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*Holiness Writers*

# **POWER FROM ON HIGH**

By

*Leslie D. Wilcox*

*“Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without  
which no man shall see the Lord” Heb 12:14*

**Spreading Scriptural Holiness to the World**

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# *Power from on High*

*A Study of the Enduement of the  
Holy Spirit in Relation to  
Entire Sanctification*

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# ***Contents***

PART I  
Biblical

PART II  
Doctrinal

Notes

Bibliography

# ***Part I—Biblical***

## **Identification of the Subject**

It seems clear from the wording of the topic that it is a direct reference to Luke 24:49; "And behold I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." As we consider the text and the topic together, we see that there are three questions to be answered.

- 1.Does this promise refer to the work of entire sanctification?
- 2.How does this promise relate to the total work of the Holy Spirit?
- 3.If this text does relate to entire sanctification, what information does it give about that experience?

In answering each question we will endeavor to find an answer by the process of comparing Scripture with Scripture. Part I is therefore an attempt to find an answer to this question from the Word itself. Later, in Part II, we will consider some of the doctrinal implications of this text.

## **An Examination of the Relations of the Text**

The promise under consideration was uttered by our Lord to His disciples during one of His post-resurrection appearances, and it forms one of a group of promises which He made during this time which were fulfilled on the day

of Pentecost. Therefore we need to compare this promise with several other related passages.

- 1.The promise as given by John the Baptist
- 2.The promise as given by Jesus in the Gospel of John
- 3.The promise as given following the resurrection
- 4.The fulfillment at Pentecost
- 5.Comparison of Pentecost with the event at Cornelius' house.

Scripture ties all of these together so intimately, that we cannot avoid the conclusion that they all refer to the same event, either in promise, in narrative of the promise's fulfillment, or in later explanation of the event. Other Scriptures could be adduced which doubtless refer to the same subject, but we are limiting our consideration to this group since they are so closely tied together by the Word itself.

## **Pentecost Passages Compared**

We will compare this in the order given above and will arrange them in as simple form as possible for the sake of easier comparison. In arranging them in simple form, we will not quote passages in their entirety but merely give key words from each passage.

## **The Promise of John the Baptist**

Although this is given in all four Gospels, we give only Matthew and John, since Luke is similar to Matthew, and Mark is shorter than the other two and adds no new element.

Matt. 3:11, 12    Baptize with Holy Ghost and fire . . . and purge

John 1:33            The same is He which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost

## **The Promise of Jesus as Recorded by John (Chaps. 14, 15, 16)**

One feature is to be noted in these promises. They not only tell of the coming of the Holy Spirit but they also tell us some of the effects that will follow His coming.

Jn. 14:15, 16    give another Comforter . . . abide . . . Spirit of truth

Jn. 14:26            The Comforter . . . the Holy Ghost . . . the Father will send

Jn. 15:26            The Comforter is come . . . I will send . . . Spirit of Truth

Jn. 16:7, 8            The Comforter . . . I will send . . . when He is come

Jn. 16:13            The Spirit of truth is come . . . He will guide

## **The Promise Given after the Resurrection**

- |           |  |
|-----------|--|
| Lu. 24:49 | I send the promise of my Father . . . endued with power from on high |
| Acts 1:5  | Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost                             |
| Acts 1:8  | Ye shall receive power . . . the Holy Ghost is come upon you         |

## **The Fulfillment at Pentecost (all these references are in Acts 2)**

- |        |  |
|--------|--|
| Vs. 4  | They were all filled with the Holy Ghost   |
| Vs. 17 | I will pour out of my Spirit (repeated in vs. 18)                                    |
| Vs. 33 | Having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this |
| Vs. 38 | Ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost  |

## **Experience of Cornelius and Comparison with Pentecost**

- |            |  |
|------------|--|
| Acts 10:44 | the Holy Ghost fell on them                            |
| Acts 10:45 | was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost              |
| Acts 10:47 | have received the Holy Ghost as well as we             |
| Acts 11:15 | the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning |

Acts 11:16	Remembered I . . . ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost
Acts 15:8	giving them the Holy Ghost even as he did unto us
Acts 15:9	put no difference between us and them . . . purifying their hearts

## Pentecost Passages Evaluated

In this list all the passages clearly relate to the same event and experience. Let us see what terminology is used by the inspired writers to tell us about this. We note a number of areas of interest.

1. If we examine the verbs used in this passage we note God's description of the event. When God or Christ is described as doing the acting we note the following words used: **baptize, give, send, pour out, shed forth**. When the Holy Ghost is the subject of the verb, the words used are **come**, or **fell**. When the subject is described from the standpoint of the disciples, the human recipients, the words used are **endued** and **receive**. We should also note that the noun **gift** is also used.

2. We note the titles used for the Spirit of God. The common name used repeatedly in these passages is **Holy Ghost**. The only other names used are **My Spirit** in the quote from Joel, and the name that is used exclusively by our Lord in the passages from John, **Comforter**. It is to be noted that Jesus identifies this **Comforter** with the **Holy Ghost** and with the **Spirit of Truth**.



3. Several times in the passages given above, Peter makes some identifications. The verses which we have quoted obviously refer to the same event, Pentecost. But as though he wanted to clinch that fact past all doubt, Peter clearly relates them together in several ways.

His major identification is between the event at Cornelius' house and Pentecost. Four times in the passages listed above, he says that these two events are alike, both in what God was doing, and in what men were receiving, in each case. In a fifth statement, not included above, Peter identifies the two events when he speaks of the "like gift" in Acts 11:17. These repeated statements definitely identify Pentecost and the coming of the Spirit at Caesarea.

But Peter goes still further in his identifications. The second such statement links the event at Cornelius' house with the promise made by Jesus, for the apostle says "Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that He said . . . ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost." (Acts 11:16)

The net effect of these various identifications is to make it clear that Pentecost and the event at Caesarea are the same and that both are fulfillments of the promise that Jesus Himself had made. This places past all doubt the correctness of comparing the scriptures which we have put together in the foregoing list.

In one passage when Peter identified Pentecost and the event at the house of Cornelius (Acts 15:9), he not only puts the two together but gives an analysis of them both by saying that in these two separate events God was "purifying their hearts by faith." This says as plainly as language can put it, that the result of the Spirit's work in both cases was heart purity. If this is true, the conclusion is unavoidable that the condition of both groups, the

disciples at Pentecost and the persons of Cornelius' household, was identical. They both needed heart cleansing, and they were both suitable candidates for that experience. If this is not true, then God would not have cleansed their hearts, for either they would not have need of such cleansing, or they would not have been spiritually prepared to receive it.

This clearly establishes this experience as a second work of grace which can be called the **baptism with the Holy Spirit** from one point of view, or **heart cleansing** from another point of view. Undoubtedly most of our readers will recognize that cleansing of the heart is a second work of grace, subsequent to regeneration. But, lest there should be any question, let us take a look at James 4:8 which clarifies this matter past reasonable question. In this passage James gives a double exhortation addressed to two classes of people, "Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double-minded." This exhortation states what a sinner needs to do. His actions must be changed. Then follows an exhortation to persons who are not sinners, but are called "double-minded." Their need is not to repent of, or forsake actions performed by hands. Their need is deeper. It is heart cleansing. Thus, James clarifies the experience of heart cleansing. It is an experience for persons no longer sinners, but still with a divided condition of heart. That condition calls for purification. Thus it is an experience for persons already Christians. When we compare this with Acts 15, we see that this experience of heart cleansing is what was received by those at Pentecost and by those at Caesarea as well.

4. A fourth point of importance gleaned from our list of scriptures is the question of who is eligible for this heart-purifying baptism with the Holy Ghost. As we look back over this list, we find that whenever Jesus gave this promise, it was always addressed to His followers. At Pentecost, Peter addressed the promise to the multitude, but he stressed that repentance was a pre-requisite for receiving this blessing. In John 14:17 Jesus gave an

explanation of who would be eligible for the reception of this promised Comforter. He said the "world" (unconverted) could not receive Him. The reason was that they did not know Him, which means that the unconverted man lacks spiritual capacity for receiving the Holy Ghost. He must first come into a preliminary acquaintance with the Comforter. He says that the disciples already have had preliminary acquaintance since "they know Him." Some would have us believe that the reason why the "world" before Pentecost could not receive the Holy Spirit was a dispensational reason. But Jesus, who should know more about it, says the reason is one of spiritual capacity, or spiritual condition.

This all shows that the baptism with the Spirit, being for believers, was a second work of grace. We will discuss this question at some length in Part II of this book, so will not pursue it further here, except to call the reader's attention to a passage in Luke 24:52, 53. This passage describes the disciples' condition between the ascension and Pentecost. It is said they were possessed of "great joy" and that they were "continually in the temple, praising and blessing God." This certainly sounds like a group of people who were truly in love with their Lord and were certain about their relationship with Him. It bears no resemblance to a description of persons who were backslidden or were unregenerate, and waiting for an experience or pardon or of induction into the church!

## **An Examination of Other Statements of the Spirit's Work**

In studying the work of the Spirit at Pentecost and trying to identify its meaning, we must not forget that this is only one phase or one operation of the Spirit of God. Actually He works at every level of a person's life from the first dawn of conviction to the most advanced stages of the Christian's life,

and there is even one text that says it will be He who quickens the Christian's body at the resurrection of the saints. I think everyone will recognize this fact. But due to a misunderstanding of Pentecost texts there are some who have tended to put all the emphasis on the Spirit's work in regeneration. Others who interpret Pentecost as a second work of grace have tended to under-emphasize the Spirit's work in regeneration. Let us note two facts that will bear on this problem.

## The Regenerating Work of the Spirit

As we did in considering the texts relative to Pentecost, let us avoid texts that might be the subject of debate and concentrate on only those which describe the initial work of grace. We find the following:

John 3:6            born of the Spirit

Romans 8:15      Ye have received the Spirit of adoption Romans 8:16  
The Spirit itself beareth witness . . . we are children of  
God

Gal. 4:6            because ye are sons . . . God sent forth the Spirit of his  
Son . . . crying Abba Father.

These texts all speak specifically of some phase of the first work of grace, so that we may confidently apply them to the experience of the new birth. Let us analyze them.

The verbs used are **born**, **receive**, **bear witness**, **sent forth**. Two of these verbs, **receive** and **send** are also found in Pentecost language, so that they may refer to general operations of the Spirit in various capacities. But **born**,

**bear witness** are terms that apply specifically to the first work of grace and are plainly connected with regeneration and the witness to that fact. On the other hand certain, verbs found in connection with Pentecost are not found in this list, such as **baptize, endue** etc., so that we conclude that those words specifically describe a different operation of the Spirit and are not to be applied to a first work of grace.

One of the most startling differences is in the title applied to the Spirit. In passages relating to the first work of grace, the title is either the single word **Spirit**, or that word modified by another word such as his **Son**, or **adoption**, so that the titles seem to apply to the operation of the Spirit in His capacity of creating spiritual life in a soul hitherto dead. When we compare these with Pentecost, we note the great preponderance of the title **Holy Ghost** and we note that title never appears in regeneration texts. It seems to me that this indicates, again, a functional title which fits particularly in that heart purifying experience which makes men holy. As we will note in Part II, Wesley one time expressed his idea that the word Holy in Holy Spirit indicates the Spirit's work in making men holy.

## **The Total Range of the Spirit's Work**

Since the Spirit's work is to administer the plan of salvation at every step, we might expect a Scriptural correlation between statements concerning what Christ came to do, and what the Spirit now works in men. And by a little comparing Scripture with Scripture, this is exactly what we find. In the following correlation we will list matched scriptures, first stating the purpose of Christ's death, secondly stating what the Spirit now effects in men.

## **For the Sinner**

Christ died for the ungodly—Romans 5:6

(The Spirit) shall reprove the world of sin—John 16:8

Received the Spirit of adoption—Rom. 8:15

(Note that in the Spirit's work, here is both prevenient grace and saving grace administered)

## **For the Persons Already Saved but Needing Heart Purity**

Christ gave Himself for the church that He might sanctify—Eph. 6:25, 26

Giving the Holy Ghost . . . purifying their hearts—Acts 15:8, 9

(All the other Pentecost texts fit here, also)

## **For the ongoing of life after the initial experience**

(Christ) died for us . . . that we should live together with Him. I Thess. 5:10

(Here there are a multiplicity of texts that talk about what the Spirit does for all of life—lead, guide—help infirmities—bring to remembrance—glorify Christ)

## **For the resurrection of the saint**

If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so. . . I Thess. 4:14

Shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit. Romans 8:11

This comparison reveals how fully the Spirit of God acts as the executive of the God-head, or as the Vice-gerent of Christ on earth. Probably this is what Jesus meant when, speaking of the Spirit, He said, "He shall take of mine and shall shew it unto you" John 16:14

## **An Examination of the Key Words of our Text**

In our discussion we have established the relation of our text to the body of Pentecost promises and descriptions, showing thereby that our text describes a heart-purifying experience, a second work of grace, otherwise known as entire sanctification. We have also established the relation of this and companion passages to the total work of the Spirit in the experience of men. It now remains for us to answer the question as to what this text tells us about the experience of entire sanctification. Accordingly we note three features stressed by the promise that the disciples were to "be endued with power from on high."

## **A Positive Experience**

Sometimes we have so strongly stressed the cleansing aspect of the work of entire sanctification that we may have tended to give the impression that it is merely a subtraction. The stress is usually placed on purging or purifying, eradication or removal of carnal traits, or on release from the inner power of sin. All of these are true and deserve their place in any exposition of the

second work of grace. But we must not forget that there is a positive side. A new power is added. An inner fortification is accomplished. This is the true meaning of all the language that talks about a baptism with the Spirit. Jesus' promises in John 14, 15, 16 especially stress what the Spirit will do for us when He comes. And this is the thrust of this promise. There is to be an enduement. This is an addition. There is a cleansing but an empowerment as well.

## **An Experience Affecting Character**

One of the expressions used in our text is the word "enduement." I suspect that this and the accompanying word "power" have tended to make many persons think only of the miraculous, the supernatural, the unusual manifestation. When we put all the stress on this, or even a major stress, we depart from the basic meaning of Pentecost. The whole charismatic movement is based on a misunderstanding of the basic meaning of what the baptism with the Spirit is supposed to do for men. "Miracle" is one of their favorite by-words. They are more concerned with doing something that is eye-catching and attention-getting than they are in finding holiness of heart, of character, and of life. An examination of the word endue will help us at this point.

**Endue** is almost an exact repetition of the Greek word it comes from. But it has taken on overtones in English that lead us away from its basic meaning. The word means basically to **clothe**. It is used literally of wearing clothes in many passages. The following analysis will show its use in the New Testament. The word is found twenty-eight times, of which thirteen refer to literal wearing of garments, including such times as John the Baptist's camel hair garments, Christ's purple robe, and the angels and saints in Revelation wearing fine linen. Then it is used five times, mostly in I Corinthians 15 of



the putting on of the new resurrection body. This is literal also, although in a slightly changed application. This leaves ten times when it is used of a figurative putting on of some spiritual quality, equipment or characteristic. Four of these times it refers to putting on the armor of God. Twice it urges us to put on Christ, and twice it is a command to put on the new man. This leaves two other passages, the text, and a very significant passage in Colossians 3:12 which reads as follows, "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering." Let us tabulate these so we can see how the whole thrust of this word points to a transformed character. According to these passages we are to be endued as follows:

Endued with the armor of God

Endued with the new man

Endued with the Lord Jesus Christ

Endued with mercy, kindness, humbleness, meekness and longsuffering

Endued with power from on high

Does not this list give a splendid example of what that enduement means? Whether or not it is exactly the same things as those given in the list above, this certainly indicates a new quality of life, a new protection from the attacks of evil, a new power to withstand such attacks, and a new and deeper manifestation of the Christ-spirit, when the believer is endued with power from on high.

## **An Experience Producing Strength**

The word for **power** that is used in this passage has also been interpreted in ways that have had misleading effects. It is frequently noted that the English word "dynamite" comes from this Greek word. This leaves the impression this **power** is of an explosive nature, or at least that it produces a big "bang." This impression of something very conspicuous or arresting is very unfortunate. Why do we not note that the English words "dynamo" and "dynamic" also come from the same Greek word? These words would suggest an idea much more to the point and much nearer the meaning of the original word.

To examine the Greek word which is here translated "power" would involve a more detailed study than we can give in this booklet. The word covers a wide range of circumstances and applications, but its basic meaning is "ability," since it comes from the Greek word that means "to be able." Certainly a man needs a new inner ability if he is to live a life of holiness both inwardly and outwardly. But since this word "power" has been misused by certain considerations in connection with it, these basic considerations will be indicated by the next three section headings.

### **Meaning of Power in this Context**

The Greek word which is translated "power" occurs 120 times in the New Testament. Of these 120 times, the King James uses the translation "power" only 77 times. Since the word is used so frequently, to examine in detail all the ways in which it is used would be impossible. So we will limit our study to places where the word is used in connection with the word "Spirit" and so would relate to the context of our study.

Two times in the fifteenth chapter of Romans, we find these two words associated. In verse thirteen the "power of the Holy Ghost" is described as producing joy, peace and hope. In verse nineteen, Paul tells of the Spirit's work in his own ministry producing "mighty signs and wonders" so that he was enabled to preach fully the gospel of Christ. In comparing these two passages, we observe that for an apostle there was power to make the message effective, while for the common believers, the same power produced inward spiritual results.

Another passage that links the word "power" with the Spirit is II Timothy 1:17 which reads, "God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power and of love, and of a sound mind." Here the power associated with the Spirit is not something miraculous or spectacular, but an inner fortitude and transformation which enables one not to be "ashamed of the testimony of our Lord" as the following verse points out. These passages are enough to show us that the "Power" of the promised Spirit is always inner, spiritual strengthening, and may, on occasions when needed, be an enabling force for the spread of the Gospel. The power that we need to look for is not a power of a Samson or a Hercules, but the power of a Barnabas, who was a man full of the Holy Ghost. There is no record that he ever performed a miracle or preached a mighty stirring sermon, but he was a man who stood in the gap, a man with a spiritual vision to see possibilities and then step in and do whatever was needed. Yet he was a man who was not merely filled with the Holy Ghost on some mighty occasion, but one whose settled steady character is described as "full of the Holy Ghost." Acts 11:24

To conclude our consideration of the meaning of **power** in this context, we go back to our list of scriptures which described what happened at Pentecost, and to Peter's identifications of the meaning of those passages. We remember that one identification which Peter made was that the baptism of the Holy

Ghost produced a purifying of their hearts. So here is the real heart of power. It is the power of purity, cleansing the heart, providing an inward strength and stamina which were impossible as long as there were remains of sin in the heart. But now the source of weakness has been purged away, and with it a new enabling of the Holy Ghost has come. This is the real heart of power without which all other kinds of power or claims to power, turn out to be but mere sham in the eyes of God.

## **Miracle Power**

One of the doctrinal emphasis that one finds today is to the effect that the baptism of the Spirit is proved or authenticated by power to work miracles. Much emphasis is placed upon miracle working power and this is supposed to be a return to New Testament Christianity. But let us examine these claims a bit in the light of the Word.

It is claimed that miracles are to be expected today because "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever." The implication is that whatever Christ did when on earth, His disciples can do today. There are two difficulties with taking this scripture in this way. In the first place, the passage (Heb. 13:8) does not say what this usage infers. It says that Christ is unchanging. That is to say that He is the same in nature, in power, in essential being. But it does not say that He does the same things today as He did then. Manifestly, He does not. He is not now on the earth in His human bodily form as He once was in Galilee. He is not now doing the many things that He once did during His earthly ministry. So the text cannot possibly prove that He now does whatever He once did. He once created worlds; but He is not now employed in creation. An unchanging Christ, whose power is unchanging and unchangeable may not necessarily always manifest that power in the same way. So the text does not prove what it is claimed to teach.

Furthermore, the very persons who appeal to this text to prove the present possibility of miracle working power, are not consistent in their application. Jesus wrought miracles which they do not work. They seem to specialize in certain areas. Healing, speaking in tongues, material riches and handling snakes seem to be the special areas which this general group prefers, although they do not all emphasize or practice all of them. But if Jesus' power in working miracles is now to be duplicated by those who have this special power, where are the multiplied loaves and fishes, where is the water changed to wine, where are the corpses called out of a cemetery? If Jesus is the same, these should be duplicated as well as others, should they not?

But the basic assumption back of this claim to work miracles is the belief that miracles authenticate the Gospel, or at least they authenticate the fact that a person has received the baptism with the Holy Ghost. We feel this claim is false and unscriptural.

We fully believe that God answers prayer in healing sick bodies, in supplying material needs and in many other ways of blessing for the good of His children. But these answers to prayer are not an authentication of any spiritual possession or experience. Miracles were used as an authentication for the ministry of Christ and His apostles in the beginning of the Gospel. This is plainly declared in Heb. 2:4 where we read that God bore these early Gospel preachers witness with "signs, wonders and divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost." This plainly appeals to these mighty works as proof that this message which "began to be spoken by the Lord" was from heaven. Jesus Himself appealed to the works that He did as a proof of His commission from heaven. In John 14:11, He says, "Believe me for the very works sake." In other passages, such as John 10:37, 38, He uses essentially the same appeal. But while Jesus and His apostles could appeal to miracles for authentication, we cannot do that today.

For our day, a very different situation is found. Jesus looked ahead and He told of those who would claim right to eternal life because they had done many wonderful works. (Matt. 7:21-23) But Jesus called them workers of iniquity and His treatment of this subject is found in the passage where He describes false prophets. The danger of appeal to miracles as proof of God's approbation in our day is further shown when we are told of the miracle working power which the Antichrist will be able to exercise. Certainly his miracles would not prove that he was from God!

All of this has been said to expose the fallacy of supposing that the power given by the baptism with the Holy Ghost is miracle working power. It is primarily moral and spiritual power, manifested in the ability, the stamina, the strength, needed to be a holy person through and through.

## **Power for Service**

While there are those who stress miracles as proof of the power of the Holy Spirit, there are others who place an almost exclusive emphasis on the power for service. They draw this emphasis from Acts 1:8 where the promise of receiving power is coupled with being witnesses. Those who make this their strong emphasis also deny that the baptism with the Holy Ghost delivers from sin. For this reason holiness people have usually tended to avoid this interpretation in their effort to keep the emphasis on the power of pure hearts.

But while we insist on the primacy of heart purity as the real power of Pentecost, we must not ignore the clear association in this text with the task of witnessing for Christ. The power of the Spirit is to give enablement for witnessing, too. Let us see what a witness needs, and in so doing, we can see what the Holy Spirit gives to make his witness effective.

A witness must be **capable**. He must be able to speak forth the truth he has found and exalt the Saviour whom he has come to know. It may not be eloquent oratory. It may be in simple, homespun fashion. But certainly a divinely given ability is implied in this text in Acts.

A witness must be **credible**. No amount of talking will do any good, unless his life is such that it renders his testimony credible. Unless there has been something happen to make the man over, the crowd is not going to listen to what he has to say.

A witness must be **convincing**. This is not the power of a high-pressure salesmanship, but a conviction borne in upon the hearer that this witness knows what he is talking about and that there is something more than mere human opinion in what he has to say. This is not to say that all, or even large numbers, will yield to his witness. Sin has too great a hold on the multitudes, but again and again they will have to take knowledge of these witnesses that they have been with Jesus, even though they refuse to personally acknowledge His claims.

## Summary

Perhaps all we have been trying to say about the subject of power, can be best seen by a good look at a statement describing the early church right after Pentecost. In Acts 4:33, we read, "With great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus; and great grace was upon them all." Here we find power for witnessing for those whose duty called them to the public place, but for all the others, the rank and file, there was great grace. The basic thing that God gives is a new inner fortitude and an enabling to be and do whatever God has for one to do. It may be great power in witnessing. But whether it is that or not, it will always be great grace!

## ***Part II—Doctrinal***

In Part I we have given careful examination to the Scriptural backgrounds involved in a study of this subject. We have endeavored to show the following facts.

1. The text referred to by the title is a part of the whole body of passages relating to Pentecost and must be interpreted in the light of those passages.
2. Using those same passages as a basis, we have studied the various Biblical terms relating to the work of the Holy Spirit and how this particular text is related to those terms.
3. The meaning of the words "enduement" and "power" as used in relation to this text do not connote the miraculous or the spectacular, but rather relate to the effectiveness of an inner power producing godly living and ethical stamina.

In Part II we propose to examine the doctrinal implications of this subject. While we must look at man's opinions and interpretations we must ever keep in mind that a doctrinal position is to be determined not by what any man or men have said, but by the "Thus saith the Lord." However, we find certain teachings on this subject which tend to affect our thinking or sway our decisions on doctrinal matters. So we will take time for a brief examination of some of those positions.



The question at stake is to find a scriptural position on this subject of the meaning of Pentecost that will strike a proper balance in interpretation of this vital subject, while at the time avoiding the excesses both of those who over-emphasize Pentecost by equating it with some miraculous manifestation, as well as of those who reduce emphasis on it until it means no more than a born-again experience.

In dealing with this subject, we will note those theories about the work of the Holy Spirit with which we are most likely to come into contact. We will note some of the marks or characteristics of each and compare them with Scriptural teaching. Then, finally we will note those vital truths about the work of the Holy Spirit that we of the Holiness Movement need to conserve.

We note three types of teaching which we will refer to by rather brief titles, although the title in some cases may not be full enough or comprehensive enough to describe all facets of the particular type of doctrine under consideration. It needs to be clearly understood at the beginning, that within these groups we mention there are differences of teaching or emphasis, and all writers espousing a given type of interpretation may not agree in every detail. However, the similarities are sufficient for them to be grouped together.

## **Charismatic View**

Under this heading we group together those who believe that the baptism with the Holy Spirit produces some kind of miraculous or spectacular results. It is commonly associated with speaking in tongues, and often places an undue stress on healing. These persons may or may not believe in three works of grace. If they believe in three works of grace, sometimes sanctification precedes the baptism, and sometimes it follows. In either case the entire

tendency is to exalt the so-called "gifts" above heart purity or holiness. Some groups omit any teaching on heart cleansing. Others pay it lip service, but to all practical intents treat it as a matter of much less importance than the miraculous display of gifts.

We have dealt with the question of the meaning of the words "endowment" and "power" in Part I, so that perhaps no further attention need be given to this theory. Any teaching which minimizes the importance of holy character in favor of anything else, is going wide of the mark of Biblical emphasis.

### **Keswick View**

This teaching insists on a further need in the life of the Christian. He has received the Spirit in His regenerating power, but needs a filling of the Spirit later. Their language often approximates the terminology of holiness teachers very closely. However, there is one major, and very vital, point of difference. Any filling or baptism of the Spirit received subsequent to the born-again experience is strictly for empowerment in service, but does not produce heart-cleansing. They teach a "counteraction" rather than a cleansing. Some well-known names are included among Keswick leaders of the past. Included in the number are Andrew Murray, F. B. Meyer, Griffith Thomas, Alan Redpath. In more recent times the Keswick theory has tended to adopt the language of the men who advocate positional holiness, so that the two theories have tended to approximate each other in present day presentation. The key point to be noted about them is their denial of cleansing of the heart. Since this subject is also pertinent in any discussion of the next group, we will leave consideration of this point of doctrine for consideration at that time.

## **Two Natures Theory**

The title given this group may not be the best, since it only describes one facet of their teaching, but we use it as a convenient short designation for a rather large group of people who take a specific position relative to the work of the Holy Spirit and couple with that certain other doctrinal ideas which are closely associated with their teaching on the Holy Spirit, so that it becomes necessary to examine several phases of their doctrine.

This type of teaching first became prominent in the teaching of the Plymouth Brethren in Great Britain. Its first leader was John Darby, and so this theory is sometimes called Darbyism. However, Darby also had a special teaching on the church and on the Second Coming which are not necessarily a part of this phase of his teaching. Most of the modern followers of the teaching of John Darby have dropped his peculiar ideas about the church. His teachings on the Second Coming have spread widely into holiness circles, and so go beyond the area where his teaching on the Holy Spirit is accepted. However, in adopting his ideas of the Second Coming, one must watch that they do not accept his ideas on the subject of Christian experience for in some cases the two are closely interwoven.

The theories of Darby, both on the subjects of Christian experience and of the second coming have been widely disseminated by many writers since his day. We will give particular attention to his theories on Christian experience which involve his position relative to the work of the Holy Spirit and relative to the question of sin. Among some of the best-known men who have propagated this theory about the Holy Spirit and the question of sin are C. I. Scofield, Harry Ironsides, Lehman Strauss, John R. W. Stott, Charles C. Ryrie.

For a brief summary of these teachings, we note that they teach that the Christian receives the Holy Spirit at regeneration, so that there is no further need of the work of the Holy Spirit in the Christian's life, except to appropriate what He has already done. To them the baptism with the Holy Spirit is equivalent to the experience of the new birth. If the Christian has already received the Holy Spirit, he is positionally sanctified. That is—He is in Christ and because Christ is holy, the Christian is holy. But while this is his standing as far as God is concerned, he may actually be very unholy, and in fact can never be rid of sin in this life. He now has a new nature, received when he was born again, but the old nature remains and must remain throughout life. He must struggle against this old nature, but it can never bring him into condemnation no matter what it leads him to do, for he will always retain this new nature which he received in regeneration. Thus, it also involves the teaching of unconditional eternal security.

Due to these peculiarities of teaching it is known by other names besides the Two-Natures Theory. It is also called by the names **Positional Holiness**, and the **Holy-in-Christ** Theory. This theory by whatever name it goes, denies any second work of grace, and it denies any real cleansing of the heart.<sup>[1]</sup>

Since these theories have become so influential in popular radio broadcasts and in a tide of religious literature of our day, it may be well to examine certain earmarks of this teaching at greater length, in the following sections of this paper. In each case, we will try to state the doctrinal position we are studying, and then compare it with Scriptural truth.

### **The Baptism with the Spirit Is Regeneration According to this Theory**

This is one of the strong tenets of Darbyite teaching and we believe it is totally unscriptural.

The theory under consideration teaches that all Christians possess the Holy Spirit in such a way that it is quite wrong for any believer to pray for the Spirit since he already possesses Him as a result of the new-birth experience. The following references to various authors will give an example of this position.

C. I. Scofield, who is known for his notes in the Scofield Bible, makes it plain that in his opinion when a child of God is born of the Spirit, he is at the same time baptized with the Spirit, sealed with the Spirit, and will henceforth be indwelt with the Spirit (Without any possibility of ever losing that Divine indwelling).<sup>[2]</sup>

Harry Ironsides, author of the book, *Holiness the False and the True*, expresses the same idea. Henry Brockett has carefully examined his position and has summarized it as follows; "He (Ironsides) teaches only one critical work of grace in the believer and contends that all that is meant by the baptism with the Spirit is received by everyone the moment he first believes and is born of the Spirit. We "get it all" at conversion. This is the root error of the two-naturist doctrine concerning the Holy Spirit and the believer."<sup>[3]</sup>

John R. W. Stott, a more recent writer, makes it plain that he considers the gift of the Spirit and the baptism of the Spirit to be identical, and that this is an initial blessing bestowed on all persons who enter the new covenant.<sup>[4]</sup> George Turner, in summarizing Stott's book, points out that the effect of what he (Stott) has to say would be to discourage a Christian from seeking any specific blessing.<sup>[5]</sup>

The references given above all deny a second work of grace, and although they do not specifically say so, in the passages referred to above, they all definitely deny any possibility of heart cleansing. Furthermore, the position

represented by these writers confuses Bible terminology relative to the work of the Spirit. We have already given this matter a careful examination in Part I of this discussion. By confusing the terminology relative to the work of the Spirit, it also takes the position that no one is born again until he is baptized with the Spirit, and that this act of the Spirit is that by which one is constituted a member of the body of Christ. By thus equating the birth and the baptism, these writers tend to make the baptism only something done for us—a sort of formal induction into the body of Christ. This makes the baptism something which does not affect our own consciousness. One writer even calls it "imperceptible."<sup>[6]</sup> Probably this tendency is intended to combat charismatic teaching which over-emphasizes the baptism with the Spirit. But certainly no good result is accomplished by thus minimizing, or misinterpreting the meaning of the baptism with the Spirit. Certainly those who received the baptism with the Spirit in the book of Acts were fully aware of it, and Peter knew exactly what that experience had wrought in him and in others. There are other erroneous ideas also, which are involved in making the birth of the Spirit and the baptism with the Spirit synonymous.

The attempt to make the baptism with the Spirit equivalent to a born-again experience presupposes either that the disciples were not yet believers until the day of Pentecost, or that although they had been justified by faith in Christ they were only in an Old Testament state of justification and therefore were not born again prior to Pentecost. This last position involves a question of difference in dispensation. We will try to answer all three of these ideas.

## **Disciples Believers Before Pentecost**

Perhaps this idea can be no better answered than by a quotation from Joe Brice of England. He describes the disciples in the following terms. "Though they were very immature in faith, they were 'not of the world.' They had

received 'power to become the sons of God.' They were genuinely converted. Moreover they had received power over unclean spirits and had been sent through Galilee sharing the ministry of Christ. He had taken them to Himself; He had given them the Eternal Word; in them He had inaugurated His Church."<sup>[7]</sup> Some of these statements made by Brice are plainly references to John 17. Let us summarize the statements Jesus made about His disciples in that chapter.

1. They were not of the world, verse 14
2. They already belonged to Him, verses 9, 10
3. They had obeyed His word, verses 6, 8, 12
4. They were heirs of eternal life, verse 2

### **Believers Born Again Before Pentecost**

There are those who try to meet this question by telling us that though the disciples did possess all the marks of a believer before Pentecost, that all they could have was justification and that regeneration was impossible until the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. This creates the situation where we have people justified but not regenerated. For any such division between these two phases of the initial work of grace, I find no Scripture warrant. Today, justification and regeneration are concomitant blessings; i.e. they take place simultaneously. There is no evidence that God ever separated these two into separate steps. To suppose such a possibility can only be done by adopting a special theory of the work of salvation for which there is no support in the Bible. But in case this consideration does not satisfy the

student of Christian experience, let us note some definite Bible statements that men before Pentecost were, or could be born again.

In the first chapter of John, we have the statement, "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them who believe on his name." This statement is connected with Christ's advent into the world, not with Pentecost, and it specifically states that Christ's coming made it possible for men to become sons of God through faith. Surely this is regeneration. Again in John, when Jesus talked with Nicodemus and informed him of the necessity of being born again, and Nicodemus expressed surprise and disbelief, Jesus said to him, "Art thou a master in Israel and knowest not these things?" The implication of Jesus' words are that Nicodemus, with his religious background and teaching, should already have known about the new birth. Or we may move a little farther into Chapter three of St. John and we find Jesus declaring in verse 36, "He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life." Please observe that this was spoken in the present tense at a time early in Jesus' ministry. It is a promise of everlasting life and it is received by faith. Surely everlasting life now possessed can be nothing less than a regenerating experience. Still later in St. John, Chapter 5, we have further confirmation of this truth, when Jesus says that "He that heareth my word and believeth on him that sent me hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life." Note how full this description is. In answer to faith a soul is freed from condemnation. This is justification. But still more, he has everlasting life. This is regeneration. And it goes even further to say that this regeneration came by a definite act wherein the person passed from death to life. In the face of such definite statements, surely no one can claim that the disciples had to wait until Pentecost to be born again. They had already believed on Christ, and according to the Scriptures we have just now noted, such faith brought a change which is described as passing from death unto life.



## **Dispensational Theory**

At this point the question of dispensations is sometimes brought in to support the idea that the disciples could not be born again prior to Pentecost. The general idea of dispensations, which is another one of the Darbyite ideas, has given rise to the idea that men are saved in different ways in different dispensations. However valuable the idea of dispensations may be from the standpoint of prophecy it has led to a totally false impression in regard to the method of salvation. It may be that the men who set forth this idea did not intend for it to be interpreted in some ways in which it has been, but the general idea is that the method of salvation changed with the dispensation of grace or the church age. Scofield tries to guard his statement about how men were saved but his language certainly leads to the generally accepted idea of the change of dispensation. In the Scofield Bible notes on Acts 2:1, he makes it plain that he considers the baptism with the Spirit the Divine act whereby believers for the first time were created into the Church. This, and similar statements, which abound in dispensationalist writers, have given the general impression that there was a change of method of salvation, so that not until Pentecost could anyone be saved in the sense which we know today.

This is quite at variance with the Bible teaching that men in all ages have been saved by faith. Note that when Paul would prove salvation by faith in Romans four, he goes back to the Old Testament, quoting Abraham from before the law, and David's words in Psalm 32 which would be from the period of the law. Thus Paul considers that salvation was by faith in the days of the law, and also in the days of the patriarchs. If we turn to Hebrews eleven, we find the method of salvation by faith pushed back to earlier ages. In verse 7, Noah is referred to as one of the heroes of faith, and he is described as one who "became heir of the righteousness which is by faith." Or if we go back to the time before Noah, called by dispensationalists "the

dispensation of conscience," we find Enoch, who by faith "had this testimony that he pleased God," and Abel, who by faith "obtained witness that he was righteous."

I have heard the Old Testament dispensation referred to as a failure, as if God were experimenting to try to find a way to save men, and finding only failure until He instituted the age of grace. My thought is that it has always been an age of grace ever since God gave the first promise of a Redeemer to Eve. The Old Testament, under the age of law, offers pardon on the basis of grace as in Isaiah 55, "Let him return unto the Lord and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God for he will abundantly pardon," or the repentant prayer of David in Psalm 51.

Paul gives us a much truer dispensational picture in Galatians three where he again goes back to Abraham as an example of justification by faith, and states that the promise to Abraham antedates the giving of the law by 430 years and therefore the law cannot disannul the promise. If we ask what is the meaning of the period of law, Paul gives us two key statements, one in verse 11 where he states that "no man is justified by the law" and quotes "the just shall live by faith" to prove his point, and the other in verse 24 where he tells why the law was "added" and that was to serve as a "schoolmaster to bring us to Christ." The true idea is progression of revelation, not change of method.

If these considerations are not enough to clear our minds about the experience of the apostles prior to Pentecost, and if anyone should still feel as if they were under the law, and therefore could not be proper candidates for a second blessing at Pentecost, let me call your attention to a statement uttered twice by our Lord to the effect that the law and the prophets were until John. (Matt. 11:13; Luke 16:16)

These considerations show us that God has always provided salvation by faith in every age, and that whatever effect the law may have had during the period in which it was instituted, that period ended with the coming of Christ, and throughout Christ's personal ministry on earth, men were enabled to pass from death unto life by faith. This provides a picture of the one hundred and twenty in the upper room as genuinely saved men and women, truly justified and truly born again, and thus candidates for the baptism with the Holy Spirit.

## **Transition Between Dispensations**

Before we leave the question of dispensations, we should note another facet of the teaching of dispensationalists which is very alarming. By their dispensationalism they have allotted various scriptures to certain periods or dispensations. We (so they say) are not under law, so the Old Testament does not apply to us. The Gospels do not apply to Christians today because this was a time of the offer of the Kingdom to Israel. Much of Acts does not apply to us today for this was in a transition from the law and the Gospels to the period of grace. This method, called "rightly dividing the Word of truth" results in taking away from us a large portion of the Bible. Any type of teaching which thus robs us of parts of the Word of God is immediately suspect. There is something wrong with the basic premises which lead to such conclusions. Ironside attempts to bolster up his theory about the "baptism" by creating such a transitional period.<sup>[8]</sup> Stott insists that we must not build a doctrine of the Holy Spirit from events which occurred in the book of Acts. He does not find any consistency in the descriptions given to them, and so concludes that we must leave Acts out of consideration and go to the epistles to find a doctrine of the Spirit.<sup>[9]</sup>

## **Argument about Receiving a Person**

Another argument that is frequently encountered is to the effect that one cannot receive a person and then later receive him again, for if you have him you have all of him. Applying this to the question of when one receives the Spirit, the reasoning runs like this. If we receive the Spirit in regeneration, then we have received a Divine Person, but since personality is indivisible we must have all of Him, and therefore can henceforth receive Him at no other time. We readily agree that the Holy Spirit is a person and a person is indivisible in essential personality. But it seems to me that when they use the word all, they have already betrayed their own cause and are actually thinking in materialistic concepts of the Spirit. Just what is meant by **all**? This terminology runs into several difficulties. Do they mean all in the sense of a finite being possessing all of infinity? How does this square with the Divine attribute of omnipresence? And how is it possible that 120 persons on the day of Pentecost could each receive all of the Spirit? These questions are posed, not because they deal with impossibilities, but because they betray the wrong angle of thought of those who argue from this premise.

It is readily admitted that sometimes the advocates of second blessing holiness may have been careless in their language and have talked about receiving more of the Spirit. I am sure that this has given rise to this argument. But both ways of saying this go wide of the mark. There is one Spirit but many operations or offices of the same Spirit. One may have the Spirit in one operation or relationship but still need to receive Him in another capacity. We have tried to point out the varying offices of the Spirit in our discussion of Scripture foundations given in Part I of this paper.

## Baptism Is Cleansing

As noted earlier in our discussion, the Two Natures theory identifies the baptism with the Spirit with an initial experience. It is the means whereby one is made a member of the body of Christ. References to Stott and Scofield already given will show this. Another feature that has only been briefly noted at the outset is that since the baptism is initial, it does not and cannot mean purity of heart. The same is true of the Keswick teaching which differs in some essentials from the theory we have been discussing, but does agree with it at this point. The reason both of these theories reject the idea of cleansing is that they have an idea of sin which makes it inseparable from a material body.

Diametrically opposed to this theory is the belief of the holiness people that the baptism with the Spirit is a second work of grace and it does provide cleansing. When Peter compared the event at Pentecost with what happened at Cornelius' house, he went to the heart of the experience by stating in this spiritual crisis God was "purifying their hearts by faith." This is a key scripture in understanding Pentecost and the baptism with the Holy Spirit. Brockett asks the question about this text, "If hearts are purified by faith what are they cleansed from if not sin?"<sup>[10]</sup> Brice deals with the matter of heart cleansing by referring back to the promise given by John the Baptist in Matthew 3:11, 12 and says, "It was promised that the effect of the baptism of the Spirit would be like the winnowing of harvest . . . the Spirit purifies the heart from chaff and makes it good all through, like winnowed grain."<sup>[11]</sup>

## **Summary of the Holiness Position**

Throughout our discussion of the various theories about the work of the Spirit, we have endeavored to make plain what we consider to be the Scriptural position.

1. The disciples were genuinely born again before Pentecost.
2. Although they had experienced the regenerating power of the Spirit in the new birth, they still needed a further work of the Spirit.
3. This further work was in the operation of the Spirit as sanctifier.
4. It was this work of sanctification which was accomplished by the baptism with the Spirit.
5. The pattern of Christian experience established at Pentecost provides a norm for Christians of our time.

## **The Question of Wesley's Position**

The question of Wesley's terminology about the work of entire sanctification or Christian perfection has frequently been raised and it has been noted that Wesley did not make extensive use of terms relating to the Holy Spirit with reference to a second work of grace. In fact it is sometimes denied that he ever used such terms. Let us examine the actual facts of the

case and see if we can find an answer to this question. We believe it will be well to note the following items in connection with this problem.

- 1.Wesley's general concept concerning the Spirit
- 2.Wesley's actual terminology
- 3.The use of the terminology concerning the Spirit in Methodism
- 4.An explanation of the facts we find.

We need to note first of all that Wesley's view of the work of the Spirit was a comprehensive view. He regarded Him as being active at every step of the Christian life, and he might even refer to receiving the Spirit in some particular office or operation, without thereby precluding the idea, that the Spirit might still need to be received for some other purpose. If we do not recognize this we are very likely to read back into Wesley our own ideas about the use of the word "receive." The true way of understanding Wesley is to understand that he believes that any light or grace or help along the Christian way must come from the Spirit of God. This may be regarded as the giving of the Spirit in a particular function or office work to accomplish the purpose specified. Although one thus received Him, he will need to receive Him in a different or new capacity for any new need that may arise.

An excellent example of this varied use of the terminology of the Spirit is to be found in his "Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion."<sup>[12]</sup> To substantiate his own teachings about the work of the Spirit he quotes from the **Daily Service** and **Collects** of the Church of England. In these quotations we will note that there are prayers for the Holy Ghost to be "granted," to be

"sent," or "given" in various ways, some of which would apply to any person at any point in Christian life. This type of language colors all of Wesley's thought on this subject. In his sermon on "Grieving the Spirit," he says, "The Holy Spirit is the immediate minister of God's will upon the earth, and transacts all the great affairs of the Church of Christ."<sup>[13]</sup> In the same sermon he also says, "The title 'holy,' applied to the Spirit of God, does not only denote that He is holy in His own nature, but that He makes us so; that He is the great fountain of holiness to His church; the Spirit from whence flows all the grace and virtue by which the stains of guilt are cleansed, and we are renewed in all holy dispositions, and again bear the image of the Creator." A similar idea about the significance of the title "Holy Spirit" is voiced by J. Agar Beet, the English Methodist theologian, "All realized holiness is the mind of the Spirit of God, breathed into those to whom He is the soul of their soul and the life of their life. Hence the frequent term 'Holy Spirit.'"<sup>[14]</sup>

The major passage from Wesley which is adduced to back up the idea that he connected the reception of the Spirit with conversion exclusively is one found in a letter addressed to Joseph Benson under date of Dec. 28, 1770. He discusses the work of entire sanctification and then adds, "If they like to call this receiving the Holy Ghost, they may: Only the phrase, in that sense, is not scriptural, and not quite proper; for they all 'received the Holy Ghost' when they were justified."<sup>[15]</sup> This is the clearest and most definite passage which makes such a statement. Other passages from his works seem to imply the same thing. Herbert McGonigle has gathered together a number of other passages from his writings which pre-suppose or imply the same teaching.<sup>[16]</sup>

However much one may seize upon such passages and conclude that Wesley took the position that the baptism of the Spirit is equal to the new birth, and that there is no possible receiving of the Spirit subsequently, such conclusions overlook the wide range of Wesley's use of terminology



concerning the Spirit. We have called attention to this fact in previous paragraphs. Now we propose to select a few passages to illustrate the broad way in which Wesley did refer to the work of the Spirit. No interpretation of Wesley can be correct which depends solely on the letter to Benson and ignores the other passages which give us a more comprehensive view of Wesley's thinking about the work of the Holy Spirit. First, we will make brief reference to statements connecting the work of the Spirit to various steps in the process of salvation. Then we will follow that by some references which show that there were occasions on which he connected the work of the Spirit with entire sanctification.

Wesley's broad application of terms relative to the Spirit may be observed in the following references. In his *Notes on the New Testament*, he comments on Romans 8:15 by saying that the receiving of the Spirit of bondage, refers to the Spirit's work in conviction of the sinner. In his "Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion," he states, "Every man in order to believe unto salvation must receive the Holy Ghost."<sup>[17]</sup> In Wesley's sermon on "The Holy Spirit," he states his purpose to "pass by the extraordinary gifts . . . and only consider what the Holy Spirit is to every believer, for his personal sanctification and salvation." He proceeds in the same sermon to refer to the resurrection of the body and says, "Then shall the Holy Spirit be fully bestowed." He further expands on this as follows. "For now we obtain but some part of the Spirit to model and fit us for incorruption . . . and therefore the apostle calls it the earnest of the Spirit; that is, a part of that honor bestowed by the Lord." In these quotations we find the Holy Spirit received in conviction on the sinner and in the enablement to exercise saving faith, and we also find Him fully bestowed only in the resurrection glory, to which all previous bestowals have been but preparatory. In the next paragraph, we will note some cases where Wesley relates the work of the Spirit directly to entire sanctification.

In his **Notes on the New Testament**, there are two places (in his comments on Acts 8:15 and on Acts 19:2) where he clearly makes a distinction between the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit and "His sanctifying graces." Both of these passages are comments on verses where the Bible uses the term "receive the Holy Ghost." In the sermon on "Christian Perfection," Wesley distinguishes between "miracle-working power of the Holy Ghost" and His operations in Christian experience. He makes the statement, "The Holy Ghost was not yet given in his sanctifying grace." In *Notes on the Old Testament*, he comments on Joel 2:28, to the effect that the outpouring of the Spirit promised by the prophet is in "extraordinary gifts on the first preachers of the Gospel, as in various graces on all believers." He further explains the title "My Spirit" by saying that this is the Spirit "of adoption and sanctification."

In his *Journal* for August 1738 Wesley is reporting on his visit to Germany where he heard Christian David describe those "who have received forgiveness through the blood of Christ, but have not received the constant indwelling of the Holy Ghost." In the same context he reports on Christian David's description of the apostles before Pentecost when they had faith but had not "received the gift of the Holy Ghost." Some time later Wesley discussed the question of entire sanctification with Zinzendorf and asks if the apostles were not justified before Pentecost, and if they were not more holy after the day of Pentecost. Zinzendorf admitted they were justified before Pentecost but did not admit that they were more holy afterwards. To this answer, Wesley rejoined by asking if the disciples were not filled with the Holy Ghost on that day. Zinzendorf had to admit that they were but thought that the apostles were only given the gift of miracles on that day. For fuller study of the conversation, consult the *Journal* under date of Sept. 3, 1741.

That Wesley did sometimes use the terminology of Pentecost to relate to a second work of grace is certainly made plain by the above references. To assume the position that Wesley taught the receiving of the Spirit always meant the first work of grace is untrue to the facts, and opens the door to the adoption of dispensational interpretation of Christian experience such as we have studied already in this paper.

The fact does remain that Wesley made but little use of this terminology. He preferred other terms. However it is very plain that since his day the terminology of the baptism with the Spirit has been used much more widely by teachers and writers on entire sanctification. This leads us to three questions. One is when did the larger emphasis on the baptism or reception of the Spirit take place? Another is a question as to why Wesley did not make more use of the terminology of the Spirit. We also want to give a little consideration to the way in which the holiness movement has developed this emphasis on the Spirit as the agent of entire sanctification.

Since Wesley made but sparing use of the terms relative to the baptism with the Spirit in connection with entire sanctification, and since in recent terminology of the holiness movement covering at least a century, this terminology has been used very commonly by nearly all holiness writers, some scholars in recent years have sought to locate, if possible, the source of such expressions. Three writers in recent issues of the *Wesleyan Theological Journal* have given attention to this subject. They are Donald Dayton, Timothy Smith and John A. Knight.<sup>[18]</sup> Dayton wrote two articles, in both of which he assigns a great deal of the influence which gave rise to the terminology of the baptism with the Spirit to Asa Mahan, who gave a series of lectures at Adrian College between 1850-1860 stressing this theme. He admits scattered use of the terms prior to that time. In his second article Dayton revised his treatment somewhat, and among other things seems to ascribe more influence to

William Arthur's book, *Tongue of Fire*, and the effect of that book on Phoebe Palmer, although he still ascribes the greatest influence to Mahan.

Timothy Smith ascribes the greatest influence to Charles Finney. Of course Finney and Mahan were closely associated at Oberlin College for some years, so that they could easily have influenced each other in ways we can no longer trace. At any rate, Smith traces the terminology back to a series which Finney gave in 1838-39 in which that writer did make specific use of the term baptism with the Spirit in connection with a second work of grace. He says that George Peck, a Methodist leader of that day picked up Finney's terms and used them in a magazine article in January of 1841. Smith claims this was the first use of the term by a Methodist since the time of Fletcher.

The article by John Knight traces the influence of John Fletcher on Methodist theology and ascribes to him the first use of an identification between Pentecost and entire sanctification.

All writers concede the point that John Benson and John Fletcher used this terminology during Wesley's own lifetime. Smith claims that the term was not used by a Methodist from Fletcher's day until the article by Peck in 1841. It is apparent that Smith has overlooked some cases where the term was used during that time. Peters quotes a sermon preached by one of the early Methodist preachers, named Thomas Webb, in which he urged those who were justified to go on to receive the Holy Ghost, making it very plain that he considered the receiving the Holy Ghost to be another way of describing sanctification.<sup>[19]</sup> Peters gives no date for this sermon, but from the other events he describes in this connection, the date must have been about 1774. There is also on record the name of another Methodist who preached on this theme. That was Timothy Merriitt at Wellfleet Camp in 1819.<sup>[20]</sup> His subject was the baptism of the Holy Spirit and under that sermon Wilbur Fisk was

brought into the experience of holiness. Both Merritt and Fisk were outstanding Methodist leaders, so it is very likely that both of these men continued the use of the terminology of the Spirit. We find the name of Merritt coming up again when in January 1841, he and his fellow editor of *The Guide to Holiness* wrote a footnote to a sermon on "Power from on High" by S.S. Smith. In this footnote the editors said that they considered the "doctrine of the foregoing sermon of vast importance to the church."<sup>[21]</sup> It is of interest to note that the date of this publication (Jan. 1841) is the same month and year as the periodical in which George Peck wrote what Timothy Smith considered to be the first usage of the term "baptism with the Spirit" since the time of Fletcher.

As to why Wesley did not make more use of the terminology of the Spirit in his presentation of the experience of entire sanctification, we can only suggest a reason. Various suggestions have been made by different writers. Dayton thinks that Wesley was reticent in the use of this language because of certain controversies of his own day.<sup>[22]</sup> Mattke further elucidates Wesley's slowness in using this terminology by the suggestion that he feared to encourage the gifts of the spirit unless they were accompanied by genuine fruits of the Spirit.<sup>[23]</sup> Such an attitude may well have grown out of some excesses that Wesley had to face in his own ministry. McGonigle feels that Wesley had not given sufficient thought to Jesus' promise, "Ye shall receive power when the Holy Ghost is come upon you," and he suggests that this reticence on the part of Wesley may have helped twentieth century Pentecostalism to practically usurp the term for its own purposes.<sup>[24]</sup> In reality, we find a man, who to all intents and purposes, rediscovered the doctrine of entire sanctification, but only after a long period of searching in his own experience. We find him struggling to verify the reality of that experience, and also to properly express its truth in proper terminology. It would not be strange, if there should be certain areas in which he did not find the fullest

and best methods of explaining every angle of that doctrine, but that God had left that task to other men who should come after him. It seems to me that this is what has happened. The result is that we find some mighty men of God in the nineteenth century picking up Wesley's doctrine, carrying it on, finding new ways of expressing it and making its language conform more fully to the Scripture presentation of that truth.

After about the middle of the nineteenth century we find a great number of outstanding men who brought into prominence the relation between Pentecost and entire sanctification. Whoever began it, we believe he was entirely scriptural as we have tried to show in Part I of this study. But, any student of the holiness movement has to admit that the language of Pentecost became very frequent in most of the writers of that era and up to the present time. All we can do is to make very brief reference to some of the more outstanding or influential men of this period. There were men like Daniel Steele, George D. Watson, A.M. Hills. Within the Methodist church we note especially three names. Whedon in his Commentary gave an exposition of pentecostal sanctification in his comment on Acts 2:4. S. A. Keen was a holiness evangelist who held "Pentecostal services" in over seventy different conference sessions in various Methodist conferences. Among the books that he wrote we find the titles *Pentecostal Papers* and *Pentecostal Sanctification*. He was followed in a very similar ministry by the great holiness expositor, Joseph H. Smith. One of Smith's books was entitled *The Things of the Spirit*, and a study of his life and teaching is given us by Dr. Delbert Rose, who points out that Smith used Pentecost to teach second blessing holiness.<sup>[25]</sup>

Lest anyone should think that this was strictly an American development in the teaching of the doctrine of entire sanctification, we turn to a few writers in England. Samuel Chadwick, who was at one time President of the Methodist conference in Britain has left some great books, among which is

*The Way to Pentecost.* One of the Methodist theological writers from England was J. Agar Beet. He wrote a *Manual of Theology* and also a shorter volume of theology. In both of these, his treatment of "Sanctification in Christ" is filled with reference to the work of the Holy Spirit in producing this grace.<sup>[26]</sup> Beet wrote in the later part of the last century and the first years of this. Coming down nearer our own times, we find a book entitled *Pentecost* by Joe Brice. These are just a few, from both sides of the Atlantic, who helped to form that great cloud of witnesses who concur in expounding the true meaning of Pentecost—heart purity or entire sanctification.<sup>[27]</sup>

## **Basic Truths that Need to be Conserved**

It may be that there is some variance of viewpoint among those who read this book, as to the proper terminology that we should use to express the great truth of entire sanctification. But whatever our preferences may be, there are certain basic truths that we must conserve.

1. There is an experience of grace that brings purity of heart. By whatever language we describe it we must admit that the Holy Spirit is the sole agent who can produce such an inner transformation.
2. The Spirit of God works at every stage of Christian experience and therefore it is improper to confine the work of the Spirit to any one work of grace (either first or second).
3. The distinction between His operation in the first and second work of grace must be maintained in some way, in spite of the difficulty of finding proper expression for that truth.
4. The disciples were regenerated (born-again) prior to Pentecost.

5. Pentecost was the experience of entire sanctification for the disciples and as such is a pattern for Christian experience today.



## *Notes*

- [1] This theory is examined at length by W. T. Purkiser, *Conflicting Concepts of Holiness* (Beacon Hill, 1953), Chapter 1
- [2] Scofield Bible, notes on Acts 2:4.
- [3] Henry Brockett, *Scriptural Freedom From Sin*, (Beacon Hill, 1941) p. 173
- [4] John R. W. Stott, *Baptism and Fulness*, (Inter-Varsity Press, 1977) p. 43
- [5] George Turner, "An Evaluation of John R. W. Stott's and Frederick Bruner's Interpretations of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit," *Wesleyan Theological Journal*, Vol. 8, p. 46
- [6] David Jeremiah, *The Baptism of the Holy Spirit, Original or Optional Equipment?* (D. J. Publications, n.d.) p.8.
- [7] Joe Brice, *Pentecost* (Schmul Publishers, 1974) p. 19
- [8] Brockett, *Op. Cit.*, p. 174
- [9] Stott, *Op. Cit.*, p. 96
- [10] Brockett, *Op. Cit.*, p. 169
- [11] Brice, *Op. Cit.*, p. 96
- [12] John Wesley, *Works* (Zondervan Edition, reprint 1958). Vol. VIII, pp. 102 ff.
- [13] All references to Wesley's Sermons are given by reference to sermon title. This enables the reader to find the passage in any edition he may have. A similar method is used with Wesley's *Journal* and *Letters*, which will be referred to by date. Other references to Wesley will include reference to scripture passage in his *Notes* either on the Old Testament or the New. Other references will be to his *Works* in the Zondervan edition.
- [14] J. Agar Beet, *Manual of Theology* (Hodder and Stoughton, 1906), p. 113.
- [15] Wesley, *Works*, Vol. XII, p. 416
- [16] Herbert McGonigle, "Pneumatological Nomenclature in Early Methodism," *Wesleyan Theological Journal*, Vol. VIII, p. 61 ff.

<sup>[17]</sup> Wesley, *Works*, Vol. VIII, p. 49

<sup>[18]</sup> The articles by the authors referred to are all found in *Wesleyan Theological Journal* and are as follows:

Donald Dayton, "Asa Mahan and the Development of American Holiness and Theology," WTJ, Vol. 9, pp. 60 ff.

Donald Dayton, "The Doctrine of the Baptism with the Holy Spirit: Its Emergence and Significance," WTJ, Vol. 13, pp. 114 ff.

Timothy L. Smith, "The Doctrine of the Sanctifying Spirit: Charles G. Finney's Synthesis of Wesleyan and Covenant Theology," WTJ, Vol. 13, pp. 92 ff.

John A. Knight, "John Fletcher's Influence on the Development of Wesleyan Theology in America," WTJ. Vol. 13, pp. 13 ff.

<sup>[19]</sup> John L. Peters, *Christian Perfection and American Methodism*, (Abingdon Press, 1956), p. 82. The same incident is quoted by John Knight, *Op. Cit.*, p. 23

<sup>[20]</sup> Anthony Atwood, *The Abiding Comforter* (1874) p. 138

<sup>[21]</sup> Timothy Merritt and D. S. King. *Guide to Christian Perfection*, Jan. 1841, footnote on p. 164.

<sup>[22]</sup> Dayton, *Op. Cit.*, *Wesleyan Theological Journal*, Vol. 13, p. 116.

<sup>[23]</sup> Robert A. Mattke, "The Baptism of the Holy Spirit as Related to the Work of Entire Sanctification," *Wesleyan Theological Journal*, Vol. 5, p. 29.

<sup>[24]</sup> McGongile, *Op. Cit.*, p. 71

<sup>[25]</sup> Delbert R. Rose *Vital Holiness, A Theology of Christian Experience* (Bethany Fellowship), pp. 227, 228.

<sup>[26]</sup> J. Agar Beet, *Manual of Theology and Shorter Manual of Theology*. His description of sanctification is found on pages 262-274 in the *Manual*, and his treatment begins on p. 110 in the *Shorter Manual*

<sup>[27]</sup> A brief bibliography of some of the important books treating the work of the Spirit is given at the end of this booklet.

## ***Bibliography***

This brief list of books is offered as a partial guide to the literature on the work of the Holy Spirit. There is no attempt to make the list complete. It only offers a partial listing that will help the reader to chart his own course in his study on this important subject.

A few notes are given following certain titles to call attention to important features.

**I. List I**—Books dealing with the work of the Holy Spirit from the Two-Naturalist, or a similar, viewpoint. These books are not recommended.

Chafer, Lewis Sperry—*He That is Spiritual*

Gaebaelin, A. C.—*The Heavenly Guest, the Holy Spirit*

Haines, Perry F.—*The Holy Spirit and Christian Living*

Lehman, Chester—*The Holy Spirit and Holy Life*

Lockyer, Herbert—*The Heritage of Saints: or Studies in the Holy Spirit*

McConkey—*Three-Fold Gift of the Holy Ghost*

Scofield, C. I.—*Plain Papers on the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit*

——notes in *Scofield Bible*

Stott, John R. W.—*Baptism and Fulness*

Strauss, Lehman—*Be Filled with the Spirit*

**II. List II**—Books dealing with the work of the Holy Spirit from a holiness viewpoint. Some of these books are mainly on entire sanctification, but they include a section on the work of the Spirit.

Bregle—*When the Holy Ghost is Come*

—*The Guest of the Soul*

Brice—*Pentecost*

Carter, Charles—*The Person and Ministry of the Holy Spirit*

(NOTE—this book contains one of the best treatments available concerning the question of speaking in tongues.

See chap. 8).

Chapman—*Terminology of Holiness* Greathouse, M. M.—*The Fullness of the Spirit*.

Hogue, Wilson T.—*The Holy Spirit*

Huffman, J. A.—*The Holy Spirit*

—*The Meaning of Pentecost and the Spirit-Filled Life*

—*The Meanings of Things*

Jessop—*Foundations of Doctrine*

Knapp—*Lightning Bolts from Pentecostal Skies*

Morrison—*Baptism with the Holy Ghost*

Purkiser, W. T.—*Interpreting Christian Holiness*

Purkiser, W. T., Taylor, Richard S., Taylor, Willard H.—*God, Man and Salvation*.

(NOTE—This volume on Biblical Theology has a very excellent chapter treating this subject of the Spirit in Sanctification, Chap. 27).

Stauffer—*When He Is Come*

Steele, Daniel—*The Gospel of the Comforter*

**III.** There are two books on the Holy Spirit, which are among the most outstanding ever written on the subject. Their authors were of the Keswick type of belief, but this shows up in only a very limited way in occasional statements that show the authors did not believe in heart cleansing. Otherwise, the books are very excellent.

Cumming—*Through the Eternal Spirit*

Gordon, A. J.—*The Ministry of the Spirit*