Birth and Ministry of John The Baptist

John the Baptist is the first reformer whose name appears in the New Testament. John was a great prophet but he was also a great reformer with the power of God in and back of him. In his case, as with the ancient prophets, God sent his Spirit on to the preacher and through him into the message and through it into the hearts and lives of the people.

Prior to John the Baptist's birth an angel appeared unto his

father, Zacharias, and foretold that his wife would bear a son and great things that he would do. The angel also said concerning John, "and he shall be filled with the Holy Spirit even from his mother's womb" (Luke 1:13-17). In connection with John's birth his mother, Elizabeth, and Zacharias were filled with the Holy Spirit sufficiently to have supernatural knowledge of things and even to utter prophecy (Luke 1:41ff and 1:67ff).

Although John was a Spirit-inspired prophet, bringing God's message to the people, he was a non-literary prophet for he did not leave any writings. During his ministry John testified to the Holy Spirit descending upon Christ at his baptism (John 1:32, 33) and taught that though he baptized the disciples with water Jesus would baptize them with the Holy Spirit (Matthew 3:11).

In the Life and Ministry of Jesus

The Holy Spirit was active in the birth of Jesus. In Luke 1:30ff an angel appears unto Mary and tells her that she shall bear a son and calls attention to the high position that Jesus will hold. He thus tells Mary (vs. 35) that this miracle will occur when the Holy Spirit comes upon her. This passage and Matthew 1:18, 20 set forth the supernatural origin of Jesus' earthly life.

Not only was the Holy Spirit prominent in the incarnation but He ever accompanied the Lord. Great emphasis is given in particular to the descent of the Spirit upon Jesus at his baptism, "and straightway coming up out of the water he saw the heavens rent asunder and the Spirit as a dove descending upon him" (Mark 1:8-10; cf Luke 3:16-22; Matthew 3:11-16). The baptism of Jesus and this reception of the Holy Spirit brought to a close his private life and introduced him to his public ministry.

Soon after his baptism Christ was led by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness where he endured the temptations (Matthew 4:1-11; Luke 4:1, 14). The Holy Spirit continued His presence, influence and cooperation with Christ during all his personal ministry. It was prophesied that the Holy Spirit would be with the Messiah and the fulfillment of this prophecy was claimed by Christ in Matthew 12:18 and Luke 4:18ff. God gave the Holy Spirit in His fulness, "without measure" to Christ as the Messiah (John 3:34). Jesus worked signs and miracles through the power of the Spirit (Acts 10:38). In Matthew 12:28 and Luke 11:20 Christ is said to have cast out devils by the Spirit of God. The signs and miracles which Christ did were evidences of the Holy Spirit in him. It is clear that the New Testament writers thought of the entire public life of Christ as aided by the Spirit of God.

The Holy Spirit was also with Christ at his death and resurrection. In Hebrews 9:14 it is declared that Christ "through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish unto God." Romans 8:11 states that Christ was raised from the dead by the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit was with Christ at birth. Throughout his earthly life he was filled with the Spirit's power and influence. The Holy Spirit was with him in his ministry, his death, his resurrection and ascension.

The Teachings of Jesus on The Holy Spirit

In the Synoptic Gospels. Jesus taught that the Spirit of the Lord was upon him and this was a fulfillment of Isaiah 61:1ff (Luke 4:16ff). He taught that the Father would give the Holy Spirit to those who asked for Him, "If ye then being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" (Luke 11:13). Jesus recognized the Holy Spirit

as a source of inspiration for the scriptures (Matthew 22:43; Matthew 10:20; Luke 12:12; Mark 13:11). The Lord promised the Spirit to the apostles and declared that He would guide them as to what they should say. This promise is fulfilled in Acts 2 and Acts 4:8-12.

In Matthew 12:31; Mark 3:28f and Luke 12:10 there is the declaration by Christ that blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is an unpardonable sin. The charge made against Christ in the passages mentioned was that he cast out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of devils. It is evident, therefore, that the blasphemy against the Spirit was not only a rejection of Jesus and his works, but was also the sin of ascribing works of divine nature and power which had all the marks of their origin in the goodness of God, to a diabolic source such as Satan.

The unpardonable sin mentioned here by our Lord has been interpreted by some to refer to a sin for which no repentance has been made. While it is certainly true that God will not forgive our sins unless we repent, there is no evidence that in the context of the passages where the unpardonable sin is mentioned that this is a correct interpretation. On the other hand, the context seems to make it quite clear that the sin against the Holy Spirit, referred to as the unpardonable sin or blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, is a sin that credits the works of God's Spirit as being the works of Satan. A parallel situation today might be that of the man who would advocate that the Bible is the work of Satan rather than of God or his Spirit.

The Lord's final teaching on the Holy Spirit in the Synoptics is found in the Great Commission. Christ commanded the disciples to baptize in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19).

In the Gospel of John. In the fourth gospel there is a more elaborate presentation of the office and work of the Holy

Spirit, particularly in chapters 14-16. In John 3:3-5 Jesus declares the activity of the Spirit in the new birth, "Except one be born of the water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven." In John 7:39 the Spirit is promised by Christ to those who would believe on him. The Holy Spirit was not given to believers until after Christ's death and ascension (Acts 2:38).

In chapters 14-16 John records the Lord's last discourse to his disciples before his death. In this passage there is some of the most extensive teaching by Christ on the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is promised to the apostles by Christ, "and I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth" (John 14:16; cf. John 14:26). The Lord declares that the Holy Spirit will come from the Father and one of His principal works will be to testify of Christ (John 15:26).

In John 16:7-15 Jesus taught that the Holy Spirit could not come until after Jesus had returned to his Father. When the Holy Spirit came He would convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. The Holy Spirit was not to bring an absolutely new teaching, but He would bring to the minds of the apostles all the words which Jesus had spoken and would add those things which were now in the mind of Christ, but which at the present time he was keeping from the apostles as they were not able to understand them. In verse 15 Jesus claims all the teachings of the Spirit as his.

The teachings in John 14-16 on the Holy Spirit may be summed up as follows: He is the Spirit of truth; He guides into all truth; He brings into memory Christ's teaching; He shows things to come; He glorifies Christ; He speaks not of himself but of Christ; He, like believers, bears witness to Christ; He enabled the apostles to do greater works than those of Christ; He convicts the world of sin, of righteousness and judgment; He comes because Christ goes away; He is another Comforter; He is to abide with the disciples forever.

Questions For Study

1. List some of the names that are applied to the Holy Spirit in the New Testament.
2. What part did the Holy Spirit play in the birth and ministry of John the Baptist?
3. What is the significance of the statement that Jesus was begotten of the Holy Spirit?
4. What was significant about the Lord's "reception" of the Holy Spirit?
5. In what ways was the Holy Spirit active during the personal ministry of Christ?
6. What Old Testament passage did Jesus attribute to the Holy Spirit in his teachings?
7. What was the sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, referred to as the unpardonable sin?
8. What is included in the term "Comforter" in John 14:16?
9. In what ways was the Holy Spirit to aid the apostles as described in John, chapters 14-16?
10. Are any of the Spirit's influences mentioned in John 14-16 intended to affect others in any way, or were they all limited to the apostles?

Chapter IV

THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT— IN THE CHURCH

A clearer and more concise understanding of the Holy Spirit in the rest of the New Testament may be obtained by studying the various works of the Spirit after Pentecost (Acts 2). The New Testament scriptures speak of the Holy Spirit in connection with God's revelation to man (John 16:13); of the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 3:11); of the gifts of the Spirit (I Corinthians 12); of the work of the Spirit in conversion (Titus 3:4-7); and of the reception of the Spirit by the children of God (Romans 8:15).

In the Inspiration of the Man of God and of the Scriptures

As previously noted, the Old Testament frequently emphasizes the fact that the Holy Spirit appeared in God's revelation to man (II Samuel 23:1-2; Isaiah 61:1; Jeremiah 1:4; Ezekiel 11:1, 5; etc.). The New Testament also emphasizes that the Holy Spirit was active in inspiring men of God in oral expressions and in written truth. Jesus promised his apostles that he would send them the Holy Spirit, who would guide them into all truth, teach them all things, bring all that he had taught them to remembrance and foretell things to come (John 14-16). In Luke 12:11, 12, the Lord exhorted the apostles not to worry about what they should say, "For the Holy Spirit shall teach you in that very hour what ye ought to say."

The apostle Paul declared that he spake "not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Spirit teacheth" (I Corinthians 2:10-13). Also, in I Timothy 4:1 Paul begins a section with the phrase, "But the Spirit saith expressly,—." In II Timothy 3:16 Paul declares that all scripture is inspired of God. However, the Spirit is not specifically mentioned in this verse.

Although the apostle Peter makes no reference to the inspiration of New Testament writers he states that the Holy Spirit spoke through the Old Testament prophets. "For no prophecy ever came by the will of man; but men spake from God being moved by the Holy Spirit" (II Peter 1:19-21; cf. I Peter 1:10-11).

Man is dependent upon the word in order to know God's divine will. That God has chosen to reveal himself to man is truly an expression of his great love for us. God's love and mercy and his divine will are all made known to us through his Spirit; "the things of God none knoweth, save the Spirit of God" (I Corinthians 2:11).

The Baptism of the Holy Spirit

By the baptism of the Holy Spirit is meant the fullest and most complete manifestation of the Spirit available to man in the age of the early church. The first prediction referring to this overwhelming of man by divine power was made by the prophet Joel (Joel 2:28). He speaks of the pouring out of the Spirit. In reality the Spirit could not be poured out. This is only a figure of speech indicative of the great fulness and liberality of this unparalleled visitation of divine power. The baptism of the Holy Spirit by Christ was predicted by John the Baptist (Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16) and was promised by Jesus to his apostles prior to his ascension (Acts 1:5 and also John 14-16). It is noted that in both the Old Testament prophecy and in the New Testament, Holy Spirit baptism was a promise and not a command. No one was ever commanded to be baptized in the Holy Spirit.

There are only two instances of Holy Spirit baptism mentioned in the New Testament. The prophecies and promises relating to the baptism of the Holy Spirit were fulfilled first to the apostles on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4), and then

to the Gentiles at the household of Cornelius (Acts 10:44-46; cf. Acts 11:15-16). Thus, both Jew and Gentile were baptized in the Holy Spirit, fulfilling Joel's prophecy (2:28) that the Spirit would be poured out upon all flesh. There is no record of anyone after those of the household of Cornelius being baptized with the Holy Spirit. It seems apparent that this divine endowment of the Holy Spirit upon man was for a special or extraordinary purpose.

The purpose of Holy Spirit baptism for the apostles seems to have been twofold. One purpose was that it enabled them to bear witness for Christ. They were ready to go and preach the gospel to the whole creation, but they first needed the Holy Spirit to guide them into all truth. Christ had promised them the Spirit for this very purpose (John 16:7-15). A second purpose was that they received the ability to speak with tongues which became a sign to those that heard that they were men of God. The apostles used their miraculous powers to convince the people that what they spoke was truly the word of God (Mark 16:20; Acts 2:43; Hebrews 2:4). The special reason for the Holy Spirit baptism of Cornelius' household was also for a sign. The ability of these Gentiles to speak with other tongues became a sign to Peter and other Jewish brethren that God would also accept Gentiles into his kingdom. By seeing the Gentiles receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit, even as did the apostles on Pentecost, the Jews could perceive that God is truly no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34).

The promise of Holy Spirit baptism has been fulfilled. It has already served its full purpose and, as was noted, the Holy Spirit was never again manifested in this way after the baptism of Cornelius and his household, recorded in Acts 10. Paul states in Ephesians 4:5 that there is but one baptism. Since Mark 16:16 and I Peter 3:21 declare that water baptism is necessary for salvation and examples of it are seen throughout the book of Acts it is evident that Holy Spirit baptism is no longer in existence. Since we have the complete will of God in

the New Testament and therefore there is no additional truth to be revealed, and since the Word of God serves as a standard or criterion to show all men that we speak from God, there is now no further need for a continuation of the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Spiritual Gifts

In the period of the early church God gave to some of his adopted children various miraculous powers, referred to by Paul as gifts of the Holy Spirit. In I Corinthians 12:4-11 Paul names nine distinct spiritual gifts, all of which involve miraculous powers. These gifts were to be used by those Christians who possessed them for the general edification of the church but not for their own self-glorification. The chief end of the use of all of these gifts was, "that the church may receive edifying." (I Corinthians 14:6) In this connection spiritual gifts were given to help confirm the preaching of the word, that all who heard the gospel might know that the one who spoke was of God (Mark 16:20; Hebrews 2:1-4). They were to help with the revelation from God until the New Testament was completed (I Corinthians 13:9-12).

This manifestation of "gifts" of the Spirit, like the baptism of the Holy Spirit, was also an extraordinary endowment, yet differed radically from the baptism. Baptism of the Holy Spirit was administered directly from heaven but, while the spiritual gifts were also from heaven, the ability to perform these miraculous acts by the Holy Spirit was obtained through the laying on of apostolic hands and prayer. That the apostles were the only men to bestow these spiritual gifts is seen from the following passages: In Acts 6:6 the apostles laid their hands upon the first deacons of the church, including Philip and Stephen. They were able to perform signs and wonders (Acts 6:8; 8:6). Then, in Acts 8 Philip performed miracles and preached the gospel and many Samaritans believed and were baptized

(Acts 8:12). However, it was necessary for Peter and John to come from Jerusalem to give the Samaritans the power of spiritual gifts, showing that Philip, although able to perform miracles, did not have the power to bestow such gifts. In Romans 1:11 Paul, an apostle, tells the Romans that he desired to give them a spiritual gift. Timothy had received a gift by the hands of the apostle Paul (II Timothy 1:6). In all cases where spiritual gifts were given an apostle was instrumental in conferring them. Thus the baptism of the Holy Spirit made it possible for the apostles to preach a powerful and infallible gospel, and spiritual gifts made it possible for the apostles to have reliable help in doing so.

Since the apostles were the only ones able to bestow spiritual gifts on the early Christians it is evident that these gifts ceased with the death of the last apostle and of all those upon whom had been bestowed these miraculous powers. By that time, however, the spiritual gifts had served their purpose. The church was then well established and they had the complete and perfect revelation of the Father in the New Testament. "For we know in part, and we prophesy in part; but when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away" (I Corinthians 13:9-10). (Note Appendix, p. 95f.) By the end of the first century the writing of the New Testament had been completed. The church then had all that was needed for the purposes of edification and the spiritual growth of its members (Acts 20:32).

In Conversion

That the Holy Spirit is active in the conversion of alien sinners is evident from many passages of scripture. "Except a man be born of the water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven" (John 3:5). Again, "And He, (the Holy Spirit) when He is come, will convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness and of judgment" (John 16:8). And, "According to his mercy he saved us, by the wash-

ing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit" (Titus 3:4-7). These and other New Testament passages show clearly that the Holy Spirit is active in conversion. But how does the Holy Spirit operate on the minds and hearts of the people in order to bring them into Christ?

The apostles were placed in charge of the work of converting the world to Christ and they were to do it by preaching (Mark 16:15-16). The Holy Spirit was sent to the apostles to endow them for their work and to guide them unto all truth. The Spirit was received by the apostles on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2) and there, through the words of Peter, the Spirit reformed the world. The multitude understood and many believed, being moved by the Holy Spirit through the words of the apostle. When we hear the words of an inspired man of God we hear the words of the Spirit, and when we have the thoughts legitimately belonging to such words, we have the thoughts communicated by the Spirit. The Spirit and the word work together harmoniously. There is no evidence that in conversion they ever worked apart. Thus, the Holy Spirit uses the word as the instrument through which He operates on the minds and hearts of alien sinners.

That the Holy Spirit operates in conversion only through the instrumentality of the word is seen from a close study of the following New Testament passages: Romans 1:16, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth."; James 1:21, "Wherefore putting away all filthiness and overflowing of wickedness, receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls." It is by faith that God purifies the heart (Acts 15:9); but faith comes by hearing the word of God (Romans 10:17). I Corinthians 4:14, 15 states, "—for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel." The Spirit is the author of the gospel. Ephesians 6:17 says, "and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." I Peter 1:23 says, "Having been begotten again,

not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the word of God which liveth and abideth." John 8:32 states, "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." The narrative of Stephen in Acts 7 shows clearly that the Spirit was located in Stephen and through his words operated on the people; yet they did not receive the Spirit, but resisted it. Persons operated on by the Spirit through the word may receive or reject its teaching, as they choose. In all the examples of conversion mentioned in the New Testament the gospel as God's power to save is heard, believed, and obeyed.

From these scriptures it is evident that the Holy Spirit operates upon the heart of the sinner in conversion through the truth, and that truth is the gospel message, the word of God. The New Testament does not teach that the Holy Spirit operates in any other way in conversion than through the instrumentality of the word.

In the Personal Life of the Christian

It is this phase of the Holy Spirit's work that the next seven chapters will discuss. Therefore, it will suffice here to point out that the New Testament teaches that the Holy Spirit "dwells in" the faithful Christian. "Know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have from God?" (I Corinthians 6:19). The Spirit is given by God to those who obey him (Acts 5:32).

The indwelling of the Spirit differs from the baptism of the Holy Spirit and spiritual gifts in that it is void of the miraculous, and in this sense it is similar to the Holy Spirit's work in conversion. While the Holy Spirit dwelt in the apostles and many of the early Christians in an extraordinary sense, He dwells as an abiding gift in the mind, heart and conscience of every obedient believer. The Holy Spirit enables the Christian to bring forth abundantly in his life the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22, 23). He strengthens him with might even in

the inner man (Ephesians 3:16), and He helps his infirmities and makes intercession for him (Romans 8:26-27).

Henry B. Swete gives the following summary of the Spirit's activities as presented in God's word.

The Spirit appears first in connection with the cosmogony of Genesis, and the writers of the Old Testament frequently refer to His work in sustaining and renewing physical life. But the Hebrew Canon attributes to Him also the endowment of human nature with intellectual and spiritual gifts, and especially regard Him as the source of the great gift of prophecy. It speaks of Him as the author of moral purity and religious consecration. Lastly, it foretells the coming of an ideal king, a perfect Servant of God, in whom the Spirit should rest in his fulness, and an extension of the Spirit's gifts in the last days to the whole nation and to the world. At this point the New Testament takes up the thread of the revelation. The Synoptic Gospels show how the ideals of the Old Testament were fulfilled in the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. The fourth Gospel predicts the mission of the Spirit to the Church; the Acts and Epistles relate the fulfillment of His mission in the experience of the Apostolic Church. We are permitted to see how it has changed the whole spiritual order, raising a new Israel out of the old, transforming an elect nation into a catholic church, pouring new life into the body of the disciples, sanctifying individual wills, carrying conviction to the world and guiding believers into the fulness of truth. In St. Paul's writings the biblical doctrine of the operations of the Holy Spirit reaches its completion. The apostle sees in the Spirit of Christ the source of the vital unity which inspires the Church, the quickening and compacting power of the new creation. But he teaches with equal clearness that the Spirit has come to regenerate and restore the personal life of each of the baptized, dwelling in the body as His temple, identifying Himself with the human spirit in its struggle with the flesh and its striving after God, until He has perfected the nature which the Son of God redeemed and has raised it to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.²

²Henry B. Swete, "Holy Spirit," *A Dictionary of the Bible* (edited by James Hastings; Volume II, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1909), p. 411.

Questions For Study

1. What New Testament passages indicate to us that the Holy Spirit was active in the writing of both the Old Testament and New Testament?
2. What are the two instances of Holy Spirit baptism in the New Testament? What was the purpose in each case?
3. How do we know that the promise of Holy Spirit baptism has been fulfilled and no longer occurs today?
4. What was the purpose of "spiritual gifts" in New Testament times? How did one receive these gifts? Why have these spiritual gifts ceased to exist?
5. What scriptures teach us that the Holy Spirit is active in the conversion process? In what way does the Holy Spirit operate in conversion? How do we know this?
6. How does the indwelling of the Holy Spirit differ from Holy Spirit baptism and spiritual gifts?
7. What is the purpose of the Spirit's work as he dwells within the Christian?

Chapter V

THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The New Testament clearly teaches that the Holy Spirit does dwell in the faithful Christian. One of the greatest blessings received by the Christian because of his obedience to the word of God is the gift of the Holy Spirit. In this chapter the teachings of the New Testament will be set forth showing that the Holy Spirit is a gift of God to all those who obey him and that the Spirit dwells *in* the Christian and must do so in order for one to be a child of God.

The Promise of Acts 2:38-39

At the close of Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost the multitude of Jews were pricked to the heart and they asked Peter and the other apostles, "What shall we do?" Peter spoke these words unto them,

Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For to you is the promise, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call unto him (Acts 2:38-39).

Thus it was made known to the world that all those who obeyed the gospel would receive the blessings of the gift of the Holy Spirit. But just what is this gift which is promised to the obedient believer? Was this promise of the Holy Spirit for every Christian of every age, or was it a promise of supernatural power to be conferred on a few persons to qualify them to do a work peculiar to the age of miracles as found in the apostolic church? In Hebrews 2:4 the writer in referring to the work of the apostles said that God bore witness to them with signs and wonders and by manifold powers, and by gifts of the Holy

Spirit, according to his own will. In I Corinthians 12 Paul enumerates nine different spiritual gifts, all of which partook of the miraculous, and were bestowed upon the apostles and certain other Christians in the early church. Were these miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit mentioned in Hebrews 2 and I Corinthians 12 the "gift of the Holy Spirit" to which Peter referred in Acts 2:38?

Not a promise of a miraculous outpouring of the Spirit but a promise of the Holy Spirit Himself. That the "gift of the Holy Spirit" in Acts 2:38 was not the miraculous spiritual gifts of I Corinthians 12 can be seen by the following observations. The "gift of the Holy Spirit" in Acts 2:38 is promised to the same ones who are promised the remission of sins. The gift was promised to *all* who heard and obeyed Peter's commandments (Acts 2:39). However, it is known from the subsequent history of the church that spiritual gifts were not bestowed on all who repented and were baptized, but on only a few brethren in each of the several congregations (Note I Corinthians 12). If the gift of the Holy Spirit were the spiritual gifts conferred through the laying on of the apostles' hands, then all the three thousand baptized on Pentecost received a miraculous gift of the Holy Spirit enabling them to perform miracles. But there is no evidence that any one other than the apostles enjoyed any extraordinary gift until after the apostles laid their hands upon the seven men in Acts 6. As disciples of Christ, Stephen, Philip, and the other five had the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 6:3), and as assistants of the apostles they had the power to perform miracles (Acts 6:8; 8:6). Also, as was previously noted, spiritual gifts were obtained only through the laying on of the apostles' hands. There is no indication in Acts 2 that it was necessary for the apostles to lay their hands upon those who repented and were baptized before they could receive the Holy Spirit. Another consideration concerning the gift of the Holy Spirit is that it is obviously intended to continue to be given as long as is the remission of sins (Acts 2:39). If this be true then the "gift of the Holy Spirit" could not possibly

refer to the spiritual gifts since they ceased with the apostolic period of the church. Another observation is that in Acts 2:38 the word "gift" is singular. When spiritual or miraculous powers are meant the plural, "gifts," is always used (I Corinthians 12:4, 9, 28, 30, 31). Thus, the "gift of the Holy Spirit" does not mean "spiritual gifts." The gift of Acts 2:38 is the Holy Spirit Himself given, and not merely the power with which He invests a person for special purposes.

Another line of reasoning which is occasionally set forth is that the "gift of the Holy Spirit" in Acts 2:38 is equal to the *baptism* of the Holy Spirit received by the apostles on Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4) and by the household of Cornelius (Acts 10:44-46). In support of this view it is noted that the only other place in the New Testament besides Acts 2:38 where the phrase "gift of the Holy Spirit" is used is in Acts 10:45 when Cornelius and his household received the Holy Spirit. However, there is one fact that clearly distinguishes the "gift of the Holy Spirit" from the baptism of the Holy Spirit. In the latter case the gift of the Spirit was manifested by the miracle of speaking in tongues, and certainly not everyone who repented and was baptized was given the ability to speak with tongues (I Corinthians 14). Also, it is noted that Cornelius and his house received this gift of the Holy Spirit prior to their water baptism, while Peter makes baptism a necessary condition for the reception of the "gift of the Holy Spirit" in Acts 2:38. It is clearly seen therefore that the promise of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2 was neither spiritual gifts nor the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The "gift of the Holy Spirit" is not a miraculous outpouring of the Spirit but the Spirit himself given to the obedient believer.

The Indwelling Spirit

The true meaning of the "gift of the Holy Spirit" can be seen from a study of the New Testament passages that teach

the Holy Spirit has been given to the Christian and dwells within him. In Paul's letter to the church at Rome there are several passages which show that the Holy Spirit dwells in the Christian. "The love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit which was given unto us" (Romans 5:5). Again, "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead shall give life also to your mortal bodies through his Spirit that dwelleth in you" (Romans 8:11). And then in Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians, "Or know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have from God? and ye are not your own" (I Corinthians 6:19).

Jesus' teaching on the indwelling Spirit. The above passages harmonize with Jesus' promise to his disciples. The Holy Spirit was promised as an abiding guest and comforter, and as such was to dwell with them and be in them forever.

And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may be with you *forever*, even the Spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive; for it beholdeth him not, neither knoweth him: ye know him; for he *abideth with you* and shall be *in you* (John 14:16-17).

This abiding of the Spirit was not figurative, but a literal indwelling of the Holy Spirit as seen from Acts 2:1-4. Since the Holy Spirit was literally in the apostles to inspire them, He was also literally in the apostles to comfort them. It may be argued that the promise of the abiding Spirit as a comforter was to the apostles only and since they were inspired by His presence, the absence of such inspiration proves the absence of the Spirit. However, a careful examination of the Scriptures will show that while there was no promise that the inspiration should remain, as a comforter He was to abide *forever* (John 14:17). If this promise was to the apostles only why did Jesus promise that He should abide with them forever? Certainly they were not to live forever on earth, and after death they were

to be with the Lord again and would not need the Comforter. Earlier in the fourth gospel John said that the Holy Spirit would be received by those who believed on him, including more than the apostles, "But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believed on him were to receive: for the Spirit was not yet given; because Jesus was not yet glorified" (John 7:39). The Comforter continues to dwell in the faithful Christian and while He has fulfilled His mission as an inspiring guide He abides forever as a comforter.

Other New Testament passages that teach the possession of the Holy Spirit by the Christian. In addition to the passages already set forth there are several others that show that the Christian possesses the Holy Spirit. "And because ye are sons, God sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying Abba, Father" (Galatians 4:6). Here Paul states the fact that not only has God given us his Spirit but also that he has done so because we are his children. The Christian has received the Holy Spirit as a seal, "And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, in whom ye were sealed unto the day of redemption" (Ephesians 4:30; cf. Ephesians 1:13). He has also received the Spirit as an earnest of his inheritance, "Now he that wrought us for this very thing is God, who gave unto us the earnest of the Spirit" (II Corinthians 5:5; also I Corinthians 1:22; Ephesians 1:13-14; Romans 8:23). In Ephesians 5:18 Paul exhorts the Ephesians to be "filled with the Spirit," which implies that it was possible for them to have the Spirit. In an exhortation to Timothy Paul says that the Holy Spirit dwells in us, "That good thing which was committed unto thee guard through the Holy Spirit which dwelleth in us" (II Timothy 1:14). In the epistle to Titus Paul states, "According to his mercy he saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, which he poured out upon us richly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour" (Titus 3:5-6). The Holy Spirit is freely given to those who have been baptized into Christ. God is the source of the Holy Spirit which is given to us, "Therefore he that rejecteth, rejecteth not man, but God who giveth his Holy Spirit

unto you" (I Thessalonians 4:8; cf. Acts 5:32). John says that we may know that God abides in us by the Spirit which he has given to us (I John 3:24). It can be seen in the light of the above passages that the Holy Spirit does indeed dwell within the Christian.

Examples of The Indwelling Spirit

In the New Testament there are two expressions which might imply the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in particular individuals or groups. These are, "full of the Holy Spirit," and "being filled with the Holy Spirit." The former is used 5 times and the latter 10 times in the New Testament. For the most part these expressions seem to have been limited to the days of Christ and the early church, and refer to the miraculous outpouring of the Holy Spirit on various individuals. However, there are six times that these expressions are used which do not imply the miraculous but indicate that the early Christian possessed the indwelling Spirit separate and apart from any spiritual gifts. In Acts 6 seven men were to be selected to oversee a certain phase of the church's work. They were to be "full of the Spirit" (vs. 3) and Stephen, one of the seven, was specifically said to be "full of the Holy Spirit." (vs. 5) It is noted that these men possessed the Holy Spirit prior to the laying on of the apostles' hands, therefore, being "full of the Holy Spirit" could not refer to their possession of spiritual gifts. This is the first time the expression "full of the Spirit or Holy Spirit" is used in the New Testament when it does not obviously refer to a miraculous manifestation of the Holy Spirit. It could only mean that Stephen and the other six men had the gift or indwelling of the Holy Spirit as was promised by Peter in Acts 2:38 to all those who obeyed the gospel. The evidence that showed that the Spirit dwelt within them was the fruits of a holy life.

In Acts 9 there is an account of the apostle Paul's conversion. Chapter 9, verse 17 reads:

And Ananias departed and entered into the house; and laying his hands on him, he said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, who appeared unto thee in the way which thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mayest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Since only the apostles had the power to bestow spiritual gifts Ananias would have been unable to give Paul any spiritual gift. Therefore, for Paul to be filled with the Holy Spirit could only refer to the "gift of the Holy Spirit." And it follows that Paul received the Spirit after he was baptized by Ananias (Acts 9:18).

This made his reception of the Holy Spirit dependent on the coming of Ananias, and it sufficiently accounts for the words of the latter, without resorting to the improbable supposition that he was empowered to do that which none but apostles could ordinarily do.³

In Acts 11:24 Luke describes Barnabas as being a good man and full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. Since there is no indication that Barnabas at this time could perform miracles, it is possible that the phrase "full of the Holy Spirit" in this verse could refer to the ordinary indwelling of the Spirit. In Acts 13:52 Paul and Barnabas were said to be "filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit." The context does not infer that they possessed spiritual gifts and here again the indwelling of the Holy Spirit may well be meant. Neither of these last two examples are as conclusive as the first two, but the "gift of the Holy Spirit" does seem to be implied rather than the miraculous manifestation of the Spirit.

The last example is found in Ephesians 5:18 where Paul exhorted the Ephesians to be filled with the Holy Spirit. Obvi-

³J. W. McGarvey, *New Commentary on Acts of Apostles*, (Volume I; Cincinnati: The Standard Publishing Co., 1892), p. 178.

ously, spiritual gifts are not meant in this passage since *all* were exhorted to be "filled with" the Spirit, which means to use the Spirit fully, which you already possess. This verse would of necessity then refer to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit promised to all Christians. In this passage Paul is making a contrast between the man who is drunken with wine and the man who is filled with the Spirit. The former's life is characterized by riot while the Christian's life should be distinguished by the singing of spiritual songs and prayer, a result of the Christian's *allowing* himself to be filled or led by the Spirit.

Questions For Study

1. What is the promise of Acts 2:38-39?
2. How do we know that this promise does not refer to either spiritual gifts or Holy Spirit baptism?
3. List the passages in the New Testament that teach the possession of the Holy Spirit by the Christian and note the significance of each one.
4. What other lines of reasoning indicate an indwelling Spirit in the Christian?
5. List several examples of the indwelling Spirit in individual Christians of New Testament times. What evidence showed that an individual Christian was "full of the Holy Spirit"?

Chapter VI

THE RECEPTION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT BY THE CHRISTIAN

The gift of indwelling of the Holy Spirit was a new promise which God had never before given to man. While the Spirit had been active in the Patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations He had never been promised to the faithful followers of God in any of the old covenants. But to all those of the Christian dispensation who will obey the commands of God this exceedingly great promise of the Holy Spirit is theirs.

The Absence of the Indwelling Spirit Prior to the New Covenant

The coming of the Holy Spirit or Comforter to dwell in the hearts of the people of God was a new thing, peculiar to the Christian dispensation. There is not the least evidence in the Old Testament that the Spirit dwelt in the children of God in that age except in those who performed some miraculous feat or who were inspired of God by the Holy Spirit to reveal his divine will. In Old Testament passages which refer to the Spirit imparting moral and spiritual character they are in each case a prophecy concerning the action of the Spirit in the approaching kingdom of God.

For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring: and they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water courses. One shall say, I am the Lord's; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob; and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel (Isaiah 44:3-5).

One of the greatest promises concerning the future work of the Spirit is found in Ezekiel 36:26-28.

A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.

Although the Holy Spirit was active in several ways during the Old Testament period He did not personally dwell in the individual hearts of God's people. The absence of such an activity of the Spirit was noted earlier in the study of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament. The distinction between the work of the Holy Spirit in the former dispensations and the present Christian era has been stated thus:

In the old dispensation the Holy Spirit wrought upon believers but did not in his person dwell in believers and abide permanently in them. He appeared unto men; he did not incarnate himself in man. His action was intermittent; he went and came like the dove which Noah sent forth from the ark, and which went to and fro, finding no rest; while in the new dispensation he dwells, he abides in the heart as the dove, his emblem which John saw descending and alighting on the head of Jesus. Affianced of the soul, the Spirit went off to see his betrothed, but was not yet one with her; the marriage was not consummated until the Pentecost after the glorification of Jesus Christ.⁴

When Jesus became the mediator of a new and better covenant he purposed it as a better covenant by the granting of

⁴Gustave Tophel, *The Work of the Holy Spirit in Man*, trans. George E. Shipman (Chicago: Foundlings Home Print, 1880), p. 32.

new blessings not enjoyed before, such as the full remission of sins and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. That the believer did not possess the Holy Spirit until after the new covenant was established is evident from John 7:39, "But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believed on him were to receive: for the Spirit was not yet given; because Jesus was not yet glorified."

After the Holy Spirit came in fulfillment of Jesus' promise to the apostles (John 14-16) He maintained a relationship to the apostles and to those who had spiritual gifts similar to the relationship He had had with Old Testament writers and prophets and with those men of Old Testament days who had been able to perform miraculous feats. However, the Spirit maintained a new relationship to the children of God, since He dwelt in the heart of every faithful Christian. This "gift of the Holy Spirit" possessed by the Christian had never been received before.

Conditions to be Met in Order to Obtain the Promise of the Holy Spirit

As has already been noted the "gift of the Holy Spirit," promised by Peter on the day of Pentecost, was given to those who repented and were baptized. In another place Peter said that the Holy Spirit was given by God to those that obey him (Acts 5:32). It seems evident from these passages that obedience to the gospel is necessary before one can receive the Holy Spirit. The Spirit does not come to those of the world, "even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive; for it beholdeth him not, neither knoweth him" (John 14:17). "The Spirit does not enter the heart before its purification. There can be no communion between light and darkness—Christ and the devil. The Holy Spirit enters the heart of man after it has been purified by the blood of Christ and the body of sin

destroyed.”⁵ From the moment of baptism the life of the Spirit in the Christian begins.

In Luke 11:13 Jesus said that the Father gives the Spirit to such of his children as ask him for it. This statement does not mean that man has no conditions with which to comply before he can receive the Spirit. God also gives us our bread and Jesus taught his disciples to pray for it, yet man must still do his part. Man must also do his part before he can receive the “gift of the Holy Spirit.” The Holy Spirit, like every good gift, may be asked for. “The earnest desire and petition for God’s gifts is an essential preparation for receiving and enjoying them.”⁶ When a man has a true and sincere desire for something he will pray for it and do that which is necessary to obtain it.

Another statement concerning the way in which the Holy Spirit is received is found in Galatians 3:2, “Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?” Two thoughts are implied by this verse: first, that the Galatians did not receive the Holy Spirit by the works of the law; and second, that they did receive it by the hearing of faith. But what is the *hearing of faith*? In this chapter the apostle Paul is evidently contrasting the Mosaic law to the gospel. Hence the word faith in this verse is synonymous to the gospel system, and comprehends the whole plan of salvation presented in the gospel. The word “hearing” in this verse evidently means something more than the reception of sound. MacKnight renders the passage, “The obedience of faith” (cf. Romans 1:5; 16:26). The word used here also implies obedience in other passages such as Acts 3:23, “And it shall be, that every

⁵Robert Milligan, *Scheme of Redemption* (St. Louis: Christian Board of Publication), p. 276.

⁶J. H. Garrison, *The Holy Spirit* (St. Louis: Christian Publishing Company, 1905), p. 81.

soul that shall not *hearken* to that prophet, shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.” Thus, the passage may be read, the Galatians received the Holy Spirit by their obedience to the gospel or by expressing their faith by obedience. The reception of the Spirit in Galatians 3:2 could not have reference to any miraculous endowment of the Holy Spirit because that came through the laying on of apostles’ hands and not “by the hearing of faith.”

Obedience to the gospel is thus the condition which must be met before the Holy Spirit is received. One must become a citizen of the kingdom of God and a member of God’s family. Not until then can the Spirit be received, which entitles us to the privilege of calling God our Father. Only adopted sons of God may obtain the “gift of the Holy Spirit.” “And because ye are sons, God sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father” (Galatians 4:6).

Since the reception of the Holy Spirit is dependent upon our obedience to God’s will, the inference is irresistible that the measure of our enjoyment of the Holy Spirit is not a fixed quantity, but will depend on the perfection of our faith in Christ and our love for him. The more faithful a Christian is, the more the Spirit of Christ benefits him. The more consecrated a Christian is, the richer and fuller will be the blessings of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit comes into the Christian’s heart and consciousness along the lines of love, sympathy, and personal trust. If the love of God for us, as manifested in Christ, Jesus, awakens a responsive love for God in the human heart, along this line of reciprocal affection God sends his Spirit, and with him the richest treasures of his grace and truth, and we are filled with all the fulness of God. But if God’s love evokes no answering affection in our heart, if it breaks down no barriers of alienation and distrust, this absence of reciprocity prevents the inflow of

the divine power and life into the human soul, and leaves it barren and unfruitful.⁷

We conclude therefore, that to the *extent* to which the Christian seeks after God and serves him will determine the *extent* to which he receives the blessings of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Questions For Study

1. Discuss the absence of the indwelling Spirit prior to the New Covenant.
2. In what ways was the Spirit active in the Old Testament which were similar to his activities in the early church?
3. Was the Holy Spirit active in the Old Testament in any way parallel to His indwelling in the Christian?
4. What condition must be met in order to obtain the promise of the Holy Spirit?
5. What is meant by the expression "hearing of faith" in Galatians 3:2?
6. Is the reception of the Holy Spirit by the Christian a fixed measure? If not, what factor or factors determine the extent to which one receives the influence of the Holy Spirit?

⁷Garrison, *op. cit.*, p. 73.

Chapter VII

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE INDWELLING SPIRIT TO THE CHRISTIAN

The "gift of the Holy Spirit" is one of the greatest blessings that a Christian receives in this life. The presence of the Spirit in his life is evidence that he is a child, an adopted son, of God and has the promise of a future inheritance and redemption in God's eternal kingdom. The indwelling Spirit signifies to the Christian his true relationship to God and Christ.

A Representative of God and Christ

The New Testament clearly teaches that God dwells in the Christian.

No man hath beheld God at any time: if we love one another, God abideth in us, and his love is perfected in us; hereby we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit. And we have beheld and bear witness that the Father hath sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world. Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God abideth in him; and he in God (I John 4:12-15).

In II Corinthians 6:16 Paul writes, "even as God said, I will dwell in them and walk in them; and I will be their God and they shall be my people." It is also said that Christ dwells in us, "that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith" (Ephesians 3:17). But God is in his heaven and Christ is at the right hand of God. He has ascended back to the Father. Therefore, neither one dwells in the Christian personally. Then how do God and Christ dwell in us? They dwell in us through their representative, the Holy Spirit. After Christ ascended back to the Father they sent the Holy Spirit to the apostles and to the Church (John 15:26). The Holy Spirit represents God and Christ on earth. When the Holy Spirit dwells in Christians,

God and Christ dwell in them.

That the Holy Spirit does represent God and Christ in the heart of the Christian can be seen from the following observations. The Spirit is not only referred to as the Holy Spirit but He is also called the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ. "But ye are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you. But if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his" (Romans 8:9; see also I Corinthians 3:16; I Peter 1:10-11; II Peter 2:21). These passages show that the terms "Spirit of Christ," "Spirit of God" and the "Holy Spirit" all refer to the same person and are only different ways of referring to the Spirit. But because He is referred to as the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ it is evident that He is representative of them. It is also noted that in the passage quoted above (I John 4:12-15) John states that we know God abides in us because he has given us of his Spirit. The Christian that has the Holy Spirit knows that God abides in him. The Spirit is God's representative in the Christian (Note also I John 3:24).

Another passage which shows that God is represented by the Holy Spirit is Ephesians 2:22, "In whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit." The saints in Ephesus composed a habitation or place to dwell, and in it God dwelt "in the Spirit." But God did not dwell in the habitation in person but representatively through his Spirit. "The Holy Spirit dwelt in the saints in Ephesus, and by it, as representing him, God dwelt in them."⁸

The Holy Spirit, during the Christian era, is "in office" on earth; and all spiritual presence and divine communion of the Trinity with men, are through Him. In other words, while the Father and Son are personally in heaven, they are on earth in

⁸Moses E. Lard, "Review of Sigma on the Gift of the Holy Spirit," *Lard's Quarterly*, II (1865), 103.

the body of the faithful by the indwelling of the Comforter. The Christian may know that the abiding fellowship of God with man and of man with God becomes a matter of personal knowledge through his possession of the Spirit of God. For the indwelling of the Spirit of God in man is the indwelling of God himself. It is by his Spirit that God dwells and works in us.

A Proof of Sonship

The New Testament teaches that the indwelling Spirit is a proof to the Christian that he is a son of God. In Galatians 4:6 Paul said, "and because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying Abba, Father." "The Spirit was not given to *make* them sons, but because they were sons. Thus, when the Holy Spirit dwells in our hearts it is proof that God has accepted us as sons. In fact, if a man does not have the Spirit of Christ he is not a Christian. Paul makes the possession of the Holy Spirit on the part of the believer to be the test of genuine discipleship. "But if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his" (Romans 8:9). The possession of the Holy Spirit brings a feeling of assurance to the child of God, a feeling that is increased by the communion of the Holy Spirit. "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all" (II Corinthians 13:14).

The purpose of the Son's mission to earth was to make possible the rights of sonship. The purpose of the Spirit's mission is to give the power of using them. The Spirit of Christ is sent into the hearts of adopted sons, because he is the very "Spirit of sonship." The possession of the Holy Spirit is the distinguishing badge, the peculiar characteristic of the Christian. It is that which sets him apart from the world. Because he has the gift of the Holy Spirit he may know assuredly that he is a son of God.

A Seal

In II Corinthians and Ephesians Paul taught that the Christian is sealed by the Holy Spirit. "In whom, having also believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise." (Ephesians 1:13) Second Corinthians 1:21-22 states, "Now he that established us with you in Christ and anointed us, is God: who also sealed us, and gave us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts" (See also Ephesians 4:30).

A seal, anciently as now, was an official mark put upon any document to authenticate it, or indicate its genuineness. A seal is also a mark of ownership or possession. And finally, a seal is a means of security. The fact that the Christian receives the Holy Spirit and is thereby sealed, proves three things. The Christian has a mark of character, a stamp of genuineness put upon him by the Holy Spirit, a true sign to the world of his discipleship. The person who is filled with the Spirit bears the stamp of the Spirit. His behavior, words, dress, train of ideas, interests, everything that he does, says and is, bear the stamp of God. Second, it is proof that he belongs to God. The Christian has indisputable evidence that he is God's beloved, one with Christ, united to him, saved in him, with an everlasting salvation. Third, it is a proof of the Christian's security. With the seal he is a true child of God. It is a guarantee of all God's covenanted promises and of all the heavenly blessings he has prepared for those who love and serve him.

While many have tried to parallel baptism and circumcision, arguing that as circumcision was the seal or sign that one was in the covenant, so in Christianity baptism is the seal that one is a child of God, there is no indication in the New Testament that baptism has ever been considered as a sign or seal of covenant relationship with God. On the other hand, it is quite evident that the gift of the Holy Spirit "comes in the room of circumcision." "It was fleshly birth that made one a Jew, and circumcision was the seal or sign that one was in the covenant.

In Christianity, by analogy, baptism is the time of the new birth, and the gift of the Holy Spirit is the sign of membership in the covenant."⁹ As the uncircumcised was to be cut off from his people (Genesis 17:14) so one who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him (Romans 8:9). He lacks the seal of a covenant relationship with God.

An Earnest or Pledge

In the same passages that teach that the Christian is sealed by the Holy Spirit, Paul describes the Spirit as the "earnest" of the future life. "In whom, having also believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is an earnest of our inheritance unto the redemption of God's own possession, unto the praise of his glory" (Ephesians 1:13-14). And in II Corinthians 5:5, "Now he that wrought us for this very thing is God, who gave unto us the earnest of the Spirit." (Also II Corinthians 1:22) In human transactions an earnest is a deposit or a pledge of full payment. In like manner God has guaranteed immortal life to the Christian by his gift of the Spirit, which makes us partakers even now of divine privileges. The possession of the Spirit is a promise or pledge of a fuller and richer future; of an inheritance to be received in the life to come. However, to have received the Spirit is not only a cause for thankfulness but is also a source of increased responsibility. The first installment of spiritual life which the Spirit brings is not an absolute guarantee of final deliverance; it makes for that end, but it may be frustrated by the conduct of the person who has received the Spirit. The Spirit works in the heart of the Christian to prepare him for the full inheritance when the time shall come to receive it. The child of God has only to let himself be led by the Spirit (Romans 8:14).

⁹Everett Ferguson, "The Seal of the Covenant," *Firm Foundation*, (October 20, 1964), p. 667.

A passage very similar in meaning to those above is Romans 8:23, "And not only so, but ourselves also, who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for our adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." The "first-fruits of the Spirit" seems to imply the same meaning as the "earnest of the Spirit." Paul is saying that the Spirit in us is but the first-fruits of the future great harvest of spiritual life. Our adoption has been as yet only in part, for the body is still subject to death and the tendency to sin. But the day of redemption will come and the Christian will then enjoy the complete fulfillment (Ephesians 4:30).

Questions For Study

1. What passages indicate that the Spirit of God, Spirit of Christ, and Holy Spirit are synonymous terms?
2. If Christ dwells in us by faith (Ephesians 3:17); can it not also be said that the Holy Spirit dwells in us by faith? If so, how does the dwelling of the Holy Spirit in us differ from Christ dwelling in us?
3. Discuss how I John 4:13 and I John 3:24 prove a personal indwelling of the Holy Spirit.
4. How does Galatians 4:6 prove that one receives the Holy Spirit after obedience to the gospel, and not prior to such obedience?
5. What three things are indicated by a seal? By analogy, what three things are signified by the Holy Spirit to the Christians as a seal?
6. The seal of the Holy Spirit is a parallel to what in the old covenant?
7. What is meant by an earnest? What does the Holy Spirit signify to the Christian as "an earnest of our inheritance"?
8. Explain Romans 8:23.
9. What four things does the Holy Spirit signify to the child of God?

Chapter VIII

THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE LIFE OF THE CHRISTIAN—HIS PURPOSE

The Holy Spirit is active in the Christian's life. His work does not cease with man's conversion to Christ but He abides in the Christian and works in him and for him to bring about his ultimate redemption. The works of the Holy Spirit in relation to the Christian are many. It is by the Holy Spirit that he is sanctified. The Spirit instructs, guides, comforts, and consoles the Christian. The Spirit bears witness with his spirit that he is a child of God. He enables the Christian to bring forth the fruit of the Spirit in his life. The Spirit helps him in his infirmities and makes intercession for him. The Holy Spirit strengthens the inner man and helps him to overcome sin and resist the flesh. The Christian is made free and kept free by the Spirit of God. He is the source of joy, hope, and love in the Christian life. God has not left the Christian alone to "fight the good fight of faith." Man can be assured that he has God's help through the Holy Spirit in his every effort to follow after the Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Part of the Holy Spirit's work in the life of the Christian is done through the instrumentality of the written word. The remainder of His work He accomplishes as He dwells in the heart of the faithful Christian, where He abides in fulfillment of God's promise to those who have obeyed him.

The Purpose of the Spirit's Work

The Holy Spirit plays an important part in the life of the Christian. God has blessed the Christian with the written word and with the "gift of the Holy Spirit" for a specific purpose. It is through these means that the child of God is instructed and aided by the Holy Spirit in living a life that will eventually

lead to his eternal salvation. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to carry forward, progressively, the work of God in the human soul, until it is transformed into the likeness of Christ. Man in all his weaknesses and moral imperfections is led by the Spirit to a unity, completeness and fulness of life and love. This process which begins with man's spiritual birth and is carried on until he is transformed into the image of Christ (Romans 8:29), is called sanctification. It is the primary work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Christian.

Sanctification

To sanctify means to set apart or to make holy. "This may be done in a moment and so far as a mere state or relation is concerned, it is as instantaneous as baptism."¹⁰ "But there is a holy character, as well as a holy state, and in the formation of a holy character, sanctification is unquestionably a progressive work."¹¹ In the latter sense sanctification includes the growth and development involved in becoming holy.

The English word "sanctification" comes from two Latin words, "sanctus" which means "holy" and "facio" which means "to make." Thus, sanctification is the process of becoming holy, or separate. It is a progressive work begun in the conversion of the sinner and carried on in the life of the Christian unto perfection. Although it is impossible to reach the high hope and great goal of perfection in the flesh, the Christian works towards that end in order that he may attain perfection in glory. The New Testament teaches that the whole Christian life is to be one process of sanctification. Sanctification may be distinguished from conversion as growth is distinguished from birth. It is the perfecting of the saint, the bringing of the new-

¹⁰Alexander Campbell, *The Christian System* (Cincinnati: Standard Publishing Company), p. 49.

¹¹*Ibid.*

born babe up into the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. It is the putting off the "old man" and putting on the "new man." (Note Ephesians 4:22-24)

The babe in Christ is a new creature; old things have passed away and all things have become new. Now that he is in the family of God he must adjust to the new surroundings in the spiritual kingdom and must grow and develop as a child of God. This growth and development, which is called sanctification, is a work of the Holy Spirit which enables believers in Christ more and more to die to sin and live unto righteousness. Having been adopted into the family of God, Christian men and women are led by the Spirit of God in growth and development in the Christian life.

The characteristic name of the Spirit in the New Testament is "Holy," meaning separateness or apartness. The primary work of the Spirit in the life of the Christian is to make him holy or set him apart; to sanctify him.

But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, for that God chose you from the beginning unto salvation in sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth (II Thessalonians 2:13).

And such were some of you: but ye were washed, but ye were sanctified, but ye were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God (I Corinthians 6:11).

That I should be a minister of Christ Jesus unto the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be made acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit (Romans 15:16).

The ultimate aim of all the Spirit's work is to develop and perfect the Christian into the likeness of Christ. In a sense then *all* of the Spirit's work is included in the process of sanctification. All that the Spirit does Himself and through the instrumentality of the written word is looking towards the sanctifica-

tion of the Christian until he attains a *perfect* holiness of character in the life to come.

God through the Holy Spirit sanctifies as much of man's life as is absolutely yielded to him. He fills as much of the human heart as is opened to him. So Christian growth consists of this; that as more and more of the heart is opened to God, the more the Christian can be sanctified. Sanctification cannot be forced upon an unyielding Christian.

Although it is the duty and work of the Christian to perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord, it requires God's aid, received through the Holy Spirit.

While the Commands, believe, repent and be baptized are never accompanied with any intimation of peculiar difficulty; the commands to the use of the means of spiritual health and life; to form the Christian character; to attain the resurrection of the just; to lay hold on eternal life; to make our calling and election sure; are accompanied with such exhortations, admonitions, cautions, as to make it a difficult and critical affair, requiring all the aid of the Spirit of our God, to all the means of grace and untiring assiduity and perseverance on our part.¹²

The Holy Spirit actually and powerfully assists the Christian in the struggle for eternal life. The Spirit is the author of all man's holiness, and in the struggle after victory over sin and temptation He works in and with the Christian to bring about his sanctification.

The Fruit of the Spirit

The results of the work of sanctification is called the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22ff). Sanctification is growth and the holy life is fruit. When the Spirit leads a man there is

¹²*Ibid.*, p. 48.

movement and progress in his life as step after step he follows the Spirit's influence, each moment bringing him nearer to the goal. As the man is led by the Spirit he bears the fruit of the Spirit—a life filled with love, joy and peace and surrounded with an atmosphere of forbearance, kindness, goodness, honesty of purpose, ability to endure affront, and self-control. The Spirit bears fruit in every region of human life. All that fulfills the goal of life by bringing glory to God is of the Spirit.

The chief work that the Holy Spirit has with Christians is to develop them into the likeness of Christ, to reproduce in them the beauty and glory of the personality of Christ. But one cannot develop into the likeness of Christ without bearing the fruit of the Holy Spirit. The test of the Christian life is whether it bears the fruit of the Spirit.

In Galatians 5:22-23 the fruit of the Spirit is set forth by the apostle Paul (Also note Romans 5:5; 14:17; 15:13; II Corinthians 6:6). "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control; against such there is no law." In this passage the fruit of the Holy Spirit in the lives of faithful Christians is put in contrast with the works of the flesh. It is as easy to recognize the fruit of the Spirit as it is to recognize the works of the flesh (Matthew 7:16-20). The Christian is characterized by his life in contrast to the life of those of the world. "By their fruits ye shall know them" (Matthew 7:16). All Christians are to bear the same kind of fruit; hence all Christians are to become like Christ. However, there are some who would profess to be Christians who quench the Holy Spirit (I Thessalonians 5:19) or grieve the Spirit (Ephesians 4:30). They refuse to be led by the Spirit and therefore cannot bear the fruit of the Spirit.

It should be noted that the apostle Paul uses the singular in denoting the fruit of the Spirit. The nine attributes that he lists may thus be referred to as component parts of the "fruit of the Spirit." It cannot be said of anyone that he is truly bearing the fruit of the Spirit unless he is manifesting each characteristic which comprises that fruit. In other words, one must manifest faithfulness and loving obedience to Christ as well

as goodness, kindness, and patience. This is not to say that one must be bearing the fruit of the Spirit to the point of perfection before he can be described as bearing fruit, but he must be striving to that end. It should never be implied that an individual is a fruit-bearing Christian unless he is actively striving to demonstrate his love for the Lord by yielding his life in obedience to his will (John 14:15).

As the Christian grows in grace and in the knowledge of the truth of God day by day, he will bear the fruit of the Spirit. This growth and development as witnessed in his life is the process of sanctification being accomplished with the aid of the Holy Spirit.

Questions For Study

1. Define the term "sanctification." How does sanctification differ from conversion?
2. What passages of scripture in the New Testament emphasize the work of the Holy Spirit in the process of sanctification?
3. Discuss in detail each component part of the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22ff).
4. Can it be said that one is bearing the fruit of the Spirit when he is manifesting kindness and goodness toward his fellowman but failing to obey other commands of Christ? If not, why not?
5. Summarize in your own words the purpose of the Spirit's work in the life of the Christian.
6. Show how the terms "conversion," "new birth," "growth," "sanctification," "holy life," "fruit of the Spirit," relate to this purpose.
7. The Holy Spirit's total work in the life of the Christian is accomplished through two means. What are they?

Chapter IX

THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE LIFE OF THE CHRISTIAN THROUGH THE INSTRUMENTALITY OF THE WRITTEN WORD

A distinction should be made between the Holy Spirit and the word of God. The Holy Spirit is a personality, a member of the Godhead, who dwells in the heart of the faithful Christian. The word of God, the truth, is an instrument which the Holy Spirit employs. The instrument should not be mistaken for the agent. Although the Holy Spirit is the source of God's word there is a difference between the Holy Spirit and the words of the Holy Spirit even as there is a difference between our words and our spirit. The Holy Spirit uses the instrumentality of the written word in sanctifying the Christian and enabling him to bear the fruit of the Spirit.

Just as the Holy Spirit uses the word in the conversion of sinners so He also uses the word in the sanctification of the saints. In many instances the Holy Spirit and the word of God seem inseparable in that whatever is said of the Holy Spirit is also said of the word of God. The Christian is born of the Spirit (John 3:5-8) and of the word (I Peter 1:23). We are saved by the Spirit (Titus 3:5) and by the word (James 1:21). Man is sanctified through the Holy Spirit (I Corinthians 6:11; II Thessalonians 2:13), but Jesus said we are sanctified through the word (John 17:17). There is power in the Holy Spirit (Romans 15:13) and there is power in the word (Romans 1:16; Hebrews 1:3). These passages clearly show that the Holy Spirit uses the written word in accomplishing his work. The Holy Spirit never dispenses with this agency of truth in renewing the hearts of men and guiding Christians in their every walk of life. "Sanctify them in the truth, thy word is truth" (John 17:17). To the end of sanctifying the Christian and forming Christ in us (Galatians 4:19) the Holy Spirit does several things

through the instrumentality of the written word. He guides and leads the Christian and He comforts and encourages him.

The Holy Spirit Guides and Leads Through the Word

It is through the guidance of the truth that one becomes a Christian and it is also through continued guidance of God's word that one develops the Christian life. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God" (Romans 8:14). The Christian is led by the Spirit both externally and internally. (The latter will be discussed in Lesson XI.) Externally, the Spirit supplies the gospel truth as set forth in the New Testament, containing the rules and precepts necessary for the instruction and guidance of God's children. When we follow the word we are being led by the Spirit. Through the word, the man of God may be made complete, furnished completely unto every good work (II Timothy 3:17). To refuse to hear or follow the teachings of the word is to reject the Spirit and to refuse His guidance.

The Bible is the laws and teachings of the Spirit to guide man. It is the guidebook given to man by the Spirit of God, without which no man can live the Christian life or take a single step toward God and everlasting life. Since man is not able to lead himself (Jeremiah 10:23; Proverbs 28:26) it is necessary for man to look to the word of God for spiritual direction. As man seeks spiritual instruction and guidance he turns to the word of God revealed by the Spirit and takes it into his heart and seeks to mold his thoughts, feelings, purposes and life by that holy word.

The word of God to man defines the channels through which God's blessings flow and the conditions on which man may enjoy the favor of God. It tells man what conditions of heart, what spiritual frame and what bodily acts manifesting and attesting that frame of heart are essential to the enjoyment of the favor of God. It also furnishes the means and guidance that will produce the conditions of

heart and body essential to the enjoyment of divine favor. Through these means provided by God, the Spirit exerts his influence to instruct, to guide, to strengthen and to comfort.¹³

When the Christian is obedient and faithful to God's word, it is received into his heart, thus allowing the Spirit to guide him and lead him in order that his life might bear fruit unto eternal life.

God has chosen his word as the medium of bestowing and developing spiritual life and only through the laws of the Spirit, revealed through the word, can spiritual life be imparted and only through living in accordance with these laws can it be perpetuated and developed. Through the scriptures, inspired of God by his Spirit, the Christian is taught, reprov'd, corrected and instructed in the way of righteousness (II Timothy 3:16). The word is able to save us (James 1:21) and is capable of building us up in order that we might receive an inheritance of eternal life (Acts 20:31). However, the Spirit can accomplish these ends through the word, only when the Christian allows himself to be led by the Spirit, faithfully studying and obeying God's divine will.

The Holy Spirit Comforts and Encourages Through the Word

In addition to guiding and leading the Christian through the written word the Holy Spirit also comforts and encourages the child of God through the word. "Wherefore comfort one another with these words" (I Thessalonians 4:18). And, "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that through patience and through comfort of the scriptures we might have hope" (Romans 15:4). The Holy Spirit comforts and encourages us by means of the promises and rich blessings He offers us through his word. The many

¹³David Lipscomb, *Salvation from Sin* (Nashville: Gospel Advocate Company), p. 102.

promises revealed in God's word provide the hope that exists in the heart of the Christian. The promise of Christ's second coming and the resurrection of the dead were words of comfort to the Thessalonians (I Thessalonians 4:13-18). The promise of Christ's victory over Satan and his hosts were words of comfort to the persecuted Christian (Revelation 17:14) and helped give them the courage to endure. A study of the New Testament reveals many promises and blessings that God has made to the faithful Christian. All of these should comfort us and encourage us in our every effort to live a faithful Christian life.

The Holy Spirit uses the word of God to sanctify the Christian even as He utilizes the word to convert the alien sinner. Through the instrumentality of the word the Holy Spirit guides, leads and instructs the Christian that he might be furnished completely unto every good work and bear the fruit of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit also comforts and encourages the child of God through the many promises and blessings He has made to us through the word.

Questions For Study

1. Is there a difference between the Holy Spirit and the word of God? If so, what is the difference?
2. List several things that the Holy Spirit accomplishes through the instrumentality of the word.
3. In what ways does the Holy Spirit guide and lead the Christian through the word?
4. What limits the ability of the Spirit to lead us through the word?
5. In what ways does the Holy Spirit comfort and encourage the Christian through the word?
6. Discuss how the word of God helps us to bear the fruit of the Spirit.
7. What is the implication of the expression "the sword of the Spirit" as it is used to describe the word? (Ephesians 6:17)

Chapter X

THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE LIFE OF THE CHRISTIAN THROUGH HIS DWELLING IN THE CHRISTIAN (I)

It has been noted in previous chapters that the Holy Spirit dwells within the faithful Christian. The Holy Spirit is given by God to those who obey him (Acts 5:32). The indwelling Spirit in the heart of the Christian works toward the end of sanctifying the child of God. It is this phase of the Spirit's work that is unique, for never before has the individual man "possessed the Holy Spirit" for the purpose of aiding him to live a righteous and godlike life. It is a blessing promised only to the Christian (Acts 2:38-39). It is in the sphere of the human spirit that the Holy Spirit is truly able to work in and for the Christian to enable him to bear the fruit of the Spirit. The Spirit accomplishes much for the Christian through the instrumentality of the written word, but the distinctive work that He does as He dwells within the heart of the Christian cannot be accomplished through the word. Through the indwelling Spirit the whole of man is affected; his mind, his body, his emotions, and his spirit. Just as the Holy Spirit worked in several ways through the instrumentality of the word so He also works in several ways to sanctify the Christian as He dwells within him. The indwelling Spirit comforts, strengthens, and makes intercession for the child of God.

You shall receive the Holy Spirit as a gift; it shall enter into you and hence be in you, according to the Master's promise; it shall dwell in you as its fitting earthly temple; to which let us add, as consequences, it shall *comfort* you, so that you shall not evermore carry in your hearts the lonely, disconsolate feeling of orphans; it shall *strengthen* you with strength in the feeble inner man; it shall *intercede* for you in the sighs which no human speech can express, to procure for you such things as you know not how to

pray for as you should—such shall be the gift of the Spirit in you, and such shall it be to you.¹⁴

The Indwelling Spirit Comforts

Previously we have noted that Jesus promised his apostles the Comforter, even the Spirit of truth who would abide in them (John 14:16-17). But as it was observed, the Spirit's mission as a comforter was not limited to the apostles but included all faithful Christians in whom the Spirit dwells in fulfillment of the Lord's promise (John 7:39). We shall see that the Holy Spirit is active as a comforter as He dwells within the heart of the Christian as well as being a comforter through the written word.

The indwelling Spirit comforts the child of God in a number of ways. In chapter VII the significance of the indwelling Spirit to the Christian was discussed and four illustrations were given: the indwelling Spirit as a representative of God and Christ; the indwelling Spirit as a proof of sonship; the indwelling Spirit as a seal; and the indwelling Spirit as an earnest or pledge. In each instance the indwelling Spirit is also a comfort to the Christian because of the particular significance of the Holy Spirit to the Christian in each case. The Holy Spirit also comforts the child of God in that He bears witness with our spirits that we are children of God,

As a representative of God and Christ. Since the child of God knows from the Bible that the Holy Spirit dwells within him he also knows that God and Christ abide in him through their representative, the Holy Spirit. The knowledge that God

¹⁴Moses E. Lard, "Review of Sigma on the Gift of the Holy Spirit," *Lard's Quarterly*, II (1865), 104.

and Christ abide in him should comfort and encourage the Christian as he strives to follow God's divine will. God and Christ are not personalities that are "far removed" from the Christian, but rather they are immanent, dwelling in him and working for him through the Spirit of God. It is through his possession of the Holy Spirit that man has fellowship with God. The indwelling Spirit is a comfort to the Christian in that He signifies that God and Christ are represented by Him.

As a proof of sonship. The indwelling Spirit is a proof to the Christian that he is a son of God (Galatians 4:6). Because he has received the gift of the Holy Spirit he may know assuredly that he is a son of God. This filial relationship to the Father, established by the Spirit, also creates a spiritual kinship with Christ, so that the Christian shares in the rights of sonship belonging to the Son, becoming joint heirs with him (Romans 8:17). The Holy Spirit is a comfort to the Christian because the fact of the indwelling Spirit signifies that he is a son of God and joint heir with Christ. The knowledge of these facts not only comforts the Christian but they can give him the courage to endure abuse and afflictions.

As a seal. The Christian is sealed by the Holy Spirit that dwells within him (Ephesians 1:13; II Corinthians 1:21-22). The fact that the Christian is sealed by the indwelling Spirit proves that he truly is a disciple of the Lord, that he belongs to God and that he is secure as long as he remains faithful. Once again the indwelling Spirit is a comfort to the Christian in that He seals the Christian and signifies his genuineness, his ownership by God, and his security as a Christian.

As an earnest or pledge. When the Christian receives the "gift of the Holy Spirit" he obtains an earnest or pledge of an inheritance to be received in the life to come. Paul describes the Spirit as the "earnest" of the future life (Ephesians 1:13-14; II Corinthians 1:22; 5:5). In the giving of his Spirit to man God gave a pledge of full payment which the child of God

will receive when he obtains his inheritance of immortal life. The Christian is comforted by the indwelling Spirit because it signifies that he has God's pledge of an eternal life. And nothing should give the faithful servant of God more comfort than the assurance of spending eternity with God and Christ.

Bearing witness with our spirit. In Romans 8:16 Paul says, "The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God." The apostle speaks here of two witnesses, the Holy Spirit and our spirit. If we are led by the Holy Spirit (verse 14) then He unites with our spirit to testify that we are God's children. This testimony is for the purpose of assuring and confirming our own faith. The witness of the Spirit with our spirits takes away the doubts and fears which adversity brings. The witness of the Spirit with our spirit occurs after conversion and assures the believer that he is a member of the family of God. It is not testimony that is given but once, but it occurs throughout the Christian's life as he is led by the Spirit. In fact it is in our being led by the Spirit that both our spirit and the indwelling Spirit bear witness to our being children of God.

The testimony of the Spirit is that we are led by Him and therefore are children of God. He bears witness to this effect when we allow ourselves to be led by Him. The Spirit of God leads both externally and internally; externally through the word and internally through the indwelling Spirit as He strengthens the inner man. (The internal leading of the Spirit is discussed more fully in the next chapter.) As the Christian faithfully follows God's word and allows himself to be strengthened by the indwelling Spirit he becomes more able to overcome sin and to bear the fruit of the Spirit. When the fruit of the Spirit is manifested in the life of the Christian it is evident that he is being *led* by the Spirit. The result of the Spirit's leading, the fruit of the Spirit, makes it possible for the Spirit to testify that we are children of God. As the Christian allows himself to be led by the Spirit, he will bear the

fruit of the Spirit; and in this manner the Spirit testifies that he is a son of God.

To the witness of the Spirit is added the testimony of our own spirits. Our spirits can testify whether we are allowing ourselves to be led by the word of God and by the indwelling Spirit, or whether we are quenching and resisting the Spirit. The Christian knows whether or not he is bearing the fruit of the Spirit.

We know within ourselves what is our spiritual state, what our wish, intent, and effort. Are these in strict accordance with the Father's will as read in his word? Are we living closely up to his will, and holding the evil inclinations of the flesh in check? Are we keeping the body under? Over all its perverse tendencies is a spirit, enlightened and pure, dominant? All this we know within ourselves, and to it can testify.¹⁵

Thus, both our spirit and the Holy Spirit testify that we are children of God, as we are led by the Spirit and the fruit of the Spirit is evidenced in our lives.

If we are led, we know it, and so our own spirit testifies to us. If we are led in the godly, spiritual path, it can be none other than the Holy Spirit who leads; and so, in the very act of leading, the Spirit testifies to us. And lastly, if we are led, and if we follow, this union of our spirit and God's Spirit in joint action proves us children of God.¹⁶

Once again the Christian can be assured that he is a son of God because of the Holy Spirit that dwells within his heart and by this knowledge be comforted and encouraged in striving to live a Christ-like life.

¹⁵Moses E. Lard, *Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Romans* (Cincinnati: The Standard Publishing Company, 1875), p. 266.

¹⁶J. W. McGarvey and Philip Y. Pendleton, *The Standard Bible Commentary* (Cincinnati: Standard Publishing Company, 1916), p. 362.

The Indwelling Spirit Makes Intercession

Another work of the indwelling Spirit is set forth by the apostle Paul in Romans 8:26-27.

And in like manner the Spirit also helpeth our infirmity: for we know not how to pray as we ought; but the Spirit himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered; and he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

"The Holy Spirit is seen here in His most intimate relation with the human consciousness, distinct from it, yet closely associated with its imperfectly formed longings after righteousness, acting as an intercessor on its behalf in the sight of God, even as the glorified Christ does, however not in heaven but in the hearts of believers."¹⁷ The Christian is weak in that he does not know how to pray as he ought. Paul does not mean that the Christian does not know how to pray, but implies that he needs help in his prayers.

And we require such help, for, left to ourselves, we would fail to ask for these things which we need, and would spend our time and strength asking for those things which we do not need; for we are not wise enough to pray for the things which, considering our real, present weakness, we ought to pray for. But the Spirit knows these needful things, and he affords a remedy for our weakness by himself interceding for us.¹⁸

The Spirit aids our weaknesses and intercedes with unutterable longings which God recognizes as the voice of his Spirit and in accordance with his will (Romans 8:27). As God searches

¹⁷Henry B. Swete, *The Holy Spirit in the New Testament* (London: MacMillans and Company, Limited, 1909), p. 221.

¹⁸McGarvey and Pendleton, *op. cit.*, p. 364.

our hearts, when his Spirit dwells within us, he knows what it is that the Spirit has in mind and what it is that the Spirit asks.

This activity of the Spirit in no way conflicts with the work of our Lord as mediator (I Timothy 2:5) but rather supplements it. The Holy Spirit intercedes for us in much the same way that fellow Christians intercede for one another in prayer.

What a comforting thought to know that every member of the Godhead is concerned with our infirmities and is interested in helping us to overcome them. Certainly verses 26-27 is a proper introduction to the closing passage in Romans 8 which affirms that "we are more than conquerors through him that loved us" and that nothing is "able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Questions For Study

1. Discuss the ways in which the Holy Spirit is a source of comfort in each of the following:
 - a) as a representative of God and Christ; b) as a proof of sonship; c) as a seal; d) as an earnest or pledge; e) as He bears witness with our spirit.
2. How do we know that the Spirit's mission as a comforter was not limited to the apostles? (Note also chapter V.)
3. What is the relationship between our bearing the fruit of the Spirit and the Holy Spirit's bearing witness to our spirit that we are children of God?
4. For what reason is there a need for the Holy Spirit to make intercession for us?
5. List some instances in which the Holy Spirit could make intercession for the Christian (such as, at a time of deep sorrow and grief).
6. How does Romans 8:26-27 serve as a fitting introduction to Romans 8:26-39?
7. Is there a conflict between Romans 8:26-27 and I Timothy 2:5? If not, why not?

Chapter XI

THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE LIFE OF THE CHRISTIAN THROUGH HIS DWELLING IN THE CHRISTIAN (2)

In the preceding chapter the work of the Holy Spirit through His dwelling in the Christian was discussed with regard to His work as a Comforter and as one who makes intercession for the saints. This lesson is a continuation of the work of the Holy Spirit as He dwells within the child of God.

The Indwelling Spirit Strengthens

The greatest work of the indwelling Spirit is His strengthening of the inward man. Paul speaks of this work of the Spirit in his letter to the Ephesians.

For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, that ye may be *strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inward man*; that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; to the end that ye being rooted and grounded in love, may be strong to apprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye may be filled unto all the fulness of God (Ephesians 3:14-19).

In Philippians 4:13 the apostle writes, "I can do all things in him that strengtheneth me." These passages show that God strengthens the Christian, and Ephesians 3:16 states that he does so through the Spirit dwelling within him.

In Paul's prayer for the Ephesians quoted above (Ephesians 3:14-19) we see that the goal of the Christian life is "the fulness of God" (verse 19). But this end is not obtained until the

Christian is made strong through being rooted and grounded in love, a fruit of the Spirit. The obtaining of this love is a result of Christ's dwelling in the Christian's heart through faith which in turn is dependent upon the Spirit's dwelling in the inward man (verses 16-17). In this progress toward being filled with "all the fulness of God" the human nature alone is insufficient. Behind it all there lies a strengthening of the will, and the whole spiritual nature or "inner man" by the Spirit of God (verse 16). Spiritual strength is a primary and most fundamental need of human nature on its way to God. Without this strength obtained through the indwelling Spirit no man would be able to live the Christian life.

Without this gift (the gift of the Holy Spirit) no one could be saved or ultimately triumph over all opposition. Man himself is not competent to wrestle against the allied forces of the world, flesh and the devil. But by his Holy Spirit, in answer to our prayers, God works in us, and by us and for us, all that is needful to our present, spiritual and eternal salvation.¹⁹

It is only with the help of the Spirit of God dwelling within us that we can fashion ourselves to the image of the Lord that is set before us. The spiritual strength that is obtained from the indwelling Spirit is indispensably necessary to living the Christian life and for overcoming the flesh and the many temptations the child of God encounters. In living a Christian life it is necessary that the flesh be overcome, that sin be subdued and no longer have dominion over the child of God (Romans 6:6, 14). The Spirit of God who dwells only in the Christian comes in contact with the flesh and by the Spirit's assistance the tempting power in the flesh is overcome. The habits of life become transformed as the Spirit gradually helps us overcome the adversary, so that the works of the flesh are displaced by the fruit of the Spirit. When the "works of flesh" are care-

¹⁹Campbell, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

fully compared with the "fruit of the Spirit" as described by Paul in Galatians 5:19-23, the deadly antagonism between the two categories is realized and there can be no doubt that only as one possesses the Holy Spirit can he overcome the one class and bring forth the other in his life. The Christian then is able to mortify and crucify the flesh by the Holy Spirit that dwells within him and strengthens him. Without this strength afforded by the indwelling Spirit the Christian would be overcome by the flesh and by temptation, unable to endure and therefore subject to eternal death.

The above picture is clearly set forth by the apostle Paul in the seventh and eighth chapters of Romans. This passage shows the helplessness of man under any form of law. The law cannot change a man's nature and therefore cannot save him from himself, but God in his system of grace provides the way for the change in man's nature so that the sinful in him can be overcome, and his spiritual, regenerate nature be left free to serve God in righteousness. In chapter 7:13-23 Paul presents a picture of the struggle that goes on between the flesh and the spirit to rule the life of the man who is attempting to serve God under the law. Sin has *dominion* over him. The flesh lusts against the spirit and the spirit opposes the flesh. The law which his mind approves is not able to overcome the law of sin (the tendency to sin) ruling in his members (verses 15-23). The spiritual nature wishes to obey the spiritual law, but is not able, because it is incarnate in the flesh and consequently weakened by it. Sin excites and influences the fleshly nature and thus prompts man to break the law. The term flesh is here used (verse 18) in an ethical sense referring to the seat of the appetites, passions and lusts (Romans 7:5). It is this part of man's nature in which dwells no good thing. Man has the will to do good but with the flesh in the mastery he can find no way to accomplish it. Man is hindered by the flesh, and unable because of it, to perform the right which he desires to do (verse 19). The law of sin (the tendency to sin) ruling in the flesh prevents him from doing good. Because man's spirit is unable

to overcome this tendency to sin, the law of sin, he is a captive of sin and sin has dominion over him (verse 23). The law of Moses or any other legislative law cannot make us free from this law of sin and death (Romans 8:2-3). But all this is changed when Christ enters the picture and is received by faith. The law of sin and death (the tendency to sin) is now vanquished by a new and stronger principle, *the law of the Spirit of life in Christ* (Romans 8:2). This law of the Spirit of life in Christ includes the power of the Spirit of Christ, which leads and strengthens the Christian as He dwells within him. *Now* the spirit of man no longer resists the impulses of the flesh unaided and suffers hopeless defeat, but is *reinforced by the Spirit* which leads it to victory. The Christian is now able to do that which the man under the law could not do (Romans 8:3), and this is to walk after the inward, spiritual nature which desires to do right instead of walking according to the outward, fleshly nature which lusts to do wrong. The Christian is thus able to dominate sin instead of having sin, through the weakness of the flesh, dominate him. "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under law, but under grace" (Romans 6:14).

Romans 8:2 is often interpreted to mean that the law of the Spirit of life in Christ is the gospel which frees us from the law of sin and death (our past sins) doing that which the law of Moses could not do. There is no doubt that those who are in Christ (8:1) have been made free from their sins because of their obedience to the gospel. But Romans 8:1-3ff cannot be isolated from Paul's thought in Romans 7. The apostle is concerned with more than just the remission of our past sins. He is concerned with the man under the law, who is ruled by the flesh and the tendency to sin. He is a man who wants to do right but the law of sin in his members (Romans 7:23), the tendency to sin, keeps him from doing that which he knows is right. This "law of sin" is again mentioned in Romans 8:2 when Paul says that the "law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" has made us free from it. The "law of the Spirit of life

in Christ" has made us free from the dominating tendency to sin and its natural consequence, sin resulting in our eternal death. This "law of the Spirit of life in Christ" may well include the gospel of Christ (the plan of salvation) but it also must include that which is able to help the spirit of man overcome his tendency to sin. This is the "Spirit of life," the indwelling Spirit that strengthens with power the inward man (Ephesians 3:16). This thought is brought out by Paul in the verses following Romans 8:2, where he speaks of the Christian as one who minds the things of the Spirit (8:5) and is one in whom the Spirit of God and Christ dwells (8:9). Particularly in chapter 8, verse 13 does the apostle supplement his thought of 8:2, "for if ye live after the flesh, ye must die; but if by the Spirit ye put to death the deeds of the body, ye shall live." The putting to death of the deeds of the body was that which the man without the Spirit of Christ, described in Romans 7, could not do, but is now able to do because of the Spirit of Christ that dwells within him. It is in this manner that the Holy Spirit "leads internally" (Romans 8:14). "To whatever extent the Holy Spirit by its indwelling strengthens the human spirit, to enable it to control the flesh, to that extent the leading is internal."²⁰

Swete sums up the relationship of the indwelling Spirit to the flesh in the following:

The life of the Spirit, as it proceeds, encounters a hostile force which Paul calls the flesh, and the history of the Christian life is the history of a lifelong war (Galatians 5:17). The flesh is regarded as human nature, fallen and sinful, corrupt and morally decaying; the precise opposite in man of the principle of life which is communicated by the Spirit of God. In view of this antinomy men fall into two categories, those who are in the flesh and those who are in the Spirit (Romans 8:5, 8f). In the Christian, as the Spirit gains upon the flesh, there grows up within the man,

²⁰Lard, *Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Romans*, p. 264.

the mind of the Spirit, an attitude of thought and will which changes the direction of the inner life, inclining it to the Divine, and the eternal. To live by the Spirit, to walk by the Spirit, this was one safeguard against relapsing into the lusts of the flesh (Galatians 5:16ff).²¹

But the Spirit is not merely an aggressive force leading the human spirit against the flesh, or a defensive power shielding it from attack. The indwelling Spirit is a constructive power which builds up a new life within, cooperating with and aiding the spirit of man in the work of bringing the human life to the image of God. "For the life of the Spirit of Christ in the individual believer is the very life of Christ in him, reproducing the character of Christ by forming Christ within his heart" (Galatians 4:19).²² Christ dwelling in the heart of the Christian through the Spirit becomes the life of our lives (Galatians 2:20 also note II Cor. 3:6). Thus, the inner life of man is strengthened and enriched until at last it is filled unto all the fulness of God (Ephesians 3:19).

One question that may be asked concerning this phase of the Spirit's work is, "If the indwelling Spirit strengthens us and enables us to overcome the tendency to sin why is it that the child of God continues to sin?" How is it that we can be made free from the tendency to sin (Romans 8:2) and still occasionally transgress God's laws? There is no doubt that the indwelling Spirit enables us to overcome temptation and the tendency to sin, but we do not always allow ourselves to be led by the Spirit. By cherishing impure thoughts in our hearts we may grieve the Spirit, or quench the Spirit. To the degree which the Christian seeks after and obeys God, to that degree he receives the influence of the Spirit. When the Christian hungers and thirsts after righteousness and strives to keep his heart free he will be strengthened more and more by the Spirit's dwelling within him. Man has no right to blame God or the

²¹Swete, *op. cit.*, p. 343.

²²*Ibid.*, p. 348.

Spirit for his sins if he fails to permit the Spirit to lead him and strengthen him. In Ephesians 4:30 Paul exhorts us to "grieve not the Holy Spirit of God" and in I Thessalonians 5:19 he again exhorts us by saying, "Quench not the Spirit." The Christian is never overwhelmed by the indwelling Spirit so that he is unable to exercise his freedom of choice. The Holy Spirit provides our human spirit with that source of strength that is so necessary for us to overcome the tendency to sin, but we must allow ourselves to use it.

Other Activities of the Indwelling Spirit

The New Testament does not teach in a positive or definite way that the indwelling Spirit works in any way other than the ways we have mentioned. However, there are several implications that the Holy Spirit may be active in at least two other ways in behalf of the Christian. In James 1:5 we are taught to pray for wisdom. It would seem most appropriate for the Christian to ask God for wisdom in a teaching situation so that he might know best how to touch the hearts of men with the gospel. In response to such prayers as these it may well be that our Father in heaven uses the agency of the indwelling Spirit to provide us with wisdom. This would appear to be logical since the Spirit of God abides within the Christian and knows intimately the weaknesses and needs of the individual (Romans 8:26-27). In the realm of providence there may be many things that God does for and in behalf of the Christian, both in response to prayer and otherwise. It is possible that God uses the Holy Spirit on these occasions. In Acts 8:26ff and in Acts 10 we see how God, by his divine providence or intervention, brought the preacher and the sinner together. In Acts 8:29 the Holy Spirit is mentioned as having a part in leading Philip to the Ethiopian eunuch. In Revelation 3:8 the Lord mentions a door of opportunity opened for the brethren in Philadelphia. It may be that God uses the Holy Spirit today to provide for us such doors of opportunity and to provide for

the child of God an occasion whereby he may bear the fruit of the Spirit. (Note also Col. 4:3). We should be careful, however, in teaching or inferring that the Holy Spirit is active in a specific way either in the realm of divine providence or as He dwells within the child of God when the Bible does not clearly indicate to us such an activity or work. It is best that we limit our affirmations with regards to the work of the indwelling Spirit to those things that are clearly taught in the New Testament.

Questions For Study

1. Discuss Ephesians 3:14-19, noting especially verse 16 and the strengthening power of the Holy Spirit.
2. For what reason, or purpose, does the Christian need spiritual strength?
3. What is the plight of the man described in Romans 7:13-23?
4. How does the individual described in Romans 8 differ from the man described in Romans 7?
5. What is "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ" (Romans 8:2)?
6. Discuss Romans 8:13 and note how this relates to the strengthening power of the Spirit.
7. To what end does the Holy Spirit lead the Christian internally (Romans 8:14)?
8. In what ways is the indwelling Spirit a constructive power within the life of the Christian? (Note especially Galatians 5:16-24).
9. If the indwelling Spirit strengthens and enables us to overcome the tendency to sin, why is it that the child of God continues to sin?

Chapter XII

ERRORS CONCERNING THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE LIFE OF THE CHRISTIAN (I)

It is almost impossible to study any phase of the Holy Spirit's activities without noticing that certain errors are taught which are contrary to the teaching of God's word. This is definitely true concerning the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Christian. In this lesson we will discuss the belief that the Holy Spirit works for the Christian *only* through the written word. The next chapter will deal with other errors that have been taught concerning the work of the Holy Spirit in the Christian.

Over the past century several brethren in the church have taken the position that the Holy Spirit exerts no influence upon man at any time or in any way except through the agency of the word. Believing and teaching that the Holy Spirit operates *in conversion* only through the word they also argue that the Holy Spirit dwells *in the Christian* only through the word. This was the position taken by Alexander Campbell in the Rice-Campbell debate. Campbell tried to sustain his proposition from arguments drawn from John Locke's (1632-1704) philosophy, from which it is shown that the nature of man is such that he can be influenced only through words.²³ However, in Campbell's "Christian System" there are indications that Campbell also recognized an influence of the Spirit in sanctification which could not be explained by Locke's philosophy.

Paul says that God has saved us by the bath of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit, which he poured

²³Winfred E. Garrison, *Alexander Campbell's Theology* (St. Louis: Christian Publishing Company, 1900), p. 268.

on us richly through Jesus Christ our Saviour (Titus 3:5). This pouring out of the influences, this renewing of the Holy Spirit, is as necessary as the bath of regeneration to the salvation of the soul, and to the enjoyment of the hope of heaven. In the kingdom into which we are born of water, the Holy Spirit is as the atmosphere in the kingdom of nature; we mean that the influences of the Holy Spirit are as necessary to the new life, as the atmosphere is to our animal life in the kingdom of nature, all that is done in us before regeneration, God our Father effects by *the Word*, or the gospel as dictated and confirmed by his Holy Spirit. But after we are thus begotten and born by the Spirit of God—after our new birth—the Holy Spirit is shed on us richly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; of which the peace of mind, the love, the joy and the hope of the regenerate is full proof; for these are among the promised fruits of the Holy Spirit.²⁴

Campbell does not try to define the method of the Holy Spirit's operating on the Christian but it is clearly distinguished from the influence of the Spirit through the word. "It seems evident that Campbell forsook his system at this point and stated religious truth, ignoring the fact that it could not be logically coordinated with his system."²⁵

Others, however, fear that to admit that the Holy Spirit works in the Christian in some way other than through the word, is to admit that the Holy Spirit may operate also in man's conversion outside of the word.

If it can be shown that the divine Spirit works by a direct impact in strengthening the Christian and helping his infirmities, it can never be proved that he does not work in the same way in the conversion of sinners.²⁶

²⁴Campbell, *op. cit.*, p. 233.

²⁵Winfred E. Garrison, *op. cit.*, p. 278.

²⁶G. W. Longan, "The Presence of the Holy Spirit in Christians," *Lord's Quarterly*, III (1866), 163.

Because of this fear they have denied the work of the indwelling Spirit and claimed that whatever the Spirit does for the Christian is done only through the instrumentality of the written word. Those who take the above position defend it by two major lines of reasoning. First, they say it is impossible to give any *tangible* evidence that the Holy Spirit dwells within the Christian, and, if one can have it and never know, of what use is it?

Can it be that, having it (the indwelling Spirit) in constant possession since the day of our salvation, we nevertheless can give no tangible evidence thereof—. Did we know the moment the gift came and were we conscious of the reception? Who will dare say yes? Who can honestly and intelligently confess to a consciousness of its abiding presence?—If one can have it and never know it, of what use is it? ²⁷

A second argument made is that there is *no need* for a personal indwelling Spirit, because everything that is claimed to be effected by the personal indwelling of the Spirit is clearly accomplished by the Spirit acting through the word of God. Those passages which promise the Christian the Holy Spirit and declare that the Spirit abides in him are said to be totally fulfilled as the Christian lets God's word, which the Spirit inspired, come into his heart.

The holy scriptures are the only means that the Holy Spirit uses to enlighten the minds of men in regard to every relation they may sustain to God, and to comfort and strengthen the heart of the Christian. And the evident reason why the Scriptures are the only means which the Spirit uses for this object, is the fact that they contain all that God has to say to man, whether he be sinner or a saint, and that they contain all the motives, considerations,

²⁷Guy Woods, "The Gift of the Holy Spirit," *Firm Foundation*, LV (March 22, 1938), 2.

hopes and fears which can arouse, strengthen and comfort the heart. ²⁸

Thus, there is no need for the Spirit's *actually* dwelling in the Christian since all is accomplished through the written word.

From our study in the preceding chapters it is clear that the Holy Spirit is promised to the Christian and dwells within him. It is granted that there is mystery connected with how the Spirit dwells within us. But there is also mystery as to how our own spirits dwell in our bodies. Just as it is impossible to explain the workings of our own spirit, so it is impossible to define or even fully understand the means and methods of the indwelling Spirit. Although we do not profess to know all mysteries connected with the indwelling of the Holy Spirit we nevertheless can be certain that He dwells within the Christian. The Christian can know that the Holy Spirit dwells within him as certainly as he knows that his sins have been pardoned. He has no "tangible" evidence that he has received the remission of his sins, nor is he actually conscious of his pardon, but he knows from the Bible that if he has obeyed God he has received the promise of remission of sins (Acts 2:38). In a like manner the Christian knows that if he obeys God he will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38, 5:32). The indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit is a matter of faith with the Christian just as is the knowledge of his pardon. It is not a matter of "feelings" any more than the knowledge of our being pardoned is based on feelings. The criterion is God's word in both instances, not feelings. If God says that his Spirit dwells within us, then we believe that He does. Also, as the Christian's life bears the fruit of the Spirit this is evidence that the Spirit abides in him. The fruit of a holy life as evidenced in the Christian is proof that he is being led by the Spirit (Romans 8:14)

²⁸Dr. H. Christopher, "The Gift of the Holy Spirit," *Land's Quarterly*, I (1864), 353.

both through the written word and the indwelling of the Spirit. "That the Holy Spirit dwells in the Christian is not contradictive of reason. It is only above it and therefore not to be judged by it."²⁹

The argument that there isn't any work that the indwelling Spirit could perform that isn't done by the Spirit's acting through the word plainly contradicts the teaching of the New Testament. Previous lessons have been devoted to showing that the indwelling Spirit comforts, strengthens and makes intercession for the child of God. In each case it is a work that can only be accomplished by the indwelling Spirit. It cannot be a comfort to the Christian that God and Christ dwell in him through the Holy Spirit unless there is an actual indwelling of the Spirit. If God, Christ and the Holy Spirit all dwell in the Christian only through the word, what is the point of John's statements in I John 3:24 and I John 4:13 where he tells us that we know that God abideth in us because he has given His Spirit unto us? The impact of this promise, as well as its significance, is eliminated unless the Holy Spirit dwells within us personally. The word of God cannot be a "proof" of sonship. It is true that every man who is adopted into the family of God must be taught by the Spirit through the word before he is adopted, but Paul says that the Spirit is *given* to him because he *is* a son, not to prepare him for adoption or to enable him to become a son (Galatians 4:6). "If the reception of the word of truth is all that is meant by the reception of the Spirit, then Paul's rule is reversed and every man receives the Spirit, not because he is a son but that he may become one."³⁰ The Spirit cannot "seal" the Christian through the word nor can the word be an "earnest" of the Christian's future inheritance. In both cases the work of the Spirit is accomplished *after* one has heard

²⁹Lard, "Review of Sigma on the Gift of the Holy Spirit," p. 100.

³⁰T. W. Brents, *The Gospel Plan of Salvation* (Nashville: Gospel Advocate Company, 1874), p. 642.

and believed the gospel, *after* he has become a Christian (Ephesians 1:13-14). The Spirit was given *after* they were instructed in and obeyed the gospel, and hence is something more than just receiving the word of God. If the word of God only, and one's adherence to it, could be proof of sonship, a seal or sign of covenant relationship, and an earnest payment of a future inheritance, then why did it not serve as such under the old covenant? The Holy Spirit who was the author of the Old Testament just as surely as He is the author of the New Testament, bears a different relationship to the Christian than He did to the faithful Jew. This is evident from John 7:39 and Acts 2:38. Those faithful under the old covenant did not possess the Holy Spirit in the same way that the Christian receives Him. Yet, if the Holy Spirit dwells within the Christian only through the written word, then of necessity, the Holy Spirit would maintain the same relationship to the faithful Jew as He does now to the faithful Christian. To affirm this is absurd, in light of the New Testament scriptures. Where in the Old Testament does it affirm that the Holy Spirit was given to the Jew to prove his sonship, to seal him or to give him an earnest pledge on an unfulfilled promise? Why did God demand that the Jews be circumcised as a sign or seal of a covenant relationship between God and them if their loyalty to the word of God, the work of the Spirit, would serve as such a seal? If one's loyalty and adherence to the word of God today is the seal, why was it not under the old covenant? God has given us the Holy Spirit as a seal or sign of our covenant relationship with him. But this seal is the personal indwelling of the Holy Spirit Himself. This gift guarantees our sonship and is the downpayment on our future inheritance, eternal life.

The strengthening of the inner man (Ephesians 3:16) by the indwelling Spirit is a work that cannot be completely accomplished by the Holy Spirit through the word. It is only through the help of the indwelling Spirit that man is able to overcome the flesh and the tendency to sin. If the words of the Spirit could fully achieve this end why weren't the Jews

able to overcome the flesh since the Old Testament is also the Spirit inspired word? This work of the Spirit more than any other shows that the indwelling Spirit performs a work that cannot be accomplished through the written word alone. The significance of Paul's basic point in Romans 7 and 8 is nullified unless the Holy Spirit strengthens us in the inner man so that we are able to overcome the tendency to sin and the deeds of the flesh (Romans 8:2, 3, 13). To deny the personal indwelling of the Holy Spirit is to deny one of the Christian's greatest blessings. It is also to deny a source of strength that is so absolutely necessary in living the Christian life. It is basically this promise that makes the Christian different from the man who lived under the law (Romans 7:15-23). The Christian is now *able* to live as God would have him to live because he possesses the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Another work of the Spirit that obviously cannot be accomplished through the word is His work as an intercessor. The word cannot pray for the child of God nor can the word know his needs and weaknesses. This work can be achieved only by the personal indwelling Spirit.

Let us continue with the line of reasoning of those who do not believe in a personal indwelling of the Holy Spirit. If those passages which promise the Holy Spirit to the Christian and teach that the Spirit dwells in him are fulfilled by the Spirit through the word of God alone, then how does the Holy Spirit maintain a relationship to the Christian different from that which he sustains to the unbeliever? Both possess the word, and both may have a thorough knowledge of it. What is the meaning and purpose of Peter's promise of "the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38) if it is nothing more than the word of God? A man must have the word in his heart *before* he is saved. If the gift of the Holy Spirit is the word, then man must receive it *before his conversion* instead of after his obedience to the gospel as Peter promised (Acts 2:38). The "gift of the Holy Spirit" is the Spirit Himself and not merely the written

word. This thought is also brought out by Jesus, "But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believed on him were to receive: for the Spirit was not yet given: because Jesus was not yet glorified." (John 7:39) This passage clearly shows that the believer did not possess the Holy Spirit until after the new covenant was established. Therefore, this could not have reference to the written word, for the Spirit had already operated on the minds of both Jews and Patriarchs through the word. The "gift of the Holy Spirit" or the indwelling Spirit is promised only to the obedient child of God. However, if this promise refers only to the word of God, then anyone with a knowledge of God's word may possess the promise even before he has obeyed the commands of God.

Hence Christ refers here (John 7:38-39) to an influence of the Spirit over and above that which it exercises through the word of truth; an influence, by means of which it helps our infirmities (Romans 8:26); strengthens us with might even unto the inner man (Ephesians 3:16); and enables us to bring forth abundantly in our lives the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23).³¹

Therefore those who affirm that the Holy Spirit operates only through the instrumentality of the word must deny the work of the indwelling Spirit as a comforter, and as one who strengthens the inner man, and who makes intercession for him. They must also deny any distinctive meaning to the promise of the "gift of the Holy Spirit." In so doing they clearly contradict the teaching of the New Testament on the Holy Spirit. "O! Deliver me from the cold material philosophy which denies that God has placed within me a comforter and a strengthener."³²

³¹Robert Milligan, *Scheme of Redemption* (St. Louis: Christian Board of Publication), p. 283.

³²Moses E. Lard, "Spiritual Influence as It Relates to the Christian," *Lard's Quarterly*, I (1864), 241.

Questions For Study

1. Why have some been reluctant to believe that the Holy Spirit works in the Christian in some way other than through the written word?
2. What are the two major lines of reasoning that are followed by those who advocate that the Holy Spirit operates only through the written word in regards to the Christian?
3. What is the standard, or criterion for knowing that the Holy Spirit dwells within the Christian? Do feelings have any bearing on this knowledge?
4. Show how each of the following clearly indicates a personal indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Also discuss how each of these activities of the Spirit could not be fulfilled by the Spirit operating only through the word.
 - a. the Holy Spirit as a comforter representing God and Christ in the Christian
 - b. the Holy Spirit as a comforter proving our sonship
 - c. the Holy Spirit as a comforter sealing the Christian
 - d. the Holy Spirit as a comforter, an earnest pledge on our future inheritance
 - e. the Holy Spirit as one who strengthens the inner man, enabling the Christian to overcome the tendency to sin
 - f. the Holy Spirit as an intercessor
5. Show how John 7:39 and Acts 2:38 are without meaning unless the Holy Spirit dwells within the Christian personally.
6. In the light of quotations found in this book, what was the position of the following men with regards to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit?
 - a. Alexander E. Campbell
 - b. Moses E. Lard
 - c. J. W. McGarvey
 - d. T. W. Brents
 - e. Robert Milligan
 - f. Dr. H. Christopher

Chapter XIII

ERRORS CONCERNING THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE LIFE OF THE CHRISTIAN (2)

This lesson is a continuation of the preceding one. We shall discuss the doctrine of the Holy Spirit as an "Inner Witness"; the doctrine of the Holy Spirit as a Perfectionist, a second work of grace; and finally, the doctrine of Glossolalia.

The Holy Spirit as an Inner Witness

A doctrine that arose during the time of the Reformation is that of the inner witness of the Holy Spirit. The work of the Holy Spirit as an inner witness is supposedly twofold: first, it bears witness to the authority of the Scriptures by inwardly testifying to the Bible reader whether or not that which he is reading is truly the word of God. Second, it illuminates and enlightens the mind of the Bible student in order that he might be able to better understand the Scriptures.

The main champion of this doctrine during the Reformation was John Calvin. The Reformed Church was influenced by Calvin's teaching on the inner witness, as well as were the Puritans and Quakers of the seventeenth century. This doctrine of the inner witness of the Holy Spirit was developed at a time when the reformers were strongly opposing the Catholic doctrine that only the church had the right to interpret the scriptures and establish authority. With the doctrine of the inner witness, Bible authority and its understanding became an individual thing which was the goal Calvin and others were seeking.

Calvin set forth the inner witness of the Spirit as that which testified to the authority of the scriptures. In his *Institutes*, Calvin writes (I, 7, 4):

Just as God alone is a fitting witness concerning Himself in His utterances, so also the utterance will not find faith in the hearts of men before it is sealed by the inner witness

of the Spirit. The same Spirit therefore, who spoke by the mouth of the prophets must of necessity penetrate our hearts to *persuade* us that what was divinely commanded has been faithfully published.

The inner witness of the Spirit to the word was of such importance to Calvin that he declared that without it the scriptures could never really affect us even though the scriptures were considered to be God's word.

Calvin offered no tangible proof that the Bible was the word of God. He depended entirely on the inner witness of the Holy Spirit as a means of determining the divine origin of the Scriptures. One of the weaknesses of his position appears in the variety of attitudes taken by his followers in the Reformed Church toward the Apocrypha, which was accepted by some, merely ignored and left out of the canon by others and expressly rejected by still others as sources of doctrine.

The Puritans took the position that the inner witness of the Spirit enabled them to *understand* the scriptures. They believed that when they read the Bible something took place in their hearts, as well as in their heads. This view of the inner witness is well expressed by A. J. MacDonald.

To each of us the Spirit is a sword which cleaves open the stubborn and obscure passages, illumines the chambers of the mind so that the dark and uncertain thoughts and conclusions become clear and effective, and supplies us with practical interpretation. Pray to the Holy Spirit not only for guidance, but for understanding and illumination in all your study of the Bible, especially when its passages are obscure and especially if you have to construct addresses to deliver to others.³³

There is no teaching in God's word that supports the Calvin-

³³A. J. MacDonald, *The Interpreter Spirit and Human Life* (London: Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, 1944), p. 157.

istic doctrine of the inner witness of the Holy Spirit. None of the passages in the New Testament that speak of the indwelling Spirit or His work made any reference to the Spirit's bearing witness to the divine origin of the scriptures, or to the Spirit's enlightening and illuminating either the scriptures or those who read them. Our acceptance of the Bible as the word of God is based upon the content of various books of the Bible and the testimony and acceptance of the early church. The content of the books of the Bible clearly set them apart from the apocryphal writings. There is no need for the inner witness of the Spirit to testify to their genuineness.

If man were dependent upon the inner witness of the Spirit in order to be able to clearly understand the scriptures then how could the alien sinner, who does not possess the indwelling Spirit, understand the gospel of Christ enough to obey it? The doctrine of the inner witness limits God's ability since it implies that God was not able to set forth his word in such a way that it could be understood by man without special divine help. The fact that God encourages man to read and study his word (Acts 17:11; II Timothy 2:15; I Thessalonians 5:27) shows that man has now the ability to understand it. The Jew under the law did not possess the indwelling Spirit, yet he was able to understand God's word. Divine assistance in understanding the Bible is neither promised to man nor is it needed. The doctrine of the inner witness of the Holy Spirit is clearly inconsistent with the teaching of the New Testament.

The Holy Spirit as a Perfectionist: A Second Work of Grace

This doctrine of the work of the Holy Spirit sets forth the idea that the Christian does not receive the Holy Spirit until some time after he has been saved or regenerated. However, when the Holy Spirit is received, the Christian is *completely sanctified* or perfected and made free from sin in the present life. Since the work of the Spirit in this case is considered to perfect or completely sanctify the Christian, and to follow the

gift of salvation, this work of the Spirit is said to be a second work of grace.

According to this theory the Christian, although saved, may live for weeks, months or even years before he receives the Holy Spirit. Yet, it is certain that he will eventually receive Him.

Whenever God does begin the work, He always finishes, though not all at once. That there is no person, therefore, who ever dies with the work incomplete, is my firm conviction. That is whenever God creates anew, He most surely gives them the Holy Spirit. I conclude that whenever a soul is quickened by the Spirit of God, or converted, it will eventually have the gift of the Holy Spirit; but it may have to wait because of no present submission to God's righteousness.³⁴

During this period after conversion but before receiving the Holy Spirit the Christian is "half-saved." He abhors sin and wants to do good, yet he constantly finds that the inward evil of his nature overcomes his desires to do right. The Christian in this state is compared to the man Paul describes in Romans 7, who wants to obey God but cannot overcome the tendency to sin in his flesh.

According to this doctrine the soul receives full deliverance when man accepts Christ and is saved, but complete deliverance for the mortal body is not obtained until the Holy Spirit is received. With the receiving of the Holy Spirit the body is made free from its sinful nature and the Christian is able to live free from sin, fully sanctified and perfected. It is in this last state that the Christian is completely freed from the bondage of sinful appetites and habits, and enabled to have constant victory over self instead of suffering constant defeat.

³⁴W. Kelly, *The New Testament Doctrine of the Holy Spirit* (London: W. H. Broom, 1877), p. 176.

It is argued that this doctrine is supported by the teachings of the New Testament. The passages quoted show that the Holy Spirit is received by one who is "already a Christian." Acts 19:6 and Acts 8:14-17 are given as examples of those who were Christians but as yet had not received the Holy Spirit. Romans 7 and 8 are interpreted in the light of this doctrine to describe a Christian before and after receiving the Holy Spirit. Finally, those passages are quoted which state the Holy Spirit is active in sanctification (Romans 15:17; II Corinthians 6:11; II Thessalonians 2:13).

Those who advocate this doctrine fail to make any distinction between the baptism of the Holy Spirit, spiritual gifts, and the gift of the Holy Spirit. This is seen by their interpretation of Acts 19:6 and Acts 8:14-17. In both examples it is not the indwelling Spirit that is referred to but the miraculous manifestation of the Holy Spirit in the lives of *some* of the early Christians, or spiritual gifts.

It is true that Romans 7 describes a man without the Spirit of Christ, but it has already been noted that this is a man under a system of law and not a Christian (Romans 7:14, 16, 20, 22; 8:3). Romans 8 gives a description of the Christian's possessing the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, but there is no verse in this chapter or elsewhere that states that the Spirit "perfects" the Christian and enables him to never voluntarily transgress God's law again.

It is also true that the Holy Spirit is active in sanctification, but this doctrine denies that the Christian is sanctified or set apart when he obeys the gospel, and therefore contradicts the following passages: John 17:17; Hebrews 10:10, 14; Ephesians 5:26; Acts 22:16. These passages clearly teach that we are sanctified by truth and by the blood of Christ and that one is sanctified when he is baptized. It is in the above sense that sanctification is instantaneous; but in the development of a holy character, sanctification is a progressive work. Sanctification means to be "set apart," it does not mean that one is de-

livered from the tendency to sin, so that it becomes "impossible" for him to sin. The indwelling Spirit strengthens the Christian so that he may overcome the tendency to sin, but this does not preclude the possibility of his grieving or quenching the Spirit. The more the child of God allows the Spirit to lead him, the more he is set apart, sanctified, from the world, and the more he will be able to bear the fruit of the Spirit.

This doctrine primarily results from a failure to understand the different works of the Holy Spirit during the New Testament period and a failure to understand the complete meaning of sanctification as set forth in God's word.

Glossolalia

Glossolalia, or tongue-speaking, was one of the nine spiritual gifts mentioned by the apostle Paul in I Corinthians 12. The ability to speak in tongues is also mentioned in connection with Holy Spirit baptism in Acts 2 and Acts 10. We noted in lesson IV that both Holy Spirit baptism and spiritual gifts have been terminated, having served their purpose in the establishment and growth of the early church.

At the beginning of the 20th century, tongue-speaking, or glossolalia, was emphasized as a basic teaching of the Pentecostal movement. In very recent years the outbreak of claims about glossolalia has been felt by all the major denominations. This has been referred to as the charismatic revival. History records that glossolalia has been taught spasmodically throughout the past nineteen centuries by such groups as the Montanists, Gnostics, the French Huguenots, Jansenists, Shakers, early Methodists and Quakers. The tongue-speaking phenomenon also occupied an important place in ancient Greek, Asian, and African religious cultures.

In our time the "gift of tongues" is normally considered as

evidence that one has received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. This gift is thought to have two purposes: first for self-edification and as proof of one's spirituality; and second, for congregational use, and where the interpretation of tongues usually follows. In the latter case, tongue-speaking serves as a means whereby God can speak to man, revealing unto him some truth.

There are different views with regards to the nature of the language spoken in glossolalia.

Pentecostals are fairly well agreed that the tongues of Acts 2 are actual foreign languages, but they differ as to the nature of those of I Corinthians 14, some holding that they are rather the speaking of an "heavenly language," unknown to man; while others accept these as also actual languages, though perhaps not even comprehended by the speaker. Present-day glossolalia are also identified as both of these types, with some Pentecostals acknowledging that some of the efforts are fraudulent.³⁵

A third category for the term glossolalia is an "ecstatic jabber"—no actual human language, but if a language at all it would be a "heavenly" one—of which we could have no verification whatever. The person uttering this ecstatic jargon might be only under an intense psychological pressure and be really saying nothing at all. He has no way of being sure.³⁶

It seems evident that the term "tongues" as used in the New Testament could in every instance mean a foreign language or an unknown, actual, human language. There is no reason to believe that tongue-speaking in the first century was anything other than speaking in a foreign language. Yet, "it is true that in the vast majority of the cases of tongue-speaking, the ut-

³⁵J. D. Thomas, *The Spirit and Spirituality* (Abilene: Biblical Research Press, 1966), p. 42.

³⁶*Ibid.*, p. 43.

terances are not intelligible, nor are they in any human language that has ever been studied or consciously learned. Many tongue speakers claim to be speaking in a human language, but their claims do not usually stand up under investigation."³⁷

The main objection to glossolalia from the standpoint of New Testament teaching is that tongue-speaking, as well as the other spiritual gifts, has no valid reason for existing today. These gifts were for the edification of the early church and to make known God's will until the time that the complete will of God would be revealed in the New Testament, and then they were to cease (I Corinthians 13:8-12 note Appendix). There is no need today for additional revelation from God. The New Testament is able to furnish us completely unto every good work (II Timothy 3:16-17; II Peter 1:3; Jude 3). With regards to the matter of spirituality, this is evidenced by whether or not one is bearing the fruit of the Spirit. The ability to speak in tongues was never a criterion for determining spirituality. In fact, quite the contrary, for in I Corinthians 13 the apostle Paul describes those who were able to speak in tongues but who were lacking in love, a component part of the fruit of the Spirit. These tongue-speakers were spiritually immature.

To emphasize the Spirit's activity in glossolalia is to stress an activity of the Spirit during a time when the church was in its infancy. This is usually done to the neglect of emphasizing those activities of the Holy Spirit with regards to His aiding the individual Christian in reaching spiritual maturity and bearing the fruit of the Spirit. The work of the indwelling Spirit is vastly more important than the work He performed through spiritual gifts, including glossolalia (Note I Corinthians 13). It is in this work that the Holy Spirit is primarily active today.

³⁷James Robert Jarrell, "Glossolalia," *North Atlantic Christian*, VII (September, 1964), 3.

If Holy Spirit baptism and spiritual gifts have been terminated, as was previously noted in lesson IV, then there is no basis for affirming that tongue-speaking or any spiritual gift exists today. In addition to this, we wonder how one can logically claim to have the "baptism of the Spirit" when he refuses to follow what the Spirit teaches with regards to other New Testament doctrines. The apostle Paul also laid down some very definite rules for the use of the gift of tongues (I Corinthians 14). These are ignored for the most part today by those claiming to have this gift.

Tongues were not to be used in public services unless there was an interpreter present—confusion was condemned (I Corinthians 14:28; 33; 40). Modern "tongue-speaking" public services violate this principle of "confusion" completely and would not be approved of God—even if they were the real thing! There is not only no New Testament authority for tongue-speaking today, but it would be contradictory to God's will as it is now practiced in public services of both the Pentecostals and the Neo-Pentecostals.³⁸

We do not deny the sincerity or honesty of many of those who claim the ability to speak in tongues. It is quite possible for them to have had some dynamic experience which they feel to be the genuine gift of the Spirit. We do deny, however, that what they have experienced is truly the Holy Spirit working in them. That many people, separate and apart from Christianity, have experienced the glossolalia phenomenon is evidence that it could be the result of an emotional or psychological experience.

We would like to close with this thought in regards to those who teach error concerning the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Christian. Our attitude should always be one of love

³⁸Thomas, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

and patience. Every effort should be made in helping them to arrive at a fuller knowledge of the Biblical teaching on the Holy Spirit, but nothing should be said or done that would sever all lines of communication. Our constant goal should be to reach a unity of the faith based on God's word and a greater appreciation and understanding of all that the Holy Spirit means to us.

Questions For Study

1. What is the doctrine of the "inner witness"? Who was the main champion of this doctrine?
2. What view did the Puritans take with regard to the inner witness of the Spirit?
3. In light of the New Testament scriptures, what is the error of this doctrine?
4. What is the doctrine of the Holy Spirit as a perfectionist? How do those who advocate this doctrine interpret Romans 7 and 8? What other scriptures do they use to support their view?
5. What are the errors of this doctrine as seen from a study of the New Testament? Note the confusion over the meaning of the term "sanctification."
6. What is glossolalia? Where is it mentioned in the New Testament? Where has this phenomenon occurred and what groups have advocated it, particularly in recent years?
7. What is the connection between glossolalia and Holy Spirit baptism?
8. What is the purpose or value of glossolalia as taught by its modern advocates?
9. What are the main objections to glossolalia in our time, from the standpoint of New Testament teachings?
10. What is the probable cause of the glossolalia phenomena in those people who experience it today?
11. What attitude should we manifest towards those who teach error concerning the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Christian?

APPENDIX

THE TERMINATION OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS An Exegesis of I Corinthians 13:8-13

In the apostle Paul's first epistle to the church at Corinth he was much concerned with the strife and division that had arisen there over the matter of "spiritual gifts." (Chapters 12-14) It would seem apparent from the 12th chapter that there were some who were envious or jealous because they did not possess these spiritual gifts, described by the apostle in the first 11 verses of that chapter. (It is evident from verse 29 that not all possessed these gifts.) On the other hand, there were some who were evidently manifesting a spirit of pride and conceit because they did possess one or more of these spiritual gifts. The result was friction and disunity in the church. (vs. 25)

Paul makes it clear that all members in the congregation were important. Whether or not an individual Christian possessed one of these spiritual gifts, each member had a contribution to make toward the good of the body as a whole. The abilities and talents possessed by each member were to complement and supplement those talents and abilities of the other members in the congregation, in order that the body of Christ might be edified and able to fulfill its purpose and mission. (12:12-28)

At the conclusion of chapter 12 Paul speaks to the Corinthians saying, "I will show you a more excellent way." (vs. 31) With this thought he introduces the great passage on the subject of love, recorded in the 13th chapter. It is Paul's purpose here to show that spiritual gifts were not the superior way. The Corinthians had elevated these "gifts" to a position of priority and importance that was unwarranted. Paul begins by saying that if a man could speak with the tongues of men and of angels but had not love he was as sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. If he had the gift of prophecy and knew all mysteries and had all knowledge and

the faith so that he could remove mountains but had not love, he was as nothing. It is obvious from this context that the possession of a spiritual gift was not the criterion for determining one's spirituality, but rather the attribute of love was to be the distinguishing mark of the Christian. (Note John 13:34-35.) In a previous letter to the churches of Galatia Paul had made much the same point. In the fifth chapter of that letter, while contrasting the works of the flesh with the fruit of the Spirit he denotes those characteristics or attributes which mark the Christian as one who "walks by the Spirit"—those characteristics being love, joy, peace, kindness, longsuffering, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, and self-control. (vs. 22-23) It is interesting to note that in describing this "fruit" Paul mentions first the attribute of love. Those eight attributes that follow are surely an outgrowth of true love. No mention is made here of the "spiritual gifts," nor is it implied that their possession meant that one was being "led" by the Spirit or was "walking" by the Spirit. (Galatians 5:16-24)

In 1 Corinthians 13, beginning with verse 4, Paul describes the nature of love and the way that love conducts itself. Obviously, it was not the way that many of the Corinthians had been behaving themselves, even though they had received the spiritual gifts. In the last half of this chapter, beginning with verse 8, Paul makes yet another contrast between love and the spiritual gifts. In this verse he says, "love never fails," but then states that these spiritual gifts will cease. He mentions the spiritual gifts of prophecies, speaking in tongues, and knowledge, and declares that "they shall be done away." While it is true he here only mentions three of the nine spiritual gifts that he had previously mentioned in the first 11 verses of chapter 12, it seems evident that those three are representative of the entire group. (The six gifts that are not mentioned here are very closely related to the three that are. The gifts of healing, miracles and supernatural faith were instrumental in confirming those truths revealed by supernatural knowledge and prophecy. The gifts of wisdom and interpretation of tongues

made clear and understandable those truths that were so revealed. The ability to distinguish between spirits made it possible for them to mark the false prophets.) There can be no doubt that Paul here affirms the termination of spiritual gifts.

The important question is *when* will these gifts be terminated? In verse 10 Paul says they will be done away "when that which is perfect is come." There are those who interpret "that which is perfect" to mean Christ, or heaven. In this case, the spiritual gifts would last until the end of time, or until the second coming of Christ. Another explanation of this passage is that "that which is perfect" refers to the coming of the completed and perfect revelation of God to man. At that point, these spiritual gifts, having served their revelatory purpose, would then be terminated. Thus, the spiritual gifts would last only until the New Testament was completed. Regardless of which interpretation one might choose, it is evident that Paul's main point is that these spiritual gifts were inferior to love, because of the duration of time that each would last.

It is our belief that this passage teaches the termination of spiritual gifts, at a point in time when the perfect revelation of God to man would have come to be a reality. At that time these spiritual gifts would have served their purpose and would no longer be necessary. These purposes were guiding, strengthening, and edifying the infant church until such time that it would have the complete New Testament to supply those needs. Let us now note, in some detail, the text of this passage, to see if we can determine just *when* it is Paul is saying that these spiritual gifts would cease.

In verse 8, after Paul states that love will never fail, he adds that prophecies, tongues and knowledge will be done away. Then, in verse 9 he says that we know in part and we prophesy in part, indicating that the inspired writers' knowledge and prophecies were limited and "imperfect", and that as yet a *complete knowledge* and understanding of spiritual

things and spiritual ways was not available to man. If this situation was to exist until the second coming of Christ, then it is evident that this description found in verse 9 could be an accurate description of the state of the church throughout the Christian age. In other words, our knowledge and understanding of those things that pertain to religious truth would be limited during the entire church age. Yet, in the 16th chapter of John, the Lord told his apostles that the Holy Spirit would come upon them and guide *them* into *all* truth (vs. 13). Later in the book of II Timothy the apostle Paul was to say that the scriptures were able to furnish man *completely* unto every good work (3:17). The apostle Peter, in the second epistle of Peter, 1:3, says "that God had granted to us *all things* pertaining to life and Godliness through the *knowledge* of him that called us by his own glory and virtue." If that which is perfect (vs. 10) rather refers to the complete and final revelation of God to man as revealed by the Holy Spirit through the inspired writers, then it is obvious and clear that the spiritual gifts of knowledge and prophecy would no longer be needed, for no longer would knowledge and prophecy be imperfect. To make this point even clearer, Paul gives us two illustrations.

The first of these is found in verse 11, where he writes, "When I was a child I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child, now that I am become a man I have put away childish things," In light of this context it is evident that the childish things refer to the spiritual gifts, and that these gifts were as the ways of a child and to last only for the duration of childhood. But when one becomes a man, or mature, then childish ways are no longer necessary. In like manner, when one becomes a mature disciple of Christ and is capable of knowing and understanding all things that God wants him to know, then these spiritual gifts, or the childish things, are no longer needed. If these spiritual gifts were to last until the second coming of Christ, then it is apparent that Paul would be saying that we could not be counted as mature and fully knowledgeable men until that time. Such a thought or concept is contrary to much of what is said elsewhere in the New Testament.

In Ephesians 4, beginning with verse 11, Paul says that the work of the apostles and the prophets and the evangelists and the pastors and the teachers is in order that we might be *perfected* unto the work of ministering and the building up of the body of Christ until we all attain the unity of the faith and the *knowledge* of the Son of God unto a *full-grown* man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. It is obvious from this passage that the apostle Paul thought it would be possible for the Christian to become full-grown or mature within the course of his life. One of the primary works of the apostles and prophets was to reveal God's will to man. When this will had been revealed, it was then the work of the evangelists, pastors and teachers to see that God's word was taught, to both Christians and all mankind. The purposes were that we might "attain unto the unity of the faith and to a state of maturity whereby we would be no longer as children tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the slight of men, in craftiness, after the wiles of error." (Ephesians 4:14). In the book of Hebrews (6:1) the writer of that epistle exhorts us to press on unto perfection or maturity. In Romans 8:29 Paul prays that we might be conformed to the image of his Son. In Ephesians 3:19 the same apostle prays that we might be filled unto all the fulness of God. Certainly such passages as these imply a state of maturity or perfection that might be attained in this life and aptly described by the term "full-grown man," in contrast to the term, "child." Such a state of maturity could only come about as a result of having available for study and guidance God's complete revelation to man. (Note Hebrews 6:1-3.)

In verse 12 Paul gives us his second illustration. "For now we see in a mirror darkly, but then face to face. Now I *know in part*, but then shall I *know fully* even as also I was fully known." Again the point is much the same as in the preceding verse. As one would look into a mirror of that time, the image was reflected very poorly. It was difficult to make out the details of one's face or what one saw. But the time would come when it would be like looking at one face

conviction of things that are not seen (Hebrews 11:1). When time is no more and our Lord has come again, then faith will become a reality. It will no longer be faith. We will then walk by sight, not by faith. While it is true that love will last throughout eternity, since it is used here in connection with faith and hope, it would seem more consistent to understand the apostle as saying that these three graces should abide while the earth stands, in contrast to the miraculous gifts that would terminate prior to the end of the world. If the spiritual gifts mentioned in verse 8 are to last as long as faith, hope, and love, then there is no point to Paul's contrast. He is showing the superiority of faith, hope, and love over the spiritual gifts, from the standpoint of their duration. Faith, hope, love, these three, abide—in contrast to the spiritual gifts, which will cease. If this point is valid, then the spiritual gifts would not last until the end of time and the phrase "that which is perfect is come" could not refer to the second coming of Christ. While faith, hope, and love were to last throughout the Christian age, the spiritual gifts would last only until God's complete revelation to man was finished.

What is evident in all this is that a certain point in time is being alluded to by the apostle. There seems nothing here to indicate that he is speaking about the end of time. In fact, if such an interpretation is given to this passage it would mean that throughout the Christian age our knowledge of God's will would ever be in a state of evolution, rather than being the complete and total revelation taught in the New Testament. It would mean that we would have to resign ourselves to a permanent state of spiritual immaturity. We could not anticipate reaching a state of maturity or Christ-likeness in this life. It would mean that we could never have a full grasp or understanding of our own imperfections and needs. It would make meaningless the contrast drawn between spiritual gifts and faith, hope, and love, if all were to last for the same period of time.

It is much more logical to interpret Paul here as saying that these spiritual gifts were to last until such time as God's complete revelation is made known to man—a revelation that would enable man to develop to a state of spiritual maturity and to be able to know right from wrong, so that he might not be tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine. Spiritual gifts had a very distinct purpose. They were invaluable and needed during the time the church was in its infancy. But to affirm that these spiritual gifts are still with us today and are present in the church would be an evidence of immaturity and weakness rather than of fully developed power and seasoned strength. If we are concerned about marks of spirituality, then let us note that these spiritual gifts were never such a criterion. Rather let us emphasize the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23) as describing those characteristics which should be noted in the individual who is both full of the Spirit and a mature child of God who has now been "transformed into the image of His Son."

APPENDIX—II

ROMANS 8:26-27 — AN EXEGESIS

The passage for our consideration reads as follows in the American Standard Version:

And in like manner the Spirit also helps our infirmity: for we know not how to pray as we ought: but God—the Spirit himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered; and he that searches the hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because he makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God (Romans 8:26-27).

These verses are found in the heart of one of the great chapters of the Bible. The richness and eloquence of Paul's remarks in the eighth chapter of Romans are virtually without comparison in God's Holy Word. They serve as a source of comfort and assurance to all who believe in the power and might of God's love.

The author's primary concern in the first eight chapters of Romans is man and his relationship to sin. In chapters 1-3 the apostle Paul affirms, and clearly illustrates, that all men, both Gentiles and Jews, are guilty of sin. In Romans 3:23 we read: "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Sinful man stands before God without hope. "For the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). Man is in a most pitiful condition in that he cannot be justified by any manner of law-keeping or works of merit. ". . . because by the work of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight (Romans 3:20). Then, to the man without hope, Paul presents the solution to mankind's dilemma in the person of Jesus Christ. We are "justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ" (Romans 3:24). In order for man to overcome the guilt of sin, he is dependent on the grace of God as expressed in the blood of Christ. "But God commends his own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood shall we be saved from the wrath of God

through him" (Romans 5:8-9). To become the beneficiary of Christ's great sacrifice, Paul teaches that man must respond to God in accordance with the principle of faith. In Romans 5:1 we read: "Being therefore justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." This faith principle encompasses not only a belief in Jesus Christ, but a trusting in the power of his blood (Romans 3:25) and a yielding in humble obedience to the Lord's command that we be baptized (Romans 6:3-4).

Paul is not only concerned with sin from the standpoint of man's guilt, he is equally concerned with the problem of man overcoming the domination or control of sin in his daily life. It is to this point that Paul addresses himself in Romans, chapters six and seven. His remarks in these two chapters lead us into the great treasure-house of Romans 8 and the text under consideration in this study.

To those Christians who might surmise that they could continue to live in sin, since freedom from the guilt of sin is now available through the blood of Christ, Paul says, "God forbid" (Romans 6:2). This new relationship with Christ, a relationship that begins with our being united with Christ in baptism (Romans 6:3-5), demands that we seek to live our lives without sin. In Romans 6:12-14 we read:

Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body that you should obey the lusts thereof: neither present your members unto sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves unto God as alive from the dead and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you; for you are not under law, but under grace.

Without explaining at this point how he can make such a positive statement as "sin shall not have dominion [or control] over you," Paul proceeds to tell us why we should seek to commit our lives to Christ as servants of righteousness and forsake

forever our allegiance to sin. We are his servants. To continue in sin means death, eternal separation from God. We cannot be servants of Christ and continue as servants of unrighteousness. We have crucified the old man that allowed sin to rule our lives. “. . . knowing this, that our old man was crucified with him, that the body of sin might be done away, that so we should no longer be in bondage to sin” (Romans 6:6). Now under the system of grace we commit our lives to the doing of right and refusing to allow sin to control us.

But the question still lingers. How is this possible? How can we keep sin from having dominion over us?

As Paul begins chapter 7, we begin the journey towards the answer to our question. First, it is because we are no longer under the law, but now live under grace. “For when we were in the flesh, the sinful passions, which were through the law, wrought in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we have been discharged from the law, having died to that wherein we were held: so that we serve in newness of the spirit, and not in oldness of the letter” (Romans 7:5-6). The law taught man that he was a sinner: “. . . for through the law comes the knowledge of sin” (Romans 3:20; also 7:7-8); but the law could not provide the means for his overcoming either the guilt or the domination of sin in his life. However, God in his system of grace provides the way for the fleshly or carnal side of man to be overcome and thus to allow man’s spiritual, regenerate nature to be free to serve God in righteousness.

In chapter 7:13-23, Paul presents a picture of the struggle that goes on between the flesh and the spirit of man, to rule the life of the man who is attempting to serve God. Under law, any system of law, sin has dominion over man. The law, which his mind approves, is not capable of overcoming the principle of sin (or the tendency to sin) which rules in his members. (Note verses 15-23.) The spiritual nature wishes to obey the spiritual law, but it is not able, because it is incarnate and consequently weakened by the flesh. Sin excites and influences the fleshly nature and thus prompts man to break the law. Man has the

will to do good, but with the flesh in the mastery, he can find no way to accomplish it. Man is hindered by the flesh and unable, because of it, to perform the right which he desires to do (v. 19). The law of sin (or the tendency to sin) ruling in the flesh prevents him from doing good. Because man’s spirit is unable to overcome this weakness of the flesh, he is a captive of sin and sin has dominion over him (v. 23). Neither the law of Moses nor any other legislative system can make us free from the law of sin and death which rules our bodies (Romans 8:3).

All of this is changed when Christ and the system of grace enter the picture. The principle of sin and death (the tendency to sin) is now vanquished by a new and stronger principle: “the law of the Spirit of life in Christ.” This principle enables the child of God to be free from the mastery of the flesh and its propensity to sin (Romans 8:2). This “law of the Spirit of life in Christ” encompasses the power of the Spirit of Christ, which leads and strengthens the Christian as He dwells within him. Now the spirit of man no longer resists the impulses of the flesh unaided, suffering hopeless defeat. He is reinforced by the Holy Spirit which leads him to victory. The Christian, under grace, is now able to do that which the man under the law could not do (v. 8:3) — and that is to walk after the inward spiritual nature which desires to do right, rather than to walk according to the outward, fleshly nature which lusts to do wrong. Now we understand how Paul could say so forcefully: “For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law, but under grace (6:14).

Romans 8:2 is sometimes interpreted to mean that “the law of the Spirit of life in Christ” is the gospel which frees us from our past sins, doing that which the law of Moses could not do. However, in this context Paul is concerned with the control of sin in our daily lives rather than the guilt of sin. He is seeking to show us how we can be successful in becoming servants of righteousness.

As Paul continues to speak about the Spirit in Romans 8, he affirms that the Christian is one in whom the Spirit dwells

(v. 11). In fact, if one does not have the Spirit, he does not belong to Christ (vs. 9). With the Spirit, man is now able to live in accordance with the ways of the Spirit (v. 5-6). In 8:13 Paul seems to sum up all that he has been saying since chapter 6, when he writes: “. . . for if you live after the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you shall live.” The putting to death the deeds of the body was that which the man under the law and without the Spirit could not do, but is now able to do because of the Spirit of Christ that dwells within him. A similar thought is expressed by Paul in Ephesians 3:16 where we read: “that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, that you may be strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inward man.” Also note Philippians 4:13 where Paul writes: “I can do all things in him that strengthens me.” If we are led by the Spirit (v. 14), then we are indeed the sons of God. The Spirit certainly leads us into all truth by his word, but it is by the Spirit’s dwelling within us that we are so strengthened as to overcome the flesh and become servants of righteousness. Indeed, as the fruits of righteousness (the fruit of the Spirit) are evident in our lives, it is as if the Spirit bears witness to the fact that we are being led by Him and are in truth children of God, joint heirs with Christ (vs. 16-17).

Again in chapter 8:18, Paul seeks to motivate us to faithfulness even as he did in chapter 6:15-23. He reminds us that the sufferings of this life can in no way be compared to the glory which one day will be ours. Even as the whole creation anxiously awaits that day of glory, we are comforted by the hope and assurance that our bodies will be redeemed. To emphasize this assurance, Paul says that our possession of the Holy Spirit is as the first fruits of the harvest. Stated another way in Ephesians 1:13-14, Paul says the promised gift of the Spirit is an earnest or pledge of our inheritance, unto the redemption of God’s own possession, unto the praise of his glory. Our hope is not yet a reality, but we have every confidence that it will become so. God has promised us the full harvest and has guaranteed it by giving us even now the gift of his Spirit, the first fruits, to dwell within us. We might also note Romans 5:5 where Paul has said: “. . . and hope puts us not to shame; because

the love of God has been shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit which was given unto us.” Such is the basis for our hope.

With these thoughts providing a background, we now turn our attention to verse 26, which is the key verse in our study. Paul begins by connecting verse 26 with the previous paragraph by stating “and in like manner.” Just as the possession of the Spirit gives substance to our hope for eternal redemption, so the same Spirit provides help for our weakness. Some have suggested that the word Spirit in this verse refers to man’s own spirit. However, the context will not allow such an interpretation. Since the second verse of this chapter Paul has been speaking of the Holy Spirit. In fact, this is the sixteenth reference in this passage to the Spirit. The activity of the Spirit here mentioned in verses 26 and 27 is not only in harmony with Paul’s remarks throughout chapter 8, but readily complements what has already been said. The Spirit is identified as the Spirit himself. “Himself” here is an intensive pronoun. He, himself, not through some means, but he, himself, does the interceding.

What is the weakness or infirmity that Paul speaks of here? Is it the weakness of the flesh discussed in chapter 7? Is it our weakness in not knowing how to pray? Possibly the two thoughts cannot be distinguished from one another. The sphere where we lack the knowledge in knowing what to pray for is in the area of our own weaknesses and frailties. Certainly there are many passages of scripture that instruct us as to those things for which we should pray. We are taught to pray for our daily bread, for those who rule over us, for doors of opportunity to be opened, for the sick, for the lost, and on ad infinitum. However, with respect to our own weaknesses, we are particularly in need of help. Help, not only in conquering these weaknesses, as Paul has already so vividly described in chapters 7 and 8, but also help in praying for that which is truly best for us. The example of the apostle Paul is a case in point. In II Corinthians 12, Paul states that he prayed three times for the removal of the “thorn” with which Paul was afflicted; we do know that he asked for the wrong thing in his prayers. Instead of removing the affliction,

as he had requested, God gave him the strength to bear it and be the stronger for it. While the "thorn in the flesh" was given to Paul to keep him humble, without God's strength to sustain him, he may well have yielded to the temptation to wallow in self-pity, possibly becoming both unfaithful and unfruitful. However, God supplied both the physical and spiritual strength that he needed. In all this Paul came to realize his dependency upon God, for he wrote: "Wherefore I take pleasure in weaknesses, in injuries, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong (II Corinthians 12:10). And again, "Now unto him that is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us" (Ephesians 3:20). Just as with Paul, we are weak and may not have the wisdom to pray as we should, but help is available to us.

The Greek word for help in 8:26 is interesting. It is found only here and in Luke 10:40 where Martha urges the Lord to tell her sister to help her. It literally means "to take hold with one." It is as if two men were carrying a log, one on each end, thus helping one another with the load. The Holy Spirit takes hold of our burden and helps us to carry it. He provides the strength that we lack in our weakness. He not only provides us with the spiritual strength we need to resist temptation (8:2, 13), but he also helps us in our petitions to God. This he does by making intercession for us.

To intercede implies intervention on another's behalf. An intercessor is an advocate, one who pleads another's case. This word should not be confused with the word "mediator." A mediator is one who represents two estranged parties and works to bring about a reconciliation of those two parties. Christ is a mediator; in fact, he is our only mediator (I Timothy 2:5). Christ is an apostle, one sent from God and representing God. He is also a High Priest and in this role represents man. (Note Hebrews 3:1.) He seeks to bring about a reconciliation between God and man. This he has accomplished through the cross. ". . . and might reconcile them both in one body unto God through the cross, having slain the enmity thereby" (Ephesians 2:16). Christ alone then

qualifies as our mediator. However, we have a number of intercessors. We are taught to intercede for one another before the throne of God (I Timothy 2:1). Christ, who even now is at the right hand of God, makes intercession for us (Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:25). He is an advocate, taking our petitions before the Father (I John 2:1). The Holy Spirit is also an advocate. ". . . and I will pray the Father and he shall give you another advocate, that he may be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth: whom the world cannot receive; for it beholds him not, neither knows him: you know him; for he abides with you, and shall be in you" (John 14:16-17). And the Holy Spirit, even as Christ, makes intercession for us. This the Spirit accomplishes in connection with groanings or sighs that cannot be uttered.

The word "groanings" in verse 26 seems to have reference to "the yearning of the human soul after something as yet unrealized." This is how the word is used in verses 22 and 23. Just as the woman groans in the giving of birth, so all creation agonizes, anticipating the birth of a new heaven and new earth. In like manner, we also groan within ourselves, anxiously yearning for the redemption of our bodies (v. 23). The groanings of verse 26 would appear to mean our yearning for deliverance from the weaknesses of the flesh. While absolute deliverance cannot be a reality until the coming of death or until we receive our spiritual bodies, we nevertheless are given now the strength and help that we need in order to present ourselves as instruments of righteousness unto God. Note again the case of the apostle Paul in II Corinthians 12 as he yearned for the removal of the "thorn in his flesh." Instead he was given the strength to endure and to serve. It is the Spirit that takes our inarticulate longings, forming and directing them so as to give them intelligibility and to make them express our own true wants and needs. Then God, who searches and examines our hearts, knows the content and the intent of the intercession. It has been made clear by the Spirit who dwells within us. Who would better know our deepest longings and yearnings than the one sent from God to abide and dwell within our hearts (Romans 5:5; I Corinthians 6:19). Not only does the Spirit make our needs known, but he does so in accordance with God's will. As in the case of Paul,

we may not know God's will, but the Spirit does. We can be assured that his intercessions, though stemming from our own longings, will always be in harmony with God's will for us, for the Spirit knows not only our hearts, but he knows the mind of God as well. "... so the things of God, none knows, except the Spirit of God" (I Corinthians 2:11).

In all of this, we perceive of God's being active in behalf of man in order that man might be victorious over both the guilt and domination of sin. Such a victory means not only everlasting life, but a life that even now reflects the power and might of God, as seen in the fruit of holy and righteous service. We see God in Christ as our redeemer and justifier and as one who makes intercession for us at the right hand of God. We see God in the Spirit as one who leads and guides us into all truth through his word and who strengthens us by his power in the inward man so that we are able to overcome the weakness of the flesh. It is this last point that is particularly punctuated by Romans 8:26-27. The Spirit helps us in our weakness. He conveys to the mind of God our deepest needs and longings, and always in accordance with his will. The end result of such divine aid is a life expressed by love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, and self-control — the glorious fruit of the Spirit.

A·C·U
PRESS

ISBN 0-915547-10-2