

John 1:29
Rom 1:20
Col. 2:9

T H E H O L Y S P I R I T

Eph 6:17

Introduction

So little is known concerning the work of the Holy Spirit. Much error surrounds this important subject. Even in the Lord's church we are grossly ignorant of the Spirit's activity in the divine realm. Perhaps, some are like the twelve men from Ephesus who declared that they hadn't heard "whether there be any Holy Spirit." (Acts 19:2).

Let us notice some pertinent matters concerning the Holy Spirit. This outline is presented with a hope that we shall all be better informed and more appreciative of the great work the Spirit has in the scheme of redemption.

I. POINTS TO REMEMBER:

1. It is preferable to speak of this member of the God-head as Holy Spirit not Holy Ghost. Many who have used the King James' "Ghost" have come to think of the Holy Spirit as some glorified "it" and not as a distinct being in Deity. *Eternal S. always been*
2. John 14:16-17 and John 16:7-14 definitely teach that the Holy Spirit is a person and not an inanimate object. *John 9:14; Eph. 3:17; John 2:1 outpouring; Isa. 63:10; not w/ N.S. fulfilled in Acts 2;*
3. Most important work of the Spirit was in guiding the apostles "into all truth." (John 14:25-26; 16:13; II Peter 1:20-21). *Eph 4:30 person grieves H. S.; 2 Cor 5:18 = led by S. I quench not; Acts 5:32 = said from when*
4. The Holy Spirit is referred to approximately 264 times in the New Testament alone. *Didn't begin in New Test. for the always been.*
5. Some of the most prevalent errors are:
 - a. "No such thing as the Holy Spirit"--Jehovah's Witnesses; Modernists.
 - b. "The Holy Spirit is the Word of God."--Some brethren.
 - c. The "Direct operation" theory.--Holiness. (Romans 1:16; 2:11; II Thessalonians 2:14).
 - d. "The Holy Spirit is Christian Science."--Mary Baker Eddy.
 - e. "Baptism of the Holy Spirit is still in force."--Various groups.
 - f. "Miraculous gifts of the Spirit are still in vogue."--Pentecostal groups. *Mk 16:20; Rom 15:17-19; Heb 2:1-4*

II. A DISCUSSION OF SOME INTERESTING PASSAGES:

1. Matthew 3:13-17 (Baptism of Jesus); Matthew 28:18-20 (Great Commission); and II Corinthians 13:14 all teach that the Holy Spirit is a divine being in

Deity. God, Christ and the Holy Spirit compose the God-head. (Acts 17:29; Colossians 2:9; Romans 1:20).

2. The importance of the Spirit's place in the plan of salvation is clearly evident when we realize:
 - a. The kingdom did not come until the Spirit came. Acts 1:8; 2:4; Luke 24:49.
 - b. The Word of God was inspired by the Holy Spirit: II Peter 1:20-21; I Corinthians 2:13.
 - c. The Apostles were guided "into all Truth" by the Spirit: John 16:13.
 - d. The prayers of Christians are aided by the Holy Spirit: Romans 8:26.
 - e. The Holy Spirit is given to Christians as a "down-payment" (an earnest) on eternal life; II Corinthians 1:22; Ephesians 1:13-14.
 - f. Hebrews 9:14; Genesis 1:2; I Peter 1:10-12; II Peter 1:21; Acts 7:51; all teach that the Holy Spirit is eternal; that is, has been from before the beginning.
3. I Thessalonians 5:19: "Quench not the Spirit." It is possible for each Christian to allow the Spirit to be quenched in his life. The early Christians were sometimes guilty of this by refusing to adhere to the teachings of Spirit filled prophets. (We stumble at this point by refusing to heed the pleadings of the Holy Spirit through the Word.)
4. Ephesians 4:30; "Grieve not the Spirit": We can grieve the Holy Spirit by not living properly. I am confident that our ignorance concerning His work sorely grieves the Spirit. This passage definitely teaches the personality of this member of Deity.
5. I Corinthians 6:19-20 teaches a most sublime ideal: The Christian's Body Is The Temple Of The Holy Spirit! Brethren, we need to carefully guard our actions, habits and desires lest we contaminate "the temple of the Holy Spirit." May God help us to "cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."

6. Romans 8:16.

III. ONE OF THE MAJOR CAUSES FOR MISUNDERSTANDING CONCERNING THE HOLY SPIRIT IS DUE TO A LACK OF DISCERNING BETWEEN: (1) BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT (2) MIRACULOUS GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT, and (3) THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. Let us notice each one in the order mentioned.

Administered by the Lord

1. Baptism of the Holy Spirit: Matthew 3:11; Acts 2; Acts 10. The only recorded accounts of Holy Spirit Baptism are found in Acts chapters 2 and 10. The apostles on Pentecost and at the house of Cornelius. It must be remembered that baptism of the Holy Spirit was a promise (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4) and not a command. It was to be administered by the Lord ^{John 1:33} and not by man--- the opposite being true of the baptism of the Great Commission (Matthew 28; Mark 16). A promise cannot be obeyed; it is fulfilled. The Lord fulfilled this promise only twice. What was the purpose of Holy Spirit baptism? To save? Never! *mentioned only twice in N.T. Acts 1 Acts 10*

On the day of Pentecost the purpose of the apostles' reception of this baptism ("over-whelming, out-pouring") was to usher in the kingdom with power (Acts 1:8; Luke 24:49; Mark 9:1; Acts 2:4).

At the household of Cornelius a careful study of Acts 10 and 11 clearly shows that the baptism of the Spirit was external to those on whom it fell. That is, it was not given for the purpose of saving Cornelius and his friends. It was given as evidence that the Gentiles had a right to the Gospel of Christ as well as the Jews! Read Acts 11:1-8. Peter had come to tell Cornelius "words whereby he might be saved" (Acts 11:14) for "the gospel is God's power to save." (Romans 1:16). Thus, even after the Spirit fell upon Cornelius and his household, Peter "commanded them to be baptized" in water "for the remission of sins." (Acts 10:33; 47 and 48; Acts 2:38; 22:16). *Peter was never baptized into the Holy Spirit*

2. Miraculous Gifts of The Spirit: There are four "measures" of the Holy Spirit spoken of in the Bible. (1) Jesus had the Spirit Without measure.

(John 3:34). (2) The Baptismal Measure. (The Apostles received this; Acts 2.). (3) Some evangelists, some other Christians had Miraculous measure. (I Corinthians 12; I Corinthians 14; and Acts, 8th chapter.). (4) Each Christian had (has) "the ordinary measure" or gift of the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:38; 5:32).

- a. What were the miraculous gifts? read I Corinthians 12:1-12.
- b. How were they acquired? Read Acts 8:5-19; 6:6; 19:1-6. When the last apostle died and the ones on whom they laid their hands died, the power to transmit these gifts ceased.
- c. What was their purpose? Mark 16:20; Hebrews 2:1-4 teach that these gifts were given "to confirm the Word." In Exodus 4 we read that Moses was given miraculous power so the authorities in Egypt (as well as the Israelites) would recognize that he had been God-sent. Jesus proved His deity by the great works He performed. (Matthew 11:1-6). In the early days of the first century the scriptures had not been completed---all of God's word had not yet been confirmed--- thus, the need for supernatural manifestations to place the stamp of Heaven's approval upon the Apostles' teaching. This was the way to test false prophets.
- d. When did they cease? When the word was fully revealed! When the faith was "once for all delivered to the saints." (Jude 3). When "the unity of Faith" (all the gospel truth) had arrived. (Ephesians 4). Read carefully, I Corinthians 12:27; 13:1-10. When "that which is perfect" had come, then "that which was in part" was done away! James refers to God's word as "the perfect law of liberty." (James 1:25); Paul identifies tongues, supernatural knowledge, etc., as "that which was in part." Thus, when the Word was fully, finally confirmed the miraculous gifts ceased because their purpose had ceased! Therefore, John wrote toward the end of the first century

That “these things are written that ye might believe”—not that these miracles are performed!

Today, we have that which the miracles produced—God’s powerful, fully confirmed Word! May God help us to live up to its dictates.

3. The Gift of the Holy Spirit: We constantly use Acts 2:38 to show the necessity of baptism. Yet, most of us fail to comprehend the great blessings that come as a result of complying with obedience. The latter portion of this verse tells us that each Christian receives “the gift of the Holy Spirit,” upon obedience to the gospel. Acts 5:38; I Thessalonians 4:8; Galatians 4:6; and I John 3:24 teach that the Holy Spirit is given to those who are baptized into Christ. I Corinthians 6:19-20 and Romans 8:9 state that the Spirit dwells within each Christian. As a result of the Holy Spirit dwelling within us, we are to bear the fruit of the Spirit. Read Galatians 5:22-26. There must be a vast difference in the fruit a Christian bears or else we play into the Devil’s hand and God will say: “Ye are not mine.” (Romans 8:9).

IV. BLASPHEMY AGAINST THE HOLY SPIRIT:

A. General Points

1. Blasphemy comes from two expressions which mean “to speak against.”
2. Matthew 12:22-37; Mark 3:22-30 and Luke 12:10 form the basis for this teaching.
3. Other passages that seem to have a relationship to this difficult study are these: Hebrews 6:4-6; 10:26; II Thessalonians 2:1-12; I Timothy 1:12-16; I John 5:16-17.
4. In Leviticus 24:11-16 we learn that the penalty for blasphemy under the Old Covenant was stoning. The enemies of Jesus tried to tack this accusation upon Him so they could dispose of Him. However, the Master teacher showed the folly of their reasoning—Matthew 12:22-27; Mark 2:5-7.

5. Other passages that could be studied in connection with blasphemy are Isaiah 64:7; II Samuel 12:14; Romans 2:24; Titus 2:5; Matthew 26:64; and Acts 6:11.

B. Pertinent Matters

1. Romans 5:6-8; I John 2:2; Hebrews 2:9; Luke 17:3; II Peter 3:9 and other passages (such as the Father representing God in the story of the Prodigal Son - Luke 15) indicate that Christ died for all and that God is willing and anxious to forgive and receive everyone who will repent and turn to Him (Acts 2:38; 3:19; Isaiah 1:18).
2. Thus, we conclude that the unpardonable sin is to die out of Christ (Ephesians 1:3; Galatians 3:27). The "sin unto death" (I John 5:16) is evidently any sin unrepented of! God's grace cannot cover these tragic situations.
3. The main emphasis here seems to be man's unwillingness to repent and not God's unwillingness to forgive. I John 1:9.

C. Hardness of the Heart

1. Hebrews 3:8-9; II Thessalonians 2:10-12; Matthew 7:6 and Ephesians 4:19 all warn us of the fact that we can "be dead while living" (I Timothy 5:6). Some have hardened their hearts (Acts 28:26-28) and thus are hopelessly lost. God knows who such are. Others are on the road that leads to this point of no return. We must warn them and plead with them (II Corinthians 5:10-14) lest they soon become hardened by "the deceitfulness of sin" (Hebrews 3:13).
2. There are others who at present are "crucifying the Lord afresh" and who "beareth thorns and thistles", Hebrews 6:4-8, instead of the fruit of the Spirit, Galatians 5:22. As long as they remain in this condition they cannot be pardoned. They need to repent so that Jehovah can forgive them.

3. There are others who refuse or reject Christ as Savior. For them, so long as they persist in this comfortless error, there is no hope. Hebrews 10:26. In this class are those who attribute the Word of God to some other source than the Holy Spirit. This is blasphemy against the Spirit who guided the Apostles into all the Truth (John 16:13) and who ushered the kingdom of Christ into the world, Acts 2:4. Even these people could be forgiven (God is willing) if they ever find a place in their lives for repentance and obedience.

D. Conclusion

1. He who dies in any of these states is miserably and forever lost (John 8:21-24; I Thessalonians 1:7-9).
2. Some are as good as dead now; their heart is so hardened to the truth that they will not change. God knows who they are; we don't!
3. OUR DUTY: Keep ourselves zealous in the Lord's work. Warn wayward brethren lest they drift into a spiritual complacency.
4. We can come to this situation ourselves not by an isolated act of sin but by an attitude of defiant rejection of Truth. John 3:19. "Such an attitude might develop rapidly into a hardening which precludes repentance."
5. Notice this excellent quotation from Plummer: "Constant opposition to the influence of the Holy Spirit, because of a deliberate preference of darkness to light, render repentance and therefore forgiveness morally impossible."
6. Let us, therefore, "take heed, lest we fall."

V. THE SPIRIT'S PART IN THE NEW BIRTH:

- A. John 3:1-7. This is the setting where Nicodemus, a member of the Jewish Sanhedrin, came to Jesus by night to express his evaluation of the Master's work. Why he came by night we do not know. The important thing is that he came. Recorded in these seven verses is a passage that has been much

discussed. It contains the basis for the "new birth." Regardless of one's position on the teaching herein found we must all agree that Jesus' talk with the Jewish leader is one of the important events in His sojourn on earth.

After testifying to the divine stamp upon the ministry of the Lord, Nicodemus was shocked to hear Jesus say that a man must be born again to enter the kingdom of God. How could such a thing be? Nicodemus, in his temporal thinking could not conceive of more than physical birth in Jesus' statement. The Master teacher quickly informed him that this new birth was not fleshly but spiritual. It was composed of two elements--water and Spirit. Our study resolves itself to these two points. What is the water referring to? And, what is the Spirit's part in the new birth?

Unquestionably, the water refers to baptism. There isn't anything else in connection with the religion of Christ that deals with water but baptism. The great leaders of various religious movements all concur that this means baptism in water. In the past few years some followers of these great leaders have tried to hedge away from the evident impact of this passage as it stresses the necessity of baptism. That scriptural truth is frowned upon by many so they must change the apparent emphasis of John 3:1-7.

Some say "water" here doesn't mean water but spirit. Some say it means "the word." Others say it refers to the natural birth. Some admit that they don't know what it means.....but they are positive that it doesn't mean water! In regard to water meaning spirit in John 3:5 we would have Jesus saying to Nicodemus: "Except a man be born of the spirit and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." How foolish. It could not refer to the natural birth because Nicodemus had already referred to that idea incorrectly! How much simpler to say the term water means water and thus could only refer to baptism....the only thing requiring water in

the religion of Christ.

B. The Spirit's Part in the New Birth: What is the Spirit's part in the new birth? In John 16:7-14 Jesus instructed His disciples concerning the work of the Spirit. In John 14:17 He stated that the world could not receive the Spirit but in chapter 16:8 we find that the Spirit would convict the world of sin. Thus, the Spirit's work in the new birth is convicting the sinner of his error. How is this accomplished? In Ephesians 6:17 we learn that the word of God is the method used by the Spirit to convict the sinner's heart. In I Corinthians 4:15; James 1:18; I Peter 1:23-25 and Romans 1:16 we learn that we are begotten by the word. In Acts 2, when the Holy Spirit came upon the apostles to usher in the kingdom, Peter was caused to preach the word. What was the result of the Spirit's work on this occasion? Acts 2:36-37 informs us that sinner's hearts were pricked or convicted in regard to sin. They were then told to be baptized for the remission of sins. Acts 2:47 tells us they thus became members of the church, the kingdom of Christ. This is an example of the new birth mentioned by Christ in John 3:1-7.

C. EXAMPLES OF THE NEW BIRTH IN ACTION:

1. Check Acts 8:5; 8:12; 8:26-39.
2. I Corinthians 12:13 (Some say this proves Holy Spirit baptism. But notice it says: "For by one Spirit---not in one Spirit---were ye all baptized into one body"). The Corinthians were not baptized in the Holy Spirit but by the agency of the Spirit. But Acts 18:8 tells us that they heard Paul preach and believing, were baptized. Paul said in I Corinthians 1:14-16 that he personally immersed some of them. Thus it had to be water baptism and not Holy Spirit baptism because only the Lord administered the latter.
3. I Peter 1:23-25 tells us that the Christians then residing in the Roman provinces of Asia Minor had been "begotten by the word." When? Read Acts 2--the day the gospel was first preached. Who was there? Among those who heard and were convicted by the Spirit were some from these same provinces

of Asia Minor.

D. SOME CHOICE QUOTATIONS:

1. From Isaac Errett: (1) "The Spirit descended upon the apostles, in fulfillment of the promise made in John 6:7-15. (2) The apostles, filled with the Spirit, preached the truth to the people, and through this means the Spirit convicted a great multitude, of sin, or righteousness and of judgment. (3) The preaching wrought on the spirits of the hearers, to change them in their convictions and feelings, and bring them to believe in Jesus as Lord and Christ. (4) They were then taught to repent and be baptized, upon the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins. (5) As many as were quickened into new life by the Spirit of God through the word of the apostles, were baptized, and thus born of water and of the Spirit, entered into the kingdom of God" (1. Errett, Evenings With the Bible," Vol. III, p. 285).
2. From James Tolle: "Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5).

"Entrance into the kingdom of God, wherein is found salvation, depends upon one being "born of water and the Spirit." Baptism is the only scriptural ordinance that bears out the reality of being "born of water." When one is born in the physical realm, he is delivered from the prenatal state, in which his body has been completely submerged in his mother's womb (see John 3:4), into the new state of existence in the open world. When one is baptized, his body is completely submerged in water; then he is "born of water" to walk in the new state of existence, free from sin. This is essentially the same description as Romans 6:4."

E. SUMMARY

Since the church and the kingdom are one and the same (Matthew 16:18-19) the new birth must be tantamount to baptism into Christ because men become

members of the church (enter the kingdom) by this process (Acts 2:38, 41, 47).

VI. ADDENDA:

A. POINTS AT RANDOM

1. Another sect that de-emphasizes the importance of the Holy Spirit is a relatively new Pentecostal group styled as "Jesus only." Matthew 28:18-20; Matthew 3 (Baptism of Jesus) and Jesus' remarks in John 16:7-14 disprove them.
2. Some have foolishly tried to make a difference between "the Holy Ghost" and "the Holy Spirit." The American Standard and Revised Standard versions clear up this quibble.
3. Colossians 2:9 is another mention of the term "God-head." There we find that Christ is the embodiment (clear manifestation) of the God-head. Why? Because only the Son tabernacled in the flesh. Notice John 14:9 and Hebrews 1:1-3. Because of John 1:14 we perhaps have a clearer understanding of Jesus. He, alone, of the God-head sojourned in bodily form on earth.
4. I Thessalonians 5:19 - "Quench not the Spirit" - "Quench" - Subdue, suppress. W. E. Vine says that the meaning or application in the first century was: "By hindering His operation in oral testimony in the church gatherings of believers."
5. Romans 8:16 needs to be added as a text misused by many. Some say: "To our spirit." The Bible says: "With our spirit." Unless the spirit proclaims through the word that we are children of God, our witnessing will not avail. Our testimony must coincide with the Truth which was revealed by the Spirit (John 16:13).
6. In regard to Cornelius add these scriptures to the ones listed: Acts 15:7; Matthew 28:20; Acts 10:48; I Peter 3:21 and Ephesians 4:5.

- 7. Not only does the Holy Spirit dwell within us but so does God: I Corinthians 3:16; I John 4:12. Christ, also: Ephesians 3:17; Colossians 3:16. Notice Galatians 3:2.

VII. CONCLUSION

May this outline be used to the glory of God, the edification of Christians and the enlightening of sinners is my prayer. Let us study more deeply the things pertaining to the Holy Spirit.

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. Amen." (II Corinthians 13:14).

EXTRA MATERIAL

SPEAKING IN TONGUES

*Ex. 31-41
that 4:1-6
1 Cor 12:1-11
1 Cor 14:1-40
Interpretation
tongues as a gift
to glorify God*

The only translation of the Bible that used the word unknown to refer to the gift of tongues was the King James Version. And even there it is in italics which means the translators supplied the word! It was not in the original Greek text. Even in the first century, when miraculous gifts of Spirit were in vogue, there was nothing mysterious about the use of tongues. In Acts, chapter two, we learn that speaking in tongues simply meant using other languages which the speaker had not previously learned (Acts 2:6). That was the miracle! The senseless gibberish of modern day Pentecostal groups has no Biblical foundation. Such things violate I Corinthians 14:40: "Let all things be done decently and in order."

The apostle Paul said that five words that could be understood were worth more than ten thousand words in a strange tongue (I Corinthians 14:19).

Rev. 5:9 - 7:9 tongues

Question:

... speaking in tongues ...

Those religions today that claim "the gift of tongues" as the Apostles had, should be able to send their preachers to any foreign country without advance schooling in the tongue or language of the new country! Why then, do they study languages at all in their Seminaries?

*7. 1 Cor 14:1-40
Interpretation*

The miracle of the Apostles on Pentecost was their ability to speak the languages of their cosmopolitan audience (15 to 17 different dialects), even though the Apostles were uneducated Galilean fishermen (Acts 2:7-8).

Christ had promised to confirm the Gospel with signs (Mark 16:20; Hebrews 2:4). Paul tells us that tongues were a sign to those who were not believers (I Corinthians 14:22). On Pentecost, the unbelievers were overwhelmed by the humble fishermen who could speak languages they had never learned. This gave Peter opportunity to preach the Gospel to the vast audience.

Once the word of God was confirmed or established, such gifts ceased. Please compare Ephesians 4:13 and Jude 3, and Acts 6:7.

HAVE MIRACLES CEASED?

In this article we are not discussing God's power but His plan. He is still able to create man from the dust of the ground but that is no longer Jehovah's plan. We shall not be discussing the miracles of Christ even though we believe that every one of them happened exactly as the New Testament relates. We certainly believe in the power of prayer and that God is the one who heals the sick today. So, remember: We recognize the power of God, the miracles of Jesus and His apostles, the power of prayer and that our Creator is ultimately the one who heals.

Our question, however, relates to "modern divine healers" or "faith healers" as they are often called.

Does God work through such men today? Do they possess some power that is not available to each Christian? If God is able to heal (and He is) the sick, we need no other mediator but Christ as we pray (I Timothy 2:5).

The best known "healer" in America once had a three million dollar temple in Oklahoma. It was built by the money taken in his tent meetings. That man was one of the ten most wealthy men in the Southern United States! McCalls and Coronet magazines have publicly reported these matters. Does such expensive showmanship sound like the words of Christ, who healed completely and instantly and without charge? Notice Matthew 8:20--"The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son

of man hath nowhere to lay his head."

There is a difference between the genuine and the counterfeit.

THE PURPOSE OF MIRACLES

In the Old Testament, when Jehovah gave Moses the power to perform miracles, it was for the purpose of proving to Pharaoh and the Israelites that Moses was sent to deliver His people from bondage (Exodus 4). Jesus performed miracles to prove that He was the Messiah (Matthew 11:1-6; John 20:30-31). The miraculous powers given unto the Apostles were bestowed to "confirm the word" which they preached (Mark 16:20; Hebrews 2:1-4). We now have in the New Testament that confirmed or verified word. We must not look today for the signs which followed the Apostles' work---for we have the message which the signs attended. When builders are erecting a building they work on a scaffold. But when the building is finished the scaffolding is removed. The miraculous gifts existed in the Apostolic age until John had penned the final words of the New Testament.

When the purpose of miracles--confirming the word--ended, so did the miracles. In Acts 8:14 we learn that only the Apostles could pass on (or hand down) such gifts to others. Therefore, when the last Apostle died the power to transmit such gifts ceased! The cessation of miraculous gifts of the Spirit was foretold in I Corinthians 13.

Some affirm that the major purpose of the miracles of Christ and the Apostles was to relieve suffering and affliction. Such preachers today often infer that healing and salvation go together.

Question:

If Jesus performed miracles just to show compassion why did He raise only Lazarus that day in Bethany? According to the logic of "faith healers," He should have raised the entire cemetery! Rom. 10:13

Question:

If the real purpose of the Apostles' miraculous power was to accompany salvation

with healing why were great Christians like Paul, Timothy and Trophimus allowed to suffer physical afflictions? Read II Corinthians 12, I Timothy 5:23, II Timothy 4:20.

Those who believe the Bible to be the complete revelation of God to man, realize that the purpose of the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit was fulfilled when the Scriptures were completed over 1900 years ago.

GOD'S COMPLETE WORD

Jesus promised the Apostles that the Holy Spirit would guide them into all the truth (John 16:13). He then identified the truth as being God's holy word (John 17:17). Since the apostles of Christ all died by the end of the first century we know that the complete revelation of the Holy Spirit was made known by the year 100. What the Bible taught then, it teaches now, for the Scriptures contain all things that pertain unto life and godliness (II Peter 1:3). The miracles that attended the work of the Apostles lasted until the word of the Lord was confirmed or established (Mark 16:20; Hebrews 2:4). Paul spoke of certain gifts being given until the system of faith became fully known (Ephesians 4:13). Jude tells us that "the faith had been once for all delivered to the saints" by the close of the Apostolic era (Jude 3). Just as Christ died once (Hebrews 9:26) to make salvation possible, so was His plan for man revealed once "for all time." We do not look for another Savior; we do not look to "latter-day revelations," either! We are complete in Christ (Colossians 2:10); we are completely furnished with Truth, to live by, in the Scriptures (II Timothy 3:16-17).

The miracles of Christ and the Apostles confirmed the work of the Holy Spirit as He revealed the perfect Savior and the perfect message. Today we have that record in the New Testament. Thus John wrote, in the closing moments of the first century: "Many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ....." (John 20:30-31). Today we believe in Christ, not because of signs or miracles---but because the testimony of the Scriptures was confirmed 1900 years

ago by miracles. Once established it stands forever. Those who will not be satisfied without the "miraculous" should remember that Jesus warned wicked men of His day that evil generations looked for signs (Matthew 12:39). A very good question to ask the "faith healers" of today is this:

What is the Purpose of their "miracles?" We already have a perfect Savior and a perfect revelation. What more could we desire?

INTERESTING PASSAGES

Any teaching concerning the Holy Spirit and His work must of necessity keep us close to the Scriptures for the Spirit's sword is the Word of God (Ephesians 6:17). In fact, we received the Spirit and His blessings by "the hearing of faith" (Galatians 3:2). Since faith comes by hearing the Word (Romans 10:17) we can see the close affinity between the Holy Spirit and the Scriptures. Indeed, Peter tells us we purify our souls in obedience to the Truth by the Spirit (I Peter 1:22). It is also interesting to note that Christ dwells in our hearts by faith when the Word of Christ dwells in us richly (Ephesians 3:17; Colossians 3:16). There is nothing mystical or intangible concerning the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. We are completely furnished unto a perfect, entire relationship with God by the revealed Word of the Holy Spirit ---read very carefully II Timothy 3:16-17; John 16:13 and 17:17.

Often we hear it stated that some who are not in Christ are nonetheless bearing the fruit of the Spirit mentioned in Galatians 5:22-23. Before analyzing the context of Galatians let me notice a basic principle of New Testament Teaching regarding the Holy Spirit. According to Acts 5:32 only those who obey Christ possess the Spirit. And, in Acts 2:38 this obedience is spelled out in clarion tones. Thus, only those in possession of the Spirit can possibly produce the genuine fruit of the Spirit. In Galatians, the inspired Paul tells us that men who pervert the gospel, preach an uncertified message or hearken back to the law of Moses are incapable of pleasing God. Such folk in Paul's day tried to feign a semblance of Christianity but only came up with a counterfeit religion (II Corinthians 11:13-15). The Devil has power

to deceive (II Thessalonians 2:9). We need to remember also that any real virtue in any life is directly related to the blessings of Christianity. A person outside of the kingdom might manifest kindness because of the power of Jesus' example. The process of osmosis could apply to this section of our study. For instance, I do not smoke but when I get off an airliner my clothes smell like a cigar factory because smoke saturated the cabin of the plane due to many others who smoked.

Positively, though, as members of the church of the Lord we certainly do need to cultivate the fruit of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Jesus said that men are known by the fruit of their lives (Matthew 7:20). We can grieve the Holy Spirit by our failure to grow spiritually (Ephesians 4:3; II Peter 3:18; Romans 8:9). Some people teach that sinners are saved by a direct operation of the Holy Spirit—separate and apart from the gospel. But, the gospel is God's power to save and He is no respecter of persons (Romans 1:16; 2:11). We are cleansed by the word of Christ (John 15:3). He has the words of eternal life (John 6:68) and "These things are written that ye might believe" (John 20:31). We shall be judged by the things Jesus spoke (John 12:48; Romans 2:16). These passages clearly disprove "salvation by feeling." Even at the household of Cornelius, Peter had "to tell words whereby they might be saved" (Acts 10:6, 22, 33, 44; Acts 11:14; 15:7).

One of the favorite verses for those who try to possess the Holy Spirit without obedience is Luke 11:13. Without consideration of context or parallel passages some misguided teachers say: "Just pray for the Holy Spirit and God will give you what you ask for." However, such a conclusion does not follow when one diligently follows the full Biblical background to the subject. You will notice from Luke 11:1 that Jesus is not speaking to the world but only to His disciples. Acts 5:32 denotes the only way for ex-sinners to receive the Holy Spirit—by obedience to the gospel. But in Luke 11 He is not speaking to alien sinners but to disciples. Matthew 7:11 is a parallel passage. "The Holy Spirit" of Luke 11:13 is "good things" or "blessings" in Matthew 7. Thus, the blessings of good things which the Holy Spirit provides come through prayer by the servant of God. As Acts 3:19 states, "seasons of refreshing

from the presence of the Lord" emanate from the Holy Spirit. We are introduced to this source of spiritual power upon our baptism into Christ. Thereafter through study, spiritual growth and effectual, fervent praying we receive the blessings of the Holy Spirit---the good things of life---in abundance. This eventuates in bearing the fruit of the Spirit in our lives. In Romans 8:26-27 we have a beautiful, yet controversial passage concerning the Christian and the Holy Spirit. It is my firm conviction that these verses clearly teach that the Holy Spirit helps the Christian when he prays. The Spirit, in "sighs too deep for words" intercedes for us. Some of our brethren believe that such a position lends comfort to the erroneous concept of ^{Med 7:121}₋₂₃ salvation without the Scriptures intervening. Be it understood, however, that Romans 8 speaks of blessings for those in Christ. These two verses tell us what the Holy Spirit does for us in Heaven and not what He does to us in life. He is not our mediator---Christ is (I Timothy 2:5). But, just as Abraham interceded for Sodom and as we are taught to intercede for others in prayer (I Timothy 2:1) so does the Holy Spirit intercede for us. Objectors will say: "But how could the Holy Spirit ever lack for words---why should He ever be inarticulate?" In John 11:33 and 38 we see that Jesus, the Master Teacher, groaned within himself! There are times when sighs are too deep for words. Often such groanings speak more clearly our concern than could a thousand words. If you will diagram Romans 8:26-27 you will see beyond a doubt that the Holy Spirit, with sighs too deep for words, helps Christians when they pray.

As in all of our Bible study we now entreat you to have the noble characteristic of the Bereans: Search the Scriptures daily to see if these things be so. If we have caused you to open the Book more and appreciate the wonderful work of the Holy Spirit more deeply---we are indeed grateful.

No finer closing sentiment can be used than Romans 15:13:

"Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Spirit."

Johnny Ramsey