

Not By Might, Nor By Power

*The Bible Believer's Handbook
for The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit*

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PREFACE

This is a study of the person and work of the Holy Spirit of God as I understand this precious doctrine from the Scriptures. Why another book on this subject? Because I felt that among a multitude of books on this subject that there was yet the need for one that offered a simple yet comprehensive study on this subject using only **the King James 1611 Authorized Version of the Bible** and the underlying Textus Receptus Greek Text. Furthermore, it expresses a moderate premillennial, dispensational viewpoint in an outline format and covers every aspect of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit in one volume. This study has been translated into the Chinese language for the work in China and is being used in the training of pastors and workers there. In the years of study that went into preparing this work I came to realize that many preachers I knew would never have the time to make such an extensive and organized study of this subject themselves. Indeed, after talking with many pastors of like faith in America, I found there was a need for such a study guide for local churches and Bible institutes there as well. It is my prayer and intent in having this volume printed, that it will be a help to all who use it. I trust it will be an effective aid to understanding the person and work of the Spirit of God that dwells within these tabernacles of clay.

I was encouraged in the work by my pastor and others because of my background. For more than ten years I was a part of the holiness movement and I attended a *Church of God Bible College* for one year (headquarters, Anderson, Indiana). I spent several more years bouncing around

in the charismatic movement searching for the truth (*Church of God of Prophecy*, *Church of God* [Cleveland, Tennessee headquarters], *Assemblies of God*, *United Pentecostal Church*, and *the Church of God* [Springfield, Missouri headquarters]). Gradually I came to see that for all the ballyhoo about spiritual power, most of those involved in this “Pentecostal,” “Charismatic” movement had very little understanding of the peculiar doctrines their own movement espoused. For example, after reading some of the original works of D.S. Warner (founder of the *Church of God*, Anderson group), I found that their churches and Bible colleges were not even teaching what their founder believed and taught. By the grace of God I was introduced to a Christian periodical called *The Sword of the Lord*. Now there was something different. I liked that kind of preaching and the emphasis on soul winning and clean living. I found out that those folks believed in the power of the Holy Spirit too. I began to listen to the radio broadcast messages of Oliver Green and that beloved old prophet and preacher, Lester Roloff. “Man,” I thought to myself “this is the real thing.” I continued studying and learned to “rightly divide the scriptures.” Now everything began to fall into place and make sense. No more ducking problem texts or changing the subject when difficult questions were asked. Now I could really study the Bible by comparing scripture with scripture.

My experience and background in the Charismatic movement have enabled me to cover every aspect of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit in a manner that will give answer to all the heresies they teach. Having once listened to the arguments of Baptist preachers from the other side I realized that they often thought smugly to themselves that they had really showed those Charismatic folks a thing or two. However, they actually could not handle many of the

Bible questions, nor the problem texts presented to them in a discussion. Those Baptists seemed to have just as many loopholes in their arguments as the charismatics did. I knew that if the word of God could stand up under the attack of Satan, it could stand up to the questions of men. Surely enough, it all makes sense now, and there are NO CONTRADICTIONS. What I now believe is not what I used to believe, not all of it is what I wanted to believe, nor is it what all my preacher friends believe— but it is truly what I believe. While all will not agree with everything in this book, I believe that any diligent student must agree that I have faithfully presented my arguments from scripture and not from my own preconceived viewpoint or that of some denomination or school.

In this study of the blessed third person of the Trinity I make no claim of originality. As every Bible preacher and teacher I know, I have borrowed much from those who have gone before. However, this work is entirely the result of my own study of the Bible and I must give all the credit to the Holy Spirit for guiding me as I wrote. I have quoted others widely and hope this will serve to introduce the reader to other sources of good study material.

I must thank the Lord for four men who have had the greatest influence on my spiritual life and my doctrinal beliefs: Lester Roloff, Jack Wood, Peter Ruckman, and my own pastor, Charles Andrews. While I could write another book about their influence upon my life, let it be sufficient to mention their names; the Lord be praised.

Furthermore, as J.C. Ryle said so well:

“The theological standpoint which the writer of this commentary occupies will be obvious to any intelligent reader...

“But while I say all this, I must be allowed to add, that in interpreting Scripture, I *‘call no man master or father.’* I abhor the idea of wresting and warping God’s word in order to make it support party views.

“In preparing this commentary I have made it a point of duty to look through every work... (on the subject) which I could meet with; when I differ from the authors, I have not written in ignorance of their opinions.

“The conclusion I arrive at, after diligent examination of many commentators, is always one and the same. I trust none of them unreservedly, and I expect nowhere to find perfection. All must be read with caution. They are good helps, but they are not infallible. They are useful assistants, but they are not the pillar of cloud and fire. I advise my younger readers to remember that. Use your own judgment prayerfully and diligently. Use commentaries; but be a slave to none. Call no man master.

“Ignorance of Scripture is the root of every error in religion, and the source of every heresy. To be allowed to remove a few grains of ignorance, and to throw a few rays of light on God’s precious word is, in my opinion, the greatest honour that can be put on a Christian.”¹

Arthur Pink writes,

“There is no spiritual good communicated to any one, but by the Spirit; whatever God in His grace works in us, it is by the Spirit. The only sin for which there is no forgiveness, is one committed against the Spirit. How necessary is it then that we should be well instructed in the Scripture doctrine concerning Him (The Holy Spirit!)”²

¹ J.C. Ryle, The Classic New Testament Commentary — John, from the preface (Marshall Pickering • London, England).

² A.W. Pink, The Holy Spirit (Sovereign Grace Publishers Inc.).

PART ONE



THE PERSON OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

“Thy good Spirit.’

— Nehemiah 9:20

“Common, too common is the sin of forgetting the Holy Spirit. This is folly and ingratitude. He deserves well at our hands, for he is good, supremely good. As God, he is good essentially. He shares in the threefold ascription of Holy, holy, holy, which ascends to the Triune Jehovah. Unmixed purity and truth, and grace is he. He is good benevolently, tenderly bearing with our waywardness, striving with our rebellious wills; quickening us from our death in sin, and then training us for the skies as a loving nurse fosters her child. How generous, forgiving, and tender is this patient Spirit of God. He is good operatively. All his works are good in the most eminent degree: he suggests good thoughts, prompts good actions, reveals good truths, applies good promises, assists in good attainments, and leads to good results. There is no spiritual good in all the world of which he is not the author and sustainer, and heaven itself will owe the perfect character of its redeemed inhabitants to his work. He is good officially; whether as Comforter, Instructor, Guide, Sanctifier, Quickener, or Intercessor, he fulfills his office well, and each work is fraught with the highest good to the church of God. They who yield to his influences become good, they who obey his impulses do good, they who live under his power receive good. Let us then act towards so good a person according to the dictates of gratitude. Let us revere his person, and adore him as God over all, blessed for ever; let us own his power, and our need of him by waiting upon him in all our holy enterprises; let us hourly seek his aid, and never grieve him; and let us speak to his praise whenever occasion occurs. The church will never prosper until more reverently it believes in the Holy Ghost. He is so good and kind, that it is sad indeed that he should be grieved by slights and negligences.”³

³ Charles Spurgeon, Morning and Evening, February 16, PM entry.

INTRODUCTION — PART 1

The prophet Zechariah spoke to King Zerubbabel,

**“Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith
the LORD of hosts.”** — Zechariah 4:6

What pictures, and hopes of spiritual power, this verse brings to the believer’s mind! And so it should, for spiritual power is the proper longing of God’s people.

Charles C. Ryrie of Dallas Seminary writes:

“Spirituality, then, is Christlikeness, and Christlikeness is the fruit of the Spirit. What better portrait of Jesus Christ is there than ‘love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, temperance?’ This is the fruit of the Spirit. Spiritual power is not necessarily or usually the miraculous or spectacular, but rather the consistent exhibition of the characteristics of the Lord Jesus in the believer’s life. All of this is the work of the Holy Spirit, of whom the Lord Jesus said, ‘He shall glorify me.’”⁴

In the New Testament alone there are some 261 passages which refer to the Holy Spirit. He is mentioned 56 times in the Gospels, 57 times in the book of Acts, 112 times in the Pauline epistles, and 36 times in the remaining New Testament.

The study of the person and the work of the Holy Spirit is properly called *pneumatology*. In the Greek language, *pneuma* means wind or breath.⁵ You may be familiar with

⁴ Charles C. Ryrie, *The Holy Spirit*, (Moody Press), Professor emeritus of systematic theology at Dallas Theological Seminary in Dallas, Texas.

⁵ W.E. Vine, *An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, (Fleming H. Revell Company).

other words that come from this root, like *pneumatic drill* (driven by compressed air), and *pneumonia* (an illness that affects the lungs; your breath). *The breath of God* is His Spirit (Job 33:4).

In this study, we will show from the word of God that the Holy Spirit is a person. Because He is represented by such impersonal symbols as *Breath* (Job 33:4) and *Water* (John 4:10; 7:38), the Holy Spirit may at first appear to be merely an influence or force.⁶ This may also seem true, because His work is *unseen* (although we can see the result of His work— John 3:8) and *unheralded* (all glory being given to the Lord Jesus Christ— John 16:13,14). Nevertheless, He is a person.

- We are living in *The Age of the Spirit*.
- The Old Testament period may be called *The Age of the Father*;
- the period covered by the Gospels, *The Age of the Son*;
- from Pentecost until the second advent of Christ, *The Age of the Spirit*.

George Whitefield rightly observed:

“The Holy Spirit is the least known, least loved and least worshipped member of the Trinity. The Holy Spirit is a divine Person, equal with the Father and the Son in the Trinity (God-head). These three are equal in power, wisdom and majesty. All possess the same attributes. The Holy Spirit may be called The Executive

⁶ At times, the Bible also uses impersonal symbols for both the Father (i.e. Psalm 18:2) and the Son (i.e. 1 Peter 2:6-8).

Member of the Godhead, for he is in the world to carry out the plan and purpose of God the Father and God the Son. Let me say that there is no doctrine that has been more misused, abused, and dishonored than that of the Holy Spirit of God. Church History will prove that two great truths that were lost to the church for a long period of time are: (1) the ministry of the Holy Spirit and (2) the Second Coming of Christ.”⁷

Everything about the Holy Spirit should, therefore, be of special interest to us who live in this age of special privilege. Yet it is lamentable, but true, that the average Christian is very ignorant concerning matters of the Spirit. The Christian church today should take heed to Paul’s warning: “*Now concerning spiritual gifts (and, we might say “everything about the Spirit”), I would not have you ignorant.*” Although many are still ignorant today, we hope to correct that in your case beginning today.

Theodore Epp, well-known radio Bible teacher says:

“What a remarkable privilege the disciples had in walking with the Lord Jesus for three and a half years! During that time they saw Him perform many remarkable works. Of even greater significance to them was the fact that He was their personal teacher and advisor during those years. Then, toward the end of that period He began to talk to them about leaving them because He must die.

“This brought fear... and sorrow to this group of men, and the Lord sought to comfort them. In the fourteenth chapter we read that there are many mansions in God’s house. Christ said concerning them: ‘... I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there you may be also’ (John 14:1-3). Later on in the same

⁷ As quoted in J. William Kanoy’s Marvelous Person of the Holy Spirit, (Church Street Baptist Church • Greensboro, NC 27405).

chapter He said, *'I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.'* (vs. 18).

"The word *'Comforter'* as used by the Lord Jesus to describe the Holy Spirit is a word rich in meaning. It comes from a Greek word (*paraklete*) that means, *'one called alongside to help.'* He is one who is called alongside to assist, to bring comfort where it is needed.

"Still another form of the word is translated *'advocate.'* This is one who is to take charge of a legal case, to plead a cause...

"He not only pleads our cause and sees it through, but He is also come to make Christ known and real in our lives.

"The disciples sorrowed because they were going to lose the presence of the Lord. But He promised them One who was a Comforter like Himself, and this Comforter would restore the presence of Christ.

"God the Father is spoken of as in Heaven. The Lord Jesus is also in Heaven in His glorified body, seated at the right hand of the Father. The Holy Spirit is on earth indwelling each believer."⁸

- ☞ It is vital that every believer should come to know the Holy Spirit as a person.

World famous Bible teacher, R.A. Torrey said:

"If you think of the Holy Spirit, as so many do today, as a mere influence or power, then your thought will constantly be, *'How can I get hold of the Holy Spirit and use it?'* But if you think of Him in the Biblical way, as a Person of Divine majesty and glory, your thought will be, *'How can the Holy Spirit get hold of me and use me?'* Is there no difference between the thought of man, the worm, using God to thresh the mountain, or

⁸ Dr. Theodore Epp, *The Other Comforter* (Back to the Bible Broadcast, P.O. Box 82808, Lincoln, NE 68501) A much loved Bible teacher whose ministry reached around the world by radio for many years.

God using man, the worm, to thresh the mountain? The former conception of man using God to thresh the mountain, is heathenish; it does not differ essentially from the African fetish worshipper who uses his god. The latter conception, the thought of God the Holy Spirit getting hold of us and using us, is lofty, Christian, sublime.

“Thousands and tens of thousands of Christian men and women can testify to an entire transformation of their experience and of their service through coming to know the Holy Spirit as a Person.”⁹

Ask any Bible believing Christian today if he believes the Holy Spirit is a Person and they will probably tell you “yes,” without hesitation. But I fear that while we have become much educated in Bible doctrine *about* the Holy Spirit we still do not know Him as we should. The material in this book was originally taught at *Grace Baptist Church*, our mission work in mainland China. I have expanded the lessons and written this book for others to use as a guide to teaching about this Person so precious to us.

It is shameful to realize how little respect has been given to the Person of the Holy Spirit. Without communion with Him we will remain weak and unprepared for the trials and battles ahead when we will need Him more than ever. Oh, believer, find Him, obey Him, yield to Him, commune with Him until the flesh is indeed crucified and Christ is Lord of all.

Brother Torrey continues:

“To sum it all up: The Holy Spirit is a Person. Theoretically we probably all believed that before, but do you in your real thought of Him, in your practical attitude toward Him, treat Him as a Person? Do you really regard the Holy Spirit as just as real a Person as

⁹ R.A. Torrey, The Holy Spirit, (Fleming Revell), pages 14-15.

Jesus Christ, just as loving, just as wise, just as tender, just as strong, just as faithful, just as worthy of your confidence and your love, and surrender as He. Do you think of Him as a Divine Person always at your side? The Holy Spirit was sent by the Father into this world to be to the disciples of our Lord in this present dispensation (after our Lord's departure and until His return) to be to you and me, just what Jesus Christ had been to His disciples during the days of His personal companionship with them on earth. Is He that to you? Do you know '*the communion of the Holy Spirit?*' the companionship of the Holy Spirit, the partnership of the Holy Spirit, the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, the comradeship of the Holy Spirit? To put it all into a single word, I say reverently the whole object of this address is to introduce you to my Friend, the Holy Spirit."¹⁰

As was Bro. Torrey's desire, so also is my own. I pray the result of this study will be not only a greater knowledge of the Holy Spirit, but a more intimate relationship and a closer walk with Him as well.

¹⁰ Torrey, page 40.

THE PERSONALITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

I. The Personality of the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is a **Person** just as the Father and the Son are persons.

Theodore Epp says:

“It is essential that we as Christians learn to know the Holy Spirit, not as an influence (as some would describe Him), but as a Divine Person. This concept of Him will prepare us for the blessings that He wants to bring into our lives.”¹¹

A. His Personality Is Shown Through Personal Characteristics

1. He has a mind and intelligence — Romans 8:27

The first “*he*” in Romans 8:27 appears to be a reference to *God the Father* (cf. I Samuel 16:7; I Chronicles 28:9) while the second “*he*” refers to the Holy Spirit Himself.

If the human mind is a marvel to the most learned men of science, to what can the mind of God, who created man, be likened? His intellect is far beyond the capacity of man to even comprehend. No man has ever truly enriched his own mind to its capacity, but to them who have “*the mind of Christ*” God has given the ability to know the truth. How poor are the minds of the most educated of men, who have not availed themselves of the

¹¹ Epp, The Other Comforter.

enlightenment of the Almighty (Nehemiah 9:20; John 14:26).

2. He has knowledge — I Corinthians 2:10-12

His knowledge is perfect and infinite (I John 3:20). The Holy Spirit knows all truth and reveals it in the Scriptures (John 16:13; I John 4:6; 5:6).

Who could write a book on what the Holy Spirit knows? But it has already been written by God Himself; it is the word of God, the Holy Bible. Yet for all He knows, how wonderful it is, that He knows us (Galatians 4:9). And surely that which causes to wonder most, is that He would care to know us at all (Psalm 144:3; Psalm 8:4).

Here are some personal things He knows about us:

- a. He knows our most intimate thoughts
— I Corinthians 13:12
- b. He knows all our works — Revelation 2:2
- c. He knows our deepest inner needs
— Matthew 6:32
- d. He knows how we should pray
— Romans 8:26
- e. He knows our hearts — Luke 16:15
John 21:17; Acts 1:24, 15:8

3. He has a will — I Corinthians 12:11

This verse makes reference to the distribution of the various spiritual gifts to believers (cf. I Corinthians 12:4-10). They are imparted to each Christian according to the will of the Holy Spirit. We also note that:

- a. Like the Son of God, the Holy Spirit's will is in submission to the Father's will (Luke 22:42; John 5:30; 6:38; I John 5:8).
- b. Again, as the Son, the Spirit of God speaks according to the will of the Father (John 14:10; 16:13).
- c. The Holy Spirit is also in submission to the Son of God (John 15:26; 16:7).

B. His Personality Is Shown Through His Actions

1. He leads and guides — John 16:13; Romans 8:14

2. He commands — Acts 8:26-29

3. He forbids — Acts 16:6-7

Here, Paul, Silas, and Timothy were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to journey to two possible mission fields they were considering.

4. He helps our infirmities — Romans 8:26-27

5. He calls men to work and assigns them duties — Acts 13:2; 20:28

6. He speaks:

- a. To Philip In A Desert — Acts 8:29
- b. To Peter On A Housetop — Acts 10:19
- c. To Some Elders In Antioch — Acts 13:2

d. To Seven Churches In Asia Minor

— Revelation 2-3

He addresses each of the seven churches. “*He that hath an ear, let him hear what the **Spirit** saith.*” (Revelation 2:7,11,17,29; 3:6,13,22).

7. He cries out — Galatians 4:6

**8. He testifies — John 15:26; 16:13;
I Peter 1:11; I John 5:6-9**

The Holy Spirit testifies to every believer about Christ, and other spiritual things, and gives us power to testify to others of the great truths of our faith.

9. He teaches — John 14:26

This ability is also mentioned in Nehemiah 9:20 and again in John 16:13. The Holy Spirit, then, is a teacher who *has* knowledge, *stores-up* knowledge, *reveals* knowledge, *passes-on* knowledge, *confirms* knowledge, and *calls back* knowledge to our remembrance after we have forgotten it.

10. He loves — Romans 15:30

How wonderful to know that each believer is loved by God:

The Father: John 3:16; 14:21; 16:27; Ephesians 2:4; Hebrews 12:6; II Corinthians 9:7; II Thessalonians 2:16

The Son: Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 3:19; Romans 8:35; Revelation 1:5; 3:19

The Holy Spirit: I John 5:7-8; Romans 5:5

11. He grieves — Ephesians 4:30

Paul is actually telling the Ephesians to *stop* grieving the Holy Spirit of God. (For further details concerning the nature of this grievance, see Revelation 2:4.) This grieving attribute of the Holy Spirit is really an extension of His love, for while one may be angered by his enemies, he can only be grieved by those he loves.

12. He Prays — Romans 8:26

In the difficult moments of our lives, it is comforting to know we are being prayed for, perhaps by family members or some concerned pastor or church member. But how much more blessed to realize that the Holy Spirit of God offers up fervent and effectual prayer for us.

"He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever." — John 14:16

"Great Father revealed Himself to believers of old before the coming of His Son, and was known to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as the God Almighty. Then Jesus came, and the ever-blessed Son in His own proper person, was the delight of His people's eyes. At the time of the Redeemer's ascension, the Holy Spirit became the head of the present dispensation, and His power was gloriously manifested in and after Pentecost. He remains at this hour the present Immanuel—God with us, dwelling in and with His people, quickening, guiding, and ruling in their midst. Is His presence recognized as it ought to be? We cannot control His working; He is most sovereign in all His operations, but are we sufficiently anxious to obtain His help, or sufficiently watchful lest we provoke Him to withdraw His aid? Without Him we can do nothing, but by His almighty energy the most extraordinary results can be produced: everything depends upon his manifesting or concealing His power. Do we always look up to Him both for our inner life and our outward service with the respectful dependence which is fitting? Do we not too often run before His call and act independently of His aid? Let us humble ourselves this evening for past neglects, and now entreat the heavenly dew to rest upon us, the sacred oil to anoint us, the celestial flame to burn within us. The Holy Ghost is no temporary gift, He abides with the saints. We have but to seek Him aright, and He will be found of us. He is jealous, but He is pitiful; if He leaves in anger, He returns in mercy. Condescending and tender, He does not weary of us, but awaits to be gracious still."

"Sin has been hammering my heart
Unto a hardness, void of love,
Let supplying grace to cross his art
Drop from above."¹²

¹² Spurgeon, Morning and Evening, February 12, PM entry.

THE DEITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

II. The Deity of the Holy Spirit

A. The Holy Spirit Is Called “God”

1. **The Lord Jesus Christ (Himself God) is called “that Spirit”— II Corinthians 3:17; (cf. Galatians 4:6)**

2. **The account of Ananias and Sapphira — Acts 5:3-4**

☞ **vs. 3** “to lie to **the Holy Ghost.**”

☞ **vs. 4** “thou hast not lied unto men, but **unto God.**”

B. He Is Equal With The Father And The Son

In *Theological Studies*, Dr. Peter Ruckman writes:

“God, the Father; God, the Son; and God, the Holy Spirit are separate, distinct Persons, and the Holy Spirit is said to be— in what we call *theology*— subordinate to the Father and the Son. For example, in John 14:26, the Father sends the Holy Spirit to the earth and He obeys the command. In John 15:26, the Son sends the Holy Spirit to the believers and to the church. In Romans 8:9, the Holy Spirit is referred to as ‘*the Spirit of God.*’ Therefore, the Holy Spirit speaks not from Himself, but repeats that which He hears. In John 16:13, we read the Holy Spirit ‘*shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he*

speaks.’¹³ This is true humiliation and condescension that reminds us of the fact that when the Lord Jesus Christ was on earth He always did those things that pleased the Father and He Himself was in subjection to the Father and said, ‘I come to do thy will, O God.’ (Hebrews 10:9). So, although the three are equal in the Godhead, they are subordinate to each other in the working out of God’s purposes... We may say God, the Father, is first; God, the Son, is second; and God, the Holy Spirit, is third on a horizontal line, not a vertical line. It is not God, the Father, at the top, and the Holy Spirit at the bottom. It is an order of procession on an equal level. The Father sent the Holy Spirit to the earth. The Son sends the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit does not refer to Himself, but testifies of the Lord Jesus Christ, John 16:13.”¹⁴

Bro. Billy Kanoy said in his book on the Holy Spirit:

“We should remember several things as we approach this subject.

- 1. ‘Jesus was sent by the Father (John 14:24; 17:3, 8, 21, 23, 25).**
- 2. ‘The Holy Spirit was sent by the Father and the Son (John 14:26; 15:1-27).**
- 3. ‘Christ submitted to the Father: the Holy Spirit submitted to the Father and the Son.**
- 4. “In submission to the Son, the Holy Spirit’s work was to illuminate that which the Son had spoken (the word of God— cf.**

¹³ It should be noted that these are nearly the same words that the Lord Jesus Christ spoke in John 5:19, “[T]he Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.”

¹⁴ Dr. Peter Ruckman, Theological Studies — Book 11 — The Deity and Names of the Holy Spirit, (Bible Baptist Bookstore, P.O. Box 7135, Pensacola, FL 32514) Founder and president of Pensacola Bible Institute, Pensacola, Florida and author of over 50 books and commentaries.

John 16:13-15). The Spirit was not to speak of Himself. (We might well look at Genesis 24 for further illustration. There Eliezer (a type of God the Holy Spirit) was sent forth by Abraham (a type of God the Father) in behalf of Isaac (a type of God the Son). Eliezer did not speak of himself, but spoke of Isaac, the son.”¹⁵

While the Holy Spirit does indeed occupy a place of submission in the Trinity, He is not the least bit behind the Father or Son in all Their divine attributes. His perfect equality with Them is demonstrated through His identity with Them in the following examples:

- 1. The baptismal experience of Christ
— Matthew 3:16-17**
- 2. The temptation of Christ — Matthew 4:1-7**
- 3. The testimony of Jesus in the upper room
— John 14:16,26; 15:26**
- 4. The testimony of Paul — Ephesians 2:18;
II Corinthians 13:14; Romans 8:2-3**
- 5. The declaration of Peter
— I Peter 1:2; 4:14**
- 6. The testimony in the book of Acts
— Acts 2:32-33**
- 7. The testimony of Jesus on the Mount of
Olives — Matthew 28:19**

¹⁵ Kanoy, Marvelous Person of the Holy Spirit.

C. The Holy Spirit Exhibits Divine Attributes

1. He is omnipresent — Psalms 139:7-8

The prefix “*omni*” means “*all*.” This means that the Holy Spirit is not limited to one place at one time as we are, but is present everywhere at the same time. In this Psalm, David concludes that it is impossible to hide from God, or to escape His presence. Even if you ascend to the heights, descend into the depths, travel across the sea, or surround yourself with darkness, He is there.

2. He is omniscient — I Corinthians 2:10; John 14:26 (the past); 16:13 (the future)

Even the greatest natural man who ever lived had only limited knowledge. But the Spirit, like the Father and the Son, knows all things. His knowledge is not limited by time or space.

3. He is omnipotent — Genesis 1:1-3; Job 26:13; Luke 1:35

He is all-powerful — nothing is impossible for Him.

4. He is eternal — Genesis 1:1-2 (the beginning); Hebrews 9:14; Revelation 22:17 (the end)

He has no beginning and no end. He existed before anything was created, because He is the Creator.

THE NAMES AND TITLES OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

III. The Names And Titles Of The Holy Spirit

Dr. Peter Ruckman tells us:

“The Holy Spirit magnifies Jesus Christ, not Himself. In John 16:14, we read, *‘He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.’* The work of the Holy Spirit then is not to talk about the baptism of the Holy Ghost. This is the talk of somebody else. The Holy Spirit (Holy Ghost) is sent to magnify the Lord Jesus Christ. The name of the Holy Spirit follows the other two when the three are linked in one sentence, clearly showing an order or procession. For example, in Matthew 28:19, the Father first, the Son second, the Holy Spirit third. In II Corinthians 13:14, the Son, the Father, then the Spirit.”¹⁶

We can learn much about the Holy Spirit by simply studying the names and titles given to Him. The following twenty-two titles ascribed to Him provide much insight into His true nature.

A. Names Which Are Self Descriptive

- 1. The Spirit — I Corinthians 2:10**
- 2. The Holy Spirit — Luke 11:13**
- 3. The Holy Ghost — Matthew 28:19**
- 4. The Eternal Spirit — Hebrews 9:14**

¹⁶ Ruckman, The Emblems of the Holy Spirit.

B. Names Which Show His Relationship To God The Father

- 1. The Spirit of God — I Corinthians 3:16**
- 2. The Spirit of the LORD — Isaiah 11:2**
- 3. The Spirit of the Lord God — Isaiah 61:1**
- 4. The Spirit of the Living God
— II Corinthians 3:3**

C. Names Which Show His Relationship To Jesus Christ

- 1. The Spirit of the Lord
— II Corinthians 3:17-18 (cf. 3:6-8)**
- 2. The Spirit of Christ — Romans 8:9;
I Peter 1:11**
- 3. The Spirit of His Son — Galatians 4:6**
- 4. The Spirit of Jesus Christ
— Philippians 1:19**

D. Names Which Show His Relationship To Men

- 1. The Spirit of Burning — Isaiah 4:4**
- 2. The Spirit of Judgment — Isaiah 4:4**
- 3. The Spirit of Promise — Ephesians 1:13;
Acts 1:4-5**

- 4. The Spirit of Truth — John 14:17; 15:26; 16:13; I John 5:6**
- 5. The Spirit of Life — Romans 8:2**
- 6. The Spirit of Grace — Hebrews 10:29**
- 7. The Spirit of Glory — I Peter 4:13-14**
- 8. The Spirit of Wisdom — Ephesians 1:17**
- 9. The Spirit of Revelation—Ephesians 1:17**
- 10. The Comforter — John 14:26**
- 11. The Spirit of Adoption — Romans 8:15**
- 12. The Spirit of Holiness — Romans 1:4**
- 13. The Spirit of Faith — II Corinthians 4:13**

THE EMBLEMS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

IV. The Emblems Of The Holy Spirit

Like the twenty-two names and titles, His six designated *emblems* help us to understand the attributes of the Holy Spirit as well as the purpose of His work.

A. The Dove — Matthew 3:16; John 1:32

1. The dove typifies peace — Genesis 8:8-11

In Genesis we read:

“And the dove came in to him in the evening; and, lo, in her mouth was an olive leaf plucked off: so Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the earth.” — Genesis 8:11

This showed Noah that the demonstration of the wrath of God against sin had ended, and that the earth and Noah’s family were at peace with God.

Dr. Peter Ruckman makes this observation:

“To this day when a political cartoonist desires to depict Peace he uses the only infallible text book available on types — *the AV 1611 Bible* — he draws a dove with an olive branch in its mouth.”¹⁷

2. The dove typifies purity — Song of Solomon 6:9

Here a dove is a picture of the pure *undefiled* Bride of Christ.

¹⁷ Dr. Peter S. Ruckman, The Bible Believer’s Commentary Series — The Book of Genesis.

B. Water — John 7:38-39

1. Water sustains life — Isaiah 44:3; John 4:14

Without water there can be no life. Man can live for thirty to forty days without food, but only three or four days without water. Our bodies are about two-thirds water. Water covers three-fourths of the surface of the Earth, and it was from “*the waters*” that God brought forth the first living creatures upon the earth (Genesis 1:20).

Dr. Peter Ruckman writes:

“If you want to bring fruit from the ground, you must water the ground. Go to the Sahara Desert and you will find very little vegetation. There is nothing but rocks and sand. What is the trouble? No water. Water fertilizes. The spirit-filled Christian life is likened unto a watered tree in Psalm 1:3, where we read that the godly man is ‘like a tree planted by the rivers of water.’”¹⁸

2. Water refreshes — Psalm 46:4; Isaiah 41:17-18

The Lord Jesus Christ was tired and thirsty in John 4:7-14, as He asked for a drink of water to refresh Himself. He then offered the woman of Samaria *living water* for her thirst. He told her that if she drank of that water she would never thirst again.

Furthermore, in Psalm 72:6, we read: “*He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass: as showers that water the earth.*”

¹⁸ Ruckman, The Emblems of the Holy Spirit.

Dr. Ruckman continues:

“Rain is abundant and refreshing. Notice in particular Psalm 68:9, and Isaiah 18:4. Lack of rain is a picture of the lack of the Holy Spirit. This means that when a country like America turns its back on God, it is liable to have a *drought*. When God wants to withhold His mercy from a land, He withholds rain. God’s judgment upon a land is no rain. Back in 1933 when Roosevelt had Prohibition repealed, one of the greatest droughts that ever took place dried up the counties of west Kansas, west Oklahoma, and parts of Texas. With dust laying like snowdrifts four and five feet high, somebody found an old signboard stuck up in the back of a barnyard that said, ‘*You gave us beer. Now give us water.*’ When we voted beer in, son, we voted water out, and that is why inflation and taxes have doubled since 1933, and will double again in the next ten years. You do not live godlessly and bear good crops. You do not live the way America is living, and expect ‘*fruited plains*’ and to ‘*crown thy good with brotherhood, from sea to shining sea.*’ Don’t expect it, and don’t expect ‘*God bless America, land that I love,*’ because He is not about to do it. God will cut off the rain, a type of the ‘*Holy Spirit.*’”¹⁹

3. Water is free — Isaiah 55:1

“The Bible tells us, ‘*...whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.*’ (Revelation 22:17). In Isaiah 55:1, the Lord invited them to come and get water ‘*without price.*’ Water is FREE, so the Holy Spirit is given to those that ask. I’ll grant you there are some conditions given in Acts 2, but at that time, the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John weren’t written. Paul (the apostle to the Gentiles) had not been saved. Every man there (at that Feast of Pentecost) was an Old Testament Jew under the law. You must be careful where you go to get your doctrine. The promise of the Holy Spirit is freely given by faith, Galatians 3:14.”²⁰

¹⁹ Ruckman, The Emblems of the Holy Spirit.

²⁰ *ibid.*

4. Water cleanses — Ephesians 5:26

“A surgeon preparing for an operation will scrub his hands for about fifteen minutes under a faucet. Unless this continuous washing is done beforehand, germs... will be carried to the body of the patient. If the hands were washed in a basin of water, no matter how long he would wash in that water, he would never be rid of germs because of the contaminated water. Running water carries away the germs until the hands are surgically clean. Moses knew this long before Pasteur knew what a ‘germ’ was (Leviticus 15:13).”²¹

We read in Ephesians 5:26 how the Lord Jesus Christ gave Himself for the church *“That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word.”* Cleansing is one aspect of sanctification,²² and just as it is necessary to continually wash our hands and bodies to keep them clean, sanctification is the corresponding continual spiritual process necessary to cleanse us from sin in order for us to maintain an intimate relationship with our God and Savior.

Paul writes to the Corinthians

“And such were some of you, but ye are WASHED, ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and BY THE SPIRIT of our God,”

— I Corinthians 6:11

In this verse Paul tells us that we are **“washed... by the Spirit of our God.”** So, what does Paul mean in Ephesians 5:26, when he says “washing of **water** by the

²¹ Robert T. Boyd, *World's Bible Handbook*, (World Bible Publisher's Inc.) Originally published as *Boyd's Bible Handbook*.

²² Noah Webster's *American Dictionary of the English Language* says: Sanctify, v.t.—In a general sense, to cleanse, purify or make holy, (1828).

word”? As we have already established, water is a type of the Holy Spirit. So, in Ephesians 5:26 “water” is a reference to the Holy Spirit, not to “the word.”

And what about a verse like Psalm 119:9?

**“Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way?
by taking heed thereto according to thy word.”**

— Psalms 119:9

Here the young man, himself, is said to “cleanse his way.” But, how does it takes place? “[B]y taking heed thereto according to the word of God.” Comparing that with the scriptures we have already looked at, we see that as the young man ‘obeys’ God’s word (“taking heed thereto”), the Holy Spirit will cleanse him with the word of God. The Holy Spirit is the AGENT, while the word of God is the INSTRUMENT. The Lord Jesus Christ issues the directive, the Holy Spirit carries out the washing, and the word of God is the actual cleanser.

Our Saviour said “[I]t is the spirit that quickeneth,” and He continued by saying that His words are “spirit and they are life.” The power of the word of God is applied through the agency of the Holy Spirit of God; they are different, but they cannot be separated. So, “the washing **of** water” (the Holy Spirit), and “**by** the word.” The Holy Spirit effectually cleanses us, by the power of the word of God.

John the Baptist recorded

“In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.

“He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of LIVING WATER.

“(But this spake he of the SPIRIT, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was

not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)”

— John 7:37-39

Evangelist James Stewart says

“When the Spirit of God enters new believers, He ‘quickens’ them (makes them alive) ‘by the word’ (Ephesians 5:26). Thereby, they are also regenerated (born again). Furthermore, the Spirit also cleanses them ‘by the word,’ sanctifying them unto the Lord. Then, He establishes Himself as a fount of ‘living water.’ But, we read that “the cares of the world choke the word” (Mark 4:19). Even as a pool with no outlet becomes stagnant, so may the soul of the believer, when the ‘rivers of living water’ become blocked from flowing. We must keep a clear channel by daily cleansing as we give attendance to prayer, Bible reading and obedience to the Lord. He made us clean and He gives us the means to stay clean and “unspotted from the world” (James 1:27).”²³

5. Water Separates

As we all know, continental land masses are separated by seas and oceans (Exodus 23:31). Furthermore, rivers often mark the boundaries between states and countries. Noah’s flood separated the righteous from the unrighteous; that is, those safe in the ark were saved (separated) from the world by the waters (I Peter 3:20; II Peter 2:5, 3:6; Hebrews 11:7). In like manner, God separated Israel from Egypt (a type of the world) as they fled Pharaoh’s army.

“And the waters returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh”

— Exodus 14:26-30

²³ Stewart, The Heavenly Executive, page 33.

After salvation, the new believer's submission to the ordinance of water baptism is a testimony of his separation from the world (Romans 6:3-4).

C. Oil — Acts 10:38

Another biblical type of the Holy Spirit is *oil*.

In Israel olive oil was essential in the preparation of daily meals. Oil was used to make cakes of the manna that God gave to Israel in the wilderness (Numbers 11:8). In normal times, cakes were made of flour and oil (I Kings 17:12-16) and sometimes with honey, (Leviticus 2:1,4; Ezekiel 16:13) and with wine (Revelation 6:6).

1. Oil is a sign of consecration

— **Exodus 29:7; Luke 4:18**

In the Old Testament, olive oil was used as a type of consecration, and it is the Holy Spirit that consecrates a man to God (Exodus 40:9-16; Leviticus 8; Isaiah 61:1-2, cf. Luke 4:18).

2. Oil is a symbol of comfort

— **Isaiah 61:3; Hebrews 1:9**

The Holy Spirit comforts in Isaiah 61:3, where we read "*the oil of joy*" is given instead of mourning. Speaking of the anointing of Jesus Christ, Psalm 45:7 says, "*God hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness...*" Notice also Hebrews 1:9, "*the oil of gladness.*" In John 14:26, the Holy Spirit is "*the comforter.*"

3. Oil is a source of light — Exodus 27:20;

Matthew 25:1-13

Charles Caldwell Ryrie tells us:

"The sole light in the tabernacle was provided by the holy oil in the lampstand which lighted the

place where God was worshipped, the place which in every particular foreshadowed the work of Christ (Exodus 27:20-21). Likewise, today, it is the Holy Spirit who throws the spotlight upon Him who is the truth and who glorifies Christ before the eyes of the Christian (John 16:13-15; I John 2:20).”²⁴

- ☉ The lamps of the foolish virgins who had no oil did not shine. **No oil, no light.**

4. Oil is an ointment for healing — Luke 10:34

Oil was also used in the cleansing and sanctifying of priests and lepers (Leviticus 8:30; 14:17). The good Samaritan poured oil into the wound of the afflicted traveler, picturing the healing ministry of the Spirit.

D. A Seal — Ephesians 4:30

The seal is still commonly used in the Far East in business and personal transactions (Jeremiah 32:11-14; John 3:33). In the West, we are more familiar with the seal of a *Notary Public* that testifies to the authenticity of a document and the identity of the person authorizing it. In the old days, Europeans commonly used wax to set their seals on letters and official documents. Some stationery stores still sell these today. Nations have their governmental seals as well.

1. It identifies

“Like his master, Paul was always drawing illustrations from local situations and surroundings in a language that everybody could understand. Now at this time Ephesus was a maritime city, having an extensive timber trade. Great logs and planks would

²⁴ Ryrie, *The Holy Spirit*.

be brought in and purchased. They were then sealed with the purchaser's seal with burnt-in marks, just as one sees in Norway and Finland today. After the sealing, there could be no question of ownership, as the marks of identification were clearly defined on the seal.

“Likewise, the moment a person is saved, God places upon him the seal of His Spirit and says as it were, ‘I have redeemed you by the precious blood of My Son, and you now belong to me. I thus place my mark of identification upon you.’

“What a privileged people we are! But, as we see in II Timothy 2:19, concerning the Spirit's stamp being upon us, the privilege carries with it a tremendous responsibility. The verse says,

‘Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.’ — II Timothy 2:19

“Since we have been sealed, we are obligated now to live as one who has been sealed. Since I am God's property, then it is my peculiar joy to see that I never disgrace His name.

“[W]e read in John 6:27, ‘...*him hath God the Father sealed.*’ The Lord Jesus was the perfect reflection of God the Father, as we read in Hebrews 1:3, He was ‘...*the express image of his person.*’

“Now if we have been sealed with the stamp of God's Spirit, we will carry with us a resemblance, not of the Holy Spirit, but of the Lord Jesus. In this economy of grace the Holy Spirit's ministry is to portray the Lord Jesus through our lives. The great question for us is, are we carrying the correct impression of our Master? Has the stamp of the Seal become dim?”²⁵

²⁵ Stewart, The Heavenly Executive

Job 37:7 shows that God has given every man on earth an individual identity. Your fingerprints are not like any other human that ever lived. We read in Revelation 7:2-8, of a time when God is going to seal 144,000 Jewish young men to preach through all the earth during the tribulation. God's *seal* identifies them and authenticates their ministry.

“In days of old, when a young Roman came of age, a serious ceremony was performed in which the father drew from his finger his own ring and handed it to his son. (There were occasions also when a Roman senator who had no son adopted one, at which time the same adoption ceremony with the ring was performed.) This particular ring was the signet ring on which was the crest of IDENTITY when a father placed the ring on the finger of his son, he was declaring ‘All that I have now belongs to you— of dignity, and wealth, and AUTHORITY you this ring with my insignia on it as a token of your full status as a son in my family.’

“Wherever the son would go, whatever his need, and in whatever difficult situation he found himself, the showing or using of his ring IDENTIFIED son of his father with all its position and possessions. The ring was the all important possession of his life.”²⁶

2. It secures

The seal of the Holy Spirit secures our transaction with God, made when we believed. It shows that the Christian belongs to God until the Lord returns to take him to Heaven forever (cf. Ephesians 4:30).

“Security” is defined as:

“1. (n.) The quality or state of being safe: safety, assurance, safeness, freedom from harm, freedom

²⁶ Stewart, *The Heavenly Executive*, p. 35

from danger, safekeeping. 2. (n.) Something given to guarantee repayment or fulfillment of an obligation.”²⁷

James Stewart says

“Now, blessed be God, a finished transaction has taken place in the believer’s life. The Lord Jesus Christ, as the Lamb of God, died in the sinner’s stead and met the demands of God’s undiminished holiness. This vicarious sacrifice was one complete divine act never to be repeated.

‘But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;’
— Hebrews 10:12

“The redeemer cried on the Roman gibbet, not the cry of a victim but that of a victor, *‘It is finished!’* (John 19:30).

*‘It is finished; what a gospel!
Nothing has been left to do
But to take with grateful gladness
What the Lord has done for you.’*

“But the work of Christ on the cross is only one side of the great transaction; the sinner himself must repent of his sin and bow before Christ as Lord and Saviour. Then he can joyfully sing,

*‘Tis done! The great transaction’s done.
I am my Lord’s and He is mine;
He drew me and I followed on,
Charm’d to confess that voice divine!’*²⁸

“The transaction having been completed, the believer is then sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise.”²⁹

²⁷ Merriam/Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary — Tenth Edition.

²⁸ From the hymn by Philip Doddridge, “O Happy Day.”

²⁹ Stewart, The Heavenly Executive, p. 32.

When a business transaction is completed, it is the seal set upon the final agreement that gives a sense of security and peace that the transaction is legal and binding.

Furthermore, the seal of the Holy Spirit is an *earnest* (a token payment as assurance that the transaction will eventually be completed at a later date— II Corinthians 1:22; 5:5; Ephesians 1:13-14). In business, sometimes a *security deposit* is made that secures the purchased possession until it is delivered to its owner.

“The Spirit Who now indwells the child of God is the token payment, guaranteeing his final full redemption.

“We may well illustrate the truth also from the Old Testament where Eliezer, the chief servant of Abraham was seeking a bride for his master’s son. Upon finding Rebekah and making sure she was the right one, he brought forth ‘jewels of silver, jewels of gold, and raiment’ and gave them to her. These were token payments of her future inheritance.

“You remember when the spies went to search out the land of Canaan, they returned to Moses and reported that the land was a glorious land and very fruitful. To back up their words, they had brought with them a large bunch of grapes from Eschol. Now these grapes were the earnest of what awaited the people when they would enter that land. In other words, they were a *token* or sample of what awaited the people when they would enter that land. In other words, they were a token or sample of what was there for them.

“Our receiving the ‘earnest’ of the Spirit’s sealing is just another way of saying that the best is always ahead. As Dr. Herbert Lockyer so sweetly said, ‘In the Spirit we have a little piece of heaven to go to heaven with.’ Just now it is our privilege to enjoy the first-fruits of the Spirit, but our present enjoyment of Him is just a pledge and guarantee of our glorious future. As one young convert exclaimed with holy glee, ‘All this and heaven too!’ We can have heaven on the way to heaven.

“It is a tragedy when a person’s golden day is behind, but for us who believed in Christ that is never so. No matter how glorious has been the past, the best is yet to come. All that the Spirit has ever been able to do for and through any one of us is but a beginning, an indication, a foretaste, a sample, of what awaits us in that great and perfect life beyond.’

— W. Graham Scroggie”³⁰

3. It authorizes

An official seal cannot be broken without violating the power and authority of the one who set the seal.

There are three examples of this in the Bible:

1. When Darius placed Daniel in the lion’s den
(Daniel 6:16,17)
2. When Haman plotted the murder of the Jews
(Esther 3:6-12)
3. When Pilate sealed the tomb of Jesus
(Matthew 27:66)

4. It sanctifies

The word *sanctify* means *to set apart, or shut up*. We see in the Bible several notable occasions of God sealing something shut. When He does, **something is shut in** and **something is shut out**.

- ☞ In Genesis 7:16, the Lord *sealed shut the door* of Noah’s ark. (We might say that Noah became the first shut-in.)

³⁰ W. Graham Scroggie, a quote by James Stewart in his book, The Heavenly Executive, p. 40

- ☉ In Daniel 12:1-4, the prophet Daniel is told to *seal a book shut*.
- ☉ In Revelation 7:2-4, the 144,000 *servants of God are sealed*.
- ☉ In Revelation 20:3, a *seal is set upon Satan* when he is cast into the bottomless pit “*that he should deceive the nations no more.*”

E. Wind — Acts 2:1-4

In John 3:8, we read, “*The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.*”

1. Wind is powerful

Anybody who has been in a hurricane or tornado knows that *wind is powerful*. Hurricanes have destroyed whole cities, including the landscape and the buildings.

Dr. Peter Ruckman makes the following observation:

“Tornadoes have been known to go by a house and take all the furniture out and the rugs off the floor, and leave everything else in the house intact. Tornadoes have been known to take half a house away and leave half of it standing. Tornadoes have been known to take people out of the house and leave them on the ground and take the whole house on down in the valley. I’ve been in homes where tornadoes have gone through in previous years, taken ranges and refrigerators through the front bay window, and left the canary sitting in the same window singing. You don’t have to worry about selectivity when it comes to the Holy

Spirit taking up the body of Christ at the rapture. All God has to do is create a vacuum between where you are and He is (this is what takes place inside the tornado), and out you go, my friend, and the refuse and the chaff will be left.”³¹

In Ezekiel 37:9-14, we read that when Ezekiel told the wind to come and breathe upon the slain, “...*breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army.*” In verse 14, when God interpreted these things to Ezekiel, He said that His Spirit would *enter* His people. It is the Holy Spirit that grants the new birth, quickens from the dead, and brings the Christian back to life spiritually; and this same Holy Spirit will one day bring the dead body of the Christian back to life, for Paul said in Romans 8:11, “*But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.*”

2. Wind is independent

John 3:8 says, “*The wind bloweth where it listeth.*” The Holy Spirit does whatever He wants to do. He is the third Person of the Godhead, and He obeys God’s will. He does not obey *your or my* orders.

3. The wind is invisible, but effective

John 3:8 says, “[*T*]hou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.” We cannot see the Spirit, but we can certainly see where He has been and the effect of His work.

³¹ Ruckman, The Emblems of the Holy Spirit.

F. Fire — Hebrews 12:29

Deuteronomy 4:36 says, “*Out of heaven he made thee to hear his voice, that he might instruct thee: and upon earth he showed thee his great fire; and **thou heardest his words out of the midst of the fire.***”

Fire has several attributes that exemplify the work of the Holy Spirit:

1. The presence of the Lord — Exodus 3:2

a. Fire gives light — I John 1:5; Exodus 13:21

There is light in the presence of God, and the Holy Spirit gives *spiritual light* to reveal *spiritual truths*. John the apostle writes, “*This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that **God is light**, and in him is no darkness at all.*” (I John 1:5).

- ☞ The first time God speaks to Moses He speaks from the burning bush and reveals His will.
- ☞ We see the Spirit of God giving light for the nation of Israel in the wilderness by a pillar of fire (Exodus 13:21).
- ☞ The first time the Holy Spirit is given to believers in fulfillment of the Lord’s promise, He gives evidence of His presence by fire (Acts 2:3).

b. Fire affords protection — Exodus 13:21

The pillar of fire was a fearsome sight to the enemies of Israel. In the circle of its light they were safe in His presence.

2. The approval of the Lord — Leviticus 9:24

God sent fire to show His approval of a sacrifice or of a man of God many times. In I Kings 18, Elijah says:

“And call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the LORD: and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God. And all the people answered and said, It is well spoken.

“Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.”

— I Kings 18:24, 38

In like manner, in Acts 2:3, God showed His approval of those 120 believers who gathered in one accord and waited for *the “Comforter,”* (John 15:26; 16:7) *“that holy Spirit of promise”* (Ephesians 1:13). The appearance was *“like as of fire”* (Acts 2:3).

3. The purifying from the Lord—Isaiah 6:1-8

Oh, for the fire from the altar of God that would give His servants clean lips and a holy tongue like Isaiah’s to speak for Him. We still need the fire of God to make our lives pure for His service. The Holy Spirit sometimes brings us through *fiery trials* to purify us (I Peter 4:12). In this manner, the three Hebrew children passed through a fiery trial.

“And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

“Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste, and spake, and said unto his counsellors, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king.

“He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.”

— Daniel 3:23-25

In I Corinthians 3:13, Paul also tells about the fire of God that will purify the believer’s works at the Judgment Seat of Christ. The works of the flesh shall be burnt up and nothing will be left but our true reward. It is as the refiner’s fire that separates the dross (impurities) from the pure gold. When the refiner can see his own reflection in it, he knows it is pure and perfected. The Laodicean Church is especially counseled to buy “*gold [FAITH] tried in the fire*” (Revelation 3:18; I Peter 1:7).

In the old days, before modern antibiotics were developed, a hot burning iron would often be thrust into a wound to cleanse it of infection and seal it against further contamination.

4. The judgment of the Lord **— Hebrews 12:29**

a. Destruction of the wicked

Genesis 19:24 gives us the unforgettable account of the destruction of two entire cities.

“Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven;”
— Genesis 19:24

b. The Lake of Fire

Revelation 20:14-15, tells of the final punishment of the wicked:

“And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

“And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.”

— Revelation 20:14-15

While the six emblems of the Holy Spirit are clearly seen throughout the scriptures, there are still other types of the Spirit found in the Bible.

G. The servant, Eliezer — Genesis 24

How can we fail to mention that wonderful type of the Spirit found in Abraham’s servant, Eliezer?

Evangelist James Stewart writes:

“In the person of the steward who had charge of Abraham’s goods, we have the most perfect picture of the Spirit’s ministry. We read that Eliezer had charge of all Abraham’s property and managed all his estate, and this is what the Scriptures teach concerning the Blessed Spirit. He is sent to administer the estate of Christ to the redeemed ones (John 16:14). The Holy Spirit is seeking a bride for the Father’s Son (study Ephesians 5). Like Eliezer, He keeps himself in the background and speaks of the glories of Christ, and thus He woos and wins lost sinners to the Saviour. Then His business is to conduct them home to glory to be received by their Isaac. As the theme of conversation over the desert was about Isaac, the glorious son of the Father, so the Spirit’s theme to us is Christ (John 14:16).”³²

³² James Alexander Stewart, The Glorious Third Person, (Revival Literature, Asheville, NC 28806) Famous Scottish Baptist evangelist and writer.

PART TWO



THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

INTRODUCTION – PART TWO

Many erroneously believe the Holy Spirit first came to earth at the time of the Feast of Pentecost in Acts 2. This is not true.³³ The Word of God assigns no less than eleven mighty ministries of the Spirit, and the first three were performed in Old Testament times.

These eleven ministries are:

1. His ministry concerning the creation of the universe
2. His ministry concerning the scriptures
3. His ministry concerning the nation Israel
4. His ministry concerning the Devil
5. His ministry concerning the Saviour
6. His ministry concerning the sinner
7. His ministry concerning the Church
8. His ministry concerning the day of Pentecost
9. His ministry concerning the believer
10. His ministry concerning the spiritual gifts
11. His ministry concerning the bearing of fruit

We shall now consider each of these separately

³³ The Holy Spirit was active throughout the Old Testament. At Pentecost (Acts 2), the Holy Spirit was sent by Christ to be the believer's "Comforter" and from that time onward, He *permanently indwells* every believer.

HIS MINISTRY CONCERNING THE CREATION OF THE UNIVERSE

I. His Ministry Concerning The Creation Of The Universe

A. Time of the Spirit's Work in Creation

The Holy Spirit was instrumental in the creation of the universe at an unknown time in the past (Genesis 1:1). But, that is not the end of His creative work. After the White Throne Judgment, the events recorded in II Peter 3:10-13 will finally come to pass (cf. Matthew 24:35).

“But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

“Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,

“Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?

“Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.”

— II Peter 3:10-13

The first and second heavens, and all therein (including Earth), will be dissolved and pass away. Afterward, the Holy Spirit will *recreate* the universe with “a new heaven and a new earth.” (Revelation 21:1-4).

B. Proof of the Spirit's Work in Creation

To avoid any confusion, we must note what the scriptures say about the work the Godhead in Creation.

1. The Bible says *the Father* created the heavens and the earth

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” — Genesis 1:1

“The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.” — Psalm 19:1

“For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.” — Psalms 33:9

“I have made the earth, and created man upon it: I, even my hands, have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded.” — Isaiah 45:12

2. However, in other places, the Bible attributes the creation of all things to the Lord Jesus Christ, *the Son of God*.

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

“The same was in the beginning with God.

“All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.”

— John 1:1-3; 14

“And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:” — Ephesians 3:9

“For by him [Jesus] were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:

And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

— Colossians 1:16-17

3. Finally, in still other passages, *the Holy Spirit* is said to have carried out the will of God in the act of creation.

“Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created: and thou renewest the face of the earth.”

— Psalms 104:30

“By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent.” — Job 26:13

“The spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.” — Job 33:4

By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.”

— Psalms 33:6

“And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.”

— Genesis 1:2

What, then, is the truth?

The truth is, that God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit all had a part in the creation.

- It was conceived by God the Father, Who willed it and spake it into existence.

- ☛ It was orchestrated by His Son, the Word of God, Who always does the Father's will (John 5:30).
- ☛ Finally, the will of the Father and the Son was instituted by the Holy Spirit (John 15:26; 16:7).

C. Particulars of the Spirit's Work in Creation

1. Life

"This is the basic work of the Spirit in many areas, including that of creation (cf. John 6:63; II Corinthians 3:6). He gives life to the creation (Psalm 104:30; Job 33:4).

2. Order

The creation is one of order. This is seen in the waters, the heavens, the earth (Isaiah 40:12) and particularly in the orderly process in the heavens (Job 26:7-13).

3. Adornment

It is the Spirit's particular work to adorn the creation to the glory of God (Psalm 33:6, Job 26:13). The heavens do "declare the glory of God" [Psalms 19:1], and it seems as if this was one of the special ministries of the Third Person as far as the work of creation was concerned.

4. Preservation

Although it is Christ who is usually associated with the preservation of the universe (Hebrews 1:3), there is at least one reference to the Holy Spirit's part in this work. Psalm 104:29-30 speaks not only of the Spirit's part in creating, but also His work in renewing."³⁴

³⁴ Ryrie, The Holy Spirit.

HIS MINISTRY CONCERNING THE SCRIPTURES

II. His Ministry Concerning The Scriptures

The Holy Spirit is the author and interpreter of the Holy Scriptures.

Dr. Peter S. Ruckman says:

“The Holy Spirit’s... job is not only to *inspire* the original autographs, but to *preserve* the infallibility and authority of that text so that a believer in any age would have access to the words of God.”³⁵

Even while the New Testament scriptures were being written, some had already begun to twist their meaning and change them to suit their own purposes. Paul made it clear that *many* were corrupting the word of God.

“For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ.” — II Corinthians 2:17

But, the Holy Spirit has preserved the word of God.

“The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.

“Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever.”

— Psalm 12:6,7

Despite Satan’s attempt to destroy God’s word, the Holy Spirit has preserved the scriptures from those who would be used by Satan to corrupt them. By the grace of God, we still have the pure word of God without error. I

³⁵ Dr. Peter S. Ruckman, Theological Studies — Book 12 — The Work of the Holy Spirit, (Bible Baptist Bookstore, Pensacola, Florida), Page 7.

will never hesitate to take my King James Bible in my hand and declare that I hold and preach the inspired word of God.

Dr. Peter S. Ruckman continues

“The Holy Spirit not only inspired the original autographs, but the scriptures we have in our hands (a *King James 1611 Authorized Version* of the Bible). And by the way, the term ‘*scripture*’ in the Bible is never a reference to the *original manuscripts*.”³⁶

“Now, the primary purpose for the writing of the scripture— according to the Holy Spirit who wrote the scripture— was doctrine. II Timothy 3:16 says, ‘*All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine...*’ Paul told Timothy to labor in doctrine and that an elder who labored in doctrine was worthy of double honor (I Timothy 5:17). He also said that Timothy could save his own ministry and save the testimony of the people who heard him if he spent time and gave attention to doctrine (I Timothy 4:13-16). *Sound doctrine* is the absolute essential quality in the last day in the Laodicean church and is the last thing the modern Laodicean Christian wants to fool with because it is divisive and controversial.”³⁷

A. The Holy Spirit Is The Author Of The Scriptures

- 1. According to David — II Samuel 23:2**
- 2. According to Isaiah — Isaiah 59:21**
- 3. According to Jeremiah — Jeremiah 1:9**
- 4. According to Jesus — Matthew 5:18**

³⁶ Ruckman, *The Work of the Holy Spirit*, Page 7.

³⁷ Ruckman, *The Deity and Names of the Holy Spirit*.

5. According to John — John 16:13-14

6. According to Peter — II Peter 1:20-21

7. According to Paul — II Timothy 3:15-17

B. The Holy Spirit Is The Interpreter Of The Scriptures

(Ephesians 1:17; I John 2:20,27)

The Holy Spirit is not only the author of the scriptures, but the divine interpreter of the scriptures (cf. John 16:13-14; Luke 24:32,44-45). He has supernaturally communicated the scriptures to man. We have received them and do understand them by the following three means:

Revelation: That process whereby the Holy Spirit spoke to the forty human writers of the Bible, the message He wanted them to transmit.³⁸

Inspiration: That process whereby the Holy Spirit guided the forty writers (using their own individual styles and personalities) so that the message was accurately recorded without error.

Illumination: That process whereby the Holy Spirit takes the written word when it is preached and read and enlightens those who will receive it.

³⁸ "REVELATION" basically means: the disclosure of that which was previously unknown. In relation to the material recorded in the Bible, it means the disclosure of God, who apart from such revelation was unknown to man. Revelation concerns the material which is made known, not the manner of its disclosure or the resultant product.

HIS MINISTRY CONCERNING ISRAEL

III. His Ministry Concerning Israel

The Holy Spirit's ministry to Israel (as a nation) took place during the Old Testament period, but will resume during the tribulation.

Charles Ryrie says:

“Apparently the Spirit’s work in believers during the tribulation period will follow the pattern of His work in the Old Testament. Specific proof texts are scarce, for the Bible says very little about the Spirit’s ministry during that time. One text that can be used is the quotation of Joel 2 in Acts 2, because for whatever purpose it was quoted on the day of Pentecost, it obviously did not have a *complete fulfillment* on that day. Full fulfillment awaits the tribulation days, since the passage expressly links the pouring out of the Spirit with the time when the Sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood. These events will occur at the close of the tribulation just before the second coming of Christ (Matthew 24:29,30). Another possible proof text is Revelation 11:3,4, which links the ministry of the two witnesses during the tribulation to the power of the Spirit (Zechariah 4:6).”³⁹

The Holy Spirit's relation to individuals during the Old Testament period is noticeably different from His relation to the New Testament saint.

A. Selective Indwelling

It appears that the *indwelling* of the Holy Spirit in Old Testament times was *not the universal experience of God's people*.

³⁹ Ryrie, The Holy Spirit, page 109.

“His relationship may be comprehended by three words.

“First, it is said that the Spirit was in certain ones (Joseph, Genesis 41:38; Joshua, Numbers 27:18; Daniel 4:8; 5:11-14; 6:3).

“Second, the Spirit is said to have come upon man (cf. Judges 3:10; 6:34; 11:29; 13:25; I Samuel 10:9-10; 16:13). Is there any difference between the Spirit’s being in and the Spirit’s coming upon men? We are probably not to understand any significant difference except that the idea of coming upon seems to imply the temporary and transitory character of the Spirit’s relationship to the Old Testament Saints.

“Third, the Spirit is said to have filled some. This is recorded of Bezaleel in relation to his leadership of the craftsmen working on the tabernacle (Exodus 31:3; 35:31). One may assume that this special filling for service presupposed the Spirit’s indwelling or at least His having come upon him.

“What do these examples indicate? Simply that, although the Spirit did indwell men in Old Testament times, it was a selective ministry, both in regard to whom He indwelt and for how long. Can this relationship be summarized in any simple way? Yes, for the Lord summarized it by telling His disciples that up to that time the Spirit had been abiding with them, though on and after the day of Pentecost He would be in them (John 14:17). From this statement two things are clear concerning the Old Testament work of the Spirit:

1. It was not erratic, even though it may have been limited as to persons included and the length of time they experienced His ministry. The word abideth, in any case, does not indicate an erratic ministry.
2. Nevertheless, His ministry was different from that which began on Pentecost, for the Lord carefully characterized the ministry as with in contrast to in, which began at Pentecost. Although in the Old

Testament there were clear instances when the Spirit indwelt men, His ministry could not be described generally as a ministry of being in men but only with them. Many things may not be clear in this contrast between with and in, but that there is a contrast, is clear.”

B. Enablement for Service

“Mention has already been made of Bezaleel’s special endowment for service in the construction of the tabernacle (Exodus 31:3). This supernatural ability was not to the exclusion of his native ability, but in addition to it. Some of the judges were given enablement (Judges 3:10; 6:34; 11:29). Samson’s strength was produced by the Spirit’s coming on him. (Judges 14:6). When David was anointed king by Samuel ‘*the spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward*’ (I Samuel 16:13). The New Testament reveals that the Spirit in the prophets gave them discernment and wisdom (I Peter 1:11).”⁴⁰

C. Old Testament Leaders in Israel that the Spirit Came Upon

No less than sixteen Old Testament individuals are said to have experienced the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

1. Upon Joseph — Genesis 41:38

2. Upon Moses — Numbers 11:16-17

3. Upon Joshua — Numbers 27:18

4. Upon Othniel — Judges 3:10

5. Upon Gideon — Judges 6:34

⁴⁰ Ryrie, The Holy Spirit, page 41.

6. Upon Jephthah — Judges 11:29**7. Upon Samson (at least three times)**

— **Judges 14:6,19; 15:14-15**

(But the Spirit departed from Samson in Judges 16:20.)

8. Upon Saul

a. After He Was Anointed King By Samuel
— I Samuel 10:10.

b. Just Before His Victory At Jabesh-Gilead
— I Samuel 11:6. (The Spirit later departed from Saul— I Samuel 16:14.)

9. Upon David

Unlike Saul's case, we are never told that the Holy Spirit departed from David. However, on one occasion David feared He might withdraw Himself— Psalm 51:11; I Samuel 16:1.

10. Upon Elijah

a. As Testified To By Obadiah — I Kings 18:12

b. As Testified To By The Prophets At Jericho
— II Kings 2:16

11. Upon Elisha — II Kings 2:15**12. Upon Ezekiel — Ezekiel 2:2****13. Upon Daniel**

a. As Testified To By King Nebuchadnezzar
— Daniel 4:9

- b. As Testified By A Frightened Queen
— Daniel 5:11**
- c. As Testified By King Darius — Daniel 6:3**

14. Upon Micah — Micah 3:8

**15. Upon Azariah the prophet
— II Chronicles 15:1**

**16. Upon Zechariah the high priest
— II Chronicles 24:20**

**17. He Came Upon Israel's Elders
— Numbers 11:25**

**18. He Came Upon Israel's Tabernacle
— Exodus 40:34-35**

**19. He Came Upon Israel's Temple
— I Kings 8:10**

**20. He Led Israel Through The Desert
— Nehemiah 9:20; Isaiah 63:10-11**

**21. He Will Come Upon Israel During The
Tribulation — Joel 2:27-32;
Revelation 6:12;7:2-4**

**22. He Will Come Upon Israel During The
Millennium — Zechariah 12:10;
Ezekiel 37:13-14; 39:29; Joel 2:23-28.**

HIS MINISTRY CONCERNING THE DEVIL

IV. His Ministry Concerning The Devil

The Holy Spirit now acts as a *divine dam*, holding back and limiting the full power of Satan and of sin.

A. As Stated By Isaiah

(Isaiah 59:19)

Here we see that when Satan mounts an offensive, the Holy Spirit will meet his attack with the power to keep him from the complete fulfillment of his desire.

B. As Stated By Paul

(II Thessalonians 2:7-14)

Paul says that at the beginning of the terrible time known as *The Great Tribulation*, the restraining power of the Holy Spirit will be removed, allowing Satan and his dreaded *Antichrist* to rule over the earth for seven years.

The actual term “*antichrist*” is found only in the epistles of John (I John 2:18, 22; 4:3; II John 2:7). From these verses we see that it refers to three things:

1. A *spirit* that opposes the Lord Jesus Christ or denies his incarnation.
2. False teachers who are led by this evil spirit.
3. One *individual* who will be the manifestation of Satan himself.

Although “*the spirit of antichrist*” has always been present in the world (Genesis 3) and is in the world today

(I John 4:3), He will soon be manifest in one satanic *superman*. He is called “*the man of sin*” and “*the son of perdition*” in II Thessalonians 2:3, and he is “*that Wicked*” in II Thessalonians 2:8. He will be THE Antichrist.

By His omnipotence, the Spirit of God has always kept Satan from back doing all that he would like to do. Although Satan is “*the god of this world*” (II Corinthians 4:4), God has restrained him from carrying out the full intent of his evil designs upon the earth. What would Satan do to believers today if the Holy Spirit did not limit him from doing all that he desired?

We can get an idea about the evil character of Satan from the Old Testament account of his attack upon Job, a man God called “my servant.” Satan was given permission from God to do whatever he wanted against Job, except to take his life (Job 1:8-2:6). After reading this story, should we not fear God and give thanks and praise to Him every day for His wonderful mercy and grace that keeps us from the evil one day by day?

Still, we know there is coming a time when the whole earth will suffer even worse calamities than Job.

The Lord Jesus Christ, Himself, warned of that day.

“For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.”
— Matthew 24:21

After Jesus comes to take his saints (the body of Christ) to heaven (I Thessalonians 4:13-17), the Holy Spirit will still be present upon the earth as always, but He will no longer restrain Satan from carrying out his plans. Through miraculous power he will deceive many nations and become the ruler over the whole world (cf. Revelation 13:1-18).

HIS MINISTRY CONCERNING THE SAVIOUR

V. His Ministry Concerning The Saviour

From His bodily conception to His final ascension, the Lord Jesus was led by the Holy Spirit. If the sinless Son of God found it necessary to depend totally upon the Holy Spirit to form every word and guide every step, how much more is this absolutely vital for us?

A. The Saviour Was Begotten By The Holy Spirit

(Luke 1:35; Matthew 1:18-20)

The Holy Spirit was the divine agent of the virgin birth. Mary was impregnated by the Holy Spirit, and the real miracle was not in the Saviour's birth, but in His supernatural *conception*. But Hebrews 10:5 infers that *the Father* prepared Christ's body, while Hebrews 2:14-16 suggests that Christ, by *His own will*, took upon Himself flesh and blood. As in the creation of the universe, all three persons of the divine Godhead had a part.

B. The Saviour Was Anointed By The Holy Spirit

(Matthew 3:16; Luke 4:18; Acts 10:38;
Hebrews 1:9)

The anointing distinguished Jesus as the Messiah, singling Him out for His particular work of redemption.

C. The Saviour Was Sealed By The Holy Spirit (John 6:27)

That seal demonstrated the Son's identification with both the Father and the Spirit, as well as the authority given to Him.

D. The Saviour Was Led By The Holy Spirit

(Matthew 4:1)

E. The Saviour Was Empowered By The Holy Spirit

(Matthew 12:28)

According to Philippians 2:5-8, Christ did not use His divine attributes while He was on earth, but chose rather to depend completely upon the Holy Spirit for strength and guidance.

F. The Saviour Was Filled By The Holy Spirit

(John 3:34; Luke 4:1)

The words "*filled*" and "*full*" refer simply to *control*. Thus, the Saviour was totally controlled by the Holy Spirit while on this earth. If He needed this filling, how much more do we?

G. The Saviour Sorrowed In The Holy Spirit

(John 11:33)

H. The Saviour Rejoiced In The Holy Spirit

(Luke 10:21)

I. The Saviour Offered Himself At Calvary By The Holy Spirit

(Hebrews 9:14)

J. The Saviour Was Raised From The Dead By The Holy Spirit

(Romans 1:4; I Peter 3:18)

**K. The Saviour Commanded His Disciples
After His Resurrection Through The Holy
Spirit**

(Acts 1:2)

**L. The Saviour Baptizes Each Believer Into
The
Spiritual Body of Christ By The Holy Spirit**

(I Corinthians 12:13)

**M. The Saviour Will Someday Return And
Raise The Dead In Christ Through The Holy
Spirit**

(Romans 8:11)

HIS MINISTRY CONCERNING THE SINNER

VI. His Ministry Concerning The Sinner

A. The Holy Spirit Reproves Sinners

During His midnight discourse, just prior to entering Gethsemane, our Lord spoke the following words (John 16:7-11) to His sorrowing disciples about the Holy Spirit:

“Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.

“And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:”

— John 16:7-8

The key word in this passage is the word “*reprove*.” In the Greek it is “*elegcho*,” also translated as “*convince*” in John 8:46, “*convict*” in John 8:9 and to tell one his “*fault*” in Matthew 18:15.

I once read a poem that referred to the Holy Spirit as the *Hound of Heaven*. As you may know, a hound is any one of several breeds of dogs used for hunting because of their characteristically keen sense of smell. In like manner, the Spirit of God tracks down the sinner. Having *caught* him, the Holy Spirit then proceeds to convince him and convict him of his sins and unbelief.

1. He Convicts Man Of Sin

Conviction of SIN is not the same as conviction of individual SINS (for example, acts of fornication,

smoking, swearing or the like). It means, to a greater degree, the conviction of man's alienation from God and his inability to please God. It means the conviction of rejecting Christ's sacrifice on Calvary; *unbelief* actually being the one sin that can damn a man's soul to Hell forever (John 3:18).

Matthew Henry's commentary on John 16:7-15 says:

“Christ's departure was necessary to the Comforter's coming. Sending the Spirit was to be the fruit of Christ's death, which was his going away. His bodily presence could be only in one place at one time, but his Spirit is everywhere, in all places, at all times, wherever two or three are gathered together in his name. See here the office of the Spirit, first to reprove, or to convince. Convincing work is the Spirit's work; He can do it effectually, and none but He. It is the method the Holy Spirit takes, first to convince, and then to comfort.

- 1. The Spirit shall CONVINCe the world of sin; not merely tell them of it.**
 - ☞ **The Spirit convinces of the FACT of sin (that by one man [Adam] sin entered into the world);**
 - ☞ **of the FAULT of sin (that we are guilty, for all have sinned);**
 - ☞ **of the FOLLY of sin (that our sin will find us out);**
 - ☞ **of the FILTH of sin (that we are all unclean),**
 - ☞ **Of the FUTILITY of sin (that we will reap what we sow)**
 - ☞ **of the FROWARDNESS of sin (that by it we are become hateful to God);**
 - ☞ **of the FOUNTAIN of sin (that the natural man is corrupt);**

⇒ and lastly, of the FRUIT of sin (that the end thereof is death).

**The Holy Spirit proves that
all the world is guilty before God.**

2. He convinces the world of righteousness; that Jesus of Nazareth was Christ the Righteous.

Also, of Christ's righteousness, imparted to us for justification and salvation. He will show them where it is to be had, and how they may be accepted as righteous in God's sight. Christ's ascension proves the ransom was accepted, and the righteousness finished, through which believers were to be justified.

3. Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.

All will be well, when his power is broken, who made all the mischief. As Satan is subdued by Christ, this gives us confidence, for no other power can stand before him.

4. And of the day of judgment.

The coming of the Spirit would be of unspeakable advantage to the disciples. The Holy Spirit is our Guide, not only to show us the way, but to go with us by continued aids and influences. To be led into a truth is more than barely to know it; it is not only to have the notion of it in our heads, but the relish, and savor, and power of it in our hearts. He shall teach all truth, and keep back nothing profitable. It behooves every one to ask whether the Holy Spirit has begun a good work in his heart. Without clear discovery of our guilt and danger, we never shall understand the value of Christ's salvation; but when brought to know ourselves aright, we begin to see the value of the Redeemer. We should have fuller views of the Redeemer, and more lively affections to him, if we more... depended on the Holy Spirit."⁴¹

⁴¹ Matthew Henry, Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary of the Bible, (Moody Press). I have slightly expanded his outline on conviction of sin.

2. He convicts man of Christ's righteousness

Later, the Holy Spirit directed the Apostle Paul to write an entire epistle on this one word “*righteousness*.” In this epistle to the Romans, Paul stresses three things:

1. God *is* righteousness
2. God *demands* righteousness
3. God *provides* righteousness

3. He Convicts Man Of Future Judgment

The Holy Spirit points out to the sinner that:

- a. All unsaved people belong to Satan
— John 8:44
- b. Satan's doom is already in the making
— Romans 16:20
- c. All the lost will someday share Satan's doom
— Matthew 25:41

There are seven classic and clear examples of this **convicting ministry** of the blessed Holy Spirit in the book of Acts.

1. The crowd at Pentecost — Acts 2:22-23,37
2. The Ethiopian eunuch — Acts 8:29-38
3. Saul of Tarsus — Acts 9:1-6
4. A centurion named Cornelius — Acts 10:44

5. The Philippian jailor — Acts 16:25-34
6. A governor named Felix — Acts 24:24-25
7. A king named Agrippa — Acts 26:1,23-28

Evangelist James Stewart put it this way.

“The Holy Spirit INVESTIGATES.

“This investigation is thorough, entering into every detail of the thought and life of the person concerned, and bringing out awful realities that the person did not know existed.

“After this, the Holy Spirit INTERROGATES...

“The word ‘reprove’ (cf. John 16:8) is the word ‘convict.’ What is the meaning of ‘conviction?’ It means convincing the mind and heart regarding certain facts of life-and-death issues in relation to salvation and the soul’s rejection of it. Imbedded in this word ‘convict’ is the idea of the cross-examination by a lawyer, by which a man is proven guilty.

“Interrogation is a very necessary preliminary work of the Holy Spirit in man’s salvation, because it brings home to himself his own sinful nature and desperate need of a personal Saviour. Horatio Bonar, a famous Scottish hymn writer some [100] years ago, has a hymn in which he says:

*’Twas I that shed the sacred blood
I nailed Him to the tree
I crucified the Son of God,
I joined the mockery.*

“[F]riend, it is not sufficient for you to believe that Jesus Christ died almost 2000 years ago on Calvary for the sins of the world. That is only a *general* belief and *historical* faith. There is no virtue nor value in this. The sinner has countless sins of which he is guilty and he might confess them all, but that confession of

these sins does not bring salvation. The Holy Spirit convicts of *one great sin* and that is the attitude of unbelief and rejection of Jesus Christ.

"Then *the Holy Spirit INCRIMINATES.*

"He passes judgment on what he has discovered through the investigation and interrogation. He points his finger at the man and pronounces the verdict—'Guilty.'

"The man's mouth is stopped. He has nothing to say for himself as he stands, a naked guilty sinner, before a holy God."⁴²

"[T]hat every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God."— Romans 3:19

"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;" — Romans 3:23

In conclusion, it may be stated that the chief ministry performed by the Holy Spirit to the sinner is that of old-fashioned *conviction* of sin. Thereby the unsaved sinner is brought to see his hopeless, helpless state before a holy God.

B. The Holy Spirit Pleads With Sinners

1. He *strives* with sinners — Genesis 6:3

**2. He *pleads* with sinners
— Ezekiel 20:35-36; Jeremiah 2:35**

3. He *draws* sinners — John 6:44; 12:32

4. He *invites* sinners — Revelation 22:17

⁴² Stewart, The Heavenly Executive, page 17.

HIS MINISTRY CONCERNING THE CHURCH

VII. His Ministry Concerning the Church

Of the three basic institutions that God has ordained upon Earth (marriage, human government, and the church), none is more important to the Holy Spirit than the Church.

Paul Jackson outlines it so well.

“The Church was purposed in the mind of God throughout the eternal ages; it was pictured in the Old Testament; it was promised by Jesus Christ during His earthly ministry; and it was purchased on the cross of Calvary. It was not produced, however, as a living reality until the Day of Pentecost, fifty days after the resurrection of Christ.”⁴³

- The Holy Spirit and the **invisible** *spiritual Church*— He formed it (Ephesians 2:19-22).⁴⁴
- The Holy Spirit and the **visible** *local church* — He guides it.

⁴³ Paul Jackson, *The Doctrine and Administration of the Church*, (Regular Baptist Press). While there are a few things I do not agree with (like the work of councils), I highly recommend this GARBC book (General Assembly of Regular Baptist Churches) to all pastors and church members for insight into the workings and responsibilities of the local church.

⁴⁴ This is the body of Christ of which all believers are a part. The word “*spiritual*” is used here as an adjective, meaning: of, or concerned with the spirit rather than the body or material things.

A. He Desires To Inspire Its Worship Service

(Philippians 3:3)

If the pastor and people will allow Him to do so, the Holy Spirit will manifest both the presence and power of God at each church meeting. Any other manner of worship is vain.

B. He Desires To Direct Its Missionary Work

(Acts 8:29; 13:2,4; 16:6-7,10)

Mission work should be initiated, and missionaries sent forth only at the direction of the Spirit.

C. He Desires To Aid In Its Singing Services

(Ephesians 5:18-19)

Music and song services conducted under the direction of the Holy Spirit will be blessed by the Spirit. This ministry is to prepare the hearts of worshippers to give thanks and to receive the word of God. Musicians and singers should never be chosen by ability alone, but according to their gifts and yieldedness to God.

D. He Desires To Appoint Its Preachers

(Acts 20:28)

It is a tragic error to appoint men because of the approval of man, without the approval of the Holy Spirit. We have fewer God-called, God-appointed men today, and too many hirelings.

E. He Desires To Anoint Its Preachers

(Isaiah 61:1; Acts 10:38; II Corinthians 1:21;
cf. I Corinthians 2:4)

Here we see the divine order of service.

- The Holy Spirit first *appoints* men to service,
- Then He *anoints* His servants with power to perform it.

In plainer words, the anointing of the Holy Spirit is the enduement of power. This power is the spiritual authority God gives to His servants so that they can accomplish the work they have been appointed to do.

F. He Desires To Warn Its Members

(I Timothy 4:1)

G. He Desires To Determine Its Decisions

(Acts 15:28)

H. He Desires To Condemn Or Bless Its Efforts As Needed

(Revelation 2:7)

Churches are often overly concerned about improving their image in the eyes of *the world*. But the real concern should be directed toward the One who alone is properly qualified to improve and correct—namely, the Holy Spirit.

I. He Desires To Direct Its Visitation And Evangelistic Endeavors

(Revelation 22:17)

It is fitting that in this closing chapter of holy scripture *one final invitation* is extended, to those who would hear, to partake of the water of life. The Holy Spirit speaks through the Church urging the lost to come to Christ. It is a simple but urgent invitation—“*Come.*”

HIS MINISTRY CONCERNING THE DAY OF PENTECOST

VIII. His Ministry Concerning the Day of Pentecost

Of all the important days in history, the day of Pentecost must be ranked near the top. At that time, the Holy Spirit performed one of his greatest and most far-reaching works— Acts 2:1-4.

A. The Background Of Pentecost

Just minutes before his dramatic ascension, our resurrected Lord commanded his disciples, “*wait for the promise of the Father*” (Acts 1:4). What was this promise of the Father? It would, of course, be something new, something that had never been known before. Various passages of scripture make it clear that it was a reference to the arrival of the Holy Spirit— Joel 2:28; Acts 1:16; John 14:16,26; 15:26; 16:7. The Holy Spirit had already performed an Old Testament ministry. His new work was to introduce three completely new elements.

1. His new ministry was to be universal

Previously the Holy Spirit had confined his work to the nation Israel. While Acts 2 was not the fulfillment of Joel 2:28, it was a *picture* of its future fulfillment. The spiritual application of Joel 2:28 that Peter was making was that the Holy Spirit’s ministry would no longer be limited to Israel, but would now be expanded to include all who would believe. There is no record before the book of Acts that he fell upon the Greeks, or Romans, or Babylonians,

etc. And while His ministry is still limited to the nation of Israel in the first chapters of Acts, it would indeed soon spread to all nations (Acts 10) and all repenting sinners everywhere. (Joel 2:28 will be dealt with more fully when we study the gifts of the Spirit.)

2. It was to be permanent

The Old Testament saint did not have this *permanent indwelling* of the Spirit of God. However, man, which is but dust, has now become the *living temple of God* (I Corinthians 3:16; Ephesians 2:21-22; Hebrews 3:6). Surely it should humble every believer to consider this wonderful truth.

(We will look at this wonderful truth more closely in the next section about *The Holy Spirit's Ministry Concerning the Christian.*)

3. It was to be perfecting

His new ministry would now be to help all repenting sinners grow in grace and be like Jesus (II Corinthians 3:18; II Peter 3:18).

B. The Chronology Of Pentecost

Pentecost (from a Greek word that simply means fifty) is the third of six great Israelite feasts mentioned in Leviticus 23. These feasts summarized the future work of the Trinity in the New Testament.

- 1. The Passover — unleavened bread feast
(a reference to Calvary—Leviticus 23:4-8)**
- 2. The Sheaf of First Fruits (a reference to
the resurrection — Leviticus 23:9-14)**

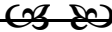
- 3. The Feast of Seven Weeks (a prophetic reference to Pentecost — Leviticus 23:15-21)**
- 4. The Feast of Trumpets (a reference to the rapture and the Second Coming of Christ — Leviticus 23:23-25)**
- 5. The Feast of Atonement (a reference to the coming Tribulation — Leviticus 23:26-32)**
- 6. The Feast of Tabernacles (a reference to the Millennium — Leviticus 23:33-43)**

C. The Comparisons Of Pentecost

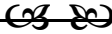
1. New Testament Pentecost may be compared with Old Testament Pentecost

- Old Testament Pentecost occurred *fifty days* after Israel left Egypt— Exodus 12:1-2,6,12,31. It appears this probably coincided with their arrival at Mt. Sinai — Exodus 19:1.
- New Testament Pentecost occurred *fifty days* after Christ rose from the dead.

Note: Our Savior was crucified during the Passover week in April (John 19:14). He then spent forty days with his disciples after the resurrection (Acts 1:3). Then, some ten days later, New Testament Pentecost occurred (Acts 1:5; 2:1). That makes up the fifty days.



- Old Testament Pentecost celebrated a birthday (that of the nation Israel, Exodus 19:5). God gave *the law* at Mt. Sinai— Acts 7:53; Galatians 3:19.
- New Testament Pentecost celebrated a birthday (that of the church, Acts 2:41-47). The Lord gave *the Comforter* at the feast of Pentecost.



- Old Testament Pentecost witnessed the *slaying* of some 3,000 souls— Exodus 32:28. Israel's worship of the golden calf, while encamped at the base of Mt. Sinai, was a tragic episode in its history.
- New Testament Pentecost witnessed the *saving* of some 3,000 souls— Acts 2:41.



- Old Testament Pentecost was introduced *in a mighty way* — Exodus 19:16-18.
- New Testament Pentecost was introduced *in a mighty way*— Acts 2:2,3.



What an amazing contrast is seen here between these two Pentecosts. In fact, the difference is so important that Paul takes an entire chapter in one of his epistles to discuss it (cf. II Corinthians 3:5-6).

2. New Testament Pentecost May Be Compared To Old Testament Babel

- At Babel, we see sinful men working for their own glory— Genesis 11:4
- At Pentecost, we see saved men waiting for God's glory— Acts 1:14



- At Babel, God confounded man's language — Genesis 11:9
- At Pentecost, God clarified man's language — Acts 2:8



- At Babel, God scattered men throughout the world— Genesis 11:9
- At Pentecost, God gathered men into the church — Ephesians 1:10

HIS MINISTRY CONCERNING THE CHRISTIAN

IX. His Ministry Concerning The Christian

Thus far we have discussed the ministry of the Holy Spirit in regard to the universe, the Scriptures, Israel, Satan, Christ, sinners, the Church, and Pentecost. But what ministry does he perform for that special group of New Testament people called Christians? The instant an unsaved person prays, “*God be merciful to me, a sinner,*” the Holy Spirit immediately effects a fivefold work in him.

A. The Holy Spirit Regenerates The Believing Sinner

Charles C. Ryrie says of regeneration:

“Biblically, the word *regeneration (paliggenesia)*, is used only twice in the New Testament (Matthew 19:28 and Titus 3:5). In the former reference it is used as a description of the Millennium when the Son of Man will sit on the throne of His glory. In the latter instance it is connected with the accomplishing of our salvation by the ‘*washing of regeneration.*’ Since this term means *to be born again*, other verses which speak of the new birth are relevant to the doctrine.

“Theologically, the term means *the act of God which imparts eternal life*. Erroneously it is often identified with or inclusive of conversion, sanctification, and justification. Those who (in error) hold that an infant is regenerated when the water of baptism is placed upon him make regeneration a work *preparatory* to conversion.”⁴⁵

⁴⁵ Charles Ryrie, The Holy Spirit, page 64.

Dr. Peter S. Ruckman adds:

“Regeneration means a *rebirth* or *re-creation*. Re-creation is the creation, by the Holy Spirit, of a new man inside... Like the first birth (physical), it is an event and not a process... [T]he actual birth takes place in a second, as one passes from darkness to light, from night to day, and from death to life. The person actually has a second birthday and becomes a new life. Born once, die twice. Born twice, die once.”⁴⁶

Notice that regeneration is not the reformation of the old man, but the creation of a new man. God literally gives the believing sinner a new nature; the very nature of God (I John 4:13; Romans 8:9). The Holy Spirit thus functions as a divine midwife to the repenting sinner as he is born into the kingdom of God. This birth is accomplished by the word of God. The following passages bear this out— John 3:3-7; 6:63; Titus 3:5; I Peter 1:23; James 1:18.

R.A. Torrey says of the regenerating work of the Spirit:

“What is Regeneration? We have two definitions of ‘*Regeneration*,’ or ‘*the New Birth*,’ in the Bible. You will find the first of these definitions in Ephesians 2:1:

‘And you did He make alive, when ye were dead through your trespasses and sins.’— Ephesians 2:1

“Regeneration is then, *the impartation of life* to men who are morally and spiritually dead because of their trespasses and sins.

“Every man and woman and child of us, no matter how excellent in character or how religious our parents may have been, was born into this world spiritually dead. We are by nature moral and spiritual corpses. In regeneration we are made alive; *God imparts to us this life. Regeneration is His work.*

⁴⁶ Peter Ruckman, Regeneration, page 13.

“We have a second God-given definition of regeneration in II Peter 1:3, 4:

“According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:

‘Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.’

— II Peter 1:3-4

- ☉ God’s definition of *regeneration* here, is the impartation of a new nature, ‘*the divine nature.*’ It is God’s Own nature created in us.

“We are all born into this world with a corrupt nature, corrupt in its thoughts, corrupt in its affections, corrupt in its will.

“First of all, every one of us, no matter how fine our ancestry, or how pious our parents, are born into this world with a mind that is blind to the truth of God.

“As Paul puts it in I Corinthians 2:14,

‘But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.’

— I Corinthians 2:14

“In the second place, we are, all of us, born into this world with affections that are corrupt, that is, with affections set upon things that displease God. We love the things we ought to hate, and we hate the things we ought to love.

“And, in the third place, we are, all of us, born into this world with a will that is perverse.

“As Paul puts it in Romans 8:7

‘Because the carnal mind [THAT IS, THE MIND OF THE NATURAL AND UNREGENERATE MAN] is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.’

— Romans 8:7

“We are... born into this world with a will that is perverse, a will that is set upon *pleasing self*, and not set upon *pleasing God*. Now, what pleases self may not be something corrupt or criminal or vile or immoral. What pleases us may be something refined, something of a high character; it may not be getting drunk or stealing or lying or committing adultery or doing any evil or vile or base thing; it may be culture or music or art or some other high and refined thing; but *pleasing self is the very essence of sin*, whether the thing that pleases self is something very high or something very low. And any will that is set upon pleasing self is a will in rebellion against God: it is ‘*enmity against God.*’ There is only one right attitude for the human will, and that is an attitude of absolute surrender to God, and the whole aim of life should not be to please self at all, but to please God in all things.

“So then we are all born into the world with this nature that is intellectually, affectionally and volitionally corrupt. What occurs in the *new birth*? We are given a *new nature*.

1. “We are given a new intellectual nature, a new mind, a mind which instead of being blind to the truth of God is open-eyed to the truth of God.

“How often I have seen that. I have seen a man come into a meeting like this, an utter infidel. I have a man in mind at this moment, a man who had not been inside a church for fourteen years, and who was a rank and very bitter infidel. But this man was induced to come and hear me preach. The Spirit of God wrought through me that night and through a personal worker who dealt with him in the aftermeeting, and that man was born again then and there, and that thoroughly darkened mind became illuminated at once, and, instead of things ‘*of the Spirit of God*’ being any longer ‘*foolishness to him*’ they became as clear as day, and within a week he was bringing others into a knowledge of the truth. He brought his own wife to meeting the following Sunday night and led her into the light; and within a year he was preaching the Gospel.

2. **“But we are not only given a new intellectual nature, we are also given a new affectional nature.**

“We get new tastes instead of the old tastes, new loves instead of the old loves. Instead of loving any longer the things that displease God we now love the things that please God. The things we once hated, we now love, and the things we once loved we now hate. How clearly that was illustrated in my own experience. As I look back upon my life... I can hardly believe what I know to be true about my own affections and about my likes and dislikes, before I was born again. In those days I hated the Bible. I read it every day, but it was to me about the most stupid book I read, I would rather have read last year’s almanac any day than to have read the Bible. But when I was born again my heart was filled with love for the Bible and today I would rather read the Bible than any other book or all the books put together. I so love it that sometimes I think I will not read any other book but the Bible. In those former days before I was born again, I loved the card table, the theatre, the dance, the horse-race, the champagne supper, and I hated the prayer-meeting and the Sunday services. Today I hate the dance and the card table and the theatre and the horse-race, and I love the gathering together of God’s people and the services of God’s house on the Lord’s Day.

“Just as Paul puts it in II Corinthians 5:17,

‘Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.’ — II Corinthians 5:17

3. **“But in the NEW BIRTH we are not only given a new intellectual nature and a new affectional nature, we are given a new volitional nature, that is, we are given a NEW WILL.**

“When one is born again, his will is no longer set upon pleasing self: his will is set upon pleasing God. There is nothing else in which he so delights as he

delights in the will of God. What he himself desires is nothing to him: what pleases God is everything to him.

“We see, then, that the New Birth is the impartation of a new nature, God’s Own nature, to men who are dead in trespasses and sins. *It is the Holy Spirit Who imparts this nature.* As we have already said, the word of God is the instrument the Holy Spirit uses in imparting this new nature. This comes out in the very verse we have already quoted as containing God’s definition of the New Birth, II Peter 1:4,

‘Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these (THAT IS, THROUGH THE WRITTEN WORD) ye might be partakers.’ — II Peter 1:4

“Yes, always, the written word is the instrument through which the new nature is imparted to men, *but it is only as the Holy Spirit uses the instrument, the written Word, that the New Birth, the impartation of God’s Own nature to us, results.*

“So we see again that if we wish to be born again ourselves, it is not enough to read the Bible, though that is the instrument the Holy Spirit uses in regeneration. We must put ourselves in such an attitude toward God, by the surrender of our will to God, that the Holy Spirit may use the written word and make it a living thing in our hearts and thus impart God’s nature to us, and thus we are born again. We see also that if we wish others to be born again through our preaching or personal work or teaching, or whatever it may be, we must see to it we not only give them the written word and give them the right passages from the word, but that we realize our dependence upon the Holy Spirit for Him to do the work, and that we so count upon Him to do the work, that He can do His regenerating work through us.”⁴⁷

⁴⁷ R.A. Torrey, The Holy Spirit, page 73,76-81.

B. The Holy Spirit Baptizes The Believing Sinner

(Romans 6:3,4; I Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 3:27; Ephesians 4:4-5; Colossians 2:12)

There is probably more confusion about this aspect of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit (coupled with the temporary dispensational aspect of certain gifts of the Spirit) than any other.

1. False doctrine

a. A Second Experience Sought After Salvation

There are many who believe the baptism of the Holy Spirit is a second *experience* after salvation to be sought by prayer and *tarrying*. The late R.A. Torrey and Dr. John R. Rice exemplified this group. In spite of all their great preaching and teaching ministries, they were in error regarding this doctrine. Their primary error was to confuse the *filling* of the Spirit with the *baptism*. Others go a bit further in their teaching, and link the baptism of the Spirit to visible manifestations such as *speaking in tongues*. This is the basic position of the Pentecostal and other holiness churches as well as that of the so-called *Charismatic Movement*— one of the fastest growing religious movements in the world today. The popularity of this movement certainly does not speak well of them in this Laodicean Church Age when Christianity is in its worst state in all of history.

b. A One Time Experience Never To Be Repeated⁴⁸

⁴⁸ This aberrant theology comes primarily from the *Baptist Bible College* of Springfield, Missouri, USA and is widespread among *Bible Baptist Fellowship* churches worldwide.

Another false doctrine associated with the baptism of the Holy Spirit is part of what is called the *Baptist Bride* heresy.⁴⁹

These Baptists believe that there is a difference between the baptism **with** the Holy Spirit (Matthew 3:11; Acts 1:5; 11:16) and the baptism **of** the Holy Spirit (I Corinthians 12:13). They say that this baptizing **with** the Holy Ghost happened only once (at Pentecost) and has never been repeated. Furthermore, they teach that there is no such thing as the baptism **of** the Holy Spirit occurring today when a soul trusts Christ.

As with the charismatics (Pentecostals), the failure to rightly divide the word of God is the root cause of their error.

The typical teaching on this subject expressed here.

“A careful reading of the... Scriptures makes it clear that the Holy Spirit does not baptize anyone; never has and never will!

“Each verse says, Christ baptizes with the Holy Ghost. This then makes the Lord Jesus Christ the baptizer— the Holy Spirit the medium (as with John the Baptist: John was the baptizer— water was the medium).

“To say, as does Scofield, that ‘*the Spirit forms the Church by baptizing all believers into the body of Christ*’ is nonsense.”^{50, 51}

⁴⁹ They use this term because, among other things, they believe that only their group of Baptists will make up the bride of Christ.

⁵⁰ Robert Sargent, Landmarks of Baptist Doctrine — Book Two — The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit, (Bible Baptist Church Publications, Oak Harbor, Washington), p. 210.

⁵¹ While Bro. Sargent does not follow the “Baptist Bride” doctrine wholly, he is nonetheless a strong and well known advocate of their view of the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

Nonsense, is it? We will see if it is nonsense, or Bible truth! Why would one think that because the baptism with the Holy Spirit was attributed to Christ, that the Holy Spirit could have nothing to do with it? (See the previous lesson, *The Holy Spirit's Ministry to the Saviour.*)

For example we read in the book of Hebrews:

“How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?”
— Hebrews 9:14

It is clear, from the plain reading of scripture, that *“Christ offered Himself,”* but He did it *“through the... Spirit.”*

Another example is seen in the creation. The apostle John opens his gospel speaking of Christ (the Word) as the Creator.

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

“The same was in the beginning with God.

“All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.”

— John 1:1-3

“For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:”
— Colossians 1:16

Well, that would seem to settle the issue of creation (if we follow the *Baptist Brider's* way of thinking). Since this verse *clearly* says that Christ created all things, then the Holy Spirit *must* have had nothing to do with the creation. But wait! There are other scriptures to be considered.

Compare these verses:

“And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.”

— Genesis 1:2

“By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent.” — Job 26:13

“The spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.” — Job 33:4

“Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created: and thou renewest the face of the earth.” — Psalm 104:30

Looking at these verses reveals more of the picture. So, who created everything— Christ or the Holy Spirit? The answer is that both of Them took part in the creation, as well as the Father.

In like manner, we see that it is Christ, Who baptizes with the Holy Spirit. But is that the end of the matter, or is there other scripture to consider?

Look what Paul the apostle says in Romans chapter 6

“Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?”

— Romans 6:3

Somehow we were “*baptized into Jesus Christ*” (cf. Galatians 3:27; Colossians 2:12). What kind of baptism could put us in Christ? Does Christ put us into Christ? Looking at Paul’s letter to the Corinthians, we find another verse that sheds more light on the subject.

“For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.”

— I Corinthians 12:13

Comparing scripture with scripture we see that all believers are baptized:

➔ **By the Spirit**

➔ **Into Christ**

Is that so hard to understand?

Someone might say, “The Holy Spirit is the *medium*.” Perhaps; but He is also the *agent*. How can these things be? I must say, I really do not know. But let me ask, How can we be “in Christ” (Romans 8:1; 12:5) and at the same time, have Christ is in us (Romans 8:9-11; Colossians 1:27)? Furthermore, the Bible says that it is the Holy Spirit Who is in us (I Corinthians 3:16). Isn’t it obvious from these verses that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Christ (cf. II Corinthians 3:17). You see, Christ (in His glorified body) is in Heaven at the right hand of the Father. But He dwells in us by His Spirit. So, also while it is Christ who baptizes, He does it by His Spirit (I Corinthians 12:13). So, they both have a part in it.

How do these folks handle I Corinthians 12:13? They approach it in many different ways. However, every time they must either CHANGE THE SCRIPTURE, or say that it means something other than what it SAYS, always spending as little time as possible dealing with the text that confounds them. Rather than change their doctrine to match the scripture, they find it easier to change the scripture to match their doctrine.

The next problem text that these *Baptist Briders* must contend with is found in Paul’s letter to Ephesians. It is usually misinterpreted, based on the misinterpretation of I Corinthians 12:13.

“There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;

“One Lord, one faith, one baptism,

“One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.”

— Ephesians 4:4-6

Notice, in the verses above, how many things are clearly spiritual (of the spirit realm) and not physical (of the material realm).

- ☞ **One God** — “*God is a **spirit***” (John 4:24).
- ☞ **One Lord** — “*The Lord is that **Spirit***” (II Corinthians 3:17).
- ☞ **One Spirit** — the Holy **Spirit**.
- ☞ **One faith** — “*We have the same **spirit** of faith.*” (II Corinthians 4:13). It is spiritual; it cannot be seen
- ☞ **One hope** — “*For we through the **Spirit** wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.*” (Galatians 5:5). It is spiritual.

Therefore, does it not seem logical, does it not fit the context, and does it not match other scripture that the:

- ☞ **One body** — spoken of is also a spiritual *entity*. “*He is the head of the body, the church*” (Colossians 1:18).
- ☞ **One baptism** — is obviously of a spiritual nature as well. “*[S]o many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?*” (Romans 6:3,4) (cf. I Corinthians 12:13).

Here, in Ephesians, Paul speaks of *one baptism*. But, actually, there are *seven different baptisms* mentioned in the Bible. Clearly, he has only one of the seven in view here. Now, if a believer is *not baptized in water* will he still go to Heaven? Certainly! But if he misses the baptism of the Holy Spirit that makes him part of His body, then he will not go to Heaven. Obviously, Ephesians 4:5 refers to the ONE baptism that we MUST have to receive eternal life and the one by which we are “*baptized into Jesus Christ.*”

Dr. Peter S. Ruckman writes

“Now the first baptism in the Bible you’ll find... is in I Corinthians chapter 10. That’s the baptism of Israel...

“Now the Bible says there is ‘one Lord, and one faith, and one baptism.’ Well, if there is ONE baptism, is that it there? A man said ‘no,’ another man said, ‘why not?’ The man said, ‘Well, because that is in the Old Testament.’ Well, they were under grace, weren’t they? They hadn’t gotten the law yet. They were under the blood of the lamb, weren’t they? Yes, under the blood of the lamb, under grace, coming out of the world, but that isn’t the ‘ONE baptism.’ When the Bible says there is ‘one Lord, one faith, one baptism,” it must mean there is one REAL baptism. And I say that because the Bible says ‘...there are many Lords’ (I Corinthians chapter 8), ‘...there are many gods’ (I Corinthians chapter 8), and there many faiths, but to the Christian there is but ‘one Lord, one God, one faith, one Spirit, one baptism.’ In plainer words, when he says ‘one baptism,’ he must mean there is only one real baptism; the rest of them, then, have to be figures or types. There is only one real one.”⁵²

Neither Romans 6:3, nor Colossians 2:12 refers to water baptism, but to the Spirit baptism of I Corinthians 12:13. So what is the purpose of water baptism? The

⁵² Peter S. Ruckman, Seven Baptisms.

apostle Peter says it is a “*figure*” (a type) of something. That means it represents something else. The earthly tabernacle built in the Old Testament was a *figure* of the real tabernacle that was in Heaven (Hebrews 9:8-11). In the same manner, water baptism is only a figure of the ONE real baptism of the Holy Spirit. It is Spirit baptism that places us into the body of Christ and identifies us with His death. Water baptism is the public testimony of a believer to the inward work of the Holy Spirit; the visible representation of the invisible work of the Spirit.

Because of pride, it is extremely difficult for those who hold to these heresies to see their error and confess that they have been deceived by false doctrine. It is all the more difficult for charismatics to confess that their doctrine is wrong when they cling to a *subjective experience* that seems to verify it. The standard rebuttal is that since you haven’t experienced it, you can’t understand it. But, brethren, every doctrine we hold and every experience we have must be subject to verification from the word of God. I determined long ago that I would never be ashamed to renounce anything I believe, if it was proven from the word of God to be erroneous. Why should I be above correction, or ashamed that God had instructed me more perfectly in the scriptures? Some are so dogmatic about *what they believe*, that their doctrine becomes the final test of all things rather than the scripture itself. My doctrine may not be perfect yet, but my Bible is.

In the book of Acts, we read of a man called Apollos

“And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus.”

“This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught

diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John.

“And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.”

— Acts 18:24-26

What a wonderful example this man Apollos was. Although he was apparently a notable preacher, he was not above being instructed, and perhaps corrected, by these two believers. We would do well to note that he had the true mark of a servant of Christ, *humility*. This is an attribute every believer should seek to cultivate. We should also maintain the spirit of those Bereans who were “[M]ore noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so” (Acts 17:11). It is the word of God that must be the final authority for the believer in all matters of faith and practice.

Charles Ryrie gives us Four Reasons for Confusion About the Baptism of the Holy Spirit

1. “There is an improper understanding of the distinctiveness of the church to this age. This leads to confusion about the baptizing work of the Spirit which forms the church. If one (mistakenly) believes that the church began with Abraham or with John the Baptist, then it will be difficult to understand the distinctiveness of the baptism of the Spirit to this age and what that baptism accomplishes.
2. “There is an overemphasis on the doctrine of *water baptism* which often obscures the doctrine of *Spirit baptism*. When the two truths are not distinguished and properly emphasized,

it is usually the truth of Spirit baptism that is lost.

3. “The association of baptism with the gift of tongues multiplies confusion. Of course, if speaking with the gift of tongues is (believed to be) the evidence of the baptism of the Spirit, then the baptism does not come at the time of salvation nor is it experienced by all Christians. Some, to justify the association of baptism with tongues, attempt to make a distinction between the baptism by the Spirit of I Corinthians 12:13, which places one into the Body of Christ, and the baptism with the Spirit of Acts 1:5, which brings tongues.
4. “Baptism is frequently identified with filling of the Spirit. Sometimes the terms ‘*baptism*’ and ‘*filling*’ are confused, while at other times the same error is stated by asserting that the baptism does not come at the time of regeneration but as a subsequent work of grace.”⁵³

2. The purpose of the Holy Spirit baptizing the believer into the body of Christ is twofold:

- a. To answer Christ’s prayer for Christian unity
— John 17:21
- b. To prepare a bride for Christ
Made up of all the members of His body, saved from the time of Pentecost until the rapture — Romans 12:5; I Corinthians 10:17; 12:13,27; Ephesians 1:22-23; 4:4,12; 5:23,30,32; Colossians 3:15; II Corinthians 11:2; Revelation 19:6-9.

⁵³ Ryrie, The Holy Spirit, pages 74-75.

Of this baptism of the Holy Spirit, Theodore Epp says

“According to I Corinthians 12:13, we are baptized *by one Spirit into one body*. This means that the Holy Spirit places us or introduces us as believers into the Body of which Christ is the *Living Head*. This is not His physical resurrection body, which body is now glorified. In that body He is sitting at the right hand of the Father making intercession for us. The body spoken of in this passage in I Corinthians is the Mystical Body (of which every believer is a member). We became members of that Body by being placed into it by the Holy Spirit. This baptismal work by the Spirit took place at Pentecost when the Body of Christ was formed. This becomes an actual fact in our lives the moment we are born again.

“[W]e must be careful to distinguish things that are not the same. The baptism of the Spirit and the filling of the Spirit are different works of the Holy Spirit. If we do not note the differences involved, we will have... a great deal of confusion.

“This being baptized into the Body of Christ is not confined to certain believers..., but is universal to all (in the Church Age). Every genuine believer in Christ was baptized by the Holy Spirit into the Body of Christ the moment he believed. In writing to the Corinthians, Paul was writing to both carnal and spiritual believers and said that all were baptized into the Body of Christ (I Corinthians 12:13). Then in Ephesians 4:5, he pointed out that there is but one baptism that is on the same level and in the same category as one Lord and one faith, and that one baptism is for all believers.

“As we have pointed out before, there is no command in the Bible for men to be baptized with the Holy Spirit. Believers are exhorted to be *filled* with the Holy Spirit, but not to be *baptized* with the Holy Spirit. The baptism of the Spirit is something that takes place the moment one believes and it is the basis for the filling of the Spirit. Potentially, the baptism of the Holy Spirit took place for all believers at Pentecost.

Experimentally, that is as far as your experience and mine are concerned as believers. The baptism took place the moment we trusted Christ.

“Let us emphasize again that being baptized by the Holy Spirit is not an endowment with power. The baptismal work of the Spirit places us into a position in Christ which makes it possible for us to receive power. Being baptized, however, by the Spirit does not guarantee that power in the life. It does place us in the Body of Christ which puts us into a position that will enable the power of God to flow through us. Before the latter can happen we have to meet certain responsibilities as believers.

“Paul wrote to the Christians in Corinth and in Galatia, all of whom were baptized by the Holy Spirit; many of them, however, were poor examples of the power of the Spirit of Christ. Many were carnal in their attitudes and Spirit or the control of the Holy Spirit was necessary before the new life in Christ showed up in their experience and walk.”⁵⁴

⁵⁴ Epp, The Other Comforter.

**The Baptism of the Holy Spirit
in contrast to
The Filling of the Holy Spirit**

Baptism	Filling
Has to do with the Body of Christ	Has to do with the individual
Occurs only once in each believer's life.	Is an experience that can be repeated
Never happened before the day of Pentecost	Occurred in Old Testament times
True of all believers	Not necessarily experienced by all
No command given	Command given
Cannot be undone	Can be lost
Results in a <i>Position</i>	Results in <i>Power</i>
Occurs when we believe in Christ	Occurs throughout the Christian life
No prerequisite (except faith in Christ)	Depends on yieldedness

C. The Holy Spirit Permanently Indwells The Believing Sinner

In other words, through the baptism of the Holy Spirit, He not only joins us to the Saviour, but He joins us to Himself as well. (Romans 8:9-10; I Corinthians 3:16, 6:19; II Timothy 1:14; I John 4:4.)

1. The Holy Spirit *permanently dwells in every believer*

- a. The Holy Spirit is the Gift of God to all who believe (John 7:37-39; Acts 2:38; 8:17-20; 10:45; 11:16-17)

The only condition for receiving the person of the Holy Spirit is to receive Christ as Saviour.

- b. A man who does not have the Holy Spirit is lost (Romans 8:9)
- c. A Christian may sin and lose fellowship with God, but the Holy Spirit will never leave him (Ephesians 4:30; II Timothy 2:11-13; Hebrews 13:5)

2. The *permanent indwelling of the Holy Spirit is a special blessing and privilege for the saints of this age.*

Old Testament saints did not experience a permanent indwelling. The Holy Spirit sometimes came upon men, and even filled them at times for some special work, but it was not permanent.

- a. As illustrated by Samson

This Nazarite enjoyed the presence of the Holy Spirit accompanied by demonstrations of super-

natural physical strength on various occasions— Judges 14:6,19; 15:15. But, because of sin and immorality, *God’s Spirit left Samson*. One of the most tragic verses in the Bible records this event— Samson’s awakening to the voice of Delilah saying:

“**[T]he Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And he awoke out of his sleep, and said, I will go out as at other times before, and shake myself. And he wist not that the LORD was departed from him.**”

— Judges 16:20

b. As illustrated by Saul

As was the case of Samson, the Holy Spirit came upon Saul, but later left him— I Samuel 10:10; 16:14.

c. As illustrated by David

The Spirit of God came upon David when he was anointed by Samuel (I Samuel 16:13), and remained with him until death. David realized the Spirit *could* depart, and on at least one occasion he pled with the Lord about that— Psalms 51:11.

3. The apostles *did not* experience the permanent indwelling while Christ was on earth

John 14:17 says, “*He dwelleth **with** you, and **shall be in you.**”* Also, in Luke 22:32 Christ tells Peter, “*when thou art **converted**, strengthen thy brethren.*” Although Peter had believed, he was only *saved in the Old Testament sense*. He had not been born again at that time, nor had he received the permanent indwelling of the Spirit.

4. The *permanent* indwelling began in Acts 2 during the Feast of Pentecost

When the Lord returned to Heaven, He sent the Comforter, and each believer received this permanent indwelling and was born again. Being a transitional period during which the nation of Israel was to be temporarily set aside, God manifested the coming of the Spirit to the Jews as well as the Gentiles. In fact, He displayed His coming to all three racial groups.

- a. To the Jews (Shem) in Acts 2:2-3
- b. To the Samaritans (Ham) in Acts 8:14-17
- c. To the Gentiles (Japheth) in Acts 10:44-47

After Acts 10, the Holy Spirit would indwell every believer the moment he trusted Christ. (The key words in this verse are “as yet.”)

D. The Holy Spirit Seals The Believing Sinner (II Corinthians 1:22; Ephesians 1:13; 4:30)

The presence of the Holy Spirit Himself seems to be the seal here, who is given by the Father to assure the believer of his eternal salvation. This seal is also referred to as an *earnest*— II Corinthians 1:22; 5:5; Ephesians 1:14 (cf. *Emblems of the Holy Spirit*, the Seal, page 14).

E. The Holy Spirit Spiritually Circumcises The Believing Sinner (Colossians 2:11-12)

At the moment of salvation, a surgical operation takes place inside the believer called “*the operation of God*,” or the “*circumcision not made with hands*.”

Paul explains this in his epistle to the Colossians

“[Y]e are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:

“Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.”

— Colossians 2:11-12

Circumcision is a surgical operation, but here it is not a *physical operation* performed with hands; it is a *spiritual operation* performed by God. What happens in this operation? The sins of our flesh are put off by the circumcision of Christ. This circumcision miraculously separates our soul from the sins of our flesh.

In the Old Testament, God commanded the Jews to circumcise every male at birth. That physical circumcision was a type of the spiritual circumcision God performs on every born again believer.

We read in II Corinthians

“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” — II Corinthians 5:17

Every man is born with a dead spirit and with his soul joined to his body. When he is born again, he is spiritually circumcised and he becomes a new creature. Then, alive unto God spiritually, his soul is separated from his sinful body of flesh forever.

Let me give an illustration of spiritual circumcision. Have you ever eaten *Jell-O*? Then you know you can take a knife, or spoon, or something and go around the inside of the bowl and loosen the *Jell-O* from the bowl. Soon you can have the whole thing loose in the bowl. That is

like spiritual circumcision. That *Jell-O* was stuck to the bowl. You can turn it upside down and it will not even fall out; it is like they are one. But, cutting the *Jell-O* loose from the bowl, you actually separate the two. Notice that the *Jell-O* is still in the bowl, retaining the shape of the vessel that it was formerly stuck to. So also our souls retain a bodily shape.

Our sins are part of our *flesh*, and although our *souls* have now been saved, our *bodies* have not. We still await the redemption of our bodies, which will take place at the rapture. For now, we are trapped inside these sinful bodies of flesh. Before salvation, we were spiritually dead and *in our sins*, but read Ephesians chapter two.

“And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;”
— Ephesians 2:1

We have been “*quickened*” (made alive) unto God by the new birth. Why are we said to be “*in our sins*” before salvation? It is because we are *in* these sinful bodies. Our sins are part of us, and we are part of them, because the two are joined together. So God performs this operation when we get saved, to separate us from our sinful bodies.

Let’s go over it once more. Every person is born with his soul stuck to his body. Our sins are part of our flesh, and as unsaved sinners we are spiritually dead in our sins. We are *in our sins* because our sins are in our flesh. They are part of us and we are part of them. If we do not get saved, we die in our sins. After salvation we are free from sin, but according to Romans 7:17,18 and 24, sin is still present in our mortal body. This is why the Holy Spirit cuts our souls loose from our bodies when we get saved, otherwise we would still be in our sins because of our flesh.

“Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

“For he that is dead is freed from sin.

“Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him:”

— Romans 6:6-8

“Destroy” does not mean to annihilate, but to make powerless. In God’s sight our flesh is dead and no longer has power to rule over us. God sees us alive unto Himself and dead to the flesh. But, still dwelling in these sinful bodies and in this wicked world, we tend to give in to the desires of our flesh when tempted. When we do, we give it power over us once again. This is like committing spiritual adultery; and even though our soul is still saved, this condition will cause us to become unstable in our mind and life.

“A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.”

— James 1:8

“Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

“Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.”

— Romans 6:11-12

Here, the word *“mortal”* means *“dead.”* When we get saved, the Holy Spirit cuts our soul loose from our body and kills (renders powerless) our flesh. But though it is dead in relation to God, we still have to put up with our flesh until the day that we leave it.

“But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

“And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.”

— Romans 8:9-10

So when the Holy Spirit comes in:

- He regenerates our spirit
- He kills our flesh
- He severs our souls from our bodies of flesh

In reality, the Christian is dragging a corpse around. A lost man has a live body and a dead spirit, but a saved man has just the opposite: a dead body and a live spirit.

No one could be born again until *after* Christ’s death on the cross. Until then, all were still under the Old Testament. The New Testament was not established until the death of Christ.

“For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.”

— Matthew 26:28

“And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which were called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance,

“For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator.

“For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth.”

— Hebrews 9:15-17

After the Saviour’s death and resurrection, He sent the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost (according to His promise) to *permanently indwell* those who received Him

as their Saviour. None of the Old Testament saints ever received the spiritual circumcision, and none were ever born again. That is why we find the words “*body*” and “*soul*” used synonymously throughout the Old Testament. Man is referred to as a “*soul*” instead of a “*person*,” because in the Old Testament their souls were still stuck to their bodies. There was no way for them to be cut loose. (Genesis 12:13, 46:26; Psalms 59:3; Proverbs 13:25; 25:25.)

There are many more verses like these in the Old Testament, but *not once in the New Testament* is the word “*soul*” used synonymously with “*body*.” In the New Testament, Christ has died and the Holy Spirit begins to spiritually circumcise believers, cutting their souls loose from their bodies. The Holy Spirit has a sharp *spiritual knife* He uses to perform this operation, even as men used a *physical knife* to perform that *physical* operation called *circumcision* in the Old Testament. He uses “*the sword of the Spirit*,” the living Word of God we can hold in our hands.

“And take the helmet of salvation, and *the sword of the Spirit*, which is the word of God:”

— Ephesians 6:17

“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”

— Romans 10:17

We are saved by grace, through faith, which comes by hearing the word of God. Without the word of God, no one could get saved, because they would not know how.

“Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.”

— I Peter 1:23

It is “*by the word of God*” that a person is saved. Furthermore, the word is alive, eternal, and incorruptible.

“Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth...

“Wherefore, lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.”

— James 1:18,21

“For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

“Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.”

— Hebrews 4:12-13

The word of God pierces and divides asunder the believer's soul and spirit, cutting them loose from the joints and marrow (our bodies). This is talking about the Bible being alive (quick), saying that the word of God knows all of our thoughts and the intent of our hearts. There is nothing hidden from Him (the word of God). He sees and knows everything we do. (Note that here the written word of God is spoken of as having the attributes of a person.)

Remember the *Jell-O* illustration? The bowl is like an unsaved man's body: before it is cut loose, the soul is stuck to it. In that body “*dwelleth no good thing*,” because it is sinful. If a man dies in his lost condition, his body goes to the grave, but his soul will go to *Hell* because it has no power to go to *Heaven*. However, when a man gets saved, the Holy Spirit cuts his soul loose from his body. So when he dies, his soul goes to be with the Lord Jesus Christ. For now, the believer is trapped in a sinful body of flesh that wants to rule over him, but the believer is no longer part of that body, nor need he be subject to it, if he yields himself to God.

F. The Holy Spirit Fills The Believing Sinner

(Acts 2:4)

Charles Ryrie comments,

“From the viewpoint of practice and experience the filling with the Holy Spirit is the most important aspect of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit.

“Spirit filling is necessary in order to experience the full extent of the ministry of the Spirit to a believer.

“Thus to be Spirit-filled is to be Spirit-controlled. And to be so controlled requires dedication of life, victory over the reigning power of sin, and constant dependence on the Spirit.”⁵⁵

1. Why Christians are not filled with the Spirit

a. They Do Not Desire To Be Filled

The average Christian wallows in mediocrity. Inoculated with a mild form of Christianity, he has become immune to the real thing.

b. They have quenched the Spirit

(I Thessalonians 5:19)

When a believer does not yield to the Holy Spirit, he in effect throws a “*wet blanket*” over His blessed workings.

c. They have grieved the Spirit (Ephesians 4:30)

The Spirit of God is grieved by sin, and He will not fill an unclean vessel. When a believer allows known sin to remain unconfessed, the Spirit cannot fill him.

⁵⁵ Ryrie, The Holy Spirit, pp. 93,101.

2. How to be filled with the Holy Spirit

a. Ask To Be Filled (Luke 11:9-13)

The Lord desires that every believer be filled with the Spirit. Is it our desire to enjoy the fullness of the Spirit? Among the disciples, twelve were called to be apostles. Among the twelve, there were three who were in the inner circle. Peter, James and John were often taken apart by the Lord for prayer, etc. (cf. Matthew 10:2; 17:1; Mark 13:3; Luke 8:51). Among the three, there was one who was spoken of as the “*disciple whom Jesus loved*” (John 19:26; 20:2). This was the disciple who lay his head on Jesus’ breast at the last supper in the upper room. He was the only one to follow Christ into the judgment hall and the only one to appear at the foot of the cross. Beloved, the truth is that we can be as close to God and as full of the Spirit as we desire. Do you desire to be one of the circle of disciples who walked with the Saviour daily; among those in the inner circle who were called aside to know the secrets of His heart; or would you be never satisfied until you are in the innermost circle knowing the very heartbeat of God? It is your choice, but there is a price to pay.

b. Yield to the Holy Spirit (Romans 6:13-19)

The Holy Spirit will lay claim upon us through the word of God. He will convict us of sin. To be filled, we must *confess* all known sin. To be filled, we must *forsake* all known sin. This ministry of the Holy Spirit is one of the most misunderstood of all, but this need not be the case. Any confusion can easily be solved by making a proper distinction between the *indwelling* and the *infilling* of the Holy Spirit. To aid in understanding this vital distinction, consider the following illustration.

“A guest is invited into a home. But upon entering that home he is immediately confined to a small room somewhere near the front door. For awhile, he may even be forgotten by his host. Finally, however, the owner of the house is convicted concerning his shabby treatment of the house guest. He thereupon gives his guest free access to every room in the house.

“In this illustration the Holy Spirit is, of course, the invited guest. The host is the believing sinner, and the house stands for his life. The difference then between the indwelling and the filling is the difference between being confined in a small room somewhere and being given free access to all the rooms. The filling, therefore, does not mean the believer gets more of the Holy Spirit, but rather the Holy Spirit gets more of the believer. In the light of these six ministries we may observe that.”⁵⁶

G. All Six Of These Ministries Happen Instantaneously To The Believing Sinner

They all occur by faith and are not in the least dependent upon one's personal, emotional feelings at the time.

H. The First Five Ministries Can Never Be Lost, And Therefore Need Not Be And Should Not Be Asked For Again

Nowhere in the Bible are we commanded to ASK God to *baptize* us by his Spirit, or to *seal* us with his Spirit, to *circumcise* our soul or to *regenerate* and *indwell* us. If a man has accepted Christ, he has for all eternity been regenerated, indwelt, baptized, circumcised, and sealed by the Holy Spirit.

⁵⁶ H.L. Wilmington, Wilmington's Guide to the Bible, (Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.).

I. The Sixth Ministry, However, Can Be Lost, And Therefore Should Be Asked For As Many Times As Needed

This can be seen from Ephesians 5:18; Galatians 5:16. Believers in the book of Acts *often* experienced the filling of the Holy Spirit— Acts 2:4; 4:8; 6:3; 7:55; 9:17; 11:24; 13:9,52.

J. The First Five Ministries Give Us PEACE WITH GOD, But The Sixth Ministry Assures Us of The PEACE OF GOD

(Romans 5:1; Philippians 4:7)

Thus, all Christians, regardless of how backslidden they might be, enjoy peace *with* God, but only Spirit-controlled believers can know that blessed peace *of* God.

K. In Acts 2:13 And In Ephesians 5:18, A Comparison Is Made Between Being Filled With The Spirit And Being Filled With Wine

Let's compare these two:

- 1. Both control the user and give him a new boldness; one in the good sense and the other in the bad sense of the word**
- 2. Both produce a desire for more of the same**

L. The Sixth Ministry Is Lost Whenever Disobedience Is Found In The Life Of The Believer

This disobedience may manifest itself in either, or both, of the following ways:

1. The sin of *quenching* the Holy Spirit

— I Thessalonians 5:19

This sin involves **not doing** that which the Holy Spirit would have us do. It is negative in nature. The same word is used elsewhere in reference to the putting out of a fire— Matthew 12:20; Ephesians 6:16; Hebrews 11:34.

2. The sin of *grieving* the Holy Spirit

— Ephesians 4:30

This sin involves **doing** that which the Holy Spirit would not have us do. It is positive in nature.

H.L. Wilmington gives the following illustration:

“Suppose a believer boards a plane in Chicago for Los Angeles and finds himself seated next to an unsaved man. In flight the Holy Spirit attempts to witness to the unsaved man through the testimony of the Christian, but he remains silent and fails to witness. At this point, the believer has *quenched* the Holy Spirit. He has not done that which the Spirit of God wanted him to do.

“As the flight continues, however, the two men introduce themselves and begin talking, but not about spiritual things. In fact, to the shame of the Christian, several off-color stories are passed between the two men. Now the saved man has gone the second step and *grieved* the Holy Spirit— he has done that which the Holy Spirit did not want him to do.

“These two sins, left unchecked, can eventually lead to that ‘*sin unto death*’ described in the following passages— I Corinthians 5:5.

“The *sin unto death* in this case was immorality on the part of a totally carnal believer in Corinth (cf. I Corinthians 11:30).

“In the case of Ananias and Sapphira, dishonesty and hypocrisy led to the sin unto death (Acts 5:1-11).

That Ananias was indeed a believer is proven by the question Peter asked him (Acts 5:3).⁵⁷

If a believer is guilty of this *sin unto death*, it does not mean the loss of salvation and eternal life. However, it does indicate the probability that God would take the guilty party's life earlier than God had originally planned. This seems to have been what Paul had in mind when he wrote I Corinthians 9:26-27.

R.A. Torrey says this about Ephesians 4:30:

"Here *grief* is ascribed to the Holy Spirit. In other words, the Holy Spirit is not a mere blind, impersonal influence or power that comes to dwell in your heart and mine. No, *He is a Person*, a Person Who loves us, a Person Who recoils from sin in what we would call its slightest forms as the holiest woman on earth never recoiled from sin in its grossest and most repulsive forms. And He sees whatever we do, He hears what ever we say, He sees our every thought, not a vagrant fancy is allowed a moment's lodgment in our mind but what He sees it; and if there is anything impure, unholy, immodest, uncharitable, untrue, false, censorious, bitter, or unChristlike in any way, in word or thought or act, He is grieved beyond expression. This is a wonderful thought, and it is to me the mightiest incentive that I know to a careful walk, a walk that will please this indwelling Holy One in every act and word and thought.

"How many a young man is kept back from doing things that He would do, by the thought that if he did that his mother might hear of it and she would be grieved beyond expression. How many a young man who went over to France in the late war, and was surrounded by the awful temptations that encompassed our young men on every hand at that time and at that place, in some hour of fierce temptation stood at the door of a house that no self-respecting man

⁵⁷ Wilmington, Wilmington's Guide to the Bible

ought ever to enter, and just as his hand was on the door-knob and he was about to open the door, the thought came to him, 'If I should enter there mother might hear of it, and if she did it would nearly kill her,' and he has turned away without entering. But listen, there is One holier than the holiest mother that you or I ever knew, One Who loves us with a more tender love than our mother loves us, and He sees everything we do, not only in the daylight but under the cover of the night; He hears every word we utter, every careless word that escapes our lips; He sees every thought we entertain, yes, every fleeting fancy that we allow a moment's lodgment in our mind, and if there is anything unholy, impure, immodest, uncharitable, indecorous, unkind, harsh, bitter, censorious, or un-Christlike, in any way, in act or word or thought, He sees it and is grieved beyond expression. Oh, how often there has come into my mind some thought or imagination, from what source I do not know, but it is a thought I ought not to entertain, and just as I was about to give it lodgment the thought has come, 'The Holy Spirit sees that and will be grieved by it,' and the thought has gone.

"Bearing this thought of the Holy Spirit in our mind will help us to solve all the questions that perplex the young believer in our day. For example, the question, 'Ought I as a Christian to go to the theatre or the movies?' Well if you go the Holy Spirit will go too, for He dwells in the heart of every believer and goes wherever the believer goes. Were you ever in a theatre or moving picture show in your life where you honestly thought the atmosphere of the place would be congenial to the Holy Spirit? If not, do not go. Ought I as a Christian go to dances? Well, here again, if you go the Holy Spirit will surely go. So with all the questions that come up and that some of us find so hard to settle, this thought of the Holy Spirit will help you settle them all, and to settle them right..."⁵⁸

⁵⁸ Torrey, The Holy Spirit, pp. 22-24.

M. The Sixth Ministry Can (And Should Be) Instantly Regained

This can be accomplished by:

1. Knowing God's means of forgiveness and cleansing — the blood of Christ — I John 1:7

2. Knowing God's method of forgiveness and cleansing — the confession of the Christian — I John 1:9

This confession is absolutely vital, for while Christ's blood will cleanse us from all *sins*, it will not cleanse us from a single *excuse*.

God does not demand golden vessels, nor does he require silver ones, but he must have clean ones. Thus the *union* with the Spirit is so strong that nothing can break it, but the *communion* with the Spirit is so fragile that the smallest sin can shatter it.

Again Dr. H.L. Wilmington gives an apt Illustration:

“Imagine a family leaving California to visit friends in New York. The first half of their trip is rather uneventful, but while they are in the Chicago area, their automobile breaks down. After some difficulty, the services of a mechanic are secured and the car is repaired. What action does the family take now? Does the driver head back for California and take another run for New York? All would agree that this, of course, would be sheer stupidity. What does this family do? They simply continue on from the spot where they first broke down.

“This story has a direct application to the Spirit-filled life. When God saves a man, he puts him on the road to Heaven. For a while the trip may go smoothly for the new convert, but there will come a time when he will break down somewhere along the line. Perhaps

the spiritual motor trouble will be caused by some angry words, or a wicked deed, or some careless act. The Spirit has been quenched and grieved and all forward progress ceases immediately. There the man sits.

“What should he do? He should immediately secure the services of that divine mechanic, the Holy Spirit. If he confesses his sins and depends upon Christ’s blood, his broken testimony will once again be restored. Then what should the believer do? The answer is obvious, of course; but there is a false concept among Christians today that once a child of God sins (particularly if it is a serious sin) he automatically loses all previous progress and must start all over. This simply is not the case! The secret of the Spirit-filled life is the knowledge that broken fellowship can be instantly restored by confession and by Christ’s blood.”⁵⁹

N. The Sixth Ministry Assures The Believer Of The Following Blessings

1. The Holy Spirit will pray for him

— Romans 8:26

“*[O]ur infirmities*” (verse 26) are our inability to pray as we should. It is for this reason that the Spirit comes to our aid. However, it should be kept in mind that the Bible says he “*helpeth*” us, which simply means the Christian must do his part also. Therefore, to enable the Spirit of God to effectively pray for us, we ourselves must pray—Jude 20; Ephesians 2:18; 6:18.

Dr. M.H. Tabb makes this comment.

“How wonderful that the child of God has two great intercessors: one on earth (the Spirit indwelling the believer), and one in Heaven (Christ seated at the right hand of the Father). (cf. Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:25).

⁵⁹ Wilmington, Wilmington’s Guide to the Bible.

This great truth is illustrated in the life of Moses (Exodus 17:11-12). As Moses grew weary in prayer, Aaron (the high priest and a type of Christ) and Hur (*Hur* means *light*; thus a type of the Holy Spirit) became his strength and bore his burden. As they did so, Joshua (type of the Saviour) won the battle against Amalek (type of the flesh, our Adamic nature). And so it is with us when we are battle weary; our two Intercessors move into action and literally become our strength, interceding for us before God the Father.”⁶⁰

2. The Holy Spirit will guide him

— John 16:13; Romans 8:14

3. The Holy Spirit will teach him

— I John 2:27

4. The Holy Spirit will empower him for witnessing — Acts 1:8

5. The Holy Spirit will give him the words he should speak in a time of crisis or trial

— Mark 13:9-11

Several instances come to mind in the book of Acts where this blessed prophecy was fulfilled (cf. Acts 4:8-22; 5:29-33; 6:10-7:55.)

6. The Holy Spirit will impart the love of Christ to him and through him

— Romans 5:5

7. The Holy Spirit will conform him to the image of Christ — II Corinthians 3:18

⁶⁰ Drawn from Dr. M.H. Tabb's commentary on Romans, The Just Shall Live By Faith, (Foundation Ministries, Fort Walton Beach, FL 32549).

The ultimate goal and stated intention of the Father is to conform the believer throughout eternity into the image of Christ. This is made clear in such passages as Philippians 3:21 and I John 3:2. But God the Spirit desires to start this glorious work in each child of God at the moment of salvation. (See Colossians 3:10.)

8. The Holy Spirit will strengthen His new nature — Ephesians 3:16

By Bible study and prayer (I Peter 2:2; Jude 20).

9. The Holy Spirit will reveal biblical truth to him — I Corinthians 2:9-10

10. The Holy Spirit will give him assurance concerning salvation and service — Romans 8:16; I John 3:24

11. The Holy Spirit will give him liberty — Romans 8:2; II Corinthians 3:17

12. The Holy Spirit will lead him to worship and praise God — Ephesians 5:18-20

Charles Ryrie tells us:

“The classic verse on the filling of the Spirit (Ephesians 5:18) is followed immediately in its context by at least four consequences of being filled. The first is the outward expression of praise through ‘*Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs.*’ The second is the inner expression of praise by ‘*singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.*’ The third consequence of being controlled by the Spirit is a thankful heart.”⁶¹

⁶¹ Ryrie, The Holy Spirit, page 102.

13. The Holy Spirit will strive to develop within him a meek and quiet spirit in submission to authority and to other believers — Hebrews 13:17; Ephesians 5:21; I Peter 3:4

Control by the Spirit will lead one to brokenness and crucifixion of self that will bring one to true submission. Then harmony can be achieved in every relationship. Peter tells us this meek and quiet spirit “*is in the sight of God of great price.*”

HIS MINISTRY CONCERNING THE GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

X. His Ministry Concerning the Gifts of the Spirit

I Corinthians 12, 13 and 14 are the primary chapters dealing with the subject of the *gifts of the Holy Spirit*.

1. The book of I Corinthians was primarily addressed to *the church of God which is at Corinth* (I Corinthians 1:2).
2. The book of I Corinthians was addressed to and circulated among believers in “*every place*” (i.e. other New Testament churches).
3. The **subject** of I Corinthians is “*divisions*” and “*unity*.” It is **not** a complimentary letter (cf. I Corinthians 1:10).
4. The **occasion** for writing I Corinthians was “*contentions*” (I Corinthians 1:11).
5. The **time** of the writing of I Corinthians was 55 AD — *25 years after* the events of the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2.

A. The Definition Of A Spiritual Gift

A spiritual gift is a supernatural ability given by Christ, through the Holy Spirit, to the believer at the moment of his salvation. At this point two distinctives should be made.

1. The distinction between the *gift* of the Spirit and the *gifts* of the Spirit

The **gift** of the Spirit is His abiding presence (permanent indwelling— John 14:16) of the Spirit of Christ in man. It was given first to those at Pentecost (Acts 2:38) when the Holy Spirit came in answer to the promise of Christ to send another comforter. In the early part of Acts the *gift* of the Holy Spirit was given by the laying on of hands by one of the twelve apostles (Acts 8:14-20). Every believer since then received this *gift* of His abiding presence at the moment of salvation without the laying on of hands (Acts 10:45).

The **gifts** of the Spirit, however, are given after Pentecost, on an individual basis, to each believer. They are given at the Holy Spirit's discretion (I Corinthians 12:4-11) to empower the believer to do the work that God has given him to do.

2. The distinction between gifts and talents

A talent is a human and natural ability given at birth. It may be in the area of music, speech, organization, etc. But no *natural talent*, however great it might be, can be used by its owner to glorify God apart from a *spiritual gift* from the Holy Spirit that enables Him to use that talent through us.

B. The Extent Of Spiritual Gifts

- 1. Each believer possesses at least one spiritual gift. This gift was given at the moment of salvation when the Holy Spirit was received — I Peter 4:10; Ephesians 4:7; I Corinthians 7:7; 12:7,11**

2. No believer has all the gifts

—Romans 12:5-6; I Corinthians 12:29-30

3. Every gift is necessary

— I Corinthians 12:14-26

4. The possession of a spiritual gift does not mean one is necessarily spiritual

The church at Corinth had within its membership *every spiritual gift* (I Corinthians 1:7a), but was at the same time carnal, and full of serious problems (I Corinthians 1:11; 3:1-4). It is possible to have only one spiritual gift and be spiritual. On the other hand, it is possible to have a gift and still be unspiritual.

5. Spiritual gifts are to be stirred up and used

According to I Timothy 4:14a, a spiritual gift *can* be neglected. God's intent is that it be "*stirred up*" and developed (II Timothy 1:6) through searching the word of God, giving "*thysself wholly*" to it, and using it to the glory of God (I Peter 4:11b).

According to Romans 12:6-8, God *expects* us to concentrate on exercising *our* gifts in the church. This is seen in the words "*let us*" and "*let him.*"

A.T. Pierson has a similar outline that is worth noting

- “1. Everyone has a gift— therefore all should be encouraged.**
- 2. No one has all the gifts— therefore all should be humble.**
- 3. All gifts are for one body— therefore all should be harmonious.**

4. All the gifts are from the Lord— therefore all should be content.
5. All gifts are mutually helpful and needful— therefore all should be studiously faithful.
6. All gifts promote the health and strength of the whole body— therefore none can be safely dispensed with.
7. All gifts depend on His fullness of power— therefore all should keep in touch with Him.”⁶²

What a wonderful heavenly Father, who has not only given us work to do in His service, but has also given us supernatural *gifts of the Spirit* that enable us to accomplish our respective tasks in a manner that will bring glory to His name.

C. The Discovery of One’s Spiritual Gift

How can the earnest believer determine what his spiritual gifts are? The following six suggestions should be helpful in answering this question.

1. **Study** the gifts of the Spirit as revealed in the scriptures (cf. I Corinthians 12; Romans 12; Ephesians 4:4-13; I Peter 4:4-10). It would be instructive to note the attributes of biblical characters who exemplified some spiritual gift. It would also a good idea to consider the lives of godly men today and their use of spiritual gifts.

⁶² Quoted by J. William Kanoy in his book, Marvelous Person of the Holy Spirit (The original source is not known to me.)

2. The possession of a spiritual gift may be indicated by **desire**. The areas of ministry that we take pleasure in or have a deep desire to accomplish may be an indication.
3. Discovering an **ability** in a particular area of ministry may indicate that one is gifted in that area. Often before salvation there may have been no ability at all (e.g., public speaking, teaching, etc.). Ability improves with practice (Paul exhorted Timothy “*stir up the gift of God, which is in thee*”— II Timothy 1:6).
4. Ministry through the gift one possesses will be accompanied by **blessing** (Romans 15:19). Be patient, it takes time to discover your spiritual gift— God is not in a hurry.
5. **Ask God** (as Solomon did I Kings 3:5-13). Paul also encourages us in I Corinthians 12:31, “*But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet I show to you a more excellent way.*” **Seek God’s will.**
6. **Ask a mature Christian** (who knows you well) what he thinks your spiritual gifts might be by their own observation.
7. **Take part in different church ministries**, as opportunity presents itself.
8. Spend time with other Christians who are known to have certain spiritual gifts.

D. The Purpose Of Spiritual Gifts

- 1. To glorify the Father — Job 36:24;
Psalm 34:3; 69:30; Revelation 4:11**
- 2. To edify the church — I Corinthians
14:12; Ephesians 4:11-12**

E. The Abuse Of Spiritual Gifts

- 1. Not using those gifts imparted to us
— I Timothy 4:14; II Timothy 1:6**

The unfaithful servant in Matthew 25 *abused* the talent given him by the Lord by not using it properly. In the same way, a spiritual gift may be abused by despising it, hiding it or failing to use it to edify other believers and to give glory to God.

- 2. Counterfeiting the sign gifts for a vain
show of power and false spirituality
— Proverbs 25:14**

- 3. Not using the gifts in love
— I Corinthians 13:1**

How often are those blessed gifts abused. Only eternity will reveal the number of men in the ministry who should never have been there. On the other hand (and just as tragic), there has doubtless been a great company of men who were called into God's service, but never answered it. But perhaps the greatest abuse of all is the use of gifts without love.

If one rightly comprehends the material given thus far in this lesson on gifts, one can understand why God sometimes seems to use a carnal Christian in a great way in spite of the glaring (or often secret) sins in his life.

However, in such cases, God is only blessing the gift and not the man personally. In this life, he will surely reap what he has sown. Certainly, at the Judgment Seat of Christ there will be many surprises (I Corinthians 3:12-15). No doubt many famous Christian leaders will receive few, if any, rewards from Christ because of their sins and carnality. What about you and me?

F. The Number Of Spiritual Gifts

From three passages of scripture, we can compile a list of the gifts of the Spirit— Romans 12:6-8; I Corinthians 12:4-11, 28; Ephesians 4:11. Listed separately they number twenty-four. However:

- The gift of a prophet and the gift of prophecy are considered separately (two different gifts).
- The gift of governments and the gift of ruling appear to be the same gift; that brings the number to twenty-three.
- The gift of healing, the gift of interpretation of tongues and the gift of an apostle are found twice among these lists; that leaves twenty.
- Four of the gifts are sign gifts that are no longer in operation today, so they will be subtracted.
- That leaves **sixteen gifts** of the Spirit available to believers for service in the church today.⁶³

⁶³ Dr. C.I. Scofield, The Old Scofield Reference Bible notes: “*In I Corinthians 12:8-28 the Spirit is seen as enduing the members of the body of Christ with spiritual gifts, or enablements for a varied service; here certain Spirit-endued men, viz. **apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers**, are themselves the gifts whom the glorified Christ bestows upon His body, the church. In I Corinthians the gifts are spiritual enable-*”

Which four gifts that were given as signs for Israel?

- | | |
|-------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Miracles | 3. Tongues |
| 2. Healing | 4. Interpretation of tongues |
-

Then the sixteen remaining gifts are for the church today.

- | | |
|----------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Apostle | 9. Helps |
| 2. Prophet | 10. Knowledge |
| 3. Evangelist | 11. Wisdom |
| 4. Pastor | 12. Discerning of spirits |
| 5. Teacher | 13. Giving |
| 6. Prophecy | 14. Governments |
| 7. Exhortation | 15. Faith |
| 8. Ministry | 16. Mercy |
-

G. The Description Of Spiritual Gifts⁶⁴

1. The four temporary “sign” gifts

The four temporary sign gifts include **miracles, healing, tongues, and the interpretation of tongues**. These sign gifts were given primarily to validate the authority of the Savior, and later His apostles.

ments for specific service; in Ephesians the gifts are men who have such enablements.”

⁶⁴ In this section I have drawn much from Robert Sargent’s lessons on The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit. (While I **disagree** with some of his teaching on the Church, he still has much that is profitable.)

How could God have expected a Jew to know that Jesus was the Messiah? Simple, He had the signs and wonders Israel looked for (Acts 2:22; I Corinthians 1:22). While John was in prison he must have begun to wonder if Christ was really the true Messiah, so he sent two of his own disciples to ask Jesus.

“Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples,

“And said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?”

“Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and show John again those things which ye do hear and see:

“The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them.”

— Matthew 11:2-5

Jesus' answer satisfied John. He reminded John of the signs and miracles He had performed. This was just what a Jew would have expected to precede the establishment of God's earthly kingdom according to the prophecies of the Old Testament (Isaiah 35:5-6; 61:1).

a. The first of the sign gifts is the gift of miracles

While healing, speaking in tongues and the interpretation of tongues would certainly be considered miraculous, they do not fall not within the scope of “the gift of miracles.” Strictly speaking then, the gift of miracles is the supernatural ability to perform acts contrary to and beyond the realm of nature; the ability to set aside, for a time, the normal operation of the laws of nature— I Corinthians 12:28; Acts 6:8; 8:6.

I believe ALL the miracles of the Bible. I have the same faith as the old country preacher who said:

“I believe the whale swallowed Jonah, because the Bible says so. But, if the Bible said that Jonah swallowed the whale, I’d believe that too!”

However, I do not believe that anyone has the “gift of miracles” today.

b. The second of the sign gifts is the gift of healing

A supernatural ability to cure human ills, whether of physical, mental, or demonic origin— I Corinthians 12:9, 28, 30.

Robert Sargent points out these facts

“The gift of healing is one of the hallmarks of the modern day Charismatic/Pentecostal movement. The question is, ‘*What does the Bible say about healing?*’

“God is omnipotent, and His power extends to His ability to heal the physical body. The issue is not, ‘*Can God heal?*’ but rather, ‘*Is the gift of healing operational today?*’

(i) The Healing Ministry of Jesus Christ

— Matthew 4:23-24.

The Bible records 18 specific miracles of healing by Jesus. A careful study of these reveals the following facts.

- (a) Christ healed people where He found them — no healing lines.**
- (b) Christ healed ALL manner of sickness — no screening process.**
- (c) Christ’s healings were complete — no failures, relapses, no convalescence.**
- (d) Christ’s healings were free of charge — no offerings, no books, no handkerchiefs.**
- (e) Christ healed some who came requesting it.**

- (f) Christ healed some who did not request it.
 - (g) Christ generally healed without touching — no theatrics.
 - (h) Christ never prayed before He healed someone.
 - (i) Christ discouraged testimonies (Mark 7:36) — the idea was to let the miracle speak for itself.
 - (j) Christ's healing ministry related to Israel.
 - (k) Christ didn't require faith on the part of anyone.
 - (l) Those Christ healed were either unsaved, or were saved at the same moment."
- (ii) **The Healing Ministry of the Apostles**
The Book of Acts records 4 specific miracles of healing and 3 general statements. In considering Acts 3, note the following:
- (a) The apostles healed people where they were.
 - (b) The afflicted did not come seeking to be healed — vs. 2-3.
 - (c) Apostolic healings were complete.
 - (d) Apostolic healings were a minor part of their ministry, and were always accompanied by Gospel preaching— vs. 13-26; 4:4.
 - (e) Faith (on the part of the recipients) was NOT a prerequisite— healing required power on the part of the healer, not faith.
- (iii) **God still heals today.**
God certainly can and does heal the physical bodies of people today. Clearly, however, the

criteria is, *'If it be Thy will.'* We should be careful to seek His will before we seek to be healed. You may wonder how it could ever be a mistake to ask the Lord to heal. God has given us one example of this in the Old Testament (Isaiah 38:1-39:7). We read that King Hezekiah asked the Lord to let him live longer, and he was healed. But I am sure he wished many times that he had not done this.

(a) Many Christians have been healed.

Many of you have experienced healing as a result of prayer, even as I have. Furthermore, there are many notable stories of God healing his servants that we know also. While a book could be written about these, I will mention only one which immediately comes to mind.

“Dr. R.A. Jaffray was a missionary sent by the *Christian and Missionary Alliance* churches. During the '40s he was working in the Baliem Valley of West Irian, New Guinea. Dr. Jaffray was a diabetic so his daughter stockpiled saccharin to substitute in every recipe that called for sugar. Because of the invasion of the Japanese army the supply of saccharin soon dwindled. One afternoon, as Dr. Jaffray prepared a cup of tea, his daughter was horrified to see him put three spoons full of sugar into his cup instead of the saccharin. She could not believe her eyes and reminded her aged missionary father that he was not supposed to have any sugar. He surprised her by saying that it was quite all right because God had healed him. However, she felt little comfort as she still remembered his most recent coma.

“Soon after this she was able to get a urine sample from him and send it to the doctor for confirmation. A few days later a letter came from the doctor saying that the urine specimen had been examined and not a trace of sugar was found.

“While there was an available supply of saccharin, the Lord did not heal Dr. Jaffray. But when the supply of saccharin was no longer available and his life was in danger the Lord healed him.”

(b) Still, many (even notable Christians) were NOT healed.

It is not always God’s will to heal.

**1. As seen in the case of Epaphroditus
— Philippians 2:26,27**

**2. As seen in the case of Timothy
— I Timothy 5:23**

**3. As seen in the case of Trophimus
— II Timothy 4:20”⁶⁵**

When God ceased His dealing with Israel as a nation, the sign gifts to Israel ceased. Toward the end of the book of Acts, no one is being healed, and Paul himself suffered from a malady that required the attention of Luke the apostle (who was a medical doctor). We note also, that instructions for medical care are given by Paul to Timothy (I Timothy 5:23) and further instructions for prayer for the sick are found in the epistle of James (James 5:13-16). Furthermore, after the Acts period, there is no record of anyone being healed.

**c. The third of the sign gifts is the gift of tongues
— I Corinthians 12:10**

Since *speaking in tongues* is one of the marks of the so-called *Charismatic Movement*, the following facts should be understood.

⁶⁵ Sargent, *The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit*, p. 227, 228.

(i) Fact #1 — Every time the word “*tongues*” is used in the Bible, it **always** means “known earthly languages.”

Genesis 10:5,20; Deuteronomy 28:49; Ezra 4:7; Acts 21:40; 22:2; Revelation 5:9; 7:9; and 13:7 are verses that help us to define the biblical usage of the word.

I quote John MacArthur:

“There are a number of reasons why known languages are always in view when the true gift of ‘*tongues*’ is mentioned in Scripture. Here are several key arguments:

1. “The Greek word “*glossa*” primarily means human language when used in Scripture. Several times in the New Testament it refers to the human tongue, but it is the normal word for language.
2. “Also used here is the Greek word “*dialektos*,” from which we get the English word “*dialect*” (Acts 2:6,8). Some of those at Pentecost heard God’s message proclaimed in their own language; some heard it in their own dialect. Classifications like languages and dialects would never have been used if ecstatic speech had been presented.
3. “The same term for language is used later in the Book of Acts and in I Corinthians 12-14. Some Pentecostals and Charismatics claim, ‘Yes, *languages are mentioned in the second chapter of Acts, but after that it means something else.*’ But if we look at the mention of tongues in later chapters in Acts (10:46, 19:6), we’ll find the very same word being used— *glossa*, languages. Throughout the Book of Acts, the Greek term used for tongues is consistently the one that refers to normal languages. It is interesting to note that *glossa* always appears in the plural form throughout Acts, indicating a multiple of languages.

4. **“First Corinthians 14:21 indicates that tongues were a foreign language given as a sign to unbelieving Israel. Paul referred to Isaiah 28:11 and 12 when he said, ‘For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people. To whom he said, This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing: yet they would not hear.’ And then Paul went on to say that tongues are for a sign, not for believers, but for unbelievers—unbelieving Israel as Isaiah 28:11-12 points out.**

5. **“Who were the men of strange tongues who fulfilled the prophecy from Paul? They were the Assyrians who spoke genuine Assyrian!”⁶⁶**

(a) Acts 2:8-11 actually lists the foreign languages spoken on the Day of Pentecost. (I Corinthians 14:9-11 also makes this fact clear.)

John MacArthur says again

“Acts 2:1-11 describes the great day of Pentecost, the birthday of the church. There was a sound like a mighty rushing wind. Cloven tongues like fire seemed to appear on the disciples, and they spoke in other languages. The Greek word used in this passage is ‘*glossa*’, the normative Greek word for ‘*language*.’ Many within the Charismatic movement today claim that the gift of tongues is a *private prayer language*, ecstatic uttering in a language known only to God. But here in Acts 2, it is clear that the disciples were speaking in *known* languages. Unbelieving Jews living in Jerusalem at the time ‘*were all amazed and marveled, saying one to another... how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?*’ Luke

⁶⁶ John F. MacArthur Jr., The Charismatics — A Doctrinal Perspective, (Zondervan Publishers), pp. 158,159,160,162,163. (A quote from John MacArthur is not a blanket endorsement of his theology. I DO NOT agree with all he has to say in the particular volume quoted. Still, much he has to say on this subject is easily understood and worth noting.)

went on to name some fifteen different countries and areas whose languages were being heard (vv. 8-11).⁶⁷

(b) “*Tongues of angels,*” as used in I Corinthians 13:1, means “*the ability to speak more perfectly.*”

This is the only questionable exception to the meaning of the word *tongues*, and at best, the meaning of the expression “*tongues of angels*” is uncertain. I mean, where can we look in the holy scriptures to find an angel speaking in some heavenly language unknown upon the earth? There is not one example to be found. What we do find, in every case where an angel appears to man, is that the angel speaks in the language of the hearer (cf. Daniel 9:22; Luke 1:26-28 and Acts 12:7). The only other utterance found in Scripture (apart from known human language) is that spoken of as “*groanings that cannot be uttered*” in reference to the prayerful intercession of the Holy Spirit in our behalf found in Romans 8:26. Obviously, since these “*cannot be uttered*” they have nothing to do with the subject at hand. Certainly, they do not indicate that anyone is speaking in an unknown heavenly language.

The fact is, Paul appears to be using *hyperbole* (exaggeration— to make a point). In order to make his point about the importance of love, Paul was saying, ‘*Even if I could speak with perfect grammar and eloquent speech, above any language known to man, and did not have love, it would be nothing but noise.*’

Here it is important that we remember one of the basic rules in the interpretation of scripture.

⁶⁷ MacArthur, The Charismatics

- ☞ Never attempt to interpret a clearly understood passage of scripture, in the light of another passage of scripture that is obscure.

Since the meaning of the expression “*tongues*” is clear from its use in the scripture in many places, it seems unreasonable to say it has a different meaning in a verse whose meaning is not clear. The only reason for wresting the scriptures in this manner is obviously to accommodate the personal theology of those false teachers who profess to believe in speaking in tongues.

- (c) The adjective “*unknown*,” as used in the *King James Bible* in I Corinthians 14, means “a language ‘unknown’ to the hearer.”

In this case, only God and the speaker understand what is being said (I Corinthians 14:2,4). The term “*unknown*” is found only once in the book of Acts, and that reference has nothing to do with speaking in tongues.

- (ii) **Fact #2**— The Bible declares tongues to be a sign to unbelieving Jews (I Corinthians 14:22).

Every time the gift of tongues is manifested, there is a Jewish audience and a Jewish apostle present.

- (a) In Acts 2:1-13, *tongues were a sign to unsaved Jews*, authenticating the gospel preached by the apostles.

(b) In Acts 10:44-48, *tongues were a sign to a group of saved Jews* who did not believe God would save the Gentiles, too (cf. Acts 11:15).

(c) In Acts 18:24-19:8, *tongues were a sign to Jewish proselytes* at Ephesus who had believed the *gospel of the kingdom* (probably preached to them by Apollos [Acts 18:24]). They had only been taught about John's baptism of repentance, and did not realize that the Messiah had come, been crucified, resurrected and glorified. (Note: John's *Jewish* baptism was replaced by *Christian* baptism after the New Testament was established in Christ's blood.)

Here is what happened at Ephesus (Acts 18:24-19:8):

- When Paul realized they had not yet received the Holy Spirit, he explained the meaning of John's *baptism unto repentance* (Acts 19:4) which was to manifest Christ unto Israel (John 1:31).
- Then Paul presented *the gospel of the grace of God* to them (I Corinthians 15:1-4; Ephesians 2:8-9).
- They immediately believed on Christ and were *rebaptized* by Paul "*in the name of the Lord Jesus.*"

- ☉ When Paul laid his hands upon them to baptize them they began to speak in tongues and prophesy. This was a sign to the Jews there that the *gospel of the grace of God* preached by Paul had replaced the *gospel of the kingdom of heaven* that John had preached.

Dr. Peter S. Ruckman writes:

“Begin at I Corinthians 12:8, and notice that the gifts given to the body of Christ during the Acts of the Apostles include signs given to Israel, because *‘the Jews require a SIGN’* — I Corinthians 1:22. Note verse 22 in particular. Mark it, and underline it: *‘For the Jews require a SIGN.’* Now have you got that? You were *not* told that *Christians* require a sign..., you were told that the sign of tongues is not a sign to a *believer*, but to an *unbeliever*. See I Corinthians 14:22, where the Bible says, *‘Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not.’* Is that clear? [Tongues] were... a gift given to the apostolic church during the apostolic times for a *‘sign’* to a man who didn’t believe. The believer had the Holy Spirit in him, and the signs were given to the *Jews* in the community. *‘The Jews require a sign.’* This explains why only three times in the book of Acts anybody speaks in tongues, they speak in a foreign language to somebody of another race. Did you notice that? Did you notice in Acts 2 when those Jews speak in tongues, they are giving it as a sign to *unsaved Jews and Jewish proselytes* that came from all over Europe and Asia? Did you notice that when those converts of Paul who had been converts of Apollos speak in tongues in Acts 19, they are doing it to *Jews in a synagogue* there? There is not one time in that Bible where tongues ever show up that it isn’t a sign given to *Israel* or a *Jew* who doesn’t believe the Holy Spirit is in operation.”⁶⁸

⁶⁸ Ruckman, The Gifts of the Holy Spirit, p. 21.

(iii) Fact #3 — The Bible places little emphasis on tongues.

There are only three instances in the New Testament where the gift of tongues was manifested.

(a) In I Corinthians, we see the first abuse of the gift of tongues.

There is **not even one** positive exposition of the gift of tongues in the word of God.

(b) In I Corinthians 12:28, the gift of tongues is found *last* in the list of the gifts of the Spirit.

Peter, James, John and Jude all spoke with tongues, but say nothing about it in their epistles.

(c) The apostle Paul only spoke in other languages on special occasions— Acts 21:37-40; 22:2.

(iv) Fact #4 — Several principles for the proper exercise of the gift of tongues are given in I Corinthians 14. Paul says that these principles are to be acknowledged by spiritual believers as the commandment of the Lord (vs. 37).

(a) Five words which can be understood are better than 10,000 words spoken in a language that cannot be understood (vs. 19).

(b) No more than two or three persons are to speak on any one occasion (vs. 27).

- (c) These are to speak one at a time, in turn (vs. 27).
- (d) An interpreter must be present (vs. 27).
- (e) If **no interpreter** is present, there is to be **no speaking in tongues** (vs. 28). (cf. I Corinthians 14:2-23.)
- (f) Each speaker is to exercise control over himself to avoid confusion (vs. 32-33).
- (g) Women are not to speak in tongues in public (vs. 34).

d. The fourth of the sign gifts is the gift of the interpretation of tongues

— I Corinthians 12:10

This is the supernatural ability to clarify and interpret messages spoken in tongues.

e. Other considerations

Having given these reasons for the cessation of the temporary *sign gifts*, and in order to give proper attention to all the scripture on this subject, we must note several things.

- (i) Paul says that tongues are **not to be forbidden**.

“Wherefore, brethren, covet to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues.”

— I Corinthians 14:39

Why does Paul say this?

First of all, there is a practical consideration here. The believers in Corinth were carnal and acting like children

(I Corinthians 13:11). If you have children, you know that if you want to be sure a child does something, just tell him he cannot. So Paul tells them not to forbid speaking in tongues lest there be more divisions and some might split off from the church and start a movement of their own based on false doctrine.

Secondly, speaking in tongues is not forbidden because it is one of the *sign gifts* “for the Jews” which will not be done away with until “*that which is perfect is come*” (I Corinthians 13:10— a reference to the return of the Lord Jesus Christ). These gifts are not for this present dispensation of grace, but will appear once again before the Lord’s return, as signs to Israel. During the time of the Great Tribulation, God will again deal with *Israel* as a nation and these signs will attend the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom of heaven.⁶⁹

(ii) Joel 2:28 was not fulfilled in Acts 2.⁷⁰

“And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:”

— Joel 2:28

Joel 2:28 is one of the primary verses referred to by those who teach that speaking in tongues and healing are still going on today. But this verse is clearly **not** a reference to the Church Age, but a reference to the Millennium. How do we know this?

⁶⁹ The kingdom of heaven is a literal, visible, physical kingdom with the Lord Jesus Christ reigning as King on a literal, visible, physical throne on earth. In contrast, the kingdom of God is a spiritual kingdom within the believer (Luke 17:21). It is not physical (“*not meat nor drink*,” Romans 14:17). One must be born into it spiritually (John 3:3-5). Sometimes in the gospels these two terms will be used interchangeably, because when Christ is present as King, both kingdoms are present at the same time.

⁷⁰ Also see previous chapter on the Holy Spirit’s ministry to Israel.

In Acts 2:16 (cf. Acts 2:33), Peter tells his *Jewish* audience (Acts 2:5,14,22) that the prophecy of Joel 2:28 had reached the time of its fulfillment and that the filling of the Holy Ghost was being manifested by the gift of speaking in other tongues. The message winds up with Acts 2:38, “[R]epent and be baptized... and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost” (as per Joel 2:28). Peter goes on to remind them that “*the promise is unto you.*” IF those Jews had believed in the Lord Jesus Christ and IF they had repented, THEN the rest of the things we read about in Joel chapter two would also have taken place, even the coming of the Lord to establish his millennial kingdom. Of course they did NOT believe, Joel 2:28 was NOT fulfilled, and the Second Advent was NOT accomplished.

Hebrews 1:2 says that God “*hath in these last days spoken unto us by his son.*” It is obvious that the first and second coming are both included in “*the last days,*” when we understand that the first coming takes place in the end of Daniel’s 69th week.⁷¹ It is plain to see, therefore, that the literal fulfillment of Joel’s prophecy (Acts 2:17-21; Joel 2:28-3:2) and of Ezekiel 36 and 37 will take place at the second advent.

⁷¹ **Daniel’s 70 weeks** is the time spoken of in Daniel 9:24-27, usually understood as seventy weeks of years (490 years). The passage groups the weeks in three parts: seven weeks (49 years), sixty-two weeks (434 years), and one week (7 years). The 49 years are associated with rebuilding Jerusalem in “*troubulous times*” (v. 25). The 434 years relate to the intervening time before a cutting off of the Anointed One (v.26). The 7 years are connected with the period of a covenant between a ruler and Jerusalem, which is violated in the middle of the 7 years (v.27)

The dispensational approach makes the 70 weeks a prophetic framework for end time events. The 69th week is seen as completed at Christ’s death, while the 70th week is yet to be fulfilled at a future Great Tribulation period. The interval between the two is seen as a parenthesis in the prophetic pattern which contains the present church age, a period not revealed in Old Testament prophecy.

According to Joel, the outpouring of God's Spirit will be followed by:

“[W]onders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke.

“The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come.”

— Joel 2:30-31

All these things are clearly related to the second advent

- ☞ Look up the word **“blood”** in the book of Revelation and you will find three distinct references that fit (Revelation 6:12; 8:7; 16:3-6)
- ☞ Furthermore, we find the word **“fire”** in Revelation 8:7,8; 9:17-18; 11:5; 16:8
- ☞ And **“smoke”** is used in Revelation 9:2-3, 7-18

There are no less than five different references to these events in the Bible, and all are connected with the second coming. (cf. Matthew 24:27-30; Isaiah 13:10; Ezekiel 32:7; Revelation 6:12; 8:12.)

Note that “[T]he day of the Lord” (Joel 2:31) includes the Millennium as well as the events leading up to it.

This can be seen in the following scripture references

- ☞ *“the last days”* (Isaiah 13:4-11; Revelation 1:10; Zephaniah 1:7-18)
- ☞ *“the advent”* (Jeremiah 46:10; Malachi 4:5; Joel 2:1-11)
- ☞ and the Millennium (Isaiah 2:12-21; II Peter 3:10-12)

On the day of Pentecost

- ☞ Were there “*wonders in the heavens*” and “*signs in the earth?*”
- ☞ Was there “*blood and fire and pillars of smoke?*”
- ☞ Was the “*sun... turned into darkness and the moon into blood*” and did the “*great and terrible day of the LORD come?*”

Of course, the answer to each of these questions is “**NO!**” Not one of these things happened then, nor have they happened since. They have yet to come to pass— all of them remain to be fulfilled at a future time.

What Peter was telling those Jews present at Pentecost, is that they were getting a preliminary glimpse of the kind of power the Holy Spirit would pour out upon **all men** in the millennial kingdom. What was seen in Jerusalem among a handful of people was a sign of what God’s Spirit would do someday on a worldwide basis.

It is evident from the context of Revelation that Joel was not talking about Pentecost, nor the church age, but about the things that are going to take place in the book of Revelation during Daniel’s 70th week, just preceding the second advent. The full context of Joel’s prophecy makes this the only plausible interpretation. Joel 2 is plainly a tribulation, second advent, and millennial application from beginning to end. Why was Peter preaching a message on the second advent of Jesus Christ on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2? Because, Daniel’s 70th week had begun, and the second coming would have been within seven years of coming to pass, *if they had believed the sign given unto them* (speaking in other tongues [languages]).

Furthermore, Joel 2:20 refers to the defeat of the northern army that wins against Israel in the tribulation time. In verse 27 of the same chapter, he speaks of the great revival that will bring Israel back to God (another feature of the Tribulation not yet fulfilled). In Joel 3, we have the description of the Judgment of the Nations at the end of the tribulation and just before the establishment of the earthly kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ (Joel 2:2, 12, 14). Later Joel gives a beautiful description of that millennial kingdom (Joel 3:18-20). Clearly Joel 3 is a kingdom prophecy, little of which was fulfilled at Pentecost or on any occasion since. It must be future to our time.

Still the question arises, “*Why did Peter quote Joel 2:28-32 on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:17-21)?*” Some Bible teachers say that Peter was claiming that the gift of the Holy Spirit to the church on the day of Pentecost was a fulfillment of Joel 2:28. But it was only a partial fulfillment, or *type of the final fulfillment*.

Charismatics also like to make a big point out of ‘*the former rain and the latter rain*’ of Joel 2:23. They want us to believe that the *former rain* was spiritual (the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost). The *latter rain* then, (according to them) would also be spiritual. Supposedly, it would be the outpouring of the Spirit of God upon all men in the twentieth century. But, the *former rain* refers to literal, physical raindrops falling on the crops in autumn and the *latter rain* is the rainy season of the spring. Joel said that in the millennial earth, both those rains will come ‘*in the first month*.’” The point is that God will make the earth to bring forth an abundant harvest in the literal, visible, physical kingdom of heaven (Joel 2:24-26). The ‘*former and latter rain*’ have nothing to do with Pentecost, the twentieth century, or the Holy Spirit.

(iii) Paul says that prophecies shall fail, tongues shall cease, and knowledge shall vanish away until **“that which is perfect is come”** (I Corinthians 13:8-12).

What is Paul referring to in I Corinthians 13:10 when he speaks of *‘that which is perfect’*? In their haste to find a Biblical basis for an end to the gift of *tongues*, some would have us believe that it is the completion of the canon of scripture.⁷² But this will not work, because we know that the two prophets, Moses and Elijah, will be prophesying, and performing miracles *“before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings”* (Revelation 10:11-11:12) who will see them killed and raised from the dead. That means that miracles, wonders and tongues will be valid once again during the time of the *Great Tribulation*. Therefore, *‘that which is perfect’* must refer to the Lord Jesus Christ upon His return to rule and reign during the millennium. Only then will these miracles, wonders **and tongues** cease forever.

“For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.” — I Corinthians 13:12

Paul tells us that when *“that which is perfect is come...we shall see...face to face”* and *“shall know even as [we] are known.”* But it is clear that, even though we do have the completed canon of scripture, we still *“see through a glass darkly,”* and not *“face to face.”* Furthermore, at present we still only *“know in part.”*

⁷² The American Heritage Dictionary, 3rd ed. says: The word **canon** means, *“The books of the Bible officially accepted as Holy Scripture.”*

2. The sixteen permanent gifts

Notice that in Ephesians 4:8, we are told that God “gave gifts unto men.” Then in Ephesians 4:11 we see that He gave those having certain of these gifts, to be leaders in the Church (cf. I Corinthians 12:28). We will begin our study of the sixteen permanent gifts of the Holy Spirit by looking at those five gifts listed in Ephesians 4:11.

a. The gift of an apostle

Because there is some confusion today about this office and its corresponding gift, we will examine it at length.

(i) Definition:

The word Apostle(-s) is derived from the Greek word *apos'tolos*.

Of this Greek word, E.W. Bullinger writes:

“Apos' tolos (απο'στολος), primarily an adjective; sent forth. Then, a substitute, one sent, messenger, ambassador, envoy, Apostle, [from Apos'tello (απο'στελλο), to send off or send away from.] (Occurs in John 13:16; II Corinthians 8:23; Philippians 2:25)

“Apos' tolon (απο'στολοη'), a sending off or away, a mission; then, the office of an apostle.”⁷³

Also, from Bullinger's Companion Bible:

“... In Matthew, Mark, Luke and Acts (except 14:4,14) the term is used of the Twelve [who were] chosen and commissioned by the Lord (Matthew 11:1; Luke 6:13) during His earthly ministry. From this office Judas fell, his place being filled later by Matthias (Acts 1:26). In the Epistles and Revelation the context shows where the Twelve [apostles] are meant.

⁷³ E.W. Bullinger, A Critical Lexicon and Concordance to the English and Greek New Testament, (Samuel Bagster & Sons Ltd., London, England.)

“Besides the Twelve there were others [apostles] appointed by the Lord after His Ascension (Ephesians 4:11; cf. I Corinthians 12:28). Such were Paul and Barnabas, first called so in Acts 14:4,14; Andronicus and Junias (Romans 16:7). Paul nineteen times calls himself an apostle, and argues his claim in I Corinthians 9 and II Corinthians 12. See also I Thessalonians 1:1; 2:6, where Paul associates Silvanus and Timothy with himself.”⁷⁴

In the New Testament, the *twelve disciples* specially chosen by Christ were called *the apostles*. Still, there were others called apostles who were not of *the twelve*, like Paul and Barnabas (Acts 14:14). Today we call them *missionaries* (from the Latin word *missio*, meaning “one sent forth by authority”).⁷⁵

As they are called by God and sent forth from a local assembly of believers, they are to go where there are no churches for the purpose of establishing a new work (Romans 1:5).⁷⁶ In particular, I believe this should generally follow Paul’s example to go where people have no knowledge of Christ. However, the term is generally used in a broader sense today, so as to include those starting churches or those involved in other ministries having nothing to do with the gift of apostle.

⁷⁴ E.W. Bullinger, *The Companion Bible*, (Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49501), appendix 189, Apostles p. 208.

⁷⁵ The word “apostle,” in our English Bible, comes from the Greek word “apostolos” and is translated “missio” in the Latin Bible. Hence, the commonly used English word “missionary.”

⁷⁶ From the Doctrinal Statement of Scofield Memorial Church, under “The Gifts of the Holy Spirit Today— The Permanent Gifts.” www.scofield.org

“Apostolic: In a specific sense, the term apostle has reference to the twelve disciples of Jesus; in a general sense, it may have reference to those who are sent by God with the supernatural ability to proclaim the gospel and plant churches as pioneer missionaries (Ephesians 4:11).”

“Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man’s foundation:

“But as it is written, To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard shall understand.”

— Romans 15:20-21

This may not be what you were taught, but let’s think about it. What spiritual gift qualifies a man to hold the **office** of Bishop? Obviously, the **gift** of a pastor (Ephesians 4:11). Then what spiritual gift qualifies a man to be a “missionary.” Some would say, “the **gift** of an evangelist.” But, in the Bible, evangelists do not start churches. In fact, in the only biblical account of an evangelist we have, says:

“Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John:”

— Acts 8:14

Philip had the gift of an evangelist (Acts 21:8). He preached at Samaria and all “they all gave heed” and “believed... the name of Jesus Christ” (Acts 8:10-12). Then, the apostles at Jerusalem sent Peter and John to Samaria to establish a church (Acts 8:14-17). No longer needed, God called the evangelist to minister elsewhere.

Nowhere in the New Testament is the word “missionary” found. So, where do we get this word? In the New Testament we see the word “apostle.” As the word “baptize” is a transliteration of the Greek word baptizo (βαπτίζω), so the word “apostle” is the transliteration⁷⁷ of the Greek word “Apos’ tolos” (αποστολος). But, in the Latin language the word is “missio” and so we get the word “missionary” from the Latin Bible. Therefore it

⁷⁷ To represent (letters or words) in the corresponding characters of another alphabet.

seems clear that a ‘missio’nary is nothing more than an apostle. Most preachers today are afraid to use the Greek word, because they do not want to concede that the gift of an apostle (‘missio’nary) is valid today. So they just use a little trickery and substitute the Latin word for ‘apostle.’

Furthermore, it may be good preaching to ‘say’ that every believer is a missionary, but it is not good doctrine. Timothy was encouraged to do the work of an evangelist, not a missionary (II Timothy 4:5). We zealously follow the concept of the Great Commission established by the Lord Jesus Christ. It is right and good that we make that spiritual application for the believer today. Nonetheless, the Great Commission was given by a Jewish Messiah, to Jewish apostles, sent to preach the message of the Kingdom of Heaven, which was only to the Jews (by Christ’s command, Matthew 10:5-7).

During the time when the *kingdom message* was being preached to Israel (for example, the four gospels and the Book of Acts), the authority of the Twelve apostles was validated by miracles and signs. Today their authority is validated by a local church who, recognizing their calling and gifts to that ministry, ordains them (I Timothy 2:7). Furthermore, Paul told the Corinthian church that *they themselves were proof* that he was an apostle.

“If I be not an apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you: for the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord.”
— I Corinthians 9:2

And what is more proof of an apostle’s gift and calling than the souls won and the churches established by the Holy Spirit through his labor?

Here is a brief description of what I believe to be the work of a missionary (apostle).

1. *Missionaries are **called** to the ministry by God* (Acts 13:2). It is interesting to note these men were already busy serving the Lord (Acts 12:25; 13:1-2).
2. *Missionaries should be **sent** by a local church* (Acts 13:3). The laying on of hands signifies the church's recognition of their calling and identification with them as their representatives.
Note: "They" (the church) sent them, not a "missions board." However, this does not diminish the proper role of these agencies today.
3. *Missionaries should be **led** by the Holy Spirit* (Acts 13:4). The church "sent," but did not dictate the actual place of service— that is God's business.
4. *Missionaries intend to **establish** churches, ordaining elders and training them for the work* (Acts 14:23). This is the true work of an apostle.
5. *Missionaries continue to **care for** the churches they have established through a loving relationship with the pastor.* (II Corinthians 11:28).
6. *Missionaries **report** to their home churches* (Acts 14:26).

Apostolic Requirements.

To be one of the company of **the twelve** apostles (Luke 6:13), one must have seen the resurrected Christ (Acts 1:22). But Acts 1:21-22 also says that they had to be "men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, Beginning from the

baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us.” For this reason, some would argue that this gift has passed away. The apostle Paul reminds the church at Corinth that *he had seen the resurrected Christ*, but he could not claim to have been *with them from the beginning* (I Corinthians 9:1), nor would any of the other apostles already noted. You see, *the Twelve* were apostles to the nation of **Israel**, while Paul was the apostle to the **Gentiles** (Romans 11:13). Furthermore, we see that the gift of apostle is still being spoken of by Paul in Ephesians 3:5 and 4:11 as being to *the church*.

“Trying” of An Apostle

Some would refer us to Revelation 2:2 to prove the gift of an apostle is no longer valid. But this passage of scripture does not say these men were judged to be false apostles because they did not have the sign gifts, miracles, etc. (This argument is used, because it conveniently accommodates the theology of those who teach this). Since the passage **does not** tell us what the test was, we are left to speculation. I believe they were deemed as false apostles because their message was wrong— they were still preaching *the kingdom message* of the apostles to the Jews, rather than Paul’s *gospel of the grace of God*. (cf. I Corinthians 9:2; 14:29-33; II Corinthians 11:13).

We read that Peter warned:

“But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction” — II Peter 2:1

False prophets and false teachers had already arisen in Peter's day. But that does not mean there are no prophets or teachers *today*. Should the fact that *some* were tried and found to be *false apostles* be a sign that there are no apostles today? It is the *signs* that are passed, not these gifts and offices (Romans 11:3).

We might add here, that in early church history the Roman Catholic Church *falsely* claimed that their Pope had the right to rule over the church because of *apostolic succession*.⁷⁸ If one does not have a proper understanding of dispensational truth, the easiest way to explain away this Roman Catholic heresy is to simply deny that the gift of apostle exists any longer. But this is done out of expediency and not dictated by scripture.

In more recent times, the Charismatic movement has arisen with some of their number claiming not only to be prophets and apostles, but also to have the ability to perform miracles and wonders with the sign gifts that some of the early prophets and apostles had. Again, the easiest way to deny their claims is to say that the gifts of apostle and prophet are no longer valid today. We are not left to these weak devices, however, because *we understand* the dispensational work of the Holy Spirit.

It is clear that:

- **YES**, God's manner of dealing with men did change during the Acts period, **after** the body of Christ was formed.

⁷⁸ The false belief that the Roman Catholic Popes have received divine authority from God to rule over church and State. They teach that this authority has been passed on from the apostle Peter and by each succeeding pope to the present day. Of course this can be easily disproved from Scripture. The most obvious error being that Peter was the apostle to the Jew while Paul alone was the apostle to the Gentiles.

- ☞ **NO**, there are **no more signs and wonders** during this dispensation of grace, because those signs were for the unbelieving nation of Israel (I Corinthians 1:22).
- ☞ **But**, I believe the **gifts and offices** of an apostle and a prophet are still valid gifts from God to the Church today, just as then. Let's see what the scripture really says.

Edifying the Body of Christ

Paul the apostle wrote.

“And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

“For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

“Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:”

— Ephesians 4:11-13

Paul says in Ephesians 4:11, that the Lord Jesus Christ gave those with the gifts of **apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors** and **teachers** to the body of Christ.

These were given:

1. For the perfecting of the saints
2. For the work of the ministry
3. For the edifying of the body of Christ

All these are present, ongoing ministries in the body of Christ, and I think it is obvious that the Church has not yet come “*in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God,*” nor “*unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.*” Until it does, it appears to me that these gifts are still present. The King James Bible says, “*Whoso boasteth himself of a **false gift** is like clouds and wind without rain* (Proverbs 25:14). We will be wary of this sort, as well as those who boast of having the *miracles and signs* of a prophet or an apostle when the signs have passed. But let’s not “*throw the baby out with the bath.*”

The Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets

But what about Ephesians 2:19 and 20? Doesn’t verse twenty show that the apostles and prophets were part of the foundation of the church, and that since the foundation has been completed those gifts have passed away?⁷⁹

In answer to this, let the Bible speak for itself.

“Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;

“And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;”

— Ephesians 2:19-20

Is Paul contradicting his earlier letter to the Corinthian church? In his first letter to the church at Corinth, he said very clearly that Jesus Christ, Himself, is the *only* foundation of the church— there is no other.

“For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.” — I Corinthians 3:11

⁷⁹ Charles Ryrie holds this view in, Basic Theology, (Victor Books), p. 369.

Certainly, there is no contradiction between these two passages of scripture. In Ephesians, Paul is *not saying* that the apostles were the foundation, but that *their own foundation (the one they laid and built upon) was Christ, Himself*. For anyone to say that the apostles were the foundation of the church, is to accept the tenet of the Roman Catholic church, that says the apostle Peter was the foundation upon which the church was built. Would a Baptist agree with that? Or would we prefer to make Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, the foundation? **Never!** That would be just as much an error as the Roman Catholic interpretation.

Remember what Christ said to Peter:

“He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?”

“And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

“And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.

“And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”

— **Matthew 16:15-18**

And to what does “*this rock*” refer? Plainly, it is the Lord Jesus Christ, and no one else (cf. Deuteronomy 32:3,4; I Samuel 2:2; II Samuel 22:2 and numerous references in the Psalms). We know too, that when Christ was three days and three nights in the heart of the earth the gates of hell did not prevail against Him.

In the Bible we learn that there are two “spiritual rocks”

“For their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges.

“And he shall say, Where are their gods, their rock in whom they trusted,”

— Deuteronomy 32:31-37

The Bible says “[**T**]**heir rock is not as our Rock.**” Christ is our rock and *the only foundation* that the Church is built upon. Therefore, is it not obvious that in Ephesians 2:19 “*the household of God*” (the church) is built upon this same foundation? The foundation that the apostles and prophets laid and built upon was none other than the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. There can be no other foundation for the true believer.

W.E. Vine gives us light on this subject:

“*Themelios, or Themelion* (θεμελιος) is properly an adjective denoting belonging to a foundation (connected with *tithemi*, to place). It is used... (a) of the ministry of the gospel and the doctrines of the faith, Romans 15:20; I Corinthians 3:10,11,12; Ephesians 2:20, where the “*of*” is not subjective (i.e. *consisting of* the apostles and the prophets), but objective, (i.e. *laid by* the apostles, etc.; so in II Timothy 2:19, where ‘*the foundation of God*’ is ‘*the foundation laid by God,*’ — not the Church (which is not the foundation), but Christ Himself, upon whom the saints are built; Hebrews 6:1.”⁸⁰

Isaiah prophesied the coming of this foundation stone.

“Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.”
— Isaiah 28:16

Warren Wiersbe says:

“The foundation for this church was laid by the Apostles and New Testament prophets. Jesus Christ is

⁸⁰ W.E. Vine, An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, (Fleming Revell), page 128.

the Foundation and the Chief Cornerstone (I Corinthians 3:11; Psalm 118:22; Isaiah 8:14)."⁸¹

Matthew Henry agrees, in his commentary:

"The church is also compared to a building, founded on the doctrine of Christ; delivered by the prophets of the Old Testament, and the apostles of the New."⁸²

- Note, that while the proper gift is given to qualify men for the corresponding office, in Ephesians 4:11 the men themselves are mentioned as being gifts to the churches.

Church Leadership and Apostolic Authority

Another question arises about the exercise of apostolic authority over churches.

"If apostles are still with us, then what do we do about 'apostolic authority'? Certainly, Paul was entrusted with the care of all the churches (II Corinthians 11:28). Even after he appointed elders, he still had authority over them."

Indeed, Paul wrote:

"Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches."

— II Corinthians 11:28

Note that Paul says this in the context of *glorying in his infirmities* (II Corinthians 11:30). It does not sound like he had any thought of Lording it over the flock (I Peter 5:3), nor to usurping the authority of any pastor. This is made clear in II Corinthians 1:24.

⁸¹ Warren Wiersbe, The Bible Exposition Commentary — Volume 2, (Victor Books), p. 25.

⁸² Matthew Henry, Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Bible,.

“Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand.”

— II Corinthians 1:24

Keep in mind that Paul had won many of the Corinthians to the Lord, and even baptized some of them himself. Also notice that while it appears that there were leaders (elders) in the church of Corinth, Paul never mentions the pastor (bishop); probably because at that time (for some reason) they had no man to pastor that church. Furthermore, any missionary knows the special relationship that remains between himself and his converts and those pastors and elders he has ordained. Long after the missionary has left one church to start another church, the care of previous churches still falls upon him as he continues to work with the national pastor to build the work and expand its facilities (Bible college, etc.).

Another question that arises, has to do with Paul's instruction regarding church government. Why didn't he mention the gift and office of apostle when he wrote Timothy about the qualifications for the *bishop* and the *deacon*? But may we not also ask, “*Why isn't the gift of an evangelist mentioned?*” Certainly, no one would suggest that the gift of an evangelist is no longer valid simply because it is not mentioned there. Of course, the answer is that the *bishop* and *deacon* are the leaders of the government within a local church. The gifts of apostle and evangelist are to be exercised in reaching others *outside* the local church. These are gifts given to evangelize the lost and to establish churches.⁸³ When an apostle establishes a church, he is the pastor for a time, but soon steps

⁸³ Of course pastors establish churches too, but the ministry of an apostle includes the unique ability to reach a certain nationality of people in places where the name of Christ is not known.

aside, turning the work over to the national pastor. Then, he forfeits his *rule* and authority over that congregation, but not its care. (Note that an apostle only has authority over the churches he has established himself.)

In the United States of America, it seems obvious that there is not much place for the ministry of the gift of an apostle (missionary) in a local church other than presenting the work of his field. Of course he may still exercise his other gifts (like teaching, etc.), but any pastor knows that this sometimes presents a difficult situation because the missionary is accustomed to exercising his authority as an apostle. This can sometimes lead to conflicts with the pastor and the exercise of his authority. When he is in the USA, the missionary is like a duck out of water. He does not really fit in, because he is not called to minister to churches here, but to his own churches and his own people. I believe that part of the gift of an apostle is the unique ability to reach those people to whom he has been sent by God.

In summary, I believe the office and gift of an apostle are still valid today, although *the sign gifts* that accompanied the early Jewish apostles are not valid today.

(ii) Characteristics:

Must have the spiritual gift of apostle, with a definite call to work with a specific culture although not necessarily to a specific nation.

Must be bold when entering a field of labor, and ready to give his life for the Lord. Must be meek before the native inhabitants and especially those in power. Must be able to labor to please the Lord in the face of no visible result. Must be an able teacher and preacher capable of training others; must be longsuffering with converts who

seem slow to progress. Must have perseverance. Must be able to maintain a personal relationship with God without the fellowship of other believers.

(iii) Example:

(a) Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles

— Romans 1:15-16; Galatians 2:8-9;
Ephesians 6:19-20; I Timothy 2:7;
II Timothy 1:8-9

(b) Peter — II Peter 1:1

(c) In modern times we have notable examples in men like William Carey, Hudson Taylor, R.A. Jaffray, Robert Moffatt, Adoniram Judson. Read their biographies and note their gifts and the spiritual authority they possessed.

b. The gift of a prophet

(I Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 4:11)

(i) Definition

Here we will speak of the *gift of a prophet* separately from the *gift of prophecy*. The reason being that the gift of prophecy is simply *the gift and motivation to preach*. In that sense all preachers may be said to be God's prophets. But from among them, I believe God calls certain ones to be PROPHETS to the nations, like Jonah. As we mentioned about a missionary, there is a general application and a particular application. If one wonders at this, just look at the gift of pastor. Certainly, in most any church, more than one person has a gift to pastor. An

assistant pastor or the youth pastor would necessarily have this gift also. Still only ONE man with this gift can hold the office of BISHOP (commonly called PASTOR). I believe there are only a few that might truly be called as *prophets* to a nation in any generation. We must be careful to remember that the gift of a prophet gives him *no authority over the churches* (except his own church, if he is a pastor also), but he is, himself, a gift to the churches. The gift of a prophet has nothing to do with church government.

E.W. Bullinger says

“A prophet was one who spoke for God (see app. 49), and this applies to those of the New Testament as well as those of the Old. It did not necessarily mean that he foretold the future, though sometimes that was done, as in the case of Agabus (Acts 11:28; 21:10).

“Prophecy was one of the gifts of the Spirit, and its chief design was to comfort, exhort (Acts 15:32), and testify from the Scriptures for the edification of believers. Prophets are included in the gifts of I Corinthians 12:28 and Ephesians 4:11, and directions for the orderly exercise of their gifts are given in I Corinthians 14.

“Besides Acts 13:1, where it is impossible to distinguish between the five persons mentioned as prophets and teachers (two of them being called apostles also in the next chapter), Judas and Silas also called prophets in [Acts] 15:32.”⁸⁴

⇒ The primary characteristic of a prophet in the Old Testament was his position *with* God, and *against* the world.

⁸⁴ Bullinger, The Companion Bible, appendix 189, Prophets p. 208.

They were raised up as watchmen (Ezekiel 3:17) to warn the nation about their sin, to proclaim the judgment of God, and call men to repentance. In this sense, there are men of God who are still prophets, but rather than *fore-telling*, their ministry is one of *forth-telling*. Just as the Old Testament prophets, they are called to take a stand *with* God, and *against* the world; to *publicly* warn the nation about their sin, to proclaim the judgment of God, and call men to repentance by the preaching of the word of God. God's prophets give us the issues of the day and warn us of the nation's sins. However, a unique part of *the Old Testament prophet's ministry* that has passed away with the sign gifts, is proclaiming and recording of future events supernaturally revealed to them by God. Some of those events would not happen until thousands of years later, but some happened during their own lifetime. (cf. Matthew 13:14; II Peter 1:20,21; Revelation 1:3; Acts 11:27-28; Acts 21:10-11). Still, today the prophet does proclaim future events, but only as revealed by the Lord in the written word of God.

I believe the gift of an apostle and the gift of a prophet are still valid today. There is no problem with one who claims to be an *apostle* today, but there is a problem when an apostle claims to have the *sign gifts* that the early apostles had. The *signs* of an apostle are no longer valid because the signs have passed away. An apostle today would be a missionary sent forth from an established church, with authority to establish another church. Likewise there is no problem with the *office* of a *prophet* today, but there is a problem when a prophet claims to have the *sign gift* of receiving new revelations of scripture and future events from the Lord, because we have the *completed revelation* of God in the Holy Bible.

So we see it is the unique *sign gifts* (tongues, healing and miracles) of the first apostles and prophets that have temporarily passed, but not the office and gift of an apostle and prophet. The prophets in I Corinthians 14 are not foretelling the future, they are preaching, and God established His church upon the preaching of the word of God. Notice that these two offices are still mentioned by Paul in Ephesians 4:11 with no indication they had passed away, although the sign gifts had passed away some years prior to the writing of that letter. The gifts of prophet and apostle were in operation at the same time as the gifts of pastor and teacher (I Corinthians 12:4-12; 14:29-32) but the ministry of the apostles and prophets overshadowed that of the pastors and teachers in the early days of the church. Today all are still in operation, but contrariwise the ministry of the pastors and teachers overshadows that of the apostles and prophets. I believe there are only a few *true* apostles and prophets today and that these men are called to a nation or people. While we are to give heed to the prophet of God, we are warned to beware false prophets (Matthew 24:24; II Peter 2:1; I John 4:1). While there are a multitude of this sort today, God's prophets will usually be known only after the fulfillment of their ministry (Ezekiel 33:33).

(ii) Characteristics:

(Romans 12:9) A prophet must have love without dissimulation (hypocrisy); despising that which is evil, and loving that which is good (Psalm 119:104). He must edify the body of Christ; exhort them and stir up the hope that is within them by the Spirit of God (Romans 15:13; Colossians 1:27). Because his ministry is particularly directed against open sin, he must live a peculiarly separated life in stark contrast to the world. If a prophet is

going to point out the sins of a nation openly, he must have a close walk with God, know His will and keep himself clean from sin. Usually somewhat rough and uncompromising in demeanor (e.g., Elijah, Jonah, John the Baptist), prophets are not highly esteemed by the religious establishment. One reason for this is that part of their ministry is to point out the sins of the local church and church leaders. This need not be done in a mean or destructive way in order to make church leaders uncomfortable. Wherever there is greatest pride, the prophet of God will be least accepted and tolerated.

A.W. Tozer has so aptly written

“And of the children of Issachar, which were men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do; the heads of them were two-hundred; and all their brethren were at their commandment.’
— I Chronicles 12:32

“A prophet is one who knows his times, and what God is trying to say to the people of his times.

“Today we need prophetic preachers; not preachers of prophecy merely, but preachers with a gift of prophecy. The word of wisdom is missing. We need the gift of discernment again in our pulpits. It is not ability to ‘predict,’ that we need, but the anointed eye, the power of spiritual penetration and interpretation, the ability to appraise the religious scene as viewed from God's position, and to tell us what is actually going on....

“Where is the man who can see through the ticker tape and confetti to discover which way the parade is headed, why it started in the first place and, particularly, who is riding up front in the seat of honor?...

“What is needed desperately today is prophetic insight. Scholars can interpret the past; it takes prophets to interpret the present. Learning will enable a man to pass judgment on our yesterdays, but it requires a gift of clear seeing to pass sentence on our own day....

“Another kind of religious leader must arise among us. He must be of the old prophet type, a man who has seen visions of God and has heard a voice from the Throne.”⁸⁵

(iii) Example:

(a) Peter — Acts 2:14-40; 3:12-26; 5:3-11

(b) Stephen — Acts 6:9-7:60

(c) Paul — Acts 9:20; I Timothy 2:7

(d) Some modern day examples (men I have known personally) are Lester Roloff, Jack Wood, Carl Lackey and Peter Ruckman. There can be no better example than that great Christian and Missionary Alliance Pastor, A.W. Tozer. In fact he is often called “a 20th century prophet.” No doubt you can add others to this list.

c. The gift of an evangelist

(i) Definition:

The supernatural ability to preach to lost sinners about their unsaved condition, their certain judgment, their eternal destiny and their need for salvation. Many who claim to have the gift of evangelism today do not possess this gift at all. Realizing that they are not involved in preaching to masses of lost sinners, but more often to backslidden Christians, some have even

⁸⁵ A.W. Tozer, Of God and Men, pp. 19-22.

begun to call themselves *revivalists*. That is fine, but the gift they are really displaying is not the gift of an evangelist at all, but the gift of *exhortation*. We must remember, however, that it is possible that one could possess both these gifts.

Of course, all believers are to witness for Christ whether they have this special gift or not. Timothy, for example, was not an evangelist, but he was a soulwinner. It was in that light that the apostle Paul instructed him to “*do the work of an evangelist*” (II Timothy 4:5).

(ii) Characteristics:

Evangelists require great physical stamina to enable them to travel many miles by car, train or plane. They must be able to preach night after night for days or weeks when necessary, in churches, rescue missions and on the street. They must be willing to sacrifice and often spend much time away from their families.

(iii) Example:

Philip (Acts 8:26-40; 21:8).

d. The gift of a pastor

(i) Definition:

(I Peter 5:1-4; Acts 20:17-28;
Ephesians 4:11)

Theodore Epp explains:

“Christ has also given to the Church *“pastors and teachers”* (Ephesians 4:11). Pastors are shepherds of God’s flock. They are those whom God has especially gifted to deal with the problems of His children, to

encourage and comfort them, and to build them up in the Christian faith by teaching God's Word."⁸⁶

Paul R. Jackson adds

"The pastor is the shepherd, bishop and overseer of the flock. Hebrews 13:17 certainly speaks of the bishop (or pastor) when it says, '*Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls.*' He is God's prophet. His authority in the church, as God's leader, is a moral and spiritual power, not a legal one. His authority rests in the power of a godly example, as well as in the fact that he is a biblical officer (Ephesians 4:11)."⁸⁷

(ii) Characteristics:

(I Timothy 3:1-7)

"The pastor ...should exercise leadership. He must refuse to compromise biblical convictions..., be gracious in attitude, and never be stubborn about personal opinions or desires that do not involve biblical principles. [He] is not to be a lord '*over God's heritage*' (I Peter 5:1-4). He has no biblical right to be autocratic, dictatorial or domineering. No man of God, filled with the Spirit, will manifest such an attitude.

"Godliness of life is the basic element. It is feared that sometimes we are too much influenced by glamour and a glib tongue. The qualifications extend into the faithfulness of his ministry. He is to be '*apt to teach*' (I Timothy 3:2; II Timothy 2:24). He is to preach the word with urgency and to '*reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine*' (II Timothy 4:2). Pastors may or may not be gifted orators, but they must give to the flock the whole counsel of God. This will not always be a pleasing ministry. There is a time to rebuke sin. No man is qualified to be a pastor who

⁸⁶ Theodore Epp, Living Abundantly — Studies in Ephesians, (Back to the Bible, Lincoln, Nebraska 68501)

⁸⁷ Jackson, The Doctrine and Administration of the Church.

is more concerned with pleasing men than pleasing God. Beware of such men.

“Good judgment, leadership ability, financial integrity, a life of prayer and a well-ordered family are practical aspects of his life that should adorn the sound doctrine which he preaches.

“The pulpit ministry is vital. *[It] pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.*’ (I Corinthians 1:21).

“The pastor must teach, challenge and lead the church in aggressive evangelism, even while he edifies the saints and equips them to serve the Lord.”⁸⁸

A pastor for forty-five years, Avery Rogers gives us further insight.

“[T]he shepherd’s life was a *loving* life. The relationship of the shepherd to the sheep in the Holy Land [Israel] was not just a relation of a man to an ordinary animal. There was more to it than that. There was a friendship and fellowship between the shepherd and sheep, a very close one. He loved the sheep and the sheep loved him. He even loved them enough to die for them. He had a particular and peculiar love for the sheep.

“Whenever the shepherd would get the sheep out of the fold, he would go to the front and call them by name. As he called their names they fall into file. If a shepherd had a hundred sheep each one had its place. In a long file they would follow him out to the pasture. There he would let them feed on the grass covered by the early morning dew. Sometimes during the day he would stop, turn around and look at his sheep. Down the line perhaps one sheep would step out of line and look up at the shepherd coming toward him and let out a soft “*baaa.*” The shepherd would reach out his hand and stroke its head or scratch it under the chin, or even stroke its back. He might even pick it up and fondle it a moment. “*Fondling*” is the word for love to

⁸⁸ Jackson, The Doctrine and Administration of the Church.

an animal. The little lambs he often carried in his bosom, just for love of them. Or if they were heavier, he would put them across his shoulder. Not only did he show his love, but he expressed it in words. When a sheep came up to him, he might stoop down, lift its ear and lovingly talk to it. He'd ask it how the grass was, if it was having a good day and had its shepherd been good to it— expressions of love. The sheep would then go back to its place and others would come forward for the same attention. The shepherd had a special, peculiar love for his sheep that he had for nobody else or for anything else in this world.”⁸⁹

The author of the book of Hebrews reminds us:

“Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.”

— Hebrews 13:17

What a wonderful gift and calling to be a pastor and shepherd unto God’s people. But never forget, the great responsibility this man must bear for the souls put under his care. One day he must give account to the Lord for the flock of God.

(iii) Example:

(a) The Lord Jesus Christ — Psalm 23:1;
Isaiah 40:11; John 10:11-14;
Hebrews 13:20

(b) Moses — Isaiah 63:11

(c) Timothy — I Timothy; II Timothy

⁸⁹ William Avery Rogers, The Shepherd and His Sheep — An Exposition of Psalm 23, (Revival Literature, 159 Davenport Road, Asheville, North Carolina 28806). Every pastor should get this book and read it often.

These two books are called the *pastoral epistles* and are written to a young pastor to give him instruction in the organization and administration of a local New Testament church.

e. The gift of a teacher and of teaching

(Romans 12:7; Ephesians 4:11)

(i) Definition:

The supernatural ability to instruct others in the Word of God in a clear and understandable manner. While no one can present a *better gospel* than that in the Bible, there are those who can teach that *gospel better*. This is the gift of teaching.

(ii) Characteristics:

(Romans 12:11; II Timothy 2:15)

A teacher must be diligent in study, fervent in spirit, and do his work as unto the Lord rather than unto man. Even in Paul's day many false teachers had begun to teach heresies among the churches. It is the job of the pastor to expose these false teachers and to give instruction in true doctrine. We should not study after all men, but give heed to those who teach the truth (I Corinthians 11:19; II Peter 2:1).

(iii) Example:

(a) Paul — Acts 20:27

(b) Apollos — Acts 18:24-25

(c) Aquila and Priscilla — Acts 18:26

(d) All pastors — I Timothy 3:2

f. The gift of prophecy.

(I Corinthians 12:10; 14:1-6; Ephesians 4:8-11; II Peter 1:19-20)

(i) Definition:

Certainly, there are many with the gift of prophecy whose calling is to a ministry in a local church, if not unto the nation. Every prophet would have the gift of prophecy, in this sense, just like any other preacher.

Here is a good definition of the gift of prophecy.

“The spiritual gift of prophecy today is the motivation to proclaim the word of God, to speak out against sin and error.

“It is a God-given ability to be persuasive in preaching the word of God, to be able to use the word of God to bring to light things concealed, to be able to bring a man’s conscience into the light of God’s presence.”⁹⁰

(ii) Characteristics:

(Romans 12:6; I Corinthians 14:9;
II Timothy 4:2; Revelation 19:10)

The power to “*preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine*” in a manner easily understood.

(iii) Example:

Old Testament Prophets — II Peter 1:21

(a) The Apostle John — Revelation 10:11

⁹⁰ Sargent, The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit.

(b) Two witnesses (Moses & Elijah)—
Revelation 11:3

g. The gift of exhortation

(Romans 12:8)

(i) Definition:

The Greek word for exhortation means to “*come along side of.*” The gift of exhortation is the ability to encourage, stimulate, and prompt others in the church to spiritual growth and a closer walk with the Lord (I Corinthians 14:3).

It would say that the man possessing the gift of exhortation is empowered accomplish to objectives.

(a) The primary purpose of this gift is to enable one to excite believers to action. When this gift is exercised, the hearers respond by saying, “*We’ll do it.*” Exhortation is the kind of preaching that will magnify the Lord and bring revival to the church. Exhortation will stir believers to the proper worship of God and fire them up to live for Him.

(b) This gift enables one to put an arm around another and encourage them, to comfort and console them. This person would no doubt make a good counselor and should do well ministering in hospitals, prisons, or nursing homes.

(ii) Characteristics:

(Romans 12:12)

An exhorter must be able to see hope in and for others, be patient with slow progress, and persistent in praying.

(iii) Example:

Some New Testament Bible characters with this gift, were:

(a) Barnabas — Acts 11:22-24

(b) Judas (not Iscariot) and Silas — Acts 15:32

(c) A believer referred to as “yokefellow” — Philippians 4:3

(d) Paul — II Corinthians 9:5; Acts 14:22; I Thessalonians 2:11; 4:1; 5:14

(e) Peter — I Peter 5:1

(f) Jude — Jude 3

h. The gift of ministry

(Acts 6:4, 20:24; Romans 12:7; Ephesians 4:12; I Timothy 1:12)

(i) Definition:

This gift seems to be different from the gift of helps (next in our list). I believe this because of what I read in Acts 6.

“Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables.

“Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.

“But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.”

— Acts 6:2-4

Serving tables is in the realm of the physical and falls under the gift of helps. “*Ministry of the word*” is in the spiritual realm and falls under the “gift of ministry.” Do not be confused by the word *minister*. One ministers by the gift of helps, while another ministers by the ministry of the word.

The gift of ministry puts a man into “*the ministry*” and equips him with the supernatural ability to minister to the spiritual needs of others by the word of God. I believe this would include all who are mentioned in Ephesians 4:11-12 (apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers) as given to the church, “*For the perfecting of the saints, **for the work of the ministry**, for the edifying of the body of Christ.*” It might include musicians and singers as well.

(ii) Characteristics:
(Romans 12:10-15)

Those given to the ministry of the word must have compassion and a genuine affection for others, be able to demonstrate brotherly responsibility and be willing to work without the praise of men. Furthermore, they should consider themselves as servants of servants, even as our Master, the Lord Jesus Christ.

See the Master's own example

“But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister;

“And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant:

“Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.”

— Matthew 20:26-28

(iii) Example:

(a) John Mark — Acts 13:5

(b) Aquila and Priscilla — Acts 18:26;
I Corinthians 16:19 (cf. Romans 16:3,4)

(c) Stephanus — I Corinthians 16:15

(d) Epaphroditus — Philippians 2:25

(e) Archippus — Colossians 4:17

It appears that Aquilla, Priscilla and Epaphroditus might have had both the gift of ministry of the word and the gift of helps.

i. The gift of helps

(i) Definition

This is the supernatural ability to minister to the physical needs of others (I Corinthians 12:28). I believe it includes Christian workers, camp workers, secretaries, cooks, janitors, etc.

What a great need there is today for those who would exercise their gift of helps within our churches. There

seems to be an abundance of eloquent pastors and colorful evangelists, but there are so few who are willing to work quietly in the background as unheralded helpers.

(ii) Characteristics:

“Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?”
— Matthew 25:44

(Romans 12:10-15) Those with this gift must have compassion and a genuine affection for others, be able to demonstrate brotherly responsibility, and be willing to work without the praise of men.

(iii) Example:

(a) The Deacons — Acts 6:1-7

(b) Dorcas — Acts 9:36-39

(c) Aquila and Priscilla — Romans 16:3-4
(cf. Acts 18:26; I Corinthians 16:19)

(d) Phoebe had this gift — Romans 16:1,2

(e) Mary — Romans 16:6

(f) Urbane — Romans 16:9

j. The gift of knowledge
(I Corinthians 12:8)

(i) Definition:

The supernatural ability to *know* things by the revelation and illumination of the Holy Spirit. I believe this gift especially applies to the study of the word of God.

It is obvious that certain men like Charles Spurgeon, Clarence Larkin, C.I. Scofield and Dr. Peter Ruckman possessed an unusual *gift of knowledge* in studying the Scriptures (I Corinthians 2:6-10).

Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, wrote:

“How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words,

“Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)

“Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;

“Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;

“And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:”

— Ephesians 3:3-5; 8-9

By inspiration the Holy Spirit revealed the word of God to Paul the apostle. Then, by the gift of knowledge, he was given understanding of the scripture that he might be able to preach and teach the knowledge given to him.

He speak of the gift of knowledge in Ephesians 1:17

“That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him.” — Ephesians 1:17

(ii) Characteristics:

The most important characteristic of one holding the gift of knowledge is the fear of the Lord, for *“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge”*

(Proverbs 1:7). After that would be humility, for “*knowledge puffeth up.*”

Paul warned the Corinthian church:

“Now as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth.

“And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.

“But if any man love God, the same is known of him.”

— I Corinthians 8:1-3

(iii) Example:

(a) The prophet Daniel had this gift, and it was not just related to the inspiration of the scriptures (Daniel 1:17; 2:21).

(b) The apostle Paul evidently had this gift as well (I Corinthians 13:2; 14:6).

The two verses above show that *revelation* is not the same as *knowledge*.

k. The gift of wisdom
(I Corinthians 12:8)

(i) Definition:

The supernatural ability to critically *evaluate* and *employ* knowledge (I Kings 3:5-12; Daniel 2:21; I Corinthians 12:8).

(ii) Characteristics:

As with the gift of knowledge, *the fear of the Lord* is most important, along with meekness and humility.

**“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom:
and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.”**

— Proverbs 9:10

(iii) Example:

(a) King Solomon is the most notable example — Exodus 28:3; I Kings 3:28
Unfortunately, as seen in Solomon’s personal life, possessing wisdom does not preclude the employment of that wisdom.

(b) Joseph — Genesis 41:15-57
Joseph had knowledge and wisdom, and did employ them effectively in his life and work.

(c) Daniel — Daniel 2:21

(d) Stephen and Philip — Acts 6:3-6

I. The gift of discerning of spirits

(I Corinthians 12:10)

(i) Definition:

This gift is the supernatural ability to distinguish between the natural human spirit, devils and the Spirit of God in another person. I would say, by experience, that it also includes the ability to know the spiritual condition of others, as God reveals it. This is the gift that was in operation in Acts 5:1-5.

While I John 4:1 tells us to “*try the spirits whether they are of God,*” it does not seem to have anything to do with the gift of discernment. By the gift of discernment one

knows of what spirit another person is without the test. However, the test makes it manifest to others who do not have this gift. I know people who *obviously* have this gift and others who *obviously* do not.

(ii) Characteristics:

Must be sober minded and filled with the Spirit of God and sensitive to His voice. Furthermore, this person must not be a gossip. One must often keep to oneself what is discerned and make it a matter of prayer before any action is taken based on what is discerned.

(iii) Example:

(a) Peter — Acts 5:1-11

(b) Paul — Acts 16:16-18

m. The gift of giving

(Romans 12:8)

(i) Definition:

The gift of giving is the motivation to gain assets and share them with others in and for the work of the Lord.

It is the God-given ability to give, to be able to heed the Holy Spirit's guidance in meeting the financial needs of others, and to entrust personal assets to others for the furtherance of their spiritual ministry.

(ii) Characteristics:

(Romans 12:13) A giver must take a genuine interest in the needs of saints and strangers, giving

to their necessities according to the direction of the Holy Spirit.

(iii) Example:

(a) Titus — II Corinthians 8:1-24

(b) The Jerusalem church — Acts 4:32-37

(c) The Galatian church — Galatians 4:15

(d) The Philippian church—
Philippians 4:10-18

(e) A pre-Pentecost foreshadowing of this gift is also seen in the account of the widow's mite (Luke 21:1-4).

n. The gift of governments

(I Corinthians 12:28)

(i) Definition:

This is the same gift referred to in Romans 12:8 (*“he that ruleth”*). It is the supernatural gift to organize, administer and lead the activities of others in the accomplishment of common goals. It is the God-given ability to lead, to identify objectives, and to help those involved to accomplish them.

(ii) Characteristics:

A leader who rules must be diligent in directing the affairs of the church, able to take criticism and capable of appointing others to positions of authority.

Paul's exhortation of Romans 12:9-18 seems to be especially applicable to this gift.

(iii) Example: The Twelve Apostles— Acts 6:2-6

o. The gift of faith

(i) Definition:

(I Corinthians 13:2) Every man is given enough faith to believe what God says, and to do what God commands. The *gift* of faith, however, is a supernatural ability to believe and expect great things from God. This gift manifests itself in unusual deeds of trust and commitment.

(ii) Characteristics:

The one possessing this gift has the capacity to *see* what God is doing (or wants to do) in a given situation, and is able to believe that God will do it even though it *looks* impossible.

(iii) Example:

(a) All the saints listed in Hebrews 11

While these saints might not be said to have had the *gift* of faith, they are certainly Old Testament examples of what one blessed with this gift could accomplish. The emphasis is on what God can do through those who will believe Him in spite of what they see in this world.

(b) Stephen was “*full of faith*” — Acts 6:5

p. The gift of mercy
(Romans 12:8)

(i) Definition:

The gift of mercy gives the motivation to identify with and share in the sufferings and joys of others as a comforter.

It is the God-given ability to empathize with the misfortunes and miseries of others, to mentally and emotionally relate to their needs, and be able to bring comfort through the word of God. This person must give themselves unselfishly to those who have no way of repaying them.

(ii) Characteristics:

(Romans 12:15) The merciful must be cheerful and uplifting, being ready in mind to share the happiness of those who are happy and the grief of those in sorrow, with promptness.

(iii) Example:

(a) Joseph of Arimathea —
Matthew 27:57-60; Luke 23:50

(b) The good Samaritan — Luke 10:30-37

HIS MINISTRY CONCERNING THE FRUIT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

XI. His Ministry Concerning The Fruit Of The Holy Spirit

We now come to the eleventh and final recorded ministry performed by the Holy Spirit of God. In a very real sense, it best demonstrates his ultimate goal here on earth, namely, to bear fruit for Christ through believers (Romans 6:22; 7:4; Colossians 1:10).

A. The Commands To Bear Fruit

- 1. God desires his new creation in Christ to do the same as he ordered his original creation to do — Genesis 1:28**
- 2. God desires the believer to fulfill the prophecy concerning Joseph — Genesis 49:22**
- 3. God desires that His children experience the blessings of Psalm 1 — Psalm 1:3**
- 4. God desires that His *children of light* function today as his *tree of life* will function in eternity — See Revelation 22:1-2**

B. The Prerequisites For Bearing Fruit

- 1. One must DIE to this world— John 12:24**

2. One must ABIDE in the Saviour

— John 15:1-5;16

- a. In the Old Testament the nation Israel was God's chosen vine vessel— Psalms 80:8; Hosea 10:1
- b. That nation was later set aside by Jesus — Matthew 21:43
- c. In the Gospels, Christ was God's chosen vine while He was on this earth— John 15:1; Isaiah 11:1; 53:2

Jesus told His disciples they were to be *branches*. The branch does not *produce fruit*. Its only useful function is to *bear fruit* produced by the vine itself.

To help keep this in mind, just remember the word DAY (D-A-Y) — **Die, Abide, Yield**. “[T]he inward man is renewed DAY by DAY” (II Corinthians 4:16).

3. One must YIELD to the Spirit —

Romans 6:13-19

C. The New Testament Speaks Of Several Different Kinds of Fruit

- 1. Souls won to Christ as part of a harvest — John 4:35-36 (cf. John 15:1-8; Romans 1:13; Proverbs 11:30)**
- 2. Holy Living — Romans 6:22**
- 3. Gifts brought to God — Romans 15:26-28; Proverbs 3:9**
- 4. Good Works — Colossians 1:10**

5. Praise — Hebrews 13:15

6. Christian Character — Galatians

5:22-23; Ephesians 5:9; Romans 6:21-22

Regarding character, it should be noted that the word *fruit* in these passages is in the singular. Paul does not say “*the fruits of the Spirit are*,” but rather “*the fruit of the Spirit is*.” The reason is this: all the attributes of the *fruit* of the Spirit (unlike all the individual *gifts* of the Spirit) are to be displayed by *every* believer. This fruit may be likened unto the grape whose fruit comes in a cluster. And each cluster is made up of many individual grapes. Also, the fruit of the Spirit might well be likened unto a cut diamond, each diamond having many facets.

D. The Purpose of the Fruit of the Spirit

God’s purpose in producing the fruit of the Spirit in the life of the believer is to magnify the Lord Jesus Christ. The fruit of the Spirit gives testimony to the transformed life of one redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. It shows the work of God in our lives.

The Psalmist tells us:

**“Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name;
worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.”**

— Psalm 29:2

The “*beauty of holiness*” can only be seen by the world in the fruit of the Spirit, and thus Christ is exalted. When we do not lead holy lives, the fruit of the Spirit is hidden in our carnality and we can never exalt Christ in words alone. We have a saying— “*Actions speak louder than words.*” Another saying is, “*What you do speaks so loudly I can’t hear what you say.*” If we are filled with the Spirit of God, others will know and Christ will be exalted.

Job proclaimed:

**“Remember that thou magnify his work, which men
behold. — Job 36:24**

His work in us can be SEEN in the fragrant fruit of the Holy Spirit of God.

Once again we read in the Psalms:

**“O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his
name together.” — Psalm 34:3**

Only as the Saviour is thus exalted in our lives will men be drawn to Him. Even the best of men who are exalted before others will always be found to have fault. But not the Lord Jesus Christ. Even those who crucified Him said, “*I find no fault in Him.*” The more He is exalted, the more perfect He is seen to be.

The Lord Jesus Christ said in John 12:

**“And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all
men unto me.” — John 12:32**

We realize that He was *lifted up* physically on the cross of Calvary, but He was also *lifted up* spiritually in His greatest hour when He gave His life for you and me. His promise was that He would draw all men to Himself if we would *lift Him up* before the world. We can do this in proclaiming His word, but no one will believe it until we proclaim it in our lives. The more we are like Christ *inwardly*, the more we will be like Christ *outwardly*. Then, more men will be drawn to Him and more souls will be saved. The *purpose* of the fruit of the Holy Spirit is to present the very nature of Christ to the world, so the lost will be drawn to Him and receive Him as their Savior.

Warren Wiersbe says:

“It is unfortunate that an overemphasis on *gifts* has led some Christians to neglect the *graces* of the Spirit. Building Christian character must take precedence over displaying special abilities.”⁹¹

Dr. C.I. Scofield makes a noteworthy comment.

“Christian character is not mere moral or legal correctness, but the possession and manifestation of nine graces:

- love, joy, peace— **character as an inward state;**
- longsuffering, gentleness, goodness— **character as expressed toward man;**
- faith, meekness, temperance— **character as expressed toward God.**

Taken together, they present a moral portrait of Christ and may be taken as the apostle’s explanation of Galatians 2:20, ‘*Not I, but Christ,*’ and as a definition of ‘*fruit*’ in John 15:1-8. This character is possible because of the believer’s vital union to Christ (John 15:5; I Corinthians 12:12-13), and is wholly the fruit of the Spirit in those believers who are yielded to Him (Galatians 5:22-23).”⁹²

E. The Presentation of the Fruit of the Spirit

It is the privilege of all believers to have the fruit of the Spirit manifested in their lives. Understanding the plain

⁹¹ Warren Wiersbe, The Bible Exposition Commentary — Volume 1, p. 719, (Victor Books).

⁹² Scofield, The Scofield Reference Bible.

teaching of scripture on this subject will enable us to facilitate the work of the Spirit in bearing this lovely fruit of God before an ungodly world. In Galatians 5:22-23, we find the nine attributes of the fruit of the Holy Spirit listed for our examination.

Note: in the Bible, NINE is the number for fruit-bearing

- When Abraham was NINETY and NINE (99 years old) he bore fruit (the birth of Isaac).
- Look at the front of your King James Bible, should see the number 1611—
(1+6+1+1=9). (That is the book that will bear fruit.)
- Notice that the NINE attributes of the fruit of the Spirit are found in the book of Galatians (spelled with NINE letters),
- Which just happens to be the NINTH book in the New Testament.

In Genesis 1:11, we read in the record of the creation account that the Lord made a fruit tree “*whose seed is in itself.*” Life only comes from life. That tree could reproduce because its seed had life in it as well. It is like the word of God.

So we are not surprised to read in I Peter that we are:

“[B]orn again, not of corruptible seed, but incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.”
— I Peter 1:23

We are born of incorruptible seed unto eternal life. We know we have the right book, because it bears the right fruit—and its seed is in itself.

By Their Fruits Shall Ye Know Them

Warren Wiersbe suggests:

“The characteristics that God wants in our lives are seen in the ninefold fruit of the Spirit. Paul begins with love because all of the other fruit are really an outgrowth of love. Compare these eight qualities with the characteristics of love given to the Corinthians. (cf. I Corinthians 13:1-8; I Timothy 1:5)”⁹³

As Paul instructs us:

“And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.” — Colossians 3:14

The attributes of the fruit of the Spirit are part of one package. The Spirit of God desires to fill each individual believer, so that He can produce in them the attributes in the list. When these attributes are manifested in the life of the Christian, it shall be known of them.

As we read in Proverbs chapter twenty:

“Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right.”
— Proverbs 20:11

What we are, is going to tell on us sooner or later because of *what we do and say*. Therefore, we can tell much about others by observation. In this sense, all believers are to be fruit inspectors.

⁹³ Kanoy, Marvelous Person of the Holy Spirit.

Matthew warns us:

“Beware of false prophets...

“Ye shall know them by their fruits...

“A good tree cannot bring forth evil FRUIT, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

“Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.”⁹⁴

— Matthew 7:15-16, 18, 20

In context, the doctrinal meaning of “evil fruit” is the works of false prophets. But, we may make spiritual application for the believer today by cross-referencing this passage of scripture with Galatians 5:22-23. This **does not mean** that we are to go about judging one another’s motives or looking to see who is the most spiritual. It **does mean**, however, that when a believer is filled with the Holy Spirit, it will be evidenced by the fruit of the Spirit.

Illustration:

Suppose I showed you a Florida orange and told you it was a Red Delicious apple. You would not have to possess a great deal of intelligence to question that, would you? But, suppose I told you it came from an apple tree. You would immediately argue that this piece of fruit did not come from an apple tree. But it looked like an apple tree, and it was in an orchard full of apples. But no matter, there is no way that oranges could come from apple trees or that apples could come from orange trees. No matter how much it may have seemed to have been an apple tree, it is obvious that I have been deceived. We may not be able to tell a book by its cover, but you can always tell a tree by its fruit.

⁹⁴ The plural “fruits” is used here, to agree with the plural word “their.”

Paul says to the believers at Galatia,

“Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods.

“But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?

“Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years.

“I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.”

— Galatians 4:8-11

Paul is telling these folks that he is afraid for them (in this verse, *of* means *for*). Paul is concerned for their souls. What he is saying is, “*You folks say you are saved, but you act like a bunch of heathen idolators. I am afraid some of you are not born again at all, but just think you are!*” I am afraid there are many church members today who are not in a backslidden state at all—they are simply lost. One day, these false professors are going to die and no one will even know if they were lost or saved. And what a terrible thing for a man or woman to die and leave their family at the funeral home wondering if they were really saved or not. I can picture it now. “*I guess old Jim is in heaven now,*” one friend would say. “*Yeah, I guess so,*” replies a second friend. “*Well, he was saved you know,*” continues the first friend. “*Well, I know he went to church once in a while, but then I also know he hung out at the lake about as much as he was in church,*” observes the second friend. “*That’s true. And you know I never said anything, but I saw him coming out of that pornographic book store a couple of times,*” continues the first friend. “*But old Jim really loved the Lord; I mean I’ve heard him pray and give testimony at campmeeting,*” says the second friend in

defense. *“I know, but he didn’t talk much about the Lord any other time, and he never showed up for church visitation or prayer meeting,”* says the first friend. *“Well, it was that church split; you know he never got over that,”* the second friend notes. *“But, he never had much concern that his family were lost,”* laments the first friend. *“Yes, but they seem to think Jim was saved,”* the second friend says encouragingly, *“but it’s hard to tell.”* *“Man, I hope old Jim was saved,”* says the first friend anxiously as the coffin is closed for the last time.

Friend, does that sound anything like you? Is there enough evidence of the work of God and the fruit of the Spirit in your life to convince folks that you are saved? If we are walking with God we will manifest God’s fruit garden everywhere. That’s the testimony of holiness in our lives for everyone to see. If we don’t, then no one will know for sure if we are saved and the truth is we won’t know for sure either. Get it settled— heaven or hell, wickedness or righteousness, liberty or bondage, the fruit of the Spirit or the works of the flesh. Get right with God, stay right with God and let Him make a real Christian out of you. Otherwise, you might as well quit troubling the church with your unstable ways and go fishing until Jesus comes. If you are going to act like a heathen, don’t try to make folks think you’re one of the saints of God. The worst part of this kind of life is that these unsaved church members always seem to drag some weak Christians down with them.

Yielded to God

The truth is, OUR fruit (the works of the flesh) stinks, and the whole world can smell it. In order for God’s

people to look like what they are and live like what they are, they must yield to God and bear HIS fruit. The Bible plainly instructs us to *“walk in the Spirit.”*

“This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

“For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would”

— Galatians 5:16-17

The scripture also asks the question

“Can two walk together, except they be agreed?”⁹⁵

— Amos 3:3

Speaking of the Trinity, the scripture says

“[T]hese three agree in one.” — I John 5:8

There is absolute harmony and unity in the Godhead, because they are in complete agreement.

The Scripture also tells us that

“Only by pride cometh contention...”

— Proverbs 13:10

It is plain to see then, why some believers aren't in agreement with God. It is because they want their own way, not His way. Their sin is PRIDE just like the inhabitants of Sodom, long ago (Ezekiel 16:49).

But the Bible says that

“The fear of the LORD is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate.”

— Proverbs 8:13

⁹⁵ The American Heritage Dictionary says: “agreed v. intr. — 2. To come into or be in accord, as of opinion. 3. To be of one opinion; concur.”

Some do not bear the fruit they ought to bear, because they are not walking in the Spirit. And they cannot walk in the Spirit, because they do not agree with the Holy Spirit. Their thoughts and actions do not line up with His thoughts and directions. When a believer is not yielded to the Holy Spirit, he has a disagreement with God and cannot manifest the fruit of the Holy Spirit. Their testimony is tainted and the world sees much of them, and little of Him in their lives. The results are impotent lives with little impact on a lost, hell-bound world. The Holy Spirit WILL lead us, but we must **give up** our way and **yield** ourselves wholly to him.

Note four things regarding your relationship with God:

- No yieldedness, **no walk**
- No yieldedness, **no fruit**
- No yieldedness, **no power**
- No yieldedness, **no holiness**

Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary says that the word "yield" means "to deliver up, to give up."

We've all seen a "YIELD" sign somewhere on the streets and highways. When we come to an intersection and are instructed to YIELD, we are to give way to the other driver. There are two interests involved and we are to give up our right of way to the other party. It's the same way with the Lord, and we are specifically instructed in the Bible to YIELD to God and let him have the right of way. Always keep that yield sign in mind when there is a conflict in spiritual matters.

“Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.”

— Romans 6:13

“[S]hadrach, Meshach, and Abednego... yielded their bodies that they might not serve nor worship any god except their own God.”

— Daniel 3:28

Brother, that’s what I call yielded. But it’s no more than what is expected of each born again believer today. Those three Hebrew boys gave over their very lives unto death, keeping nothing back from the Lord. Christ wants each of us to do the same (Galatians 2:20).

Look what Paul the apostle says:

“Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.

“Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

“For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

“What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.

“Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?

“But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.

“Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.

“I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your

members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.

“For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness.

“What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death.

“But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.”

— Romans 6:12-22

Romans 6:13 tells us that we become the instruments of those things to which we yield ourselves. Instruments of righteousness or instruments of unrighteousness— to which are you yielded? Of which have you become an instrument?

Each day, believers should yield themselves to be “servants to righteousness unto holiness” (Romans 6:19). If we are saved, we have everlasting life and the fruit of the Holy Spirit will be manifested as holiness (Romans 6:22).

Remember, no yieldedness, no holiness— BUT

“[T]he root of the righteous yieldeth fruit...”

— Proverbs 12:12

**The RIGHT ROOT will bear the RIGHT FRUIT!
The only condition is YIELDEDNESS.**

Note this:

- ➡ We don’t practice fruit, we bear it.
- ➡ We don’t practice joy, we experience it.

- We don't practice meekness, we demonstrate it.
- The Holy Spirit bears fruit in the lives of those who are filled with the Spirit and who walk in the Spirit.

The Bible tells us:

“Be ye followers of God, as dear children;”

— Ephesians 5:1

Almost all new age Bible versions (NIV, NASV, RSV, TEV, etc.) change the word “followers” in Ephesians 5:1 to “imitators.” But we are to imitate no one. Imitate is the wrong word because it suggests the idea of man working to be like Christ. But the Bible tells us that the Holy Spirit will transform us. The imitators are the Catholics and liberals who originated, preserved, publicized and promoted an IMITATION CHRISTIANITY with an IMITATION SAVIOUR, an IMITATION BIBLE, and IMITATION FRUIT. If we follow God, we will have the real fruit of the Spirit for all to see and enjoy. That's why the Holy Spirit was careful to say “fruit of the Spirit,” rather than “works of the Spirit” in Galatians 5:22. There, the Lord is showing the Christian the difference between the old and the new nature. We worked to go to hell before we were saved, now we rest in the Lord and bear His fruit.

“For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

— Romans 6:23

The verse says “*the wages of sin.*” THEN we worked, but NOW God works in us as we yield to His good pleasure.

“For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.” — Philippians 2:13

The new life is thus characterized by HIS fruit, as the result of HIS work in us. The new life is HIS life, and in no way the result of our works. From the beginning to the end, it is HIS work.

“But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.” — Romans 4:5

“Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:” — Philippians 1:6

Three key words we want to remember are

- **Yield**
- **Agree**
- **Follow**

The fact that Christ is working in us, does not mean we have no work to do (cf. I Corinthians 3:8; Colossians 1:29; I Thessalonians 1:3; I Timothy 5:17). Our works are a necessary part of obedience and service. However, if they are the outworking of the flesh (our old nature) it only brings a harvest of corruption. But, if it is the outworking of the Spirit (our new nature), the harvest is eternal rewards (Galatians 6:7-9). We can do no real work without His first working in us, then through us.

See in Philippians how these two work together:

“Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

“For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.”

— Philipians 2:12-13

What’s in You?

Now let’s examine ourselves to see what is being produced in our lives. Do we have the beautiful adorning of the lovely, fragrant fruit of the Holy Spirit in our lives? If not, why not? A closer look at the works of the flesh listed in Galatians 5 will help us to see what causes a Christian to become sterile and unproductive.

➔ **God IS** working in the life of every believer.

But we are still responsible to God for what is going on in our lives, because the end result depends upon **our response** to God. In other words, what he is able to accomplish through us depends upon how yielded we are to the Spirit of God.

What powerful instruction Peter gives us:

“According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:

“Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

“And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge;

“And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness;

“And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.

“For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

“But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.”

— II Peter 1:3-9

While II Peter 1:3 tells us that God “*hath **given** unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness,*” he also tells us to “*add to your faith*” virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and charity. Yes, “*all things*” are already ours as “*partakers of the divine nature.*” However, we must yield to the Spirit to reap fully the benefits of His work in us.

Every believer has already taken one of two attitudes toward God, and as Jesus instructed the multitudes that followed Him to the mount outside Galilee, “*Ye cannot serve God and mammon*” (Matthew 6:24). And we are reminded of Joshua’s exhortation to Israel, “*Choose you this day whom ye will serve.*” (Joshua 24:15).

- ☞ The believer may **resist the Holy Spirit** (Acts 7:51) and choose to follow the old nature in the flesh. But, having sown to the flesh, he will reap corruption (Galatians 6:7-8).
- ☞ Or the believer may **agree with the Holy Spirit** in his mind, heart and actions and thereby “*sow to the Spirit and reap life everlasting*” (Galatians 6:7-8).

Every Christian is a true schizophrenic, having two natures warring inside him (Romans 7:14-18). What the Holy Spirit desires, the flesh abhors. What the flesh desires, the Spirit abhors (cf. Luke 16:15). If a Christian is not yielded to the will of God, he is yielded to the will of the flesh. If he is walking in the power of the Spirit, he is obviously not being controlled by the flesh. But, at any moment, he is under the control of one or the other.

As Paul wrote to the Corinthians:

“For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.”
— II Corinthians 4:16

Daily we are sowing and reaping. Daily we are renewed in the *spirit* of our minds (spelled with a little “s,” speaking of *man’s* spirit— Ephesians 4:23). Paul exhorts us to do this so as to “*grieve not the holy Spirit of God*” (Ephesians 4:30).

In Galatians 5, the Holy Spirit has given a checklist so we can know if the Spirit is controlling us or if the flesh is controlling us.

In II Peter 1:8, the apostle Peter says, “*if these things be in you, **and abound**, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful...*” Now we know we have two natures in us, but which one are we presently yielded to, and which one is *abounding*?

Whatever is in us, will be manifest in words and deeds

“[O]ut of the abundance of the heart, the mouth SPEAKETH...”
— Matthew 12:34

“But they shall proceed no further; for their folly shall be MANIFEST unto all men...” — II Timothy 3:9

“But all things that are reprov'd are made MANIFEST by the light...” — Ephesians 5:13

“Now the works of the flesh are MANIFEST...”
— Galatians 5:19

Webster's Dictionary says:

“Manifest — made known or easily understood or recognized by the mind; obvious, evident.”^{96, 97}

The works of the flesh are listed or described again and again in the scriptures. If we have problems with *the works of the flesh*, we will be able to learn more about ourselves by looking at the scriptures that deal with those works of the flesh. Comparing scripture with scripture we can readily determine the nature of our relationship with God.

Now, let's examine the works of the flesh in Galatians 5

1. Adultery — Sexual intercourse between a married man and a woman other than his wife, or between a woman and a man other than her husband. This is something we will hear of more and more in the end times. Because of what we read in Matthew 5:28, we know that adultery is widespread today. Certainly, television and pornographic videos have added a new dimension to this sin.

2. Fornication — (a) The forsaking of that which is lawful for that which is not. Physical or spiritual. (b) Any unclean sexual act (cf. I Corinthians 5:1; 6:18).

Certainly, this is becoming more widespread today than we like to think, including child molestation and homosexuality.

⁹⁶ A.W. Tozer, *Of God and Men*, pp. 19-22.

⁹⁷ Merriam/Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, Tenth Edition.

3. Uncleaness — moral or sexual impurity.

4. Lasciviousness — Sexually unrestrained (without limit or control). Inclined to lust, lewd, wanton. This is the natural progression of the first three works of the flesh.

5. Idolatry — The worship of a physical object as a god. Also, an immoderate attachment or devotion to something. In I Corinthians 10:14, we are instructed to “*flee idolatry.*” (We read in Colossians 3:5, that “**coveteousness... is idolatry**” as well).

Worship means “*extravagant respect or admiration for, or devotion to an object or person of esteem.*”⁹⁸

(Idol — Old English Definition 1, from Jewish and Christian use— An image or similitude of a deity or divinity, used as an object of worship. Any thing or person that is the object of excessive or supreme devotion, or that usurps the place of God in human affection.)⁹⁹

(Idolator — (a) A worshipper of idols or images; (b) An adorer, idolizer, devoted admirer of some person or thing.)¹⁰⁰

These definitions make it apparent that *idolatry* is indeed rampant among Christians today. Certainly, this applies to entertainers in the music field whether they profess to be “*Christian*” or not. It also applies to sports. Years ago while holding meetings in Maryland, I was casually reading the sports page. There in giant bold print, the headline of an article declared, “**Redskins Fans Worship This Sunday.**” The article went on to

⁹⁸ Oxford English Dictionary, (Oxford University Press, London, England).

⁹⁹ *ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ *ibid.*

demonstrate the devotion of fans to their team who would be playing that weekend at their home stadium. When unsaved newspaper writers recognize this, isn't it about time the body of Christ admits it too? What are some other things people idolize? Are you guilty of any form of idolatry? (cf. I Samuel 15:23) Oh, Church of God, repent in sackcloth and ashes for this great sin that we take so lightly.

6. Witchcraft — The use of power gained from evil spirits, usually with the aid of drugs. The word **pharmacy** comes from the Greek word for witchcraft, **pharmakena**. Also, an irresistible influence or fascination.

Beloved, are any of you guilty of contacting a professional psychic to try to learn about your future? In America, this wickedness has recently become increasingly more accepted as a normal practice and even our own president and the rulers of other nations are using psychics to try get guidance from spirits and the supernatural. This has become so easy to do by telephone and computer that it now seems the spirit world and technology are merging, but it does not lessen the seriousness of this sin that God hates. Astrologers, chi-gung masters, necromancers, and witches who would have been put to death under the Old Testament abound on every hand today. And isn't it interesting how these *Charismatic* preachers resemble the psychics? Whether in the church or out, saved or unsaved, they are teaching the doctrines of devils. (cf. I Samuel 15:22-23; I Timothy 4:1.)

7. Hatred — Intense hostility. Also, a habitual emotional attitude of distaste coupled with sustained ill will; enmity, opposition.

Oh, how the Holy Spirit must be grieved to see so much hatred and pride, with the resulting strife they bring within the church (Proverbs 10:12).

We learn more about this from James.

“Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.”
— James 4:4

The word *enmity* and the word *enemy* are from the same root word that means *opposition* which is actually *hatred*. A shocking fact is revealed here: that a saved born-again child of God can actually become the enemy of God. The unsaved cannot be guilty of this, for they have not God for their Father. You will remember that his son Absalom became King David’s worst enemy although he was of his own household.

Have we ever been guilty of opposing the will of God—of being at enmity with Him? Has not the Lord sometimes shown us some sin in our lives that we would not turn from at His initial reproof? Have we not failed to heed Him at times when we felt compelled to witness or give some gospel literature to some troubled soul? However, because of our hurried pace we resisted and opposed Him. We must be careful that these resistings do not become actual opposition to the will of God.

Hatred is closely coupled with the following works of the flesh.

8. *Variance* — Being in disagreement, discord (a lack of harmony often marked by bickering and antipathy), dissension, or dispute (I Corinthians 1:10; 3:3-4).

- 9. Emulations** — Envious rivalry (an ambitious desire to equal or surpass another, especially through imitation); contention or competition between rivals, coupled with ill will; jealousy. (Proverbs 13:10).
- 10. Wrath** — Punishment or vengeance as a manifestation of anger. (Nahum 1:2)
- 11. Strife** — Bitter conflict for superiority, cliques, factions. (James 3:8-4:10)
- 12. Seditio** — Incitement of resistance to or insurrection against lawful authority. Divisions, closely connected with rebellion. (II Peter 2:9-10)
- 13. Heresies** — An opinion or doctrine contrary to the truth; sects. (Titus 3:10; II Peter 2:1)
- 14. Envyings** — Painful or resentful awareness of an advantage enjoyed by another, joined with a desire to possess the same advantage.
- 15. Murders** — To kill unlawfully with predetermined malice. (John 8:44; I John 3:15)
- 16. Drunkenness** — Habitual excessive use of alcohol; intoxication. (Ephesians 5:18)
- 17. Revellings** — A wild party or celebration (wild—without regulation or control).

What we have just studied is the manifestation of the nature of Satan, even as the fruit of the Spirit is the

manifestation of the nature of the Lord Jesus Christ. Are not some of the very attributes of Satan creeping into the lives of believers today? (cf. II Timothy 3:1-9,13; James 1:20-22; Acts 7:51; I Peter 4:3-4; II Peter 2:10; Galatians 6:7-8; Romans 13:13-14; I Corinthians 10:6; 15:33; Colossians 3:1-17.)

Following is a table comparing the works of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit, as listed in Galatians chapter five.

Works of the Flesh	Fruit of the Spirit
Adultery, Fornication, Uncleanness, Lasciviousness, Idolatry, Witchcraft	Love, Joy, Peace
Hatred, Variance, Emulations, Wrath, Strife, Sedition, Heresies, Envyings,	Longsuffering, Gentleness, Meekness, Goodness, Faith
Murders, Drunkenness, Revellings	Temperance

Warren Wiersbe comments:

“The contrast between works and fruit is important. The flesh produces *“dead works”* (Hebrews 9:14), but the Spirit produces living fruit. And this fruit has in it the seed for still more fruit (Genesis 1:11).

“It is possible for the old nature to counterfeit some of the fruit of the Spirit, but the flesh can never produce the fruit of the Spirit. One difference is this:

when the Spirit produces fruit, God gets the glory and the Christian is not conscious of his spirituality; but when the flesh is at work, the person is inwardly proud of himself and is pleased when others compliment him. The work of the Spirit is to make us more like Christ for His glory, not for the praise of men.”¹⁰¹

As we study the nine facets of the fruit of the Spirit, it should be cause for rejoicing to see how far the Lord has brought us from our old lives of sin and despair.

1. Love — I Corinthians 13

God’s word tells us that LOVE is the distinguishing mark of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (Romans 5:5); of being born again (I John 4:7) and of being a true disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ (John 13:35). Should we be surprised then, to find that God’s love is much, much more than merely *one of the fruits*. I John 4:8 says that “*God is love.*” The expression of His every attribute has love as its motive and His love is expressed in all the nine fruits enumerated both in Galatians 5:22-23 and I Corinthians 13:1-7. The Greek word *agape* used in I Corinthians 13 is translated *charity* (love demonstrated). God’s love permeates everything He controls

2. Joy — Romans 14:17

The word joy comes from the Greek word “*chara*” meaning *gladness, rejoicing, or triumphing* (John 15:11). While the world may experience happiness, true joy is uniquely the experience of God’s people. It is a unique quality of character often confused with happiness. The root word for happiness is *happ*, which has to do with chance or fortune. One’s *happ* is one’s lot in life.

¹⁰¹ Wiersbe, Bible Exposition Commentary, p. 720.

Therefore, **happ**-iness is always conditioned by and often dependent upon what is **happ**-ening to us. However, joy is a quality of life that rises above the event. In the 26 occasions where the word *happy* is found in the Bible, it seems to be a synonym of *blessed* (cf. Genesis 30:13).

3. **Peace** — Philippians 4:7

We find there are two kinds of “*peace*” mentioned in the Bible.

☞ Peace with God — Romans 5:1

This peace has to do with our *position* before God and includes all believers at the moment of their salvation.

☞ Peace of God — Philippians 4:7

This peace is *experienced*, and includes only those believers who are filled with God’s Spirit. It can be defined as *reassurance in tribulation*. This is the peace that is the fruit of the Spirit. An excellent example of the peace of God is the story of the Lord Jesus Christ fast asleep in the hinder part of the ship as He and the disciples crossed the Sea of Galilee during the storm at night.

Philip Keller says:

“Peace is the selfless, self-giving, self-losing, self-forgetting, self-sacrificing love of God in repose despite all the adverse reverses of life. It is love standing serene, strong, and stable in spite of every insult, every antagonism, every hate.”¹⁰²

¹⁰² Philip Keller, A Gardener Looks At the Fruit of the Spirit, (Inspirational Press). A must for every Christian bookshelf.

4. Longsuffering — the ability to patiently and cheerfully bear seemingly unbearable situations and to patiently endure the seemingly unendurable— II Corinthians 6:6; Romans 2:4

Bro. Keller continues:

“So often we human beings, rather than exercising... [longsuffering]..., prefer to opt out of adversity. Endeavoring to escape from difficult situations, we try to avoid and cut ourselves off from awkward people. We kick over the traces, shake off the harness, and break up anything that might bind us into suffering.

“Yet the... [longsuffering]... of God spoken of in the New Testament is just the opposite. It is really a picture of a beast of burden remaining steadily under control. It is an ox yoked to a plow breaking up the stiff soil of its owner’s field. No matter whether the plow runs into rocks, stumps or heavy sod, the patient beast just pushes on steadily. Regardless of summer sun, the annoyance of flies or chilling winds, the strong beast goes on breaking ground for its master.

“[Longsuffering]... in God’s people is one of the surest signs whereby even a non-Christian can discern and discover something of the nature of God. This attitude will pulverize the nonbeliever’s prejudice more surely than almost any other Christian virtue. It will encourage him, reassure him, and convince him that there is more to Christianity than mere theory.”¹⁰³

5. Gentleness — a quiet and respectful kindness
— Titus 3:2; II Timothy 2:24

Gentleness is simply kindness and has to do with the way we treat others. It is the demonstration of a considerate or kindly disposition. It is quietness, without harshness or rudeness.

¹⁰³ Keller, A Gardener Looks At the Fruit of the Spirit

6. Goodness — wholesome acts; going the extra mile— Matthew 5:41

The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language defines goodness as “the state or quality of being good.” Good is then defined as follows: **17.a.** Of moral excellence; upright: *a good person.* **b.** Benevolent; kind: *a good soul; a good heart.*¹⁰⁴

Therefore, *goodness* is the demonstration of moral virtues (e.g., honesty, morality, benevolence, charity, generosity, purity and duty). In Luke 10:30-34 (vs. 33), we see the **good Samaritan** had *mercy and compassion* upon the wounded man and manifested the virtues of *charity and duty* as well.

In the original Anglo-Saxon, the word *good* carried the same connotation as *God*. Therefore, implying that *goodness* was *godliness* (exemplifying the nature of God). In Matthew 19:17, Jesus asked, “*Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God:*” When the Bible says, “*there is none that doeth good, no, not one*” (Romans 3:12) it means no man does anything good of himself. But the believer has a new nature that is good and that produces goodness as one of the attributes of the fruit of the Spirit.

7. Faith — Galatians 2:20; 3:11

This is not the *gift of faith* that enables one to believe God, but rather the fruit of the Spirit adorning the believer who has believed and followed after God, having yielded his life to the leadership of the Holy Spirit. This is the faith we are to follow after (cf. I Timothy 6:11). It is actually faith demonstrated unto others in our faithfulness to God by our daily walk with Him.

¹⁰⁴ *American Heritage Dictionary*, 3rd ed..

It is like James tells us,

“Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works.” — James 2:18

8. Meekness — subdued strength

- ☞ Paul demonstrated this attribute in dealing with the Corinthian church— I Corinthians 4:21.
- ☞ It is the proper manner for the restoration of a backslider by spiritual men— Colossians 3:12-13; Galatians 6:1.
- ☞ It is to be exercised in keeping unity within a church — Ephesians 4:2-3.
- ☞ It is the proper manner of dealing with all men — II Timothy 2:24-25 (cf. Titus 3:2).

Never mistake meekness for weakness. Meekness is a strength that comes from the Spirit of God, enabling the believer to have control of his deepest desires.

Warren Wiersbe writes:

“The meek Christian does not throw his weight around or assert himself. Just as wisdom is the right use of knowledge, so meekness is the right use of authority and power.”¹⁰⁵

The Old Testament prophet, Moses, was anything but weak. He confronted the Pharaoh of Egypt face to face; he became a shepherd in the wilderness; he returned to Egypt under threat of death and lead about 3 million

¹⁰⁵ Wiersbe, Bible Exposition Commentary, p. 720.

Hebrews out of Egypt; and he received the Ten Commandments from God on Mount Sinai.

But we read in Numbers:

“(...Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.)” — Numbers 12:3

☞ Notice that Moses was “*meek above all men.*”

We gain further insight into the meaning of this word “*above*” from the Old Testament book of Judges.

“Blessed above women shall Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite be, blessed shall she be above women in the tent,” — Judges 5:24

“*Above,*” in Numbers 12:3, as in Judges 5:24, suggests that meekness is an attribute that fits a man to lead, and exalts him above his peers. We must be careful here not to mistake a rigid militaristic discipline for the tender attribute of meekness. The former will always break down and show its true colors, while meekness comes from brokenness. It comes forth only after self has been denied and daily crucified.

Philip Keller wrote:

“This quality of life that produces genuine humility in the human spirit bestows upon us a truly balanced view of ourselves and others. We see the greatness and goodness in our God and in others around us. Likewise it enables us to see ourselves as we really are. We see our own relative insignificance in the great mass of mankind, yet we also see we are of great worth to Christ who has called us from darkness into the light of His own love. We see ourselves as sinners, yet at the same time [we see ourselves as] those who have been saved from their despair to become the sons of God.

“So it is the generosity of our God, the kindness of Christ, the patient perseverance of His Holy Spirit drawing us to Himself that humbles our haughty hearts. It is the depth of Christ’s compassion which crumbles the tough crust that accumulates around our self-centered characters. The inflowing impartation of His own gentle, gracious Spirit displaces our own arrogance and self-preoccupation. It leaves us laden with His own fruits of lowliness and gentleness.

“There is an old saying among orchardists that *‘The most heavily laden branches always bow the lowest on the tree.’* It is likewise true in human conduct.”¹⁰⁶

Consider the example of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.

“Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.” — I John 3:16

“Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.” — Matthew 20:28

“But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

“And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”

— Philippians 2:7-8

9. Temperance — Self-Control

The great New Testament example of this is the Apostle Paul. Observe his testimony— I Corinthians 9:19-27.

The day in which we live is marked by *intemperance* (no self-control). The attribute of temperance is in marked

¹⁰⁶ Keller, A Gardener Looks At the Fruit of the Spirit.

contrast to all the works of the flesh. Around the world, we see men given to excess in all they do and our society is out of control. Nothing seems to be done in moderation. We have trouble controlling our credit cards, eating, television, sports and all our desires. We are no longer shocked when we hear of gruesome murders, child molestation, adultery, drugs, and homosexuality. But we are troubled when so many of these criminals are set free by the justice system with only a slap on the wrist. Often they are deemed unaccountable by reason of temporary insanity. These criminals are out of control, but not without responsibility. Our children are out of control and government spending is out of control, but still we lean on the arm of the flesh that can never bring deliverance. Only by the power of the Holy Spirit can we bring our lives under control and live temperate lives. This should be the goal of every believer.

In Conclusion:

Having examined the beautiful, fragrant, appealing fruit of the Holy Spirit, don't you want to taste of it more fully and have the Spirit of God adorn your life with its testimony to a lost and dying world? The Holy Spirit *will* bring forth HIS fruit in the life of the believer who is yielded to HIS will and seeking HIS guidance. In doing this *the flesh* must be crucified daily and kept in subjection. That is the work of the Spirit to bring forth temperance in the life of the believer. **Love** is the sweet fragrance and permeating flavor of this fruit. **Peace and joy** comes from the loving relationship that is found in daily communion with God. When one has the peace of God, then he finds it easy to be at peace with man. This begets longsuffering, gentleness and goodness. It is only natural that faith should then spring forth, for as our relationship with God deepens, so

does our understanding of His will and our trust in Him. Meekness is not weakness, but is associated with temperance. True meekness is a strength only developed in one who is wholly yielded to God. Temperance then, is the full blossom of this mature ripe fruit of the Spirit. These all come forth from brokenness.

Brother Billy Kanoy adds:

“The seed that brings forth the fruit is sown by the constant reading of the Word of God. It is watered with prayer. But the Holy Spirit of God alone gives the increase that produces the fruit.”¹⁰⁷

Warren Wiersbe concludes:

“People around us are starving for love, joy, peace, and all the other graces of the Spirit. When they find them in our lives, they know that we have something they lack. We do not bear fruit for our own consumption; we bear fruit that others might be fed and helped, and that Christ might be glorified. The flesh may manufacture ‘results’ that bring praise to us, but the flesh cannot bear fruit that brings glory to God. It takes patience, an atmosphere of the Spirit, walking in the light, the seed of the word of God, and a sincere desire to honor Christ.

Will you yield to Him and let Him work?”¹⁰⁸

Thoughts on how to maintain victory over the flesh:

- 1. Remember** Christ’s work for you at Calvary
(Hebrews 12:3 [don’t faint]; Philippians 2:4-13)
- 2. Reckon** yourselves crucified with Christ (Romans 6:1-11)

¹⁰⁷ Kanoy, Marvelous Person of the Holy Spirit.

¹⁰⁸ Wiersbe, Bible Exposition Commentary, p. 720.

- 3. Rest** in the Lord by faith [(Psalm 37:7; Hebrews 4 (vs.9)]
- 4. Request** his will (Romans 12:2; Ephesians 5:17; I John 5:14)
- 5. Receive** his work in your life (Philippians 1:6)
- 6. Rejoice** in the Lord (Philippians 4:4)
- 7. Resist** the Devil and he will flee (James 4:7)

