

W. T. PURKISER

**GOD'S
SPIRIT**



**IN
TODAY'S
WORLD**

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by

W. T. Purkiser



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Preface

One of the most exciting developments in the religious world today is the widespread interest in the person and work of the Holy Spirit. Although some have put their major emphasis on the gifts of the Spirit, multitudes have come to appreciate the Giver himself.

This book consists of material prepared as Bible studies for the Third International Nazarene Laymen's Conference in August, 1974. It is not in any sense a complete theology of the Holy Spirit, nor does it lay claim to novelty. It is an attempt to bring together some basic teachings of the Scriptures as they relate to the Holy Spirit's ministry in this age.

The limits of our human understanding make it necessary for us to consider one biblical theme at a time. The danger in such a process is that we may lose our sense of the wholeness of God's redemptive work in our behalf.

There is particular danger in detaching the doctrine of the Spirit from a thoroughgoing Christology. Although it will be said later in these pages, it should be kept in mind throughout: The Holy Spirit is the Spirit both of the Father and of His Son. The most complete knowledge we have of the Spirit is expressed in the words of Jesus: "I will pray the Father, and He shall give you Another just like Me" (John 14:16, Greek).

Just as we know what the Father is like when we look at Jesus, we know also what the Holy Spirit is like when we look at Christ. "Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father," Jesus said (John 14:9). He could have added, "and has seen the Holy Spirit" (cf. verses 15-23).

—W. T. PURKISER



Introducing the Holy Spirit

Whatever the world may call our time in history—the atomic age; the age of anxiety, of apathy, or crisis—in Bible terms it is the age of the Spirit. If we do not understand this, we cannot understand our times, our faith, ourselves, or our possibilities.

This has not always been seen. For 1,800 years, theologians struggled to understand the doctrines of the Father-God and of Jesus Christ, our Saviour. Most of the studies in the person and work of the Holy Spirit were in connection

with the doctrine of the Trinity. That is, until the dawning of our century. Since then, interest in the doctrine and experience of the Spirit has grown to monumental proportions.

With all the passing problems to which it may lead, the present interest in the work of the Holy Spirit is an encouraging sign. In *The Christian Faith*, Olin Curtis wrote, "In any time of rich quickening and deepening of the Christian life you will notice, in song and prayer and testimony, a continual dwelling upon the personality of the Holy Spirit."¹

Just a little over 100 years ago, Frederick Denison Maurice said, "I cannot but think that the reformation in our day, which I expect to be more deep and searching than that of the sixteenth century, will turn upon the Spirit's presence and life, as that did upon the Justification by the Son."²

1. *A Divine Person*

In a sense, it is presumption to speak of "introducing" the Holy Spirit. He has been with us from the earliest dawn of consciousness. But He has been with us anonymously. Like the wind, we have felt His influence but have not known whence He came or whither He went (John 3:8).

Let it be said right off, we are introducing a Person—not an influence, power, or abstraction of some sort.

I've never been one to quarrel with songwriters in the exercise of poetic license. It is hard enough to write sensible doctrine in prose, let alone verse. But I cringe when I hear one current gospel folk-song: "There's a sweet, sweet Spirit in this place; and we know that *it's* the Spirit of the Lord." True, there is a use of "spirit" to mean disposition, attitude, or morale—we use it when we speak of an ugly spirit, or a Christlike spirit. But the song is not about disposition or attitude. It is about the Holy Spirit, and He is present, not as an "it," but as "He."

The Holy Spirit is a divine Person as surely as God the

Father and Jesus Christ, His eternal Son. Every essential quality of personality is attributed to Him in the Scriptures: mind, will, sensibilities.

We have difficulties, of course, because *spirit* in English, as in Hebrew and Greek, is a neuter noun. The normal pronoun would be *it*. Once in a while, an overliteral translation in the KJV will speak of "the Spirit itself." But this is wrong, and we should never allow ourselves to fall into the heresy of speaking of the Holy Spirit as "it."

2. *Our Changing Language*

Another point—minor in a way, yet in other ways not so minor. We have inherited from the King James Version the phrase "the Holy Ghost." The KJV translates the same Greek phrase "Holy Spirit" 4 times and "Holy Ghost" 89 times. We have two different English words because our language is the combination of Anglo-Saxon-Germanic roots, and Norman-French-Latin roots. *Ghost* comes from the German *geist*, which means "spirit." *Spirit* comes from the Latin *spiritus*, which means "ghost."

This was no problem 350 years ago. Matters are different today. English usage has almost completely reversed the meanings attached to *spirit* and *ghost*. *Ghost* in 1611 carried with it the idea of essential, individual, personal reality. Now it has come to be associated with the astral, occult, and spiritualistic overtones of Halloween. *Spirit* in 1611 virtually meant what we now mean when we use the term *ghost* in ordinary speech today.

Apart from its use in the familiar phrases of liturgy, there is therefore no particular piety involved in using the phrase "the Holy Ghost." In our day, the truth is better conveyed by the term "the Holy Spirit." The meaning is the same in the strict definition of the terms, but the connotation of *spirit* is now to be preferred.

3. *God as Three in One*

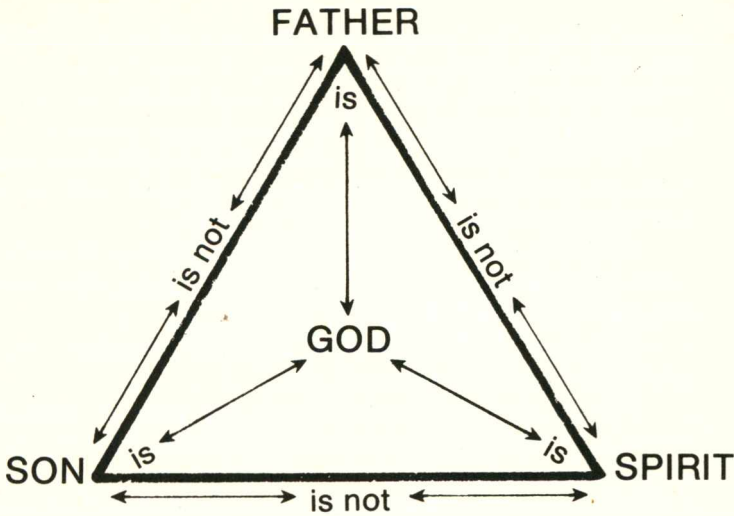
Can we fully understand how Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are three, yet one—the Triune God as taught in the doctrine of the Trinity?

Probably not. An even better question could well be, If we did fully understand the nature of the infinite God, would what we understood really be God after all? Can limited and finite minds fully comprehend the unlimited and eternal God?

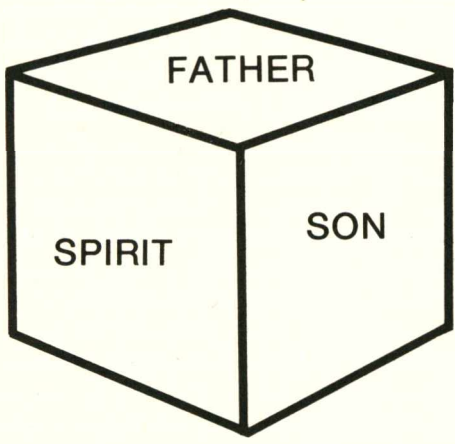
Yet we must not dodge the issue. The Christian doctrine of God affirms that God is one in essential nature and three in personal relationships within that unity and in manifestation in scripture and experience.

The doctrine of the Trinity is not taught to baffle or humble our intelligence. It is our human effort to put together three undebatable facts of scripture and experience: the fact that God is one (Deut. 6:4; John 17:3; 1 Tim. 1:16; Jas. 2:19); Jesus Christ is the God-man—God incarnate in human nature (John 1:1-4, 14, 18; 5:18; 10:30, 33; 14:9; Acts 20:28; Rom. 9:5; Phil. 2:5-11; Col. 2:9-10; 1 Tim. 3:15-16; Heb. 1:1-3, 8; 1 John 5:20; Titus 2:13 and 2 Pet. 1:1 in RSV); and the Holy Spirit is divine personality as are both Father and Son (Matt. 28:19; John 14:15-17, 26; 15:26; 16:7-15; Acts 5:3-4; 1 Cor. 2:10-16; 6:11; 2 Cor. 13:14; Eph. 2:18; 1 Pet. 1:2). The God of the Bible is revealed to us always as Creator (the Father), Redeemer (the Son), and Sanctifier (the Spirit). What God is, the Father is. What God is, the Son is. What God is, the Spirit is.

While there is mystery here, there is no essential contradiction. We have hints in our experience that help us understand threeness and oneness and their interrelation. One triangle, for example, has three points. The diagram helps us see that, while the Father is not the Son, and the Son is not the Spirit, yet all three are one God.



A cube has three dimensions. The height is not the breadth, and the breadth is not the depth. If any dimension is lacking, there is no cube. The cube is one body with three dimensions as God is one Being in three Persons.



One man may be at one and the same time a father, a son, and a husband. One woman may be at one time a mother, a daughter, and a wife. One human being is always a trinity of body, mind, and spirit.

The sun in the heavens is one—yet it is mass, heat, and light. An earthly sovereignty is one government, with three functions: legislative, judicial, and executive.

A Hindu challenged a Christian missionary in India: "You Christians don't know your mathematics. One plus one plus one equals three."

"But don't forget," said the missionary quickly, "that one *times* one *times* one equals *one*."

But the test of any doctrine is not only its biblical source, but what happens when it is denied. To deny the unity of the Godhead leads to polytheism, the worship of more than one God. To deny the deity of Jesus is to drift into unitarianism. To deny the personality and deity of the Holy Spirit leads to a religion that is little more than humanism. Most of the theological vagaries of past and present can be traced to confusion concerning the nature of the Triune God.

Since this is true, knowing the person and work of the Holy Spirit becomes of vital importance. We cannot know either the Father or the Son if we ignore the Spirit. What the New Testament teaches about the Spirit is the crown and climax of the self-disclosure of the true and living God.

4. No "Experts"

So I invite you to meet the Holy Spirit, to seek with me a better and deeper understanding of His person, His place on the divine side of reality, and His ministry in and for us.

Let me say right off: In the realm of the Spirit there are really no "experts" who have all the truth to impart. We are all students in the school of the Spirit. My purpose here is not to hand down to you the pronouncements of authority.

It is to be, hopefully, the "lead learner" in a group whose minds and hearts are given to seeking insights more clear and pure than we have had before.

There is an ancient prayer addressed to the Holy Spirit that may well be ours:

*Come as fire and burn,
Come as wind and cleanse,
Come as light and reveal.
Convict, convert, consecrate,
Until we are wholly Thine.³*



The Holy Spirit in the Old Testament

When we want to know about the Father God and about His Son and our Saviour, we turn to the Bible as our great Source Book. Reason and experience can tell us something about the divine. But the true Source of understanding is the inspired Word of truth.

It is the Holy Spirit who moved men to write the words that convey inspired truth. *Inspiration* is literally "in-breathed," and the Spirit is the "Breath of God" who conveyed to the minds of the writers and who conveys to the minds of the readers truth about God, and man, and sin, and salvation.

Since the Holy Spirit is the unseen Author of the pages, we recognize what Daniel Steele called "the divine reticence." As Jesus said of Him, He does not speak of (literally, "from") himself in the same direct and extensive way He speaks of God the Father and God the Son. As a good Teacher, He does not draw attention to himself but to His Subject. Yet we find His fingerprints all through the Bible from Gen. 1:2 to Rev. 22:17.

As with all important Christian truths, the doctrine of the Spirit has its beginnings in the Old Testament and its completion in the New. The Old Testament witnesses chiefly to His power; the New Testament, to His purity. The accent of the Old Testament was upon "Spirit"; the accent of the New Testament is upon "Holy Spirit."

The Old Testament has a total of 86 references to the Spirit. Three times, the phrase "holy spirit" is used. Five times, the reference is to "Spirit of the Lord God." Of the remainder, approximately half are to "the Spirit of God" and the other half to "the Spirit of the Lord" or with "the Lord" as antecedent to "my spirit," "his spirit," or "the spirit."

What does the OT tell us about the Spirit? The Spirit is:

1. *God's Agent and Power in Creation and Nature*

This is His relation to the world in general. The very first mention of the Spirit in the Bible is in its second verse. Gen. 1:1-2 reads, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. 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." Job 26:13 tells us that "By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens" or "the heavens became bright" (cf. Job 27:3; 33:4; 34:14).

To the Holy Spirit is given credit for wisdom and ability in the conduct of affairs. The wisdom of Joseph was recognized as from "the Spirit of God" (Gen. 41:38). Bezaleel,

the artisan who built the Tabernacle and fashioned its furniture, was "filled . . . with the spirit of God" (Exod. 31:3; 35:31). King Saul's zeal for war against the Ammonites came when "the Spirit of God came upon" him (1 Sam. 11:6). Later, Saul and his messengers were thrown into a prophetic frenzy by "the Spirit of God" (19:20, 23).

2. *Bearer of God's Love and Grace in Salvation*

The phrase here is usually "Spirit of the Lord," and the first example is in Gen. 6:3, "My spirit shall not always strive with [or rule in] man," when the reference is to the preaching of Noah and the coming of the Flood in judgment on a rebellious society.

The Spirit of the Lord directed Moses and the elders of Israel in shepherding the people of God (Num. 11:17, 25-26, 29). The Spirit came upon Othniel, Gideon, Jephthah, and Samson to enable them to deliver the tribes from their enemies (Judg. 3:10; 6:24; 11:29; 13:25; 14:6, 19; 15:14; cf. also, re: David, 1 Sam. 16:13-14; 23:2).

In this aspect of it, the work of the Spirit begins to take on a moral and spiritual dimension. The Psalmist prayed, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me" (51:10-11). The Psalmist also asked, "Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?" (139:7). The Holy Spirit is the Presence of the Lord.

"Teach me to do thy will; for thou art my God," prayed the Psalmist in 143:10: "thy spirit is good; lead me into the land of uprightness."

Isaiah described the unbelief of the people in the wilderness as having "vexed his holy Spirit," though God had "put his holy Spirit within" them (63:10-11).

Ezekiel repeatedly speaks of the Spirit as directing, con-

trolling, enabling, and even taking him from one place to another in his work as a prophet (1:12; 2:2; 3:12, 24; 8:3; 11:1, 5, 19, 24).

Micah speaks of being full of the power of the Spirit of the Lord, of judgment, of might—"to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin" (3:8).

Haggai encourages the people not to fear, because the Spirit of the Lord of hosts remains among them (Hag. 2:4-5).

Zechariah conveys the promise of success in building the Temple: "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts" (4:6). The words of the prophets are sent by the Lord through His Spirit and must not be ignored (Zech. 7:12).

The comment of William Greathouse is relevant here: "The prevailing idea in all these passages is not that of making men righteous or holy, but of endowing them in times of national crisis or for the purpose of divine revelation. Two points are worth remembering: (1) The coming of the Spirit upon individuals in the Old Testament was a transient experience. There is no hint that the Holy Spirit came as a permanent Indweller; rather, He 'came mightily upon them' for prophecy or for some immediate task. (2) To put the same idea in a different way, He did not come to sanctify the souls of men. John said specifically, 'The Holy Ghost was not yet given' (John 7:39)."¹

3. *To Be Fully Manifested in the Age of the Messiah—the Christian Era*

The messianic age will be the age of the Spirit. Isaiah, the great prophet of the Christian age, is also the prophet of the age of the Spirit.

a. The Spirit will rest upon the Messiah as "the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord"

(Isa. 11:1-2). God will put His Spirit upon His Servant, the Messiah, so that He "shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles" (Isa. 42:1). The Servant-Messiah himself says, "Now the Lord God, and his Spirit, hath sent me" (Isa. 48:16), a verse in which Ethelbert Stauffer sees a foreshadowing of the New Testament doctrine of the Trinity.²

Isaiah also gives the great passage Jesus quoted of himself in Luke 4:18-19, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord" (61:1-2).

b. In the age of the Spirit, God will put His Spirit into the hearts of others besides His prophets. When the Spirit is poured upon us from on high, the wilderness shall be a fruitful field (Isa. 32:15). Isaiah voices the promise of God: "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring" (44:3). "When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him" (Isa. 59:19).

The covenant God will make with His people in that day, Isaiah says, is to the effect that "my spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever" (59:21).

Ezekiel also envisions the coming age of the Spirit: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you. . . . And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes" (36:25-27). God says, I "shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall

live" (37:14). The Lord will then say, "Neither will I hide my face any more from them: for I have poured out my spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord God" (39:29).

Joel reported the promise quoted by Peter at Pentecost: "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: and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit" (Joel 2:28-29; cf. Acts 2:17-21).

Zech. 12:10 gives the final promise of the Old Testament regarding the age of the Spirit: "And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced."

Here is a sure foundation. It is not the building. That must await the coming of Christ, His atoning death and victorious resurrection, and "promise of the Father" at Pentecost.

While foundations are not buildings, they are important. From the Old Testament we learn that God carries on His work in creation, in history, in providence, and in the guidance of His people—all by means of His Spirit. The Spirit, unrecognized and often scorned, is the conscience of the race. He is also the creative Source and therefore the best Interpreter of the physical universe. There is a very real sense in which all morality and all science—though they be made the boast of men—are gifts of God through His Spirit. Without the Spirit, anonymous though He be, we should be no more than the beasts of the field—albeit without an animal's redeeming instinct.



The Holy Spirit in the Gospels Before the Last Supper

The New Testament gives us the full biblical portrait of the Holy Spirit. It is a picture drawn with firm lines and exquisite shading. As in the Old Testament, the first stroke appears in the very first chapter. Matthew 1:18, 20 and Luke 1:35 tell us that the conception of our Saviour in the womb of the virgin mother was by the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Virgin Birth is a miracle in every way—a miracle as unique in its kind as the Resurrection itself. The ovum in Mary's womb was quickened to full human life by the Spirit

of the living God. The result, said the angel to the wondering maiden, is that "the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35). As Bishop H. C. G. Moule long ago said, "The Manhood he [Jesus] took was, in the divine order and law, manhood begun and maintained in its perfect holiness and power by the Holy Spirit as the immediate personal divine Worker. It is accordingly by the Holy Spirit that the Lord Jesus Christ is the Second Man."¹

Zacharias, father of the forerunner John, "was filled with the Holy Spirit" and recalled the promise to Abraham that his people would be delivered from their enemies "to serve him [God] without fear in holiness and righteousness before him all" their days (Luke 1:67, 74-75).

Of the aged Simeon it was said, "The Holy Spirit was upon him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Christ. Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts" (Luke 2:25-27), there unofficially to preside at the dedication of the infant Jesus and to put into the record one more testimony to the divine mission of Mary's Child.

1. Inaugurating the Ministry of the Messiah

Not only in His birth but in His ministry Christ Jesus went in the power of the Spirit. He was presented to Israel by John the Baptist at the Jordan as the "Spirit-Bearer." He is the One who is to baptize His people with the Holy Spirit. So important is this point that all four of the Gospels make it, Jesus himself quotes it (Acts 1:5), and Peter mentions it (Acts 11:16): "I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire" (Matt. 3:11; cf. Mark 1:7-8; Luke 3:16-17; John 1:33).

When Jesus was himself baptized with water by John,

the Baptist gave this testimony: "I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him. I would not have known him, except that the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, 'The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is he who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.' I have seen and I testify that this is the Son of God" (John 1:32-34).

Matthew says that when the Dove descended, "A voice from heaven said, 'This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well-pleased'" (3:16). Jesus himself heard the voice say, "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well-pleased" (Mark 1:10; Luke 3:22).

You and I need the baptism with the Spirit and fire to cleanse us. Jesus, who was from birth "holy, blameless, pure" (Heb. 7:26), received the Spirit as a Dove.

Immediately after His inaugural baptism and anointing, "Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the desert" (Luke 4:1; Matt. 4:1; Mark 1:12), where He was tempted and triumphed. Luke tells us that, after the Temptation, "Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit" (4:14).

On the Sabbath, Jesus went into the synagogue. When the scroll of Isaiah was handed to Him, He unrolled it, and read from Isa. 61:1-2: "The Spirit of the Lord is on me; therefore he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." "Today," He said, "this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing" (Luke 4:18-21).

Among the last recorded words of John the Baptist was his statement that Jesus is the One to whom "God gives the Spirit without limit" (John 3:34). Although God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, the teachings, the miracles, and even the resurrection of Jesus are all credited to the power and presence of the Holy Spirit.

2. *In the Teachings of Jesus Before the Last Supper*

Although Jesus mentioned the Holy Spirit only six times in His recorded words before the Last Supper, each of those six times is important.

a. The first, already noted, was in the quotation from Isaiah 61 in the synagogue at Nazareth. If the anointing of the Spirit was necessary in the preaching of the only begotten Son of God, how much more is it necessary in the witnessing and preaching of those who are children of God by grace!

b. Early in His ministry in Judea, Jesus met Nicodemus. To this moral, upright, orthodox religious leader, Christ said, "I tell you the truth, unless a man is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You [the Greek is plural, "all of you"] must be born again.' The wind blows wherever it pleases. You may hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit" (John 3:5-8).

Here is the first New Testament statement of the need for a new birth. Reformation cannot bring a person into the Kingdom; only regeneration can do that. The reason is that "like begets like." Those born of the flesh are only fleshy. Only one born of the Spirit has spiritual life.

c. Casting out demons by the power of the Spirit, Jesus warned His enemies against attributing that work to the power of Satan. "If I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. . . . And so I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will

not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come" (Matt. 12:28-32; cf. Mark 3:29; Luke 12:10).

Few New Testament passages have been more completely misunderstood than these. Many have expressed great concern that they had, consciously or inadvertently, committed the unpardonable sin of "blasphemy against the Spirit." To such we must never fail to give the word of faith. If they are concerned about it, that concern is complete evidence that they have not so blasphemed. The concern itself is the grace of the Spirit. Any who have blasphemed the Spirit—in whatever these rather enigmatic words may mean—just couldn't care less.

d. One of the great "how much more" comparisons of Jesus relates to the Holy Spirit. "If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!" (Luke 11:13). Although this is a pre-Pentecost promise, the setting clearly shows that there is a giving of the Holy Spirit to those who are children of the Heavenly Father—a Gift bestowed on those who ask Him.

e. Disciples under pressure are promised that the Holy Spirit will enable them to articulate their witness. "When they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you" (Matt. 10:19-20; cf. Luke 12:12)—words that Mark repeats in connection with the end times (13:11).

Only utter fanaticism would make this promise a substitute for a preacher's preparation. But the promise is fulfilled over and over in the lives of those faced with crisis times when no human preparation could possibly help.

f. Jesus affirmed the inspiration of Psalm 110 when He said, "David himself, speaking by the Holy Spirit, declared: 'The Lord said to my Lord: Sit at my right hand until I put

your enemies under your feet'" (Mark 12:36; Matt. 22:43).

Peter was to say it later as Micah (3:8) had said it before: "Prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit" (2 Pet. 1:21). The Bible is the Word of God because the Breath of God articulates its truth.

In addition, John 7:37-39 is of prime importance: "On the last and greatest day of the Feast [of Dedication, when libations of water were poured out before the Lord], Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, 'If a man is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.'" John adds the all-important interpretation: "By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified."

Here is abundance beyond imagination: "rivers of living water" (KJV)—Mississippis, and Amazons, and Colorados, and Columbias of living water! No excuse here for parched and thirsty souls!



4

The Holy Spirit in the Last Supper Discourses

In the teachings of Jesus called the Last Supper Discourses, of John 14–16, we have the climax and crown of the New Testament introduction to the Holy Spirit. It would hardly be possible to overemphasize the importance of the five "Paraclete Sayings" given here.

For one thing, the personality of the Spirit is affirmed with such clarity that only the blindest eyes could miss it. In careful and precise words, Jesus spoke of the One who was to come as "He," "Him," and the works and words as "His." In eloquence rarely found in contemporary writing, Bishop Moule spelled it out:

In this central and decisive passage then we have the Holy Ghost revealed to us in so many words as HIM, not only as IT; as the living and conscious Exerciser of true personal will and love, as truly and fully as the First

"Paraclete," the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. And now this central passage radiates out its glory upon the whole system and circle of Scripture truth about the Spirit. From Gen. 1:2 to Rev. 22:17 it sheds the warmth of divine personal life into every mention of the blessed Power. With the Paschal Discourse in our heart and mind, we know that it was He, not It, who "brooded" over the primeval deep. He, not It, "strove with man," or "ruled in man" of old. He, not It, was in Joseph in Egypt, and upon Moses in the wilderness of wandering, and upon judges and kings of after-days. He, not It, "spoke by the prophets," "moving" those holy men of God. He, not It, drew the plan of the ancient Tabernacle and of the first Temple. He, not It, lifted Ezekiel to his feet in the hour of vision. He, not It, came upon the Virgin, and anointed her Son at Jordan and led Him to the desert of temptation, and gave utterance to the saints at Pentecost, and caught Philip away from the road to Gaza, and guided Paul through Asia Minor to the nearest port for Europe. He, not It, effects the new birth of regenerate man, and is the Breath of his new life, and the Earnest of his coming glory. "By Him, not by It, the believer walks, and mortifies the deeds of the body, filled not with It, but Him. He, not It, is the Spirit of faith, by whom it is "given unto us to believe on Christ." He, not It, speaks to the churches. He, not It, says from heaven that they who die in the Lord are blessed, and calls in this life upon the wondering soul of man to come to the living water.¹

The first of these important passages is John 14:15-18, "If you love me, you will do what I command. I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor, the Spirit of truth, to be with you forever. The world cannot accept [or receive] this Counselor, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you."

Three points may be mentioned here:

1. *The Preparation*

Jesus said, "If you love me, you will do what I command." Here He strips discipleship to its true essentials: not creed or doctrine, not ceremony or cult, not baptism or confirmation, not church membership or profession—the tests of genuine Christianity are love and obedience. It isn't love without obedience. That's sentimentalism. It isn't obedience without love. That's legalism. There is no new morality here—love without law. There is a law of love that gives birth to love for the law of the Lord.

The point is: The Holy Spirit does not come in abiding fullness to unprepared hearts. God gives many gifts to all: the sun to shine and the rain to fall on the just and unjust alike. But He gives the greatest Gift of all to those who love Him and keep His commandments.

2. *The Person*

"I will leave you," Jesus was later to say. But "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you." How could it be? No principle or power could ever fill the place Jesus had. Who but God could make God real?

"I will pray the Father," said Jesus, "and he shall give you another Comforter" (KJV). To the 11 who were there, yes. There was a historical dimension to this promise. It did foretell the age of the Spirit to dawn just 50 days later. But when Jesus prayed, as He did in John 17, He said, "My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message" (v. 20). That takes us in. We are believers today through the message of that very group of disciples sequestered in the Upper Room.

"Another Comforter" (KJV)—each word is a volume of truth about the Holy Spirit.

New Testament Greek has two words for *other*. One of these is *heteros*. It means "another of a different sort." We bring it into English when we talk about "heterodoxy"—

doctrine of a different sort, outside the mainstream of Christian teaching. It is the second word Jesus used: *allos*. It means "another of the same kind."

Nothing more definitive has ever been said about the Holy Spirit. He is "Another just like Jesus." He is the Spirit of Christ, Christ's *alter ego*, His resurrection Life.

When we want to know what God the Father is like, we look at Jesus. "Anyone who has seen me," said Jesus, "has seen the Father" (John 14:9). In exactly the same way, when we wish to know what the Holy Spirit is like, we also look at Jesus. The Comforter is "Another just like Jesus."

E. Stanley Jones said, "If God is a Christlike God, then it follows that the Spirit is a Christlike Spirit. The same content of character will be in both. Then if the Spirit lives within us, he will not make us other than Christlike. 'The fruits of the Spirit are the virtues of Christ,' said the great Schleiermacher. If we are made other than Christlike, it is some other spirit that possesses us—the spirit of weakness, of folly, of clannishness, not the Holy Spirit. For the Spirit will not make us other than Christlike."²

The word we clumsily translate "Comforter" is a theology in a word. You have probably often heard it Anglicized: "Paraclete." It is *parakletos*. It comes from two words: *para*, "with" or "alongside"; and *kaleo*, "I call." It means, literally, "one called alongside" to help in some special way.

But this is only part of the story. The word *parakletos* was used in New Testament times in a number of ways.

a. A witness was called a *parakletos*. If one's word were in doubt, he would call in someone who knew the facts to confirm his testimony. In John 15:26, Jesus described one of the purposes of the Comforter in just this way: "When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me."

The Holy Spirit corroborates the Word of God in our

hearts. This is what the Reformers called "the witness of the Spirit" to the truth of scripture.

Many sincere Christians have an almost unending battle with doubts about the truth of God's Word until the Comforter comes. Those doubts then seem to vanish like mist before the rising sun. This does not mean no more questions, and no more temptations. But the work of the Spirit is to confirm the truth of Christ within us.

b. An attorney or an advocate in a court of law was called a *parakletos*. A lawyer may still be called "counselor."

Parakletos is the word John used in 1 John 2:1-2 as applied to Jesus himself: "My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense [or as the KJV puts it, 'an advocate with the Father']—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world."

As Christ is our Defender at the point of God's broken law, the Holy Spirit is our Advocate or Attorney in the face of accusations at the point of infirmities, human shortcomings, and failures. Satan is described in Rev. 12:10 as "the accuser of our brothers [and of our sisters, too, by the way], who accuses them before our God day and night." In face of his accusations, the Holy Spirit becomes our Defender—pleading the Blood to cover what John Wesley described as "sins improperly so-called," the infirmities, lapses, mistakes, and weaknesses of our humanity.

c. An expert advisor was called a *parakletos*. In perplexity, having a problem to solve that is too much, we call in an expert. He gives guidance, advising on steps to take to solve the problem.

So the Holy Spirit becomes our Guide through the often perplexing maze of life. We may not at the moment fully

understand the way He leads. But most of us have already had the experience of pausing at some point farther down the road, and looking back to see that He has done all things well and the way He has led has been the way that was best.

d. Just what *comforter* ordinarily means to us also describes a *parakletos*. In sorrow, bereavement, loneliness, and heartache, a comforter gives solace by his presence. He may not say much—if he is wise, he will not say much. But his very presence is a help. That he cares enough to share the lonely hours itself speaks volumes.

So in sorrows others cannot know about, when the load is too heavy to bear alone and no human presence can really help, there is One who applies the "balm of Gilead" and brings healing to the heart. The Holy Spirit makes real to us the comfort of Christ's "seamless robe . . . beside our beds of pain."

e. But there is one other service of a *parakletos*. He was one who "comes alongside" in order to strengthen and encourage, to put heart into a person. There is unsuspected meaning in the very old English word *comforter*. *Con* is from the Latin and means "with." *Fortare* means "to strengthen, to fortify." It is the term from which we get our words *fort* and *fortification*.

It is the Holy Spirit who makes us strong, who enables us to meet with adequacy the tests, struggles, and pressures of life. He gives us strength when others weaken—to stand in the testing of temptation, to keep us from caving in when the pressure is on. He is the Spirit "of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (2 Tim. 1:7, KJV). He helps us to cope with the demands life places upon us.

3. *The Promised Presence*

The Holy Spirit, Jesus said, will "be with you forever." "He lives with you and will be in you." Life in the Spirit is a day-to-day walk. It is the realization of a living Presence.

One of our greatest errors in understanding the Christian life is to think of it in impersonal and mechanical terms. We talk about an "experience," "the blessing," "a work of grace," "two trips to the altar." All of these are neuter nouns. They are described as "it." Have you sought "it"? Have you found "it"? Do you have "it"? as if we're talking about some sort of heavenly rabbit's foot to find, and keep, and perhaps, sadly, to lose. The result too often is institutional religion—abstract, impersonal, just going through the motions. There is a tendency either to frustration, disillusionment, bitterness, and confusion—or, even worse, a hard, loveless legalism without life and vitality.

Jesus would save us from all this. What He promises is not an "it," "a blessing," "a power," "an influence." What He promises is the personal presence of Another just like himself and just like His Father.

There are many definitions of holiness and entire sanctification, its nature and its effects. None of them is quite as satisfying as what Jesus here presents: the abiding fullness of the Holy Spirit—no more, no less, nothing else. In His holiness is our cleansing, and maintained purity of heart. In His divine nature is our empowerment for life and service.

We can have a hundred "experiences," "blessings," religious "its," and still be restless and hungry. More than getting an experience, we are to receive a Person—another Jesus—in the warm, living reality of a fellowship that is growing and deepening along the way.

There's another truth here we often miss. Jesus said of the Holy Spirit, "The world cannot receive" Him. It neither sees Him nor knows Him. "But," said the Saviour, "you know him, for he lives with you."

Here Jesus dispels another common error. It is the mistake of identifying Christ with conversion and the Holy

Spirit with a subsequent work of grace, and supposing that the two are quite separate.

This is a million miles from the mark. The work of Christ does not end at conversion. "Christ Jesus," wrote the Apostle Paul, is "our righteousness, holiness and redemption" (1 Cor. 1:30). All we have or need is in Jesus. The young charismatic who said, "I've found something better than Jesus; I've found the Holy Spirit," was dreadfully confused.

Conversely, the work of the Holy Spirit does not begin with a second crisis. To become a Christian is to be "born of the Spirit." Conviction, capacity for faith, conversion—each of these is the direct and immediate work of the Holy Spirit. Paul put it bluntly and conclusively: "If anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ" (Rom. 8:9).

"He lives with you and will be in you" (John 14:17). *With* and *in* here are not spatial terms, as we clearly see from verse 23, where the same promise is repeated in slightly different terms: "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home *with* him." *With* and *in* are here relational terms. They have to do with the quality of relationship between the Holy Spirit and the human soul.

Nor is it a matter of "part of the Spirit now and part later," or "some of the Spirit now and more later." The Holy Spirit is a Person and cannot be divided into more or less, part or whole. It is a matter of relationship. The life-giving Spirit becomes our sanctifying Lord. He is the same Spirit in a new and different relationship.

We have no problem understanding this in our daily lives. An acquaintance may become a dear friend. The doctor who has been a physician to us may become our surgeon. Forty-five years ago I met the girl I decided I wanted to spend my life with. After some months of acquaintance, I

screwed up my courage and said, "Wilt thou—?" and she "wilted." She became my fiancée. A year later, my fiancée became my bride. She was the same girl—a whole, undivided person. But there was a new, deeper, and abiding relationship.

So it is with the Comforter. The Spirit of Life of whom we were born again, made new creatures in Christ, now becomes our sovereign, sanctifying Lord. It is a settled, abiding relationship. All hesitance and transiency is swept away. There is nothing here about breathing out confession of sin and breathing in the Spirit, as if the Spirit were as transient and fragile as a man's breath. "He will abide with you forever." We have that on the very best authority.

The world cannot receive Him. This forever destroys the teaching that the baptism with the Spirit comes at conversion. For "receiving the Spirit" is used in a special way in the New Testament. It means more than "having Him," or being convicted and converted by Him. "To receive" implies welcoming with open arms, acknowledging His sovereignty, submitting to His rule.

There is a direct parallel in John 1:11-12 when Jesus "came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him." He was with them; they heard Him; their eyes beheld Him and their hands handled Him. But they did not receive Him. "Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God." Receiving is more than hearing or having. Receiving is recognizing His authority and bringing all of life under His control.

So when Paul questions the Ephesians about receiving the Holy Spirit (Acts 19), he does not question their faith or imply that they are not conscientious Christians to whom baptism could be administered in the name of Jesus. He uses the same language Jesus used: "I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor, the Spirit of truth, to be

with you forever. The world cannot accept [receive] this Counselor, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you."

His is an ongoing presence. "The Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you" (John 14:26).

"When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me; but you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning" (John 15:26-27).

"It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. When he comes, he will prove the world wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment: about sin, because men do not believe in me; about righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; and about judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned" (John 16:7-11).

"When he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you" (John 16:12-14).

So we meet the Holy Spirit. We meet Him at the dawn of creation as God's Power bringing order out of chaos. We meet Him through the struggles of the covenant people in the Old Testament. We meet Him in the miracles and wisdom of Jesus. But most of all, we meet Him as He convicts us of sin, reminds us of the Saviour, and makes us new creatures in Christ Jesus. We move on next to meet Him in the glory of His dispensational ministry in the Church and in our personal lives.



The "Acts of the Holy Spirit"

The Holy Spirit in human personality is one of the cardinal themes of the Book of Acts and of the New Testament letters. The Old Testament gives us the foundation. The Gospels give us the description and the promise. The Book of Acts gives us the example. The letters unfold the doctrine and ethics of the Spirit-filled life. The Book of Revelation gives us the prospect for those who "hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

It is with good reason that the Book of Acts lies at the very heart of the New Testament. Harnack called it "the pivot book of the New Testament." It is the vital link between the Gospels and the letters, between the promise and the explanation.

If the author Luke were to have chosen a title for what we call "The Acts of the Apostles," he would probably have named it as A. T. Pierson suggested, "The Acts of the Holy Spirit." Luke makes 55 references to the Spirit in its pages, more than twice as many as are found in any other single book in the Bible.

But the Acts is more than a book of history. It is a book of experience. Jesus introduced the Holy Spirit to His disciples. The Book of Acts tells what the Spirit does in and for the people of God. It is the first book in the New Testament to end without an "Amen" at the close. Whatever else this means, it suggests that the "Acts of the Holy Spirit" are not to end until Jesus comes again.

1. *Pentecost the Portal*

Pentecost is the portal to the Acts of the Apostles. Without Pentecost, there would have been no acts to record. With the account of Pentecost, everything that follows in the New Testament becomes both possible and expected. Pentecost brought the Church out of the seclusion of the Upper Room into the marketplace and out into the world.

We hear much about the baptism with the Holy Spirit in our day, and I have no reluctance whatever to use that phrase. I would just point out that it occurs in only one context in the New Testament. That is in reference to the contrast between baptism with water and baptism with the Spirit as symbolized by fire.

Jesus repeated John's promise of a Spirit baptism—"For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 1:5). Peter recalled that promise when he reported on the Gentile Pentecost in Caesarea, "I remembered what the Lord had said, 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit'" (Acts 11:16).

When it happened, the baptism with the Spirit was de-

scribed as being "filled with the Holy Spirit" in both the initial act of filling and the state of being filled (Acts 2:4; 4:8, 31; 6:3, 5; 7:55; 9:17; 11:24; 13:9, 52). I do not think this is an accident of terminology. "Baptism" most naturally describes the crisis or momentary infilling of the Spirit. Being "filled with" describes both the crisis or momentary infilling and the continuing state of fullness that follows. There is no state of fullness without an infilling; but the infilling alone is most important in terms of what it leads to—life in the Spirit, under His sovereign control.

2. *Two Sides to Pentecost*

Pentecost obviously has two sides.

a. *It has a historical side.* It reports the beginning of a new age in the ongoing story of God's dealings with the human family. It is the beginning of the "age of the Spirit" foretold by Isaiah, Ezekiel, Joel, and Zechariah. It is the initial fulfillment of "the promise of the Father" (Acts 1:4, KJV). It is, if not the birthday, at least the inauguration of the Christian Church.

In this sense, Pentecost can never be repeated. It would be as meaningless to pray for another historical Pentecost as it would be to pray for another Calvary or Easter resurrection.

Here is the meaning of the dramatic signs that accompanied the first Jerusalem Pentecost: the noise of the rushing, mighty wind; the cloven tongues as of fire; and the other languages. These were dispensational signs that marked the beginning of a new era—just as at the giving of the law on Sinai the mountain was clothed with smoke, and there was the flash of fire and the roll of thunder. These inaugural signs at Pentecost were never repeated, although speaking in other languages occurred two other times in the 30-year history spanned by the Book of Acts.

b. But there is another side to Pentecost. It is the *personal, experiential side*. The promise was not to the apostolic group alone. "The promise is for you and your children," Peter said, "and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call" (Acts 2:39).

In this sense, Pentecost can be repeated. It was repeated in Samaria, in Caesarea, in Damascus, in Ephesus—and wherever Christian hearts have been open to receive the Spirit's fullness. Everything Pentecost did personally for Peter, James, John, and the others, it does for us today.

We have seen the fingerprints of the Spirit from creation to Christ. The Holy Spirit endowed Jesus with His manhood. The Apostle Paul tells us that the Holy Spirit raised Christ from the dead. At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit became the great Gift of the risen Redeemer to His people.

The Holy Spirit in today's world is what He always has been. But He is now available in a new way. The relationship of this new era, this new age of the Spirit, to what had gone before is illustrated by William Barclay in a striking metaphor:

Nuclear energy has always existed; it is built into the very structure of the world, but it only became available to man in the twentieth century. So what we are to think is that the Spirit has always existed in all his grace and power, but that the work of Jesus opened the flood gates and the Spirit in all his splendour became fully available to men. . . . Just as the life and death of Jesus opened to men the love of God, so the resurrection and the ever-continuing life of Jesus open to men the grace and power of the Spirit. The incarnate Jesus brings us the love of God; the Risen Christ makes available for us the power of the eternal Spirit.¹



The Holy Spirit and You

It is time to turn from the historical to the personal, the present ministry of the Holy Spirit. The remainder of Acts and the letters of the New Testament are full of this theme. The Holy Spirit is not afar off to be brought near. He is the living, throbbing presence, power, and purity of the Godhead making real the resurrection life of Jesus to His people here and now. "Nearer is He than breathing, and closer than hands and feet." In Halford Luccock's phrase and the title of D. Shelby Corlett's book, He is "God in the present tense."

But what is it the Holy Spirit does within us and for us? Standing on the height of Pentecost, we can look out

over the balance of the New Testament and at least note the high spots.

1. *The Holy Spirit Convicts of Sin.*

It is important for us to see that everything God does for us in salvation comes through the immediate agency of the Holy Spirit. Daniel Steele called Him "the Executor of the Godhead" and compared Him to the executive branch of government.

Many of our earliest ideas of right and wrong come from earthly and human sources. But with and through what we get from parents and teachers, there is "the true light that gives light to every man" (John 1:9), brought to us in prevenient grace by the Spirit of Christ. He is the "cosmic Conscience," the unheralded and unrecognized Source of all human morality, Christ "anonymously present" in moral consciousness.

But it is at the point of our awakening to the need of Christ that we are apt first to become conscious of the working of the Holy Spirit. We may not know what to call Him, but He convicts us of sin and righteousness and judgment, just as Jesus said He would (John 16:8-11). We see the sinfulness of sin in the light of His purity. We see the winsomeness of righteousness in the light of His love. We see the certainty of judgment in the light of His holiness.

2. *The Holy Spirit Draws Us to Christ.*

"The Spirit and the bride say, 'Come!' And let him who hears say, 'Come!' Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life" (Rev. 22:17). "The Spirit . . . [says], 'Come!'" Without that invitation, we could not—indeed, we would not want to—come. "No one can come to me," said Jesus, "unless the Father who sent me draws him" (John 6:44)—and

that drawing is the tug of the Spirit in our hearts.

Charles Wesley wrote:

*Spirit of Faith, come down,
Reveal the things of God;
And make to us the Godhead known,
And witness with the Blood.
'Tis Thine the blood to apply,
And give us eyes to see
Who did for every sinner die
Hath surely died for ME.*

3. *Conversion Is Being Born of the Spirit.*

The theologians call it "regeneration." It literally means being "born again" or "born anew." But this happens to us when we are born of the Spirit, as Jesus said to Nicodemus: "I tell you the truth, unless a man is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows wherever it pleases. You may hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit" (John 3:5-8).

Paul echoes the truth: "He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life" (Titus 3:5-7).

Can you understand it? No, I cannot understand it. Scientists have cracked the DNA code that controls human and animal heredity. But they have left unsolved the basic mysteries of birth and life even in the realm of the physical. I cannot understand the new birth; but I've seen it happen to

hundreds, and it happened to me. It is the Holy Spirit who makes real Paul's great saying, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!" (2 Cor. 5:17).

The believer's new life in Christ lays the foundation for victory over sin. While the term *sin* is used in different ways, we can never afford to say less than the New Testament:

"Jesus replied, 'I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. . . . If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed'" (John 8:34-36).

"What shall we say then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?" (Romans 6:1-2).

"He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work. No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in him; he cannot sin, because he has been born of God" (1 John 3:8-9).

What if there are defeats? While God makes no allowance for the defeat of sin in the Christian life, He has made provision for it. "My dear children, I write this to you," said John the Beloved, "so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world" (1 John 2:1-2).

These words give no license for sin. They give hope and guidance for one who inadvertently falls. When the Spirit convicts, the remedy is at hand: an immediate confession and renunciation of the sin, claiming the intercession of our Advocate, and the forgiving love of our Heavenly Father.

4. *The Spirit Witnesses to Our New Life.*

Christian assurance is not the product of logic or wishful thinking. "Those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit who makes you sons. And by him we cry, 'Abba, Father.' The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory" (Rom. 8:14-17).

Here again is something "better felt than telt." The witness of the Spirit is not an emotion, although it may result in great joy and peace. The witness of the Spirit is a deep and settled conviction that what God has promised He has done. It is the filial attitude, the assurance with which we call God our Father and know that we are His children.

5. *The Spirit Fills and Sanctifies.*

a. *The "filling" follows conversion.* We have already seen the crucial place of Pentecost in the unfolding plan of salvation. What happened in the hearts of the disciples at Pentecost must happen in us. It is always at a point in our lives following conversion. When Peter preached at Pentecost, multitudes were convicted of their sins and their need of Christ. "Brothers, what shall we do?" they asked. Peter's reply was "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call" (Acts 2:37-39).

Many today would make the gift of the Spirit's fullness identical with repentance and forgiveness. But the interposition of baptism shows this to be impossible.

Without putting too much weight on a metaphor, even

a biblical metaphor, it just stands to reason that birth and baptism are not the same; and birth must precede baptism. One must be born of the Spirit before he can be baptized with the Spirit. Jesus had said it before: "The world cannot . . . [receive him], because it neither sees him nor knows him" (John 14:17).

Right here is the reason the Holy Spirit came upon the 120 at Pentecost, not at that moment upon the 3,000 later converted. Still of the world at that time, those later converts did not know the regenerating power of the Spirit. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his" (Rom. 8:9, KJV). Brought into the young Church and continuing in "the apostles' teaching and . . . the fellowship," these people were in the prayer meeting described in Acts 4:24-33 and were among those who "were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly" (verse 31).

What is called the "Samaritan Pentecost" of Acts 8 shows the same fact: The Samaritans received with joy the gospel preached by Philip. They believed, and were baptized. When Peter and John came later from Jerusalem, they "prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit" (verse 15).

b. A personal Pentecost purifies as it empowers. At Caesarea, as the story unfolds in Acts 10-11 and 15, the essential meaning of the infilling of the Spirit becomes even more clear. Admittedly, there are some ambiguities about the spiritual status of Cornelius and his family. But they certainly were no ordinary unconverted people. They were "devout and God-fearing" (Acts 10:2). The angel assured Cornelius that his prayers and gifts to the poor had come up "as a remembrance before God" (verse 4). Peter recognized Cornelius as accepted with God and as one who knew the gospel. Even as Peter spoke, the "Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message" (verse 44). As at Pentecost, so here at Caesarea some 10 years later, the use of other languages

testified that the total gospel breaks over all barriers raised against it.

At the Council in Jerusalem described in Acts 15, some 20 years after Pentecost and 10 years after the events in Caesarea, Peter had occasion to recall again what had happened. The issue before the Council was the nature of the gospel to be preached to Gentiles. Peter told how God had dealt with him at this point and what had happened to Cornelius and his people: "God, who knows the heart, showed that he accepted them by giving the Holy Spirit to them, just as he did to us. He made no distinction between us and them, for he purified their hearts by faith" (verses 8-9). In passing, if the language gift had any essential connection with the infilling of the Spirit, Peter had but to mention it to make his point, for it also occurred in Caesarea. But he passed it entirely. What clinched for him the identity of the Caesarea and Jerusalem Pentecosts was the fact that in each case God "purified their hearts by faith."

Here the truth is spelled out that is implied in the very name of the Third Person of the Triune Godhead. He is the *Holy Spirit*. *Spirit* means power just as *flesh* is always the symbol of weakness. *Spirit* in the Bible is not the symbol of vagueness, weakness, or futility—as it is apt to be for us. *Spirit* in the Bible is the symbol of strength, of conquering power. "The Egyptians are men, and not God," said Isaiah; "and their horses flesh, and not spirit" (31:3). Man and his armor are flesh and therefore weak; God is Spirit and therefore all-powerful. "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you," said Jesus; "and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

As *Spirit* suggests power, *Holy* spells purity. The Spirit is, in Paul's terms, "the Spirit of holiness" (Rom. 1:4). "God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life. Therefore, he who rejects this instruction does not reject

man but God, who gives you his Holy Spirit" (1 Thess. 4: 7-8). It is the Spirit who sanctifies—sets us apart unto God and purifies our hearts (Rom. 15:16; 2 Thess. 2:13; 1 Pet. 1:2).

c. *What purity means.* In this post-Freudian age, people are apt to throw up their hands at the mention of heart purity. "What about the subconscious?" they ask. "Those nests of unseen horrors that lurk beneath the control of the will; that surface, if at all, in dreams or compulsive behavior or psychic disturbances of one sort or another?"

We are concerned here, however, with what God's Word means by a pure heart, and not the ways in which men might define it. When Jesus said, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God" (Matt. 5:8), He was not describing an impossibility. The call of St. Paul to the Corinthians is to "cleanse" themselves "from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Cor. 7:1, NASB). His prayer for the Thessalonians is that "God himself, the God of peace, [will] sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it" (1 Thess. 5:23-24). James puts an ancient psalm in a Christian context: "Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded" (4:8). Peter says, "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently" (1 Pet. 1:22, KJV). And John caps it off: "But if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin" (1 John 1:7, NASB).

How can these things be? Not through our own efforts or striving, any more than in the new birth. It is the Holy Spirit who makes real within us what was purchased for us

at Calvary when "Jesus also suffered outside the city gate to make his people holy through his own blood" (Heb. 13: 12). It is the "Spirit of life" who sets us "free from the law of sin and death" (Rom. 8:2).

Like a powerful neutralizer poured into a jar of acid, the Holy Spirit interpenetrates and saturates the yielded heart, destroying the acids of sinful self-love. Like light flooding into a partly illuminated room, the Holy Spirit enlightens every part of the soul. Like wealth bestowed on one of limited means, the Holy Spirit banishes our poverty and makes real to and in us the inexhaustible riches of Christ.

Holiness has many definitions among theologians, as we have noted. But the simplest and best is the personal, abiding fullness of the Holy Spirit, conditioning us to love God with all the heart, soul, mind, strength, and our neighbors as ourselves.

d. Kinds of "fullness." Reference has already been made to the work of the Holy Spirit in Old Testament times, and in the Gospels before Pentecost. Seventy-five years before people began to talk about the "charismatic" movement, Daniel Steele, the noted Methodist New Testament scholar at Boston University, wrote that there are three kinds of "fullness" in the Bible in respect to the Holy Spirit.

There is what Steele called "charismatic fullness," the power of the Spirit resting upon judges and prophets. There is "ecstatic fullness," as of Zacharias, father of John the Baptist; and Simeon at the dedication of Jesus (Luke 1:67; 2:27-32)—fullness of joy and praise. But, said Dr. Steele,

there is another kind of fullness of the Spirit which must imply entire sanctification—the permanent gracious presence in the soul of the Holy Spirit, in his fullness, not as an extraordinary gift, but as a person having the right of way through soul and body, having the keys even to the

inmost rooms, illuminating every closet and pervading every crevice of the nature, filling the entire being with holy love. This we may call the ethical fullness, or fullness of righteousness, to distinguish it from the ecstatic and the charismatic fullness.¹

e. Father, Son, and Spirit. A caution is in order here. The Holy Spirit is the Agent in our sanctification. But in His agency, Christ and the Father are both real and present. Sanctification is the will of God for His people (1 Thess. 4:3). Christ is the Pattern for our sanctification.

Jesus links Father, Son, and Spirit together in the Last Supper message to His disciples, to which reference has already been made. "If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he will give you another Counselor, to be with you for ever. . . . He dwells with you, and will be in you. . . . If a man loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him" (John 14: 15-23, RSV). "He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, whom God made our wisdom, our righteousness and sanctification and redemption" (1 Cor. 1:30, RSV).

Here, as at so many points, we owe an incalculable debt to John Wesley. Mr. Wesley never lost sight of the personal dimension in holiness, as we so often have. It was never for him a "thing," an "it." The confession of the sanctified heart is, he said, "Thou art my light, my holiness, my heaven. Through my union with Thee, I am full of light, of holiness, and happiness. But if I were left to myself, I should be nothing but sin, darkness, hell."²

All pride, self-sufficiency, and smugness is shattered here at a stroke. Holiness is not an attainment, an achievement in which we might possibly glory. It is a relationship, initiated and sustained by grace alone. In Harriet Auber's words:

*Our blest Redeemer, ere He breathed
His tender last farewell,
A Guide, a Comforter bequeathed,
With us to dwell.*

*He came in tongues of living flame,
To teach, convince, subdue;
All-powerful as the wind He came,
As viewless too.*

*He came sweet influence to impart,
A gracious, willing Guest,
While He can find one humble heart
Wherein to rest.*

*And His that gentle voice we hear,
Soft as the breath of even,
That checks each fault, that calms each fear,
And speaks of heaven.*

*And every virtue we possess,
And every victory won,
And every thought of holiness
Are His alone.*

*Spirit of purity and grace,
Our weakness pitying see;
O make our hearts Thy dwelling-place,
And worthier Thee.³*

6. *The Spirit Leads and Empowers.*

"All who follow the leading of God's Spirit are God's own sons," wrote the Apostle Paul (Rom. 8:14, Phillips).

Once in a while, the leading of the Holy Spirit is so direct and so powerful as to be virtually self-authenticating. One so led follows without hesitation.

But usually it is the "still small voice" that is the leading of the Lord. One so led will often hesitate. He will need to heed John's caution: "But do not trust any and every spirit,

my friends; test the spirits, to see whether they are from God, for among those who have gone out into the world there are many prophets falsely inspired" (1 John 4:1, NEB).

a. Testing impressions. Of one thing we may be sure, the Holy Spirit never leads anyone to do what is contrary to the Bible He has inspired. No imagined inner leading, however strong, that opens the door to sin can ever be right.

Many years ago, Martin Wells Knapp wrote a little classic entitled simply *Impressions*. The main part of the book is given to four tests to apply to impressions.

First, "Is it Scriptural—within the broad outlines of the will of God laid down in the Bible?"

Second, "Is it Reasonable?" Not that God may not sometimes lead in ways our reasons cannot understand; but He is not an unreasonable Master. He doesn't ask a mother with five small children to leave home and go to the mission field.

Third, "Is it morally Right?" One person justified a petty theft with the detached verse of scripture, "All things are yours." The Bible does not sanction and the Spirit does not lead into the morally offensive.

Finally, "Is it Providential?" Do the doors of providence open that would make possible the end toward which one seems to be led? Many have pushed through a closed door only to find that it had a spring lock when it snapped shut behind them.⁴

b. Great and enduring moments. Two more considerations quickly: How do you feel about it when you are closest to God in prayer and worship? Bertha Munro put it this way:

Trust your great moments. Our world is full of shifting standards and ideas. Many conflicting voices are calling. The great moments of your life are those moments when through all the confusion God got a message

through to you plain and certain. You saw things clearly in eternity's light, the light of reality. The devil will try, or has tried, to blur your vision with dust and cloudiness; but if you will be honest with yourself, you know that in those moments you saw truth. You must hold to them as to your life; they are your life.⁵

Everett Cattell made one other point in *The Spirit of Holiness*: "*Does the impression become an ever more weighty conviction?* For me this has been the heart of guidance. Many an idea has seized me with great enthusiasm. Then to my surprise it faded out over a short period of time. But the voice of God is in a conviction which grows with the passing of time and becomes inescapable and compelling."⁶

So rarely that one could almost say "never" does the Holy Spirit push one into a sudden decision. Satan drives—and the impulse is always, Now—this very moment, without prayer, evaluation, counsel. The Spirit leads—and there is always time to weigh, and ponder, and pray.

c. *The Spirit empowers.* Some of the very specific ways the Holy Spirit imparts power, we shall see when we turn to His gifts and graces. Here it is important to see and say that it is "not that we are sufficient of ourselves to claim anything as coming from us; our sufficiency is from God, who has qualified us to be ministers of a new covenant, not in a written code but in the Spirit; for the written code kills, but the Spirit gives life" (2 Cor. 3:5-6, RSV).

This does not mean that every minister becomes a Wesley or a Whitefield, or every layman a Müller or a John Mott. It means that each of us reaches his own maximum in service and achievement only to the degree that the Holy Spirit can qualify us and work in and through us for the glory of God.

Jesus had promised, "You are to be given power when the Holy Spirit has come to you. You will be witnesses to

me, not only in Jerusalem, not only throughout Judaea, not only in Samaria, but to the very ends of the earth!" (Acts 1:8, Phillips). The original language here is strong. It is not simply that we will give witness. It is that we will *be* witnesses—by lip and by life.

In and through it all is the emphasis of Paul to his young friend Timothy: "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (2 Tim. 1:7, KJV).

7. The Holy Spirit Is Our Resurrection Hope.

Both healing and resurrection are included in Paul's great statement in Rom. 8:11—"Moreover, if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells within you, then the God who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give new life to your mortal bodies through his indwelling Spirit" (NEB).

Jesus had said, "Because I live, you also will live," and Paul shows us that it is through the same life-giving Spirit who indwelt the Master and who dwells in us.



The Gifts of the Spirit

No study about God's Spirit in today's world would be complete without attention to the gifts of the Spirit and the fruit of the Spirit. In these two areas, the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit in our lives is clearly to be seen.

The gifts and fruit of the Spirit should always be held together. Only mischief results when they are separated. Together, they are two halves of a New Testament whole that will mark the Church as effective and genuine until Jesus comes again.

We turn first to the gifts of the Spirit.

1. *Differing Interpretations Are Not Personal Attacks.*

One point is always necessary when introducing a discussion of spiritual gifts. For many years, I taught college courses in logic, the principles and practice of correct thinking. Among the fallacies that threaten clear thinking is the fallacy of attempting to refute a theory by attacking the motives or judging the character of those who hold that theory. This is known technically as the "argumentum ad hominem." It is always wrong.

But there is a companion error. It is the fallacy of supposing that to discuss a theory means a personal attack on those who hold that theory. Nothing could be farther from the truth. A man may be better than his creed. On the other hand, he may not be as good. In either case, the creed may be examined—even critically, if necessary—without implying any criticism of the life and character of the person who holds that creed.

I say this here because, in talking about the gifts of the Spirit, it is impossible to avoid points of differing interpretation. To the extent to which one may differ with warm-hearted and sincere Christian brothers and sisters who hold other theologies, it must always be regarded as a lovers' quarrel.

The fact is, all of us must test our theories by scripture. The Bible must be given first place in matters of faith and practice. To follow an "inner light" contrary to the written Word is sooner or later to blunder into outer darkness.

2. *What Are the "Charismata"?*

The New Testament word for spiritual gifts is *charismata*. This is the Greek word from which we get the current English term *charismatic*. *Charismata* is the plural of *charisma*, a word which has come over into English as a term for the charm, glamor, winsomeness, or personal magnetism of

some popular public figure. This is a far cry from its meaning in the New Testament, where it literally means "a grace gift" and stands for any of the spiritual endowments Christians have in varying degree and kind. *Charisma* and *charismata*, singular and plural, are used 17 times in the New Testament; 16 times by Paul, and once by Peter. They are not the usual words for *gift* or *gifts*, which are *dorean* (gift) and *domata* (gifts).

a. *General Gifts*

In the New Testament use of the term, all Christians are charismatic. There are two *charismata* conferred on all who receive Christ as their personal Saviour.

(1) The first such *charisma* is justification. Paul wrote in Rom. 5:15-16, "The gift [*charisma*] is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God's grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many! Again, the gift of God is not like the result of one man's sin: The judgment followed one sin and brought condemnation, but the gift [*charisma*] followed many trespasses and brought justification." What a precious spiritual gift God has given us all in forgiveness of sins and reconciliation with himself!

(2) The second universal Christian spiritual gift is eternal life. Rom. 6:23 says, "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift [*charisma*] of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (KJV).

These two are the indispensable gifts. If one does not have the gifts of justification and eternal life, he may be a Christian in name, but he is none of Christ's in point of fact (Rom. 8:9).

(3) Paul speaks of four other general *charismata*. The apostle's own ministry, first by personal presence and now by the written word, is a spiritual gift: "I long to see you so

that I may impart to you some spiritual gift [*charisma*] to make you strong" (Rom. 1:11).

(4) The manifestations of God's mercy to His people are *charismata*. It is in this context that Paul wrote, "God's gifts [*charismata*] and his call are irrevocable" (Rom. 11:29).

(5) A particular station or condition of life is cited as one of the *charismata* in 1 Cor. 7:7—"I wish that all men were as I am. But each man has his own gift [*charisma*] from God."

(6) Answered prayer is a *charisma* indispensable to the work of God (2 Cor. 1:11).

b. "Service" Gifts

In addition to the general gifts there are special gifts of the Spirit. It is with these that most interest has developed.

In 1 Corinthians 12, Paul gives three principles that govern the distribution of the individual, special, or "service" gifts of the Spirit:

(1) All are given for profit or value, and the measure of the worth of a gift is the degree to which it serves the interests of the whole Church (1 Cor. 12:7; 14:6, 19).

(2) Different gifts are given to different persons according to the sovereign will of the Spirit (1 Cor. 12:11-18, 28-30).

(3) The variety of gifts given by the one Spirit unifies the Church or body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:24-27).

3. The Romans List

The Apostle Paul gives two lists of what might be called special or service gifts of the Spirit. The first is in Rom. 12:6-8: "We have different gifts [*charismata*], according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him

encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully."

There are seven gifts listed here:

a. "Prophesying," or "prophecy" as in the KJV, is repeated also in the Corinthian list. It is one of the gifts that is apt to be most confusing to us.

To the modern ear, "prophesying" suggests predicting, foretelling the future. It meant much more in New Testament times, as Paul clearly states when he defines it in 1 Cor. 14:3 as speaking "to men for their strengthening, encouragement and comfort." It might on occasion include foretelling. It much more often meant "forthtelling" the word of God to those who need to hear. The Church has many hundreds of men and women eminently gifted in speaking to people for their "edification, exhortation, and comfort" (1 Cor. 14:3, KJV).

b. "Serving" is the second gift in the Romans list. *Service* is *diakonia* in the New Testament. The KJV translates it "ministry." It is the word from which *deacon* and *deaconess* come. It usually refers to ministering to the physical needs of people, as for example in Acts 6:1-2, where it is translated "daily ministration" (KJV) and involved the serving of tables. Thank God for the multitude of laymen who have the special gift of serving! May their tribe increase!

c. "Teaching," the third special gift, is instructing others, grounding them in the truth. In teaching, two gifts from the Corinthian list are closely related: "the word of knowledge" and "the word of wisdom" (1 Cor. 12:8, KJV). These are gifts all church schools people may properly covet.

d. Exhortation or encouragement is next. This is our English translation of the New Testament word *paraklesis*—

the same root from which *Paraclete* or *Comforter* is derived. It literally means "going to another person's help" in whatever way he may need that help. Phillips translates it "stimulating of the faith." Many times I have had occasion to thank God for those who have and use this gift of encouragement! We need it more today than ever.

e. Giving or sharing is the fifth spiritual gift. This gift is to be practiced with generosity. Gifted along this line or not, none of us are excused from tithing and giving offerings. But I have known a few who seemed to have the gift of giving in higher measure than the rest of us.

f. "Leadership" or ruling is the next gift of the Spirit in Paul's Roman list. It is literally "taking the lead" in the efforts of a group. Some leaders are no doubt born. Others become leaders by the endowment of God's Holy Spirit.

g. "Showing mercy," the last gift on the Roman list, is compassion or concern—kindness to others. Phillips translates it "feels sympathy." It probably refers to what the psychologist would now call empathy, the rare but important power to put oneself in the place of another.

4. *The Corinthian List*

Paul's second major listing of *charismata* is found in 1 Cor. 12:7-11: "Now to each man the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. To one there is given through the Spirit the ability to speak with wisdom, to another the ability to speak with knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another the ability to speak in different kinds of languages [fn.], and to still another the interpretation of languages [fn.]"

There are nine gifts listed here, paralleling broadly the nine graces of the Spirit in Gal. 5:22-23.

a. "Ability to speak with wisdom" is the first. "The word of wisdom" (KJV) is *logos sopherias* in the New Testament. Both terms are rich in meaning. *Logos* means variously "word, speech, teaching, doctrine, message, communication." *Sopheria* is defined as "insight, understanding, judgment, good sense, sanity, ability to grasp the real essence of things"—"to get to the heart of it," as we would say.

b. Second is "the ability to speak with knowledge" or "the word of knowledge" (KJV). This is *logos gnoseos*. *Gnosis* means the apprehension of facts, recognition of truth, or "coming to know." "The power to express knowledge" is one translation; "the ability to speak intelligently" is another.

These first two gifts on the Corinthian list are closely related to teaching and prophecy or speaking to men to edification, exhortation, and comfort. Jesus taught that the Holy Spirit is to be our Teacher and guide us into all truth (John 14:26; 16:15). He therefore is the Source of all spiritual wisdom and knowledge.

This does not mean that the Holy Spirit acts independently of natural abilities and aptitudes. But natural abilities and aptitudes fall short in the area of spiritual insight and knowledge without these gifts of the Spirit (1 Cor. 2:7-16).

c. The third spiritual gift is faith. The context shows that this is not saving or sanctifying faith, but achieving faith. It is faith of the kind Jesus described in Matt. 17:20—the "grain of mustard seed" (KJV) kind of faith that can remove mountains of difficulty. All over the Church, people whose names may never appear in a directory of outstanding spiritual leaders are exercising the gift of faith as they face the challenge of their circumstances.

d. "Gifts of healing," or literally here and in verse 28, "gifts of healings," are a fourth kind of gift. Both "gifts" and "healings" are in the plural in the Greek New Testa-

ment. The point is clear: This is not a generalized "gift" that can bring healing to all who come, but refers to specific acts of God in divine healing as promised in Jas. 5:14-15, "Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over [about, not above] him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up."

Here again is the kind of gift that is practiced throughout the Church in many unobtrusive ways. All healing is ultimately of God. The father of modern surgery, Ambrose Paré, said, "I tended him; God healed him." But there are those gracious times of supernatural touch when faith touches the seamless robe and the finger of God is extended to heal.

e. "Miraculous powers" or "working of miracles" (KJV) is fifth on the Corinthian list. The original New Testament words for "working" and "miracles" are the words from which we get *energy* and *dynamo* or *dynamite*: *energemata dunameon*.

Dynamis is one of the often used words in the New Testament. It is almost always used to describe what brings results that could not be produced by natural agents or means. Gal. 3:5 uses the word to describe miracles of grace in human lives as well as physical miracles.

I have little patience with the kind of emphasis on the miraculous that results in the "Can you top this?" sort of anecdote. Filling teeth and lengthening the legs of people who have never walked with a limp is nothing but "Mickey Mouse" compared with the power that transforms lives. But miracles are real, and the Spirit of God is the Source of the energetic power that brings them to pass.

f. Prophecy is the one gift common to both the Roman and the Corinthian lists.

g. The seventh spiritual gift is "the ability to distin-

guish between spirits" or "discerning of spirits" (KJV). There is a reason it falls next to the two that follow, for in our day discernment in relation to the language gifts is a prime need. The KJV translation of Prov. 25:14 sounds an important warning: "Whoso boasteth himself of a false gift is like clouds and wind without rain." It is the discernment of spirits that enables us to tell the true from the false.

h. "Different kinds of languages" (the footnote rendering of NIV) and its companion

i. "The interpretation of languages." The last are the two gifts in the Corinthian list that have given rise to most discussion. The fact that they are totally missing from the Roman list says something.

5. *The Language Gifts*

I have used the term "languages" instead of the more familiar "tongues" for a reason. In our day and time, the English word *tongues* has become so identified with the practice of "unknown tongues" that it is almost impossible for us to escape this connotation. Yet *tongues* in 1611, when the KJV was translated, meant just what we now mean by *languages*. Jesus spoke to Paul on the road to Damascus in the Hebrew tongue or language (Acts 26:14), and when Paul addressed the mob in Jerusalem he spoke to them in "the Hebrew tongue" or language (Acts 21:40, KJV). John saw a great multitude in heaven "of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues" or languages (Rev. 7:9, KJV).

We carry no cudgels and have no stones to throw at those whose worship of the Lord differs from our own. We are concerned only to know what the Bible teaches at this point. Not for a moment would one impugn the motives or Christian character of brothers and sisters in the Lord who practice speaking in unknown tongues, or "glossolalia" as

it is called. This is their privilege, and for one I would not forbid them.

However, the misunderstandings that gather around this point are so widespread and the biblical evidence so misinterpreted that we must meet the question forthrightly. Let us consider the following points:

a. There were no unknown tongues at Pentecost. Acts 2:7-13 records the amazement of the assembled crowd—not that they were hearing what they could not understand except by interpretation, but that they were hearing “the wonderful works of God” (KJV) in the languages and dialects of the various Mediterranean areas from which they came.

In fact, the language gift at Pentecost was for the very purpose of preventing “unknown tongues.” The native language of the Galilean disciples (Acts 2:7) was a distinctive form of Aramaic easily recognized by those living in other parts of Palestine (Matt. 26:73). But the Parthians, Medes, Elamites, Mesopotamians, Judeans, Cappadocians, and men of Pontus, Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, Libya, Rome, Crete, and Arabia all heard in their native dialects. If the disciples had spoken in their own native dialect, they would have been speaking an unknown tongue to multitudes in that cosmopolitan crowd.

The nature of the languages in Acts 10 and 19 is not described, but there is no particular reason to believe that it differed from those of Acts 2. In all, Acts records three instances of language gifts in 30 years of New Testament Church history—hardly the sort of preoccupation with “tongues” that has often been attributed to Luke.

b. While we read Acts before we come to 1 Corinthians in the New Testament, in the order of writing, 1 Corinthians came before Acts by about nine years.

Luke, the “beloved physician” who wrote the Book of Acts, was a close companion of Paul and had been sent

with Titus to Corinth as Paul's representative (2 Cor. 8:18). Luke knew what was being done at Corinth, the "problem church" of the New Testament and the only one in which there is any reference to glossolalia. The fact that three times in Acts 2, Luke insists that the languages of Pentecost were understandable human languages (vv. 6, 8, and 11) may well be his quiet and noncontroversial way of saying, "This is what the New Testament gift of languages is really like."

6. 1 Corinthians 14

Does this mean that Luke and Paul differ about what the gifts of language and interpretation really are? Not necessarily. What it means is that we have probably misunderstood what Paul was talking about in 1 Corinthians 14.

How, then, should we understand 1 Corinthians 14? There are two major ways of interpreting the problem that plagued the Corinthians at this point. One is that the language gifts of Corinth involved speaking languages in which neither the speakers nor the hearers know what is being said apart from a parallel gift of interpretation. The other is that the languages spoken in the Corinthian church, while unfamiliar to a majority of the congregation, were languages that could be understood and interpreted by those acquainted with them.

There is a great deal in 1 Corinthians 14 to support the second view. Let me list the points:

a. The word "unknown" does not occur in the Greek New Testament. It was added by the KJV translators. This is shown by the fact that it is *italicized* in most printings of the KJV.

b. Since the context is not private worship but group worship, if one speaks an unfamiliar language, "no one understands" (v. 2). This most naturally means "no one *present* understands." "He utters mysteries with his [human]

spirit"—the mysteries revealed by Jesus (Matt. 13:11; Luke 8:10) and made known by the apostles in the preaching of the gospel (Rom. 11:25; 16:25; 1 Cor. 2:7; 4:1; 15:51; Eph. 1:9; 3:3; Col. 1:26; etc.).

c. The result of such speaking is to edify the speaker but not the hearers, something that could hardly happen if the speaker didn't know what he was saying.

d. "I would that ye all spake" other languages, "but rather that ye prophesied" (v. 5, KJV) is the familiar New Testament way of comparing values. Jesus said, "Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life" (John 6:27, KJV). This does not forbid us earning our daily bread, but stresses the greater value of spiritual food. "Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities" (1 Tim. 5:23, KJV) did not forbid Timothy to drink water, but encouraged the medicinal use of wine in his case.

e. Paul appeals to the proper function of language, which is to communicate. Using unfamiliar languages makes the speakers and hearers "barbarians" (KJV) to each other (vv. 10-11). "Voice" (KJV) is the translation of another Greek word for *language*.

f. The idea of a special unknown prayer language is based on vv. 14-15. It is supposed that Paul is saying, If I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prays, but my understanding is uncomprehending, without understanding (v. 14). But the original term *akarpos* does not mean "without understanding," "uncomprehending." It means "without fruit," "furnishing nothing to others," as Vincent says in his *Word Studies in the New Testament*.¹

Kenneth Wuest properly translates the phrase, "My intellect confers no benefit upon others." It is not that the speaker in an unfamiliar language does not understand what he says. It is that his understanding does not help anyone

else. So Paul concludes, Whenever I pray or sing, it will be in languages that can be understood.

g. Three times in verses 16, 23, and 24, Paul states his concern that the "unlearned" (KJV) will be confused when they hear languages they do not understand. There would seem to be only one reason for singling out the "unlearned" for this concern. It would be that an educated person would at least have a chance of recognizing one or more of the languages being used.

h. Did Paul thank God that he spoke unknown tongues more than all the Corinthians (v. 18)? This could hardly be, since he immediately says that "in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words" in an unfamiliar language (v. 19, KJV).

What he says is, "I speak more languages than all of you." The same comparative (*mallon*) is used by Paul in Gal. 4:27, "The desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband" (KJV). Here the meaning is clearly more in number and not more in degree.

i. The reference to Isa. 28:11-12 in v. 21 shows that Paul was talking about unfamiliar languages. The other tongues and other lips are Assyrian and Babylonian languages spoken by the invaders whose coming was God's judgment on ancient Israel.

j. That languages are a sign, not to those who believe, but to those who believe not, is because the message conveyed in those languages is intelligible. If it is not intelligible, then so far from being a sign, the words produce only scorn or confusion (vv. 22-23).

k. Is the use of unfamiliar languages therefore to be permitted indiscriminately? Doesn't Paul say, "Forbid not to speak with tongues," (v. 39, KJV), or unfamiliar languages? Yet Paul himself does forbid speaking in tongues (or un-

familiar languages) if two or at the most three have already spoken (v. 27), if there is no interpreter present (v. 28), or if the would-be speaker is a woman (v. 34). The simple observance of these three limitations would go far toward solving most of the problems created by the practice of glossolalia today.

A perfectly possible alternate translation of verse 39 is, "Do not hinder [prophecy] by speaking in unfamiliar languages." This eliminates the discontinuity present in our traditional translation and makes the passage perfectly coherent: "Therefore, my brothers, be eager to prophesy [speak to others for edification, exhortation, and comfort], and do not hinder by speaking in unfamiliar languages. But everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way."²

7. *What Glossolalia Is*

But what about those who in our century do practice speaking in unknown tongues? I have no doubt in my own mind that many find speaking or "praying" in tongues a real source of blessing. It gives them an emotional release. They find in it a devotional aid that to them is very meaningful.

Within the last 20 years, there has developed an entirely new system of piety based on the practice of speaking or praying in unknown tongues. I do not question the motivation of those who follow it. I can only say that there is little if anything in the Scriptures to warrant it. I can receive those who speak in tongues and who manifest the fruit of the Spirit as Christian brothers and sisters. But this does not prove that speaking in unknown tongues is an authentic spiritual gift—not because it isn't practiced by good people, but because there isn't all that much in the Bible to validate it.

Studies of glossolalia as practiced both within and outside evangelical Christianity make it clear that the phenome-

non is a perfectly normal human activity which can be understood psychologically without invoking either divine or demonic powers. It rarely if ever occurs in people filled with the Spirit unless they have been exposed to the teaching that it is the "biblical evidence of the baptism in the Spirit" or desirable as a "language of prayer and praise."

But even if glossolalia were taken at face value, there is no New Testament justification for the emphasis currently given to it. Nothing in the Scriptures shows any single gift of the Spirit to be the "be-all and end-all" of devotion and spirituality. If, as Paul says in 1 Cor. 12:14-24, the whole body were eye, or ear—or tongue—the result would not be a functioning body but a monstrosity. Yet insistence—overt or implied—that glossolalia is essential to spirituality is just such unwarranted overemphasis.

But there very well may be genuine language gifts today as at other times in the history of the Church. All over the world, missionaries are telling the wonderful works of God in the languages of the people to whom they preach. They did not acquire these languages right out of the blue. But in hundreds of instances they have been able to communicate the gospel far sooner and more effectively than they ever could with unaided human skills or learning.

In fact, most of the gifts listed both in Romans and in 1 Corinthians are related to human abilities. They are subject to development and enlargement under the Spirit's power. Rarely does speaking to men to edification, exhortation, and comfort—the word of wisdom and the word of knowledge—come fully developed instantaneously. Serving, teaching, encouraging, giving, leadership—all involve skills that are acquired as well as powers divinely imparted.

Even instances of divine healing are often cases where the healing process is greatly shortened. They are not always instantaneous. It is with us as with the boy described

in the Gospels, from that hour he began to get well. The crisis was past. Healing had begun.

God is the God of the supernatural. But He doesn't always come in the earthquake, the thunder, or the lightning. Often He comes in the "still small voice." It is no less important to recognize His coming in the "still small voice" than it is to see Him in the earthquake, the thunder, or the lightning.

Have you thanked God for the gifts of the Spirit He has given you? Have you recognized them in your life? Are you faithfully using the gifts Christ has given you to build up His body, the Church? These are the questions that are most important in relation to the gifts of the Spirit.



The Fruit of the Spirit

We must turn now from the gifts of the Spirit to the fruit of the Spirit.

Were one to compare gifts and fruit, the New Testament would clearly show the fruit to be more important than gifts. Nowhere is it said, "By their gifts you shall know them," or, "Every branch in Me that bears no gifts He takes away." It is said by none other than Jesus, "By their fruit you will recognize them" (Matt. 7:16, 20); and, "He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he trims clean so that it will be even more fruitful" (John 15:2).

Spiritual fruit is mentioned a number of times in the New Testament (John 15:1-5; Rom. 1:13; 6:22; 7:4; Eph. 5:9; Phil. 1:11; 4:17; Jas. 3:17-18). But the most important passage is Gal. 5:22-23, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law."

On the face of it, we are struck with the strange grammar of verse 22. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience . . ." It sounds as if the apostle should have said, "The *fruits* of the Spirit *are* love, joy, peace, patience . . ."

But the grammar is no accident. It can be understood in two different ways.

1. *The Fruit as Indivisible*

First, the fruit of the Spirit is an indivisible cluster of graces that are never separated. There are not nine separate fruits of the Spirit. There is one undivided cluster which taken altogether constitutes the fruit of the Spirit.

Here the contrast with the gifts of the Spirit is striking. The principle underlying the distribution of the gifts of the Spirit is that to one there is given one gift, to another another gift, to a third still another. The Spirit gives to each as He determines (1 Cor. 12:7-11, 29-30).

Not so the fruit. The Spirit does not manifest himself in one as love, in another as joy, in a third as peace, and so through the cluster. The fruit is not divided. The graces go together.

There is another contrast. Gifts may be received or kept without the Spirit. The fruit is never without its divine Root. In 1-Cor. 13:1-3, Paul mentions the gifts of languages, prophecy, knowledge, faith, and giving as possible without love. "If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging

cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy, and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing."

But love is "poured out . . . into our hearts by the Holy Spirit" (Rom. 5:5). Where there is no love, the Spirit is absent. Without the Spirit, on the other hand, there is no fruit of the Spirit. The principle Jesus stated is, "By their fruit you will recognize them" (Matt. 7:20).

2. *The Fruit as Love*

But there is another explanation for the grammar of these verses. It is that what Paul means is that "the fruit of the Spirit is love [period]." What follows are the dimensions of love outlined by S. D. Gordon in this way:

Joy is love singing.

Peace is love resting.

Patience is love enduring.

Kindness is love sharing.

Goodness is love's character.

Faithfulness is love's habit.

Gentleness is love's touch.

Self-control is love in charge.

Not of least importance is to note that two are expressions of feeling; six are descriptions of character and action.

This is just to say, Here is love's content. These are the dimensions of God's kind of love. Without such content, "love" is just a word. Call it *chesed*, *agape*, *amour*, *amore*, *liebe*—in any language you wish. It is but sound in the air or marks on paper until it is translated into the language of life. Then only—to apply a verse from another context—does the word become flesh and dwell among us.

Over and over—in a score of ways—the New Testament lets us know that love is the basis of all. The very chapters

that describe the gifts of the Spirit serve as a frame for the great "Hymn to Love" in 1 Corinthians 13: "Love is patient and kind; love is not jealous or boastful; it is not arrogant or rude. Love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things" (vv. 4-7, RSV).

"Make love your aim," says the apostle (1 Cor. 14:1, RSV). To aim at anything else is forever to miss the mark. Such love is more than an emotion; it is a commitment. It is more than feeling; it is caring. Love is not static and changeless. It is dynamic and growing.

The context of Paul's listing of the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5 is a contrast with "the works of the flesh" (KJV). "Fruit" contrasted with "works" is, like the grammar, no accident. "Works" are complete, finished, the moment they are done. Fruit is organic. It appears in bud, in flower, fully formed fruit, and finally mature and ripe. But it is growing. It may and must be cultivated.

3. *God's Measure of Spirituality*

Since it is the fruit of the Spirit, we have here God's measure of spirituality. There are many different ideas as to who the more spiritual people are. Some will have it that the plainest and dowdiest in dress and appearance must be the most spiritual. But one can be proud of plainness as well as proud of apparel.

Others have thought the loudest shouter and the highest jumper were the most spiritual. But some have jumped high who haven't walked straight when they were on the ground.

Others will have it that the most extreme notions, dogmatically held, are evidence of rugged spirituality. The longer the list of do's and don'ts, the more spiritual the per-

son thinks himself to be. But the rugged quickly becomes ragged, and extremism tends to make a caricature out of Christianity.

The gloomiest, most ascetic, antisocial, and even unfriendly have sometimes been esteemed the more spiritual. It is hard to see how such can be true followers of the One whose reputation was that He was a Friend of publicans and sinners.

For some, the busiest are the most spiritual. They are ceaselessly occupied with what A. W. Tozer rightly termed "religious squirrel cages." They get lots of exercise but make little headway.

In some circles today, the one who talks the most—particularly if neither he nor anyone else knows what he is saying—is esteemed the most spiritual.

These verses cut through all such nonsense. Their message is clear. The most spiritual Christians are the most loving, joyful, serene, patient, kind, good, faithful, gentle, and temperate.

4. *God's Kind of Love*

God's kind of love is joyful. This is not frothy emotionalism. It is not the "cheery chumminess of certain brands of piety, the synthetic smile, the ostentatious chirpiness that knows all the answers by being insensitive to all the problems."¹ It is the "joy of the Lord," the joy that comes from confidence that in final control of the universe is the wisdom of a loving Heavenly Father, that the One who sits on the throne is the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

God's kind of love is serene. It is peace with God by His reconciling act of justification (Rom. 5:1). More, it is "the peace of God, which transcends all understanding," that guards our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus (Phil. 4:7).

Peace is inner composure; being able to live with ourselves instead of fighting ourselves; being comfortable with oneself. "The peace of God is not glassy calm," said Peter Forsyth, "but mighty confidence."²

God's kind of love is patient. "Longsuffering" is the old-fashioned word for it. Love "suffereth long, and is kind" (KJV). Some suffer long, but are less than kind. It is probably dangerous to pray for patience. "Tribulation [or trouble] worketh patience" is the KJV for it. But patience is the capacity to endure whether or no.

God's kind of love is kindly. The old farmer said, "When I got religion, even the cat knew it." This is the way it should be. The original term here means to be of good heart, well disposed. Love never gives needless pain.

God's kind of love is good. *Goodness* is a word to underline in relation to love. Love must never compromise morality. To compromise the morally good in the name of love is to miss its meaning entirely. Love is not soft or indulgent toward moral evil.

God's kind of love is faithful. The "crown of life" is promised, not to the successful, but to the faithful. Success may depend on factors over which we have no control. Faithfulness is an evidence of the Spirit.

God's kind of love is gentle and meek. Meekness is almost inevitably confused in the modern mind with weakness. It is, in fact, the very opposite. Gentleness is strength under control. The Greek philosopher Plato used the term *meek* to describe the sheep dog: gentle with the flock; fierce with the wolves.

God's kind of love is temperate, self-controlled. It avoids excess. It leads to disciplined living. It represents mind and soul in control of the body; as Paul said, "I am my body's sternest master, for fear that when I have preached to others I should myself be disqualified" (1 Cor. 9:27, Phillips).

5. God's Requirement

How does love like this come to reign in our hearts? Paul gives the answer in Gal. 5:24, the verse that immediately follows: "Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires" (RSV).

"Flesh" in passages such as this and Romans 8 does not mean "body." The "works of the flesh" (KJV) listed in Gal. 5:19-21 are predominantly sins of the soul, the inner life: idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions, and envy. "You are not in the flesh," says Paul in Rom. 8:9, "you are in the Spirit, if the Spirit of God really dwells in you" (RSV).

Paul gives us the key to the life of love in the words "belong to Christ Jesus." This is the strongest expression of ownership. It is, literally, "those of Christ Jesus." How are we Christ's? The Bible answers that we are Christ's in three ways:

a. We are Christ's by creation. "Through him [the Eternal Word] all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made" (John 1:3). He made us.

b. We are Christ's by redemption, by the purchase of His cross. "For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect" (1 Pet. 1:18-19).

c. We are Christ's by consecration, by the voluntary surrender of redeemed selves to the sanctifying and sustaining will of God. "Once for all offer yourselves to God as those who, though once dead, now have Life" (Rom. 6:13, TCNT). "Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer yourselves as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—which is your spiritual worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be

transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will" (Rom. 12:1-2).

We must never forget the divine grace that freely gives the Holy Spirit. Neither should we forget that God pours His Spirit's fullness into vessels emptied by a consecration that is complete.

Frances Ridley Havergal was the daughter of a rector in the Church of England. Her life was short and she suffered much physically. But her gifts were many and she has left a heritage of sacred verse that has blessed the Church for over a century. Early in her life, she said, she heard a prayer she could never forget:

*Lord, take my lips, and speak through them;
take my mind, and think through it;
take my heart, and set it on fire.*³

She came to see, as she said, that "He who made every power can use every power—memory, judgment, imagination, quickness of apprehension or insight; specialties of musical, poetical, oratorical, or artistic faculty; special tastes for reasoning, philosophy, history, natural science, or natural history—all these may be dedicated to Him, sanctified by Him, and used by Him. Whatever He has given, He will use, if we will let Him."⁴

From her own experience she tells us that "it was Advent Sunday, December, 1873, that I first saw clearly the blessedness of true consecration. I saw it as a flash of electric light; and what you see, you cannot unsee. There must be full surrender before there can be true blessedness. God admits you by the one into the other. He himself showed me this. First, I was shown the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth from all sin; and then it was made plain to me that He who had cleansed me, had power to keep clean; so I ut-

terly yielded myself to Him, and utterly trusted Him to keep me."⁵

The path of consecration is clearly traced in Frances Havergal's great hymn we sing often so thoughtlessly:

*Take my life, and let it be
Consecrated, Lord, to Thee.
Take my hands, and let them move
At the impulse of Thy love.*

*Take my feet, and let them be
Swift and beautiful for Thee.
Take my voice, and let me sing,
Always, only, for my King.*

*Take my lips, and let them be
Filled with messages for Thee.
Take my silver and my gold;
Not a mite would I withhold.*

*Take my will, and make it Thine;
It shall be no longer mine.
Take my heart, it is Thine own!
It shall be Thy royal throne.*

*Take my love; my God, I pour
At Thy feet its treasure store.
Take myself, and I will be
Ever, only, all for Thee.*

Such a yielding leads to what Thomas Kelly, the Quaker philosopher-mystic, called "Life from the Center." The concluding lines of his *Testament of Devotion* are memorable: "Life from the Center is a life of unhurried peace and power. It is simple. It is serene. It is amazing. It is triumphant. It is radiant. It takes no time, but it occupies all our time. And it makes our life programs new and overcoming. We need not get frantic. He is at the helm. And when our little day is done we lie down quietly in peace, for all is well."⁶

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**GOD'S
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1. Introducing the Holy Spirit
2. The Holy Spirit in the Old Testament
3. The Holy Spirit in the Gospels
Before the Last Supper
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